

TOWN OF YAMPA
TOWN BOARD MINUTES
November 19, 2025 – 6:00 pm

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Geilert, Trustee Lewis, Trustee Shoptaugh and Trustee Montgomery

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustee Geanious

EMPLOYEES PRESENT: Town Administrator/Clerk Sheila Symons Planner/Treasurer Mary Alice Page-Allen

AUDIENCE PRESENT:

Online: HP, Stephanie

In-Person: Joe Edwards, Dan Nielsen, Jeff Brooks, Tim Brooks, Aaron Symons, Todd Carr, Lacy and Kenny Trout, Sarah and Von Piano, Machia Cox, Wyatt and Ella Baker, Kasey O'Halloran, Kade O'Halloran, Rhett O'Halloran, Mary Jo O'Halloran and Ellis O'Halloran

1. Call to Order

- Mayor Geilert called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm
- The Pledge of Allegiance was recited
- Roll call was taken

2. Audience Participation

No Public Comments were made

3. Recognition of South Routt Home School Group

On October 26, the South Routt Home School Group organized the “Trick or Treat So Others Can Eat” food drive in Yampa and Oak Creek, with local students collecting donations for the Community Food Pantry. The Town Board recognized the participating students by presenting letters of appreciation and shared letters from Senator Michael Bennet acknowledging their leadership and generosity.

4. Joint Meeting with Yampa Fire Protection District

The Yampa Fire Protection District Board joined the Town Board to discuss the 2025 Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code along with updates on the Old Town Hall furnace and generator. Todd Carr from the Routt County Building Department attended the meeting and outlined the new Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Code, mandated by the State of Colorado, which must be adopted by April 1, 2026, and enforced on new permits starting July 1, 2026. The Building Department will lead adoption, education, and contractor outreach, with added staff to manage the workload. Mr. Carr noted the code is largely non-negotiable, with costly requirements for amendments. Yampa has already adopted Class A roofing and soffit protection, but stricter standards will apply. Chapter 4 addresses construction requirements, while Chapter 5 covers site and landscaping, which may be difficult to apply retroactively but could be exempted at the discretion of officials.

Discussion focused on challenges of implementation. Yampa falls entirely within Class 2 wildfire intensity, meaning the full code applies uniformly. Chapter 4 requires stricter hardening of structures, including non-combustible or ignition-resistant eaves, soffits, and exterior walls. These changes will affect traditional siding choices and factory-built homes, which must comply before delivery.

Exemptions were discussed to the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code, noting their importance for Yampa's older housing stock and potential historic structures. Exemptions include interior alterations, additions under 500 square feet, repairs affecting less than 25% of exterior walls or roofs, small accessory structures under 120 square feet, larger agricultural buildings located more than 50 feet from residences, and fences more than 8 feet from structures. Roofing is less of a concern, as Class A materials have already been required locally. The comprehensive plan has cataloged structures meeting the 50-year threshold for historic designation, which may assist with exemptions.

The Board acknowledged that the greatest burden would fall on building requirements and structure hardening, while most existing landscapes can be exempted retroactively. Enforcement of landscaping requirements remains a concern, given limited state resources. To address this, site plans may be recorded with property titles, placing responsibility on owners, with insurance companies expected to play a role. Enforcement may become complaint-driven, though questions remain about which agencies will oversee compliance.

Outreach efforts are underway to inform contractors and designers, with clear guidance that permits submitted after July 1, 2026, will be subject to the new code. Contractors are encouraged to submit permits before that date to avoid

additional requirements. The Board noted that new siding and roofing materials, such as cement board and ignition-resistant products, are already appearing locally.

The Town of Yampa received a grant to support integration of the Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code, providing professional assistance and bi-monthly meetings. Yampa anticipates adopting the code by reference, with community education, outreach, and public hearings planned for the April 1, 2026, deadline. Because site planning elements constitute a zoning amendment, the Planning Commission will also be involved.

Coordination between the Town, Routt County Building Department, and Yampa Fire Protection District will be essential. Planning and fire staff agreed to assist with site inspections, while the Town will serve as the final gatekeeper for certificate of occupancy issuance. Approved site plans may be recorded with property titles to ensure future owners maintain defensible space.

Challenges are anticipated for small, closely spaced lots where spacing requirements may conflict with existing conditions. The Board stressed the importance of community education and a unified approach to help residents comply.

Discussion continued to the planned replacement of the coal burner at the Old Town Hall Fire Station and installation of a backup generator. The 2026 budget estimates the project at \$180,000, with \$120,000 allocated for furnace replacement and electrical upgrades and the remainder for the generator. The Town intends to pursue outside funding, including an energy impact grant that could cover up to half of the costs, and anticipates a funding model of 10% local cash and 90% grant support, requiring about \$18,000 in local contributions. Collaboration with the fire district will be important, as costs are generally shared under the current lease agreement, though infrastructure updates remain subject to negotiation and the fire department may be able to leverage different grants that municipalities are not able to access. Klumker Electric, previously vetted for other electrical work, can be prepared to begin implementation in spring/summer 2026, with the goal of having the system operational by fall. The project is considered essential for heating the building, which serves as the Town's Emergency Operations Center and houses the fire department, while also aligning with the broader transition away from coal.

The Boards discussed the choice of electric over propane, noting that while propane is cheaper and avoids costly three-phase upgrades, the Town's adoption of the Routt County Climate Action Plan and state funding requirements could necessitate electric systems. Electric heating complements the Town's solar investments and aligns with sustainability standards, though members acknowledged concerns about rising electricity costs. The proposed generator, expected to be propane-fired, was included in Routt County's hazard mitigation plan to ensure backup power for emergency operations.

Past propane boiler estimates were revisited, showing costs approximately \$20,000 lower than current electric conversion proposals. To balance financial realities with sustainability goals, the Boards agreed to solicit updated propane quotes as a backup option while continuing to pursue grants for the electric system. This approach provides flexibility if grant funding falls short. The Boards will revisit the issue at the first meeting in January to review updated proposals and align decisions with upcoming energy impact funding cycles.

5. Seasonal Snowplow Operator – Job Description

The Board discussed the seasonal snowplow operator job description, which was originally drafted to provide interim snow removal support when staff are unavailable. The position will be formalized for inclusion in the Town's personnel policies and was adapted from the road and bridge role, with a focus specifically on snow removal duties, responsibilities, and qualifications. A clarification was made to designate the role as "seasonal" rather than "temporary" under FLSA standards. Discussion emphasized the importance of backup operators to ensure coverage during emergencies, illnesses, or heavy storms, with the role intended to be "as needed" rather than scheduled. Board members noted that additional operators would improve response times and reduce reliance on outside help. Compensation will be based on hours worked, with overtime paid, if necessary, but the position will not be paid on-call. Coordination with the school was also discussed to align plowing schedules. The Board agreed the position provides needed stability and preparedness for the community.

Motion

Trustee Lewis made a motion to approve Seasonal Snowplow Operator Job Description. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. **Appointment of Town Board Representative to the Yampa Valley Regional Transportation Authority**

Board Members discussed the appointment of representatives to the newly formed Yampa Valley Regional Transportation Authority Board. A primary representative and an alternate representative need to be appointed to ensure consistent participation as the Authority begins organizing, particularly in preparation for potential ballot measures related to tax questions. Trustee Shoptaugh volunteered to serve as Yampa's representative, citing her daily commute to Steamboat and vested interest in regional transportation issues, while Mayor Geilert agreed to serve as the alternate. The Board acknowledged that upcoming elections could affect representation but agreed to move forward with appointments to ensure Yampa's involvement when the Authority begins operations in January.

Motion

Trustee Lewis made a motion to appoint Trustee Shoptaugh as the primary representative and Mayor Geilert as the alternate representative of the Yampa Valley Regional Transportation Authority. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. **2023 Audit Engagement Letter – Hinton Burdick CPAs & Advisors**

The Board reviewed the proposed 2023 Audit Engagement Letter with Hinton Burdick CPAs and Advisors. Mary Alice explained that the engagement letter was requested to ensure the Town's 2023 audit is properly completed following deficiencies in the prior filing with the previously engaged auditor. The audit cost was noted at approximately \$30,000, consistent with projected fees for 2024 and 2025. The recommendation was to authorize signing the engagement letter, with the condition that Hinton Burdick would only proceed if Baker CPAs LLC and/or Excel Tax and Accounting LLC fail to file an accepted audit with the Colorado Office of the State Auditor within 10 days. Two letters from the State Auditor's Office were shared, one directed to Seth Baker, CPA of record on the incorrect filing, and another to the Town Board outlining deficiencies, reinforcing the need for corrective action. Mary Alice emphasized that while complaints have been filed, the priority is to ensure a qualified firm to complete the audit correctly and on time. It was clarified that Hinton Burdick must conduct its own independent audit rather than correcting prior work, and that all documentation for 2023 is already compiled to allow prompt action if needed. Questions were raised about potential refunds from the previous auditor, with Mary Alice noting legal action may be necessary, but the Board agreed reliable audit services are the immediate priority.

Motion

Trustee Lewis made a motion to authorize to sign an engagement letter to provide 2023 Audit Services with Hinton Burdick CPAs & Advisors. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. **Board Policies and Public Behavior Policy Work Session**

The Town Board held a work session to review and refine board policies, procedures, and the draft public Code of Conduct. Discussion focused on clarifying responsibilities, consolidating outdated sections, and modernizing practices. Key action items included defining the format of meeting minutes to emphasize summary actions, establishing clear rules for the consent agenda, and revising the section on decorum and order with more concise language. Attendance policies were reviewed, with consensus to require advance notice of absences while removing language about dismissal for unexcused absences, since board members are elected officials.

The Board also discussed adopting clearer guidelines for public comment and audience participation, adding language on board member public statements to media and social platforms, and considering disciplinary measures for violations of board rules. Mead's policies were highlighted as useful models, particularly regarding board interactions with staff and conduct monitoring. Board Members agreed to more clearly define quasi-judicial, special, and regular meetings to reduce confusion.

Additional updates included adding general board responsibilities and conduct language under duties and privileges of members, correcting minor wording issues, and consolidating special events policies into a shorter, streamlined format with a checklist. The Board emphasized simplifying the special events permit questionnaire. Internal control policies will be incorporated into personnel policies without substantive changes.

Other discussion addressed bidding and purchasing procedures. Concerns were raised that recent bid openings did not follow formal processes. Members recommended updating policies to reflect modern electronic bidding practices

while ensuring transparency, including opening bid attachments during meetings for public review. Mary Alice agreed to research state bidding requirements for projects funded with state money and to align local procedures accordingly. The Draft Public Behavior Policy, which was collaborated with CIRSA's legal team, was reviewed. Members supported refinements including stronger language on respect and civility, prohibiting slanderous or personal attacks, and authorizing the presiding officer to remove individuals who violate standards. Language will also clarify the use of electronic devices during meetings, requiring them to be silenced. The Board supported posting the finalized Public Behavior Policy in town facilities to promote awareness.

Staff will revise the draft of the Town Board Code of Conduct and Public Behavior Policy with the noted changes and return it for review in January.

9. Consent Agenda

Motion

Trustee Lewis made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, specifically the November 5, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Staff and Board Member Reports/Updates

Mary Alice explained that the consent agenda had been abbreviated due to her being out of the office and that payment approval reports and other routine items would be doubled up going forward. The December 3 meeting will include updates on the South Routt Housing Authority, Housing Advisory Board progress, and adoption of the comprehensive fee schedule as part of the year-end budget process. Vehicle availability from the county was reported, with two trucks under consideration at an estimated cost of \$20,000–\$25,000; these will be assessed and incorporated into the budget. Staff also clarified utility billing rules for the mobile home park, noting that monthly fees apply regardless of usage unless service is formally abandoned, and that the Board may be asked to consider abandonment requests in the future.

Sheila updated on the progress on Huffstetler trailer demolition following evictions, with permits and asbestos abatement underway. The Routt County Economic Development Partnership will hold office hours in Yampa on December 15. The Routt County Climate Action Plan Collaborative has a board seat opening, with applications due November 28, and trustees were asked to help spread the word. Upcoming community events were noted: Stagecoach Mountain Ranch's holiday party on December 18, the community giving tree coordinated by staff, and Fourth of July Committee fundraising activities. The committee raised \$430 at the Arts and Crafts Fair, will host cookie decorating on Christmas Eve, and is planning a soup fundraiser in February and a salsa contest on Cinco de Mayo.

Additional updates included the cancellation of the Planning Commission meeting, with the next Town Board meeting scheduled for December 3 for budget adoption, and December 17 held tentatively. Trustees were reminded that special meetings may be required during the holiday period if necessary. Trustee Shoptaugh updated that Yampatika and the Routt County Wildfire Mitigation Council are planning property surveys and public outreach in South Routt beginning in spring and summer. These efforts may align with the Town's upcoming code adoption timeline, with surveys potentially scheduled between April 1 and July 1 to support defensible space education and compliance.

Discussion continued to the maintenance needs for the town park fence. It was noted that the wooden fence has not been re-oiled since last year and requires ongoing treatment to prevent deterioration. Action items include ensuring fence maintenance is scheduled for the spring season, researching appropriate fire-retardant oils or treatments, and confirming product information with suppliers to ensure the correct materials are used. The Board also considered whether future fencing may need to meet residential neighborhood standards, including the possibility of installing a line-of-sight or metal fence.

Sheila highlighted the current art show in the downstairs area, featuring works by local artists Jane Sindell, Misty Brever, and Andrea Abrahamson. Members agreed the exhibit has been a positive addition and discussed reaching out to the artists about repainting or redesigning the town's entrance signs as part of future gateway improvements. These items will be carried forward into spring planning

11. Scheduled Meeting/Work Sessions


- a. Town Board and other requests for Agenda Items
 - i. November 26, 2025 @ 6:30 p.m. – Planning Commission Meeting - Cancelled
 - ii. December 3, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m. – Town Board Regular Meeting
 - iii. December 17, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m. – Town Board Regular Meeting – Tentative if needed

12. Adjournment

Motion

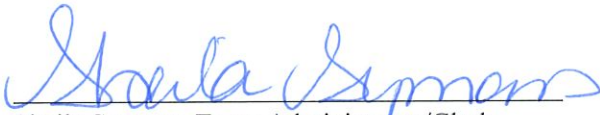
Trustee Lewis made a motion for adjournment. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Approved the 3rd day of December 2025.



Stacey Geifert, Mayor

Attest:



Sheila Symons, Town Administrator/Clerk

