

Hatch Town Board Meeting July 15, 2026

Town Board: Gary Goble, Kerry Barney, Russ Riggs, and Kurt Sawyer

Staff: Carly Burrows, Janell Barney, and David Barnhurst

Public: Tony Dinges, Nikki Dinges, Pete Dinges, Damon Leonard, Misti Leonard, Dallas Barnhurst, Sarah Barnhurst, Duane Barnhurst, Brett Burrows

1. Meeting Called to Order

Mayor Kerry Barney called the meeting to order. Councilor Riggs offered the opening prayer and then led those present in the pledge. The meeting began at 7pm.

2. Approval of June 17, 2026 minutes

Councilor Riggs approves the minutes with one correction that the minutes reflect the approval of the zoning project, Councilor Goble 2nd the motion with the corrections, the vote was unanimous.

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

Councilor Sawyer motioned to approve the July invoices Councilor Riggs 2nd the motion, the vote was unanimous.

4. Public Hearings

4.1 Pete's fair animals

Pete requested a donation to support the lamb and goat he is raising for the fair, noting his prior grand and reserve champion showmanship awards. Councilor Sawyer approved a motion to donation \$150 per animal, Councilor Goble seconded the motion, the vote was unanimous.

4.2 Tony Dinges water connection (north)

Tony requested a new culinary water connection for his property at 85 East 300 North and discussed either using an existing unused two-inch meter (if not already effectively reserved/piped to Kade's property) or installing a new ¾-inch connection on his west property line. Because a water connection moratorium remains in place pending a definitive capacity determination from Ensign Engineering, no formal motion was taken, and the request will proceed only after written confirmation that additional connections are allowed.

4.3 Mayoral interviews and appointments

This item was moved to the end of the meeting where members of the council convened in an executive session at 7:45pm to address an error in the prior appointment term for Mayor Kerry Barney and to realign the mayoral term with the required odd-year election schedule. The clerk, after consulting with legal counsel and the state, explained that Kerry's 2024 appointment should have run only until the next eligible mayoral election in 2025 and that a special two-year mayoral election will be held in November 2027, returning the office to a standard four-year cycle beginning 2029. Two candidates, Kerry Barney and Russ Riggs, submitted their names for appointment to serve until that 2027 election. Following discussion about constituent input and the need for stability on the council, the council voted,

and Kerry Barney was selected to continue as mayor. The executive session was then closed at 7:55pm.

5. Petitions, Remonstrations and Communications

5.1 Hatch Town Emergency Operation Plan

The council reviewed the updated Hatch Town Emergency Operation Plan, noting that the revisions were limited to adding Chad Justus as a contact for the sheriff's department and including wildfire in the plan. Members present confirmed they had seen and were comfortable with the changes. Councilor Sawyer motioned to approve the plan and Councilor Riggs 2nd the motion, the vote was unanimous.

6. Ordinances

7. Report of Officers - boards - committees

7.1 Water Department - Water Usage

May water use was 1,453,000 gallons from Well #4, and June use was 1,705,000 gallons from Well #5. A leak on the town side of Russ Riggs' meter—caused by an improperly installed PEX compression fitting from 2005—was located and repaired; Russ excavated the site himself and will bill the town for three hours of excavator time. The department will inventory the shed and order additional meters and parts, including another two-inch commercial meter and more ¾-inch meters. A church meter reading error was also found: the meter had been read one decimal place off, making usage appear ten times higher; after cleaning and re-reading the meter, Russ and Janelle will work with the church to correct the billing.

7.2 Fire Department-

The council received an update on efforts to improve Hatch's ISO fire rating from 10 to a lower number, which would reduce insurance costs. The fire department has completed hose testing and met with the ISO representative, who requires three years of training and hydrant test records. The town plans to purchase a flow test meter (approx. \$600-\$700), expected to contribute significant points toward a rating improvement to around 9 in the near term, with potential to reach 6 or better over the next three years. The council also discussed testing hydrants in nearby subdivisions to support the rating effort and noted appreciation for the fire department's work, especially Jonathan's leadership.

7.3 Road Department-

There were no new road projects or issues reported. The council briefly discussed the upcoming UDOT project, noting that bids were awarded around July 4-6, and they expect UDOT to begin work within about a month, likely around August 1. No formal actions were taken regarding roads.

7.4 Parks & Recreation-

The council briefly reviewed the July 4th celebration, noting a relatively low turnout consistent with prior years and some leftover food, including bacon, which will be used for future meals. Preparations for the July 24th celebration are underway: roasts have been ordered (to be wrapped and placed in the pit the evening before), volunteers will be needed around 5:00 p.m. to season and wrap meat, and there will be a fun run, breakfast, dinner, pickleball tournaments, and inflatable

attractions for children. Leftover bacon will be used in the Dutch oven potatoes instead of cooking new bacon to reduce mess and waste.

7.5 Grants-

The clerk reported an update from Ensign: they are waiting to receive a date for when the town's grant-related item will be placed on the appropriate agenda. Ensign is also coordinating with Levi LaFevre and a BLM contact to secure a BLM lot needed for the project. No council action was taken beyond receiving this update.

7.6 Planning & Zoning Commission

7.7 Cemetery

The mayor reported ongoing prairie dog damage at the cemetery and surrounding properties and described coordination with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources: a representative from Salt Lake is scheduled to visit on August 12 to assess options. DWR has suggested obtaining a prairie dog removal permit for surrounding private property (primarily Barney land), naming 2-3 authorized shooters, and using sod to fill burrows to discourage re-digging. Council and public comments noted the infestation is now affecting roads and properties in town, and there was discussion of possibly seeking county or state-level help and using public/press attention if needed. The mayor is also pursuing help from Rick Miller to evaluate and repair the cemetery well and water system, though timing is uncertain due to his schedule.

8. Public Input

During public input, a Dallas Barnhurst commented that prairie dog problems have worsened significantly, noting they are now coming into town, including on the back street and at private homes. The resident recalled that Walters previously had a permit to eradicate prairie dogs and described it as effective. Council discussion acknowledged the severity of the infestation, including damage near roads and water infrastructure, and reiterated the need to continue current mitigation efforts and pursue additional help from state and county agencies if necessary.

9. Unfinished or New Business

10. Adjournment

Councilor Sawyer motioned to adjourn at 8:01pm and Councilor Riggs 2nd the motion, the vote was unanimous.