

March 18, 2026

Town Board: Mayor Kerry Barney, Kurt Sawyer, Gary Goble, Russell Riggs, and Grace Howard

Staff: Carly Burrows, Janell Barney, and Tyler Medenhall

Public: Kim Burrows and Brett Burrows

1. Meeting Called to Order

Kurt Sawyer offered the opening prayer and then led those present in the pledge. The meeting began at 7:02pm.

2. Approval of February 2026 minutes

Councilor Sawyer motioned to accept the previous minutes Councilor Goble 2nd the motion, the vote was unanimous.

3. Review Invoices, checks & financial report/budget

3.1 February

Councilor Sawyer motioned to approve the February financials and Councilor Riggs 2nd the motion, the vote was unanimous.

3.3 Extra Monthly Invoices

Treasurer Janell Barney stated that there were no extra monthly invoices.

4. Public Hearings

5. Petitions, Remonstrations and Communications

5.1 Review Council Positions

Council reviewed current assignments and clarified responsibilities:

- Water: Councilor Gary Goble will continue to be over the Water Department.
- Roads: Councilor Kurt Sawyer will continue to be over Roads.
 - Councilor Russ Riggs reported that he and Kurt have already met and exchanged all relevant road contact information, and he has begun working with those contacts.
 - Due to the anticipated workload and the upcoming UDOT highway project, Russ will assist Kurt with road responsibilities, and both will act as contacts when the road project begins.
- Parks & Recreation: Councilor Howard will be over Parks and Recreation.
- Grants: Kurt expressed interest in participating in grant work, and the council agreed that Kurt, Russ, and others will be involved in preparing and managing grants as needed, with the intention to continue handling as much of this work “in house” as possible.

No formal motion or vote was taken on these assignments, but there was general agreement of the council on the above responsibilities.

5.2 2026 Emergency response plan

All council members reviewed and signed that 2026 emergency response plan. Councilor Sawyer motioned to approve EOC 2026 Councilor Riggs 2nd the motion, vote was unanimous.

5.3 Blackburn Propane Lease

Council reviewed the existing 5-year lease with Blackburn Propane for the old Visitor Center property (approx. \$750/month, ~\$9,200/year). Council noted that Blackburn has cleaned up and improved the site and building, and that the lease provides useful revenue, but also discussed possible future uses or sale of parts of the property.

Russ favored renewing for another 5-year term with a clause allowing the town to sell all or part of the property, giving Blackburn 365 days' notice and reimbursing any applicable rent. Kurt suggested the town consider leasing only the area Blackburn occupies, leaving other portions available for potential sale or other uses.

Some residents would like to retain a Welcome Center/farmers market-type use at the site. Kerry will contact Blackburn about the fencing around the large propane tanks and confirm safety/code compliance. Carly will review the current lease and draft updated language (including a sale/exit clause) for future council consideration. No formal decision was made at this meeting.

6. Ordinances

6.1 Camping restriction ordinance

Council discussed that, although there are "No Camping" signs, the town does not currently have an ordinance prohibiting overnight camping on town streets or rights-of-way. Without an ordinance, the sheriff's office cannot enforce "no camping" when people park RVs or trailers along roads (e.g., in front of homes, at the gas station area, etc.).

It was noted that Hatch used to have such an ordinance, but it was dropped when the ordinances were re-done. Council generally agreed the town needs to reinstate/ adopt a camping restriction ordinance so that overnight camping on town streets and rights-of-way can be prohibited and enforced.

A draft camping restriction ordinance is already in the council packets. Council agreed that members will take the draft home, study it, and make notes. They anticipate:

- Reviewing and possibly revising the draft over the next meeting or two,
- Then posting it legally and holding a public hearing before adoption, as required.

No ordinance was adopted at this meeting; this item will return to a future agenda once everyone has reviewed the draft.

7. Report of Officers - boards - committees

7.1 Water Department - Water Usage

Water Report:

- Source status:

- Well #5 currently has 457,083 gallons
- Rural Water conference takeaway:
 - Tyler reported from the Rural Water meetings that a previous idea to require every town to coordinate their water systems has been dropped, which removed a major concern for many small systems.
- System performance (SCADA):
 - Gary noted that the SCADA system repairs completed last fall are holding up well and functioning properly, even through recent power bumps.

7.1.a. Moratorium on water connections for 2026

Council discussed concerns about adding new services to a strained water system and agreed to place a temporary moratorium on new culinary water connections. The moratorium is intended to stay in place for up to six months (or until additional information is received from Riker/Ensign about system capacity) and can be lifted earlier if warranted.

Councilor Sawyer moved to approve a six-month moratorium on new water connections; motion was seconded by Councilor Riggs and approved by the council.

7.1.b Water Master Job Posting

- Tyler Mendenhall announced he is resigning as the town's water operator and from Hatch Irrigation and will end his licenses for Hatch at the end of the month after completing the required reports.
- Tyler will train Gary Goble on how to take water samples, switch the system over to Well 4, and operate the SCADA system, and will finish the monthly report before he leaves. He also noted the Consumer Confidence Report will be sent by Rural Water and will need to be posted.
- Tyler will still be working in the Paunsgaunt Cliffs office and said he will remain available to help with water and irrigation as needed.
- The water operator position is posted, and council is waiting to see what applications come in. Several licensed operators in the area have indicated they could cover the operator role for a fee if needed, and the state is expected to work with the town during the transition period.

7.2 Fire Department

7.2.a. Fire rating- possible incentive for members

Council noted that the town's current fire rating is effectively a Class 10, which is similar to having no fire department and results in higher insurance premiums for residents within the Hatch fire district (including surrounding areas served by Hatch Fire). Strengthening the volunteer department and improving the rating was emphasized as a priority.

Council then revisited an earlier discussion about providing small incentives to recognize volunteer firefighters for consistent attendance at trainings and meetings. It was clarified that, although previously approved in concept, no incentives had yet been given. After discussion, council agreed to move forward with

an attendance-based incentive of \$45 gift cards, to be awarded periodically (e.g., quarterly) using existing attendance records as the basis. A motion to approve the \$45 attendance-based incentive for volunteer firefighters was made, seconded, and approved.

7.3 Road Department-

- Highway 89: Councilor Riggs reported that UDOT will widen Highway 89 on the west side through town this summer, adding a passing lane. The 100 West intersection will be rebuilt to meet the highway at a 90-degree angle, and the north town sign will be moved by UDOT's contractor.
- Water sleeve: Council discussed installing a sleeve under Highway 89 near Riverside Campground to allow a future looped water line, with an estimated town cost of about \$15,000-\$18,000 if the town supplies the pipe. No decision was made; the Clerk will check water/road fund balances for next meeting.
- Other items: UDOT will chip seal through town after construction; Russ asked them to fix shoulder drop-offs on the east side. He also requested a traffic/speed study for better enforcement, and will check with Garfield County about chip-sealing Mammoth Road and other town roads this year.

7.4 Parks & Recreation-

7.4.a Easter egg hunt

Council heard an update on the planned Easter egg hunt. Eggs will contain tickets instead of candy, and children can use tickets to make a small herb garden. There will also be a photo booth with baby bunnies, and older youth who help with the event will receive a \$10 prize. Estimated cost is up to about \$500, and the council agreed to proceed and later review whether the expense was worthwhile.

7.4.b Teen summer park employee

Council discussed rehiring Ruben and Xavier as summer park employees, starting around the end of school (late May). Their main duties will be basic maintenance, including keeping Main Street and the town park clean, and helping with tasks such as weeding and general upkeep. Council agreed to handle the summer staffing similarly to last year, and may involve them in projects like planting flowers in the stock tanks and assisting with pothole patching when weather permits.

7.5 Grants-

- During the council positions discussion, Kurt Sawyer said he would like to be involved in the "grant thing" (particularly related to roads), and Russ agreed that grants can be done in-house, with several council members (including Kurt and Russ) participating.
- Later, in Parks/Facilities discussion, Kerry briefly mentioned the idea of applying for a grant to build restrooms near the Blackburn/Welcome Center area. Russ cautioned that the town should focus on one major grant at a time, due to the workload and logistics, and no specific restroom grant application was initiated at this meeting.

7.6 Planning & Zoning Commission

Council discussed a request from a property owner to tear down an old house and eventually place a trailer/modular/single-wide on the lot. This raised questions about whether new trailer/single-wide rules are needed; Councilor Riggs noted the town already has zoning and trailer ordinances and that the main priority should be to enforce existing regulations.

Councilors Riggs and Goble also reported several long-vacant, deteriorated houses in town that may be fire or health hazards. Council agreed these blighted structures should be addressed in the future under existing nuisance/zoning powers, but no formal action was taken at this meeting.

7.7 Cemetery

Council briefly discussed needs at the cemetery, including the idea of getting volunteers to help with work there and installing a fence to keep prairie dogs out. The Town Clerk has been working with the US dept of fish and wildlife. They will be paying for the silt fence and installing it. Mayor Barney asked if the public would like to help in installing the fence, March 26th.

8.1 Public Input

Public input focused on signage and drainage issues. Kim Burrows requested that a sign by his property, which had been knocked down, be reinstalled. Residents also raised concerns about mud and water runoff from Scott's driveway and construction, which is affecting the street, a nearby water meter (causing a small sinkhole), and neighboring properties. The council discussed that Scott should be responsible for correcting the drainage issues and reaffirmed the need to enforce existing ordinances related to driveways, right-of-way work, and drainage. No formal motions were made.

9. Unfinished or New Business

10. Adjournment

Councilor Sawyer motion to adjourn, Councilor Riggs 2nd the motion, the vote was unanimous and the meeting was adjourned at 8:59pm