

**TOWN OF YAMPA  
TOWN BOARD MINUTES  
September 3, 2025 – 6:00 pm**

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

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Trustee Geanious

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

**AUDIENCE PRESENT:**

**In Person:** Aaron Symons, Angelica Salinas, Sonja Macys, Tim Redmond, Jay Harrington, Doug Scherar, Jeff Smith and Melina Bricker

**Via Zoom:** Heather Noyes Gregg and Tyler Gibbs

**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**

Heather Noyes Gregg expressed concern about the short notice given for the upcoming Discovery Land Company open house. She noted that she received the invitation only one week prior and felt that, given the potential impact of the project on South Routt, more advance notice should be provided. Heather respectfully requested that the Town communicate this concern to the project owners or their representative to ensure better outreach in the future.

**3. Routt County Commissioners**

Commissioners Sonja Macys, Angelica Salinas, and Tim Redmond attended the meeting to provide updates and engage in discussion on several key Routt County initiatives. Topics included the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), a proposed county-wide lodging tax and its potential impact on Yampa, response efforts related to the recent Crucial Fire, and opportunities for collaboration and resource sharing between the County and the Town.

Commissioner Macys led a detailed discussion on the RTA, noting that an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) is under consideration and may be placed on the November ballot to determine whether communities wish to opt into a formal RTA district. She emphasized the collaborative nature of the formation process and the importance of a consensus-based decision model, which ensures equal representation and voice for each participating community—including Yampa, Oak Creek, Hayden, Craig, Steamboat Springs, and unincorporated Routt County. Ski Corp has participated in the formation committee but does not hold voting power, as decisions are made by consensus rather than formal votes. Macys outlined recent developments regarding funding commitments from Ski Corp. Originally, a 20-year pledge of \$1 million annually was proposed, but in early August, Ski Corp withdrew that offer. After a series of emergency meetings, a revised agreement was reached: Ski Corp will contribute \$3 million over three years (\$1 million annually), with further negotiations to occur by April 2027 regarding long-term funding. Additionally, if Steamboat Springs places a lift ticket tax on the ballot and it passes, the direct pledge agreement would be voided, as the tax would serve as the funding mechanism.

Concerns were raised about whether larger entities could override smaller communities like Yampa and Oak Creek, particularly if service costs outweigh benefits. Macys clarified that the consensus model is designed to prevent such outcomes. If Yampa chooses not to join the district, it would not be subject to any associated taxes. Questions about the potential tax amount were deferred, as funding sources are still being explored, and no ballot language in that regard has been finalized.

Commissioner Angelica Salinas provided an overview of the proposed county-wide lodging tax, which is slated for the November 2025 ballot. The measure would impose a 6% tax on lodging across unincorporated Routt County and participating towns, including Oak Creek and Yampa, with revenues designated for infrastructure and public safety. Salinas clarified that this is not a short-term rental tax, as some constituents had misunderstood, but a general lodging tax that applies to hotels, short-term rentals, and other allowable accommodations. She emphasized that any lodging tax collected within a municipality would remain with that municipality and not be stacked on top of existing local taxes.

The Commissioners discussed the importance of transparency and equity in how funds would be distributed, noting that even communities contributing a smaller percentage—such as Yampa whose contribution is estimated at 4% of total revenue—could receive more funding if they proposed meaningful projects. There was interest in forming an advisory committee, potentially modeled after existing boards like the museum fund, to help guide annual allocations and ensure community representation.

Concerns were raised about public safety needs across the county, including dispatch staffing challenges, and how lodging tax revenues could help support those services. Commissioners also noted that funds could be used to support community events, such as Yampa’s Fourth of July celebration.

Heather Noyes Gregg asked whether the Discovery Land Company’s Stagecoach project includes a lodging component. Jay Harrington, Routt County Manager responded that while the application is extensive and available online, commissioners are legally prohibited from commenting on active planning applications.

Concerns were raised by the audience about the growing number of tax proposals and the financial burden on residents. Commissioners acknowledged the challenge and reiterated that the lodging tax would be paid by visitors, not local residents. They also shared that smaller revenue sources—such as a proposed day-use fee for state parks—are being explored to avoid larger tax increases. Salinas noted that counties nationwide are facing historic cost shifts, and that sharing the financial load with visitors is one way to sustain essential services. Another asked about the expected revenue from the lodging tax. Commissioners estimated that the total annual revenue could be approximately \$820,786, with Yampa’s share representing around 4%. They explained that municipalities could set their own lodging tax rates if they chose to pursue separate ballot measures.

Trustee Montgomery reported that several local lodging operators—Amber Cramer, Van Camps, and Audria Herrera—had not received notice about the proposed tax. Commissioners acknowledged that these businesses may not have been on the most recent contact list and committed to following up to ensure proper outreach.

It was clarified that Steamboat Springs and Hayden would not vote on the measure, as they already have their own lodging taxes. The lodging tax will pass or fail based on the collective vote of participating jurisdictions; if Yampa votes no and others vote yes, the tax will still be imposed within Yampa’s boundaries.

Additional community feedback was shared regarding accessibility of RTA surveys, particularly for elderly residents without smartphones or internet access. Commissioners acknowledged the need for alternative outreach methods, such as phone-based surveys, in future engagement efforts. If the RTA formation passes in November, service planning and implementation would likely take up to two years. If it does not pass, the initiative will not move forward.

Commissioner Tim Redmond provided an update on the Northwest Colorado Development Council (NWCDC), a regional coalition formed to address local needs without relying solely on state or federal intervention. He emphasized the importance of self-reliance and shared that Yampa was recently designated as a Tier 1 impacted community, making it eligible for future funding and support. Ongoing projects include the Hayden Business Park and a new aviation business park at the Hayden airport, which will host an aviation mechanic training program in partnership with Colorado Northwest Community College. The program is designed to support transitioning coal and power plant workers, with starting salaries projected around \$75,000 annually.

**4. Routt County Sherrif Department**

Sheriff Doug Scherar reported that the Crosho Fire is now fully contained and under control. This was the first wildfire during his tenure, offering valuable insight into the complexities of wildfire response. The fire originated on Forest Service land in Rio Blanco County, prompting a rapid initial response from out-of-state crews already stationed nearby. Due to mutual aid agreements, the Forest Service assumed command, and the County later signed a delegation of authority to allow the State Division of Fire Prevention and Control to take over management. This transition helped

relieve local financial burdens, with the County incurring approximately \$140,000 in expenses, while the total cost of the fire exceeded \$1 million and is offset in part by fire insurance. The source of the fire remains under investigation.

County staff and extension agents are working with the USDA's Farm Service Agency to identify recovery resources and grant opportunities for the agricultural community. Emergency Operations Center personnel coordinated evacuation mapping, press releases, and resource logistics, with monthly training efforts proving effective during the response. Alyssa Wilhelme, a Yampa resident with a background in restoration, contributed to operations during the incident.

Jay Harrington noted a broader shift toward local responsibility in emergency management and budgeting. He shared that dispatcher fee structures have been revised, though Yampa Fire Protection District should not be significantly impacted due to County subsidies.

Sheriff Scherar also advised that service rates will increase in 2026, with details to be reviewed during upcoming budget work sessions. The Sheriff's Department is currently fully staffed, with 25 deputies across all divisions.

5. **Ordinance – Land Development Code – (Tabled from August 20<sup>th</sup>)**

A public hearing was held to consider Ordinance 2025-03, adopting Title 6 of the Yampa Land Development Code by reference, repealing conflicting ordinances, and establishing an effective date. This item was tabled from the August 20th meeting to allow for additional review and public engagement. TJ Dlubac, Community Planning Strategies, led the presentation, thanking the Board for rescheduling and providing an overview of the process and timeline. Phase II of the code update began in January and has included five public engagement opportunities and stakeholder meetings. Numerous comments were received, particularly regarding historic preservation and architectural design standards.

TJ clarified that the Land Development Code is a local designation tool and is not intended to replace or conflict with state or federal historic preservation standards. The code introduces architectural design guidelines specific to Yampa's downtown overlay district, which differ from formal historic designation criteria. Properties seeking official historic designation would still need to go through state or federal channels. The architectural design guidelines referenced in the code are housed in a separate document, which will be reviewed and updated by an advisory group potentially including members of Historic Routt County. TJ emphasized that the code is a foundational framework and may require future refinements as the Town gains experience implementing it. He acknowledged that some public comments offered valuable suggestions and affirmed that the code, in its current form, is legally sound, appropriate, and within the Board's authority to adopt.

TJ also reviewed recent updates to the code since the last draft, noting that most changes were clerical or clarifying in nature. Chapter 1 received minor amendments for clarity. Chapter 2, which outlines the general review process, was updated to clarify public notice procedures and ensure portions of setback and rights-of-way areas were excluded from distance calculations. Terminology related to comprehensive plan amendments was aligned with the Town's comprehensive plan. More substantial clarifications were made to the building footprint, condominium, and townhouse subdivision processes to better define their relationship to site plan and review procedures. The exemptions and encroachments section was also revised based on early implementation feedback.

To help clarify the relationship between various design standards, TJ presented a graphic explaining that architectural standards apply town-wide, while downtown overlay standards apply only within the designated overlay area. Residential, multifamily, and non-residential design standards reference historic design elements for compatibility. Two external guideline documents—currently in draft form—will provide additional context, visuals, and templates for future use and are expected to be adopted by resolution outside of the ordinance process. These documents are intended to support broader programs in South Routt County and allow for future refinement and coordination.

Staff presented three options for Board consideration: (1) approve the ordinance with conditions to incorporate some or all of Historic Routt County's suggested revisions; (2) approve the ordinance as presented, with continued collaboration

on the architectural design guidelines; or (3) continue the item to allow further coordination with Historic Routt County. The Planning Commission previously recommended approval of the code.

During discussion, Heather Noyes Gregg asked for clarification on whether option one would require full adoption of Historic Routt County's revisions. TJ explained that the Board could conditionally approve the ordinance with flexibility to incorporate some or all of the suggested edits, depending on the outcome of further conversation. Heather expressed appreciation for the process, noting its roots in the Town's comprehensive planning efforts and the years of work that have gone into the code update.

Heather also emphasized that many people have invested significant time and energy into this effort, which represents the implementation of Yampa's comprehensive plan. She noted that for years—well before the comprehensive plan—residents, property owners, and visitors have consistently voiced the importance of preserving and celebrating Yampa's heritage and character. While neither the comprehensive planning nor code consultant teams included a historic preservationist, Yampa is fortunate to have access to Historic Routt County (HRC), whose involvement reflects a deep commitment to the community. Heather highlighted the value of this partnership and pointed out that HRC attempted to participate in the August Planning Commission meeting but was unable to gain access. Their detailed written comments were submitted and are now part of the public record. She stated that HRC's proposed revisions are thoughtful, legal, and would strengthen the document. With development pressures like the Discovery Land Company on the horizon, Heather urged the Board to seize this opportunity to adopt a strong, forward-looking code that reflects the community's values.

Tyler Gibbs, acting as a preservation consultant with Historic Routt County (HRC), provided additional context. He shared his background managing historic preservation programs in both Steamboat Springs and Denver, and reiterated that HRC's written comments submitted after technical issues prevented participation in the August Planning Commission meeting were intended to clarify confusion around the applicability of the historic design standards. Tyler explained that while the current code language suggests the standards apply to existing structures seeking historic designation, the actual guidelines appear more suited for new construction within a historic context. He recommended relabeling the standards to reflect their intended use for new builds and renovations that aim to complement Yampa's historic character. He also noted that formal standards for historic buildings already exist through the National Park Service and the Secretary of the Interior, and can be referenced for voluntary designation and eligibility for tax credits. Tyler emphasized that HRC's proposed edits are not intended to replace or conflict with existing standards, but to improve clarity and usability of the code.

Mary Alice noted that the Planning Commission statements aligned with reinforcing that the intent of the ordinance is to protect the character of the downtown area and guide future development. She clarified that the architectural design guidelines are not preservation rules, but a framework to ensure compatibility and thoughtful growth. The guidelines will continue to evolve in collaboration with preservation experts and community stakeholders. She also noted her enthusiasm for working with Historic Routt County on the next phase of implementation, acknowledging that it will be a separate but important process.

TJ added further clarification, noting that the historic design standards were always intended to apply to both existing and new construction. These standards reflect the architectural characteristics that define Yampa's historic identity and are meant to guide anyone seeking to build or renovate in a way that aligns with that character. He emphasized that this approach is distinct from formal historic preservation, which follows different criteria and processes. The standards are applied specifically within the downtown overlay, and while they are not mandatory for designation, they serve as the Town's benchmark for architectural significance. TJ acknowledged that if a property owner seeks official designation, they would follow criteria like those referenced by Tyler, rather than the Town's internal standards. This distinction is part of the broader conversation and structure the Town has developed over the past year.

Heather Noyes Gregg added that while everyone shares the same goal of preserving Yampa's character, there is confusion around terminology. She cautioned against applying "historic design standards" to new construction, noting that doing so risks creating a stylized or artificial aesthetic, likening it to "Disneyland." She strongly supported design standards for new construction within the downtown overlay but urged that they be clearly labeled as such to avoid misinterpretation. Heather praised HRC's efforts to clarify this issue and reiterated that the Town, HRC, and the community are aligned in their goals; the challenge lies in ensuring the language and structure of the code reflect that shared vision.

Mayor Geilert echoed the concern about confusion, pointing to specific redlined language under the General Provisions for historic context design standards. She noted that the revised wording if "cohesive, consistent design patterns applicable to new or renovated structures" may be contributing to the misunderstanding. She clarified that the code also states that these standards do not apply to eligibility for historic designation, which is governed by separate criteria. Mayor Geilert commended the clarity of the revised language and the effort put into the document, and suggested that the Board approve the ordinance with conditions to incorporate the redlined edits, with the understanding that the code will be revisited in January. She also noted that the Town's comprehensive plan will continue to guide policy decisions and that work on the design guidelines is expected to begin later this year. She expressed confidence that the ordinance provides a solid foundation for moving forward.

As part of the ongoing public hearing and review of Ordinance 2025-03, the Board discussed Section 6-1-10 of the proposed Yampa Land Development Code, which addresses the "Right to Farm." Trustee Montgomery voiced strong opposition to the inclusion of this section, stating that large farm animals such as horses, donkeys, goats, and cows are not appropriate within town limits. He expressed support for allowing small, caged animals like poultry or rabbits, but emphasized that if the current language remains, he would vote against the entire ordinance.

Other Board Members echoed similar concerns, noting that the presence of large farm animals in town has already caused challenges and that expanding or reinforcing their protection could lead to further complications. While there was general support for small-scale animal keeping, the consensus was that large livestock should not be permitted within residential areas.

TJ provided clarification on the intent and legal framework of the "Right to Farm" provision. The section does not grant permission for large animals to be kept in town; rather, it reflects state law that protects existing agricultural operations from being classified as nuisances, provided they are lawful, conform to zoning regulations, and are operated in a non-negligent manner. If an agricultural use is not permitted under local zoning, it would still be subject to code enforcement. The provision is intended to acknowledge state protections and clarify that nuisance complaints alone cannot override lawful agricultural uses.

Trustee Montgomery also raised concerns about communication protocols, specifically regarding notification letters sent to adjacent property owners about upcoming land use discussions. He requested that Board members receive copies of such letters to avoid being caught off guard when approached by residents. He shared a recent experience where a constituent presented a letter to him, and he was unaware of its contents, which he felt undermined his role and credibility as a trustee. Staff acknowledged the concern and advised staff reports for these types of matters can be copied to trustees moving forward.

It was reiterated that animal regulations will be addressed in more detail during the upcoming municipal code updates. The Board also discussed the statutory nature of Yampa's governance, noting that as a statutory town, state law often supersedes local ordinances. The distinction between nuisance protections and zoning enforcement was emphasized again for clarity.

With no further comments the Public Hearing was closed.

**Motion**

Trustee Lewis made a motion for the approval and authorization to sign Ordinance 2025-03, An Ordinance of the Town of Yampa, Colorado, Adopting Title 6, Yampa Land Development Code by Reference, Repealing all Conflicting ordinance; Providing for Severability; and Providing an Effective Date with the amendments provided in the redline comments from HRC. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion. The motion passed with three (3) votes in favor and one (1) opposed.

**6. Resolution 2025-10 Regional Transportation Authority Intergovernmental Agreement**

**Motion**

Trustee Lewis made a motion to sign Resolution 2025-10, A Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement for a Yampa Valley Regional Transportation Authority and submitting to the eligible electors of the Town of Yampa a Ballot Question for the formation of the Yampa Valley Regional Transportation Authority. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**7. Yampa Wastewater Treatment Plant Project – Change Order No. 1 (Tabled from August 20, 2025)**

This item was tabled from the August 20 meeting. It was clarified that the reference to “sales tax” in the budget line has been removed, and the amount listed now reflects a zero tax allocation. The figure remains unchanged and includes costs associated with health insurance, contractor policy insurance, staff time, and official duties. The adjustment was made to more accurately represent the breakdown of expenses and to reflect the lowered tax component.

**Motion**

Trustee Lewis made a motion to authorization for the Mayor to sign Change Order No. 1 in the amount of \$228,331.98. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**8. Resolution 2025-11 Wastewater Collection System Acceptance of Work**

This item represents the final step in closing out the water infrastructure project funded through the Colorado Rural Water and Power Development Authority (Authority). The Authority has retained \$10,000 from the original funding allocation, which will be released upon formal project closure. Although the project is considered complete, warranty work remains outstanding, and retention funds are being held to ensure those obligations are fulfilled. A recent video inspection identified nine remaining repairs, which will be addressed under warranty.

**Motion**

Trustee Lewis made a motion to authorize to sign Resolution 2025-11, A Resolution of the Town of Yampa, Colorado, Acting By and Through Its Water and Sewer Enterprise, Acknowledging the Project Completion and Acceptance of the Work Performed on the Town of Yampa Wastewater Collection System Improvement Project Funded in Part Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority’s Revolving Fund. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

**9. 2023 Audit (To be tabled to September 17, 2025)**

**Motion**

Trustee Lewis made a motion to table the consideration of the 2023 Audit until September 17, 2025. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

**10. Christmas Celebration Work Session**

The Board discussed scheduling and logistics for the annual Christmas holiday event. While traditionally held on December 24th, concerns were raised about volunteer fatigue and late-night commitments. Staff noted that organizing

and advertising the event—including making popcorn balls or Rice Krispies—is manageable, but volunteer capacity is limited.

Trustee Montgomery offered to take the lead on planning the event and requested a budget. He proposed holding the event on December 24th at Crossan's. Staff approved a budget of \$355 and confirmed that Trustee Montgomery will coordinate the event.

It was requested that staff check Santa's availability for the evening. Sheila advised she will follow up and inform Trustee Montgomery. She also offered support and asked him to reach out if additional assistance is needed.

#### **11. Consent Agenda**

Trustee Montgomery asked for Item C to be removed from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

##### **Motion**

Trustee Lewis made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Item A, specifically the approval of the August 20, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes and Item B, Approval of July, 2025 Payment Approval Report. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

The Board received clarification regarding the opioid settlement item listed on the consent agenda. This settlement pertains to secondary manufacturers—generic drug producers—distinct from earlier settlements involving primary companies like Purdue Pharma. These new agreements are part of ongoing litigation and represent additional phases of the broader national opioid settlement process.

It was noted that the Town originally opted into the opioid settlement program approximately three to four years ago, with approval of the agreement from the Board at that time. The current item is an amendment to that original agreement, reflecting new settlements as they are finalized.

Some concern was expressed about the age of the original decision and the lack of context in the Consent Agenda. Staff advised that, if helpful, they can prepare a brief staff report to provide background and history on similar Consent Agenda items moving forward.

##### **Motion**

Trustee Lewis made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Item C, specifically the authorization of signature authority for Town Administrator/Clerk on New National Opioids Settlement: Secondary Manufacturers. Trustee Shoptaugh seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

#### **12. Staff and Board Member Reports/Updates/Requests**

Mary Alice provided updates on several key items:

- **Water Treatment Plant Financing RFP:** The request for proposals (RFP) for interim financing of the water treatment plant project is nearing its deadline, with two proposals received so far. The submission period closes tomorrow. Due to seasonal timing and the urgency of moving forward, a special meeting may be scheduled for next Wednesday to award the financing contract. If needed, this would be the sole item on that agenda, and further details will be shared once confirmed.
- **Construction Contract Review:** Bob Weiss was unavailable to review the contractor agreement for the treatment plant construction, so attorney Gerry Dahl was asked to step in. Gerry completed the review earlier today. His attorney-client engagement agreement will be included on the next meeting agenda for ratification.

- Trustee Montgomery inquired about the required bond amount for the treatment plant construction. Mary Alice confirmed that the Town requires a full performance bond. When asked why the bond amount wasn't set higher, she explained that the Town's attorney had not raised any concerns and that she would defer to legal review for any further adjustments.

Sheila provided updates on several key items:

- **Amanda** has been actively coordinating several community and operational initiatives. She partnered with the Moniker Foundation to facilitate the art-wrapped outdoor pantry box project, currently in production at Steamboat Sign Company and expected to be installed by October 1. Amanda also supported Kasey Ohalloran in organizing the return of the "Trick or Treat So Others Can Eat" event, with promotional materials scheduled for the September/October newsletters. In preparation for potential fire activity, she organized priority items for relocation and attended a CIRSA municipal risk management lunch in Silverthorne. Amanda completed all billing duties, continued caring for the Town's flower displays, and began exploring academic opportunities at Colorado Mountain College. She is preparing to enroll in the Clerks Institute beginning in July.
- **Cannon** attended the American Water Works Association Rocky Mountain Division workshop and is actively preparing for his wastewater certification, with plans to pursue collections and water distribution certifications thereafter. He has been assisting with tree maintenance at the water plant to help protect the facility and has received positive recognition from Scott Smith, the Town's Operator of Responsible Charge (ORC), and Ben Beall, the contracted Town engineer. Cannon's initiative and dedication continue to be a valuable asset to the Yampa team.
- **Greg** has taken brief time off for haying but remains committed to his duties. Road conditions are in excellent shape, and he is preparing for winter operations.
- **Community Engagement and Mitigation Planning:** Staff participating in the regional mitigation planning effort recently attended the Steamboat Farmers Market. A Yampa resident approached the team to express appreciation for the outreach and awareness efforts, highlighting the positive impact of community engagement.

**13. Scheduled Meeting/Work Sessions**

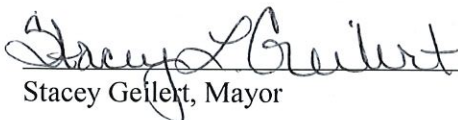
- a. Town Board and other requests for Agenda Items
  - i. September 17, 2025 @ 6:00 pm – Yampa Town Board Meeting
  - ii. September 24, 2025 – Planning Commission Meeting – (Tentative)

**14. Adjournment**

**Motion**

Trustee Lewis made a motion for adjournment. Trustee Geanious seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 pm.

Approved the 17th day of September 2025.

  
 Stacey Geffert, Mayor

Attest:

  
 Sheila Symons, Town Administrator/Clerk

