

November 19, 2025

Town Board: Mayor Kerry Barney, Kurt Sawyer, Gary Goble, Janell Barney

Staff: Carly Burrows, Tyler Mendenhall

Public: Russ Riggs, Ryker Ogden, Brett Burrows

1. Meeting Called to Order

Mayor Barney offered the opening prayer to begin the meeting at 7pm and Councilor Sawyer led those present in the pledge.

2. Approval of October, 2025 minutes

Councilor Barney approved the previous minutes, Councilor Goble 2nd the motion. The vote was unanimous.

3. Review October Invoices, checks & financial report/budget

Councilor Sawyer motioned to approve the financial report, Councilor Barney 2nd the motion. The vote was unanimous.

3.3 Extra monthly invoices for pickleball court

*See Pickleball Court update

4. Public Hearings

5. Petitions, Remonstrations and Communications

5.1 Pickleball Court update

Mayor Barney provided a detailed update on the pickleball court project. He stated that the court is nearly complete, with only a few minor tasks left. The final payment associated with the project will be just under \$10,000, and Mayor Barney mentioned he is about halfway through the paperwork necessary for its submission and potential grant reimbursement. Mayor Barney explained that the project exceeded its original budget, mostly because the initial budget did not account for excavation work and the need to resurface the court.

Councilor Sawyer then asked whether there had been contact with the grant authorities. Mayor Barney confirmed that there had, explaining that part of the grant paperwork involves reporting in-kind labor costs. He discussed how the reported amount for in-kind labor had increased, which could affect the reimbursement, and mentioned that understanding these details could inform how they approach future grants and labor reporting.

5.2 Water billing update

There was a discussion about correcting past water billing errors and the need for a detailed review of all accounts. The Town Clerk and Councilor Barney explained the complexity of this process, and the council authorized temporarily increasing administrative hours to address historical mistakes and reconcile accounts.

5.3 Water fee schedule

During the meeting, the council discussed implementing a new water fee schedule to address confusion and ensure fairness. Mayor Barney led the conversation, proposing to eliminate the “seasonal water account” category because it allowed some users (especially businesses) to avoid paying standard fees, which would unfairly shift costs to full-time residents. Instead, the group agreed to use clear definitions for “inactive” and “standby” accounts.

Under the new structure—supported by Russ Riggs, Councilor Sawyer, and others—any property with water service access, whether or not a meter is installed, will be charged at least the base standby fee (\$27.50 plus \$5 for fire service, totaling \$32.50). Only a few previously grandfathered accounts may get exceptions. The council agreed that this approach evens the financial burden and avoids loopholes.

They also discussed simplifying or reducing turn-on/shut-off fees and aligning overdue payment policies with state law, including filing property liens and sending unpaid accounts to collections after set periods.

In summary, the new water fee schedule clarifies account types and establishes consistent minimum charges for all properties with water access.

5.3 Building maintenance

During the meeting, the council addressed several city building maintenance needs. Mayor Barney led the discussion, noting that electrical work is needed in the city building. Plumbing issues were discussed, specifically toilets that are not flushing properly.

The council also discussed the deteriorating stucco on the building exterior. Councilor Sawyer remarked that the whole building, not just one area, needs re-stuccoing. Mayor Barney suggested that stucco repairs will likely wait until summer and should be part of future budgeting. The group agreed to keep seeking a stucco contractor and encouraged anyone with leads to reach out.

In summary, the town is prioritizing immediate plumbing and electrical fixes and planning for larger projects such as extensive stucco repairs as budget and resources allow.

5.5 Computer for clerk, quotes, and approval

During the meeting, the Town Clerk presented the quotes for computer and printer upgrades in the town office, sharing that several quotes had been requested but only Mountain West offered on-site installation. Their quote was \$2,366, Councilor Sawyer recalled that the council had previously approved spending up to \$2,500 on this upgrade. After discussing the benefits of using a reliable, local vendor and the value of a proper setup, the council agreed to proceed with the Mountain West proposal.

Councilor Sawyer motioned to approve the quote presented by Mountain West. Councilor Barney 2nd the motion. The vote was unanimous.

5.6 More hours and pay for staff

During the meeting, the Town Clerk and Councilor Barney explained that addressing years of billing errors and administrative backlogs required significantly more time than the current staffing arrangement allowed. To tackle the workload effectively, Mayor Barney proposed temporarily increasing the authorized hours for both the Town Clerk and the Treasurer to 20 hours extra per month at \$18 per hour for at least the next two months. Mayor Sawyer supported this suggestion, emphasizing the importance of resolving the existing backlog.

The Town Clerk discussed that most clerks in similar towns are paid hourly and agreed that moving to an hourly pay system—with time-cards and clear limits—would help maintain accountability. Russ Riggs and Councilor Sawyer disagreed because there was no way to track and maintain accountability using an hourly system. The Town Clerk pointed out that some weeks require more hours for necessary tasks like audits and training, and hourly pay would fairly reflect that effort.

The council agreed that if notable progress was achieved by the end of the trial period, the hours and pay arrangement could be reconsidered or extended. The group unanimously approved the motion to raise hours and pay for December and January to ensure billing and administrative reconciliation work could proceed efficiently. Councilor Barney left at 8pm.

Councilor Sawyer motioned to increase pay and hours for the next two months, Councilor Goble 2nd the motion.

6. Ordinances

6.1 Data Privacy Resolution

During the meeting, the council discussed data privacy responsibilities and compliance. They reviewed and prepared to sign a data privacy resolution, which included officially designating a records officer to ensure the protection of town records and privacy. The Town Clerk confirmed their certification as Records Officer, and Mayor Barney agreed to appoint the Town Clerk to this role. The Data Privacy Chief Administrative Officer was also identified as The Treasurer and is responsible for data privacy protection for town records. The group moved forward with the resolution and finalized appointments as part of ensuring proper data privacy procedures.

7. Report of Officers - boards - committees

7.1 Water Department - Water Usage

During the water usage report, Tyler Mendenhall informed the council that well 5 is at 667,000 gallons. He also updated the group on progress with Sunrise Engineering, stating that pot holing was conducted at seven locations in order to complete the lead and copper survey, which is expected to be finished and submitted to the state within the next two weeks. Tyler then moved the discussion forward to a proposal on water system upgrades.

7.1a Water System Grant/ report by Ensign

During the discussion on the water system upgrade grant, the council considered proposals to improve the town's water infrastructure. The group agreed they need a formal agreement with Ensign Engineering to apply for the grant. Ensign's representative assured the council that similar projects almost always secure funding, and in the unlikely event funding can't be found, the billing for services would be minimized. As part of the grant application process, Mayor Barney raised concerns about hiring Ensign Engineering, particularly focusing on whether the \$30,000 fee was justified. In response, Ryker Ogden explained that Ensign has relevant experience managing similar applications and confirmed the fee was a fixed cost for their services. Russ Riggs recommended the town should first prioritize resizing the main water pipes, with the addition of a new water tank being considered later if growth requires it. The council reached consensus to move forward with hiring Ensign Engineering and to begin the grant application focused on critical water system upgrades. There was agreement, led by Tyler Mendenhall and Russ Riggs, that the town should move ahead with the grant application, emphasizing the need to act quickly to secure the funding and fulfill engineering requirements. Consideration was also given to the anticipated timeline for processing the grant and executing the necessary engineering tasks.

Councilor Sawyer motioned to allow Ensign to pursue the water system grant after the formal agreement is signed. Councilor Goble 2nd the motion. The vote was unanimous.

7.2 Fire Department

7.3 Road Department

7.3a Walter's Road

The discussion about Walter's road dealt with a persistent problem where water runoff and mud from Walter's property are spilling onto town roads and neighboring properties. The town council and staff are frustrated because Scott Walter has repeatedly assured them, he would fix the issue, but has never followed through. Each time it rains or snow melts, the road becomes muddy, causing vehicles to get stuck, creating mud issues on town roads, and affecting the nearby properties.

The council recognized that the problem is made worse by the road's gradient and its alteration of natural water drainage patterns, especially after Scott requested the relocation of an irrigation ditch and the installation of a culvert. This change eliminated a water catchment, causing runoff to flow unchecked.

Several practical solutions were debated. Suggestions included placing gravel to redirect water or putting down large cement blocks possibly blocking Walter's access onto the town road until the issue is resolved. Some officials also discussed the possibility of charging Scott for the costs if the town has to step in and fix the problem themselves, as they believe the responsibility lies with him.

There was also consideration of the legal aspects, such as property rights, easements, and the town's role in enforcing responsibility for the problem's resolution. The discussion revealed some exasperation, with members saying they are tired of waiting for Scott to act, and reflecting on past concessions made to the Walters that may not have been in the best interest of the town.

7.4 Parks & Recreation-

7.4a Snowflake Lights

The council discussed the status of the town's decorative snowflake lights, which are used for the holiday season. Several concerns were raised about the poor condition of the lights, including old or incompatible bulbs and deteriorating wiring. Members noted that finding the correct replacement bulbs has become increasingly difficult, as most local stores no longer carry the necessary types.

Despite the general frustration over these challenges and the limited effectiveness of simply replacing the bulbs, it was acknowledged that the town is required to have the snowflake lights up because they will be featured on Garfield County's holiday display map. With new lights unavailable due to late timing and delivery constraints, the council concluded that they would have to make do—replacing bulbs where possible and using existing materials to ensure the decorations are in place for the holiday event.

7.4b December meeting

The council discussed whether to hold a formal December council meeting or to continue with their tradition of having a Christmas party in its place. It was noted that the December meeting had already been posted, but the group favored prioritizing the holiday event. Past parties were remembered positively as opportunities to bring together council members, planning and zoning, fire department, employees, and their families.

After weighing scheduling options and discussing who should be invited, the council agreed to proceed with the Christmas party instead of a typical business meeting. Councilor Sawyer was tasked with contacting Cowboys/ Perkins to confirm a suitable date for the event. The consensus was that hosting the party fostered community and was more meaningful than conducting a standard meeting for December.

7.5 Grants

7.6 Planning & Zoning Commission

7.7 Cemetery

The council received an update on the cemetery, reporting that new markers were installed—more than originally ordered—improving the mapping and organization of the site. The conversation noted the cemetery is now better managed, though

members briefly discussed whether to continue watering it or explore alternatives like drought-resistant landscaping or using rocks. It was shared that the well at the cemetery is occasionally used for watering. No immediate decisions were made about changes to watering or landscaping.

8. Public Input

At the end of the meeting, the discussion focused on feedback and suggestions regarding the posting and timing of meeting agendas. Russ Riggs emphasized the importance of meeting legal notice requirements and suggested that agendas be posted earlier to avoid missing the required window. There was also acknowledgment that recent meetings sometimes strayed from the set schedule, and members spoke about the need for better communication and timely responses to agenda drafts. The conversation had a collegial tone, with some humor about remembering past meetings. This segment served as the main public input and process feedback at the close of the meeting.

9. Unfinished or New Business

During unfinished business, the council revisited a previous topic about potentially incorporating the local gravel pit into the town's boundaries. The conversation addressed recent changes to state annexation laws effective in 2025, which make it so only property owners—not the town—can now initiate annexation. The group discussed how this affects their options, particularly concerning state trust lands and other private properties.

They noted that bringing the gravel pit into the town in the past could have allowed the town to collect taxes on gravel operations, but under current law, annexation of state-owned lands is only possible if the property is sold to private parties. The discussion referenced past annexations, like Riverside campground, and considered if similar actions are now less likely to benefit the town. Ultimately, the discussion clarified legal changes and concluded that annexation for additional revenue is limited unless circumstances with property ownership change.

10. Adjournment

Mayor Kerry Barney adjourned the meeting at 9:49pm Councilor Sawyer 2nd the adjournment.

