

01-13-2026 Town Council Meeting: 2026 Ordinances, Board Appointments, Budgeting, and Utilities

Key Points

- In attendance: Renee Collier, Pam Brown, Fred Schrader, Joshua Rinehart, Amy LaOrange, David Kurth, Lee Trippett, Ashley White, Peter Opdenkelder, Jim Bolen, Doug Reed, Pam Hiner and Christy Puczkowski

Meeting called to order at 6:01 PM on Tuesday, January 13, 2026; Pledge of Allegiance recited.

- Agenda included election of officers, pending items, old business, committee and board assignments, ordinance updates, scheduling, budgeting, personnel policy, rentals, utilities, and regular reports.
- Election of officers: Pam Brown elected Council President; Amy LaOrange elected Vice President (both motions carried 5-0). Nomination of Pam Brown to be council president was made by Amy LaOrange and seconded by Fred Schrader. Nomination of Amy LaOrange as council vice president was made by Pam Brown with the second coming from Fred Schrader
- TIF Board discussed: new legislative constraint that president/vice president cannot both be appointed by the same appointing authority; meeting frequency 1-2 times per year (late May/early June), budget meeting in July; typical meeting times 5:15-5:30 PM.
- TIF Board Committee: President appointees Amy LaOrange, Lee Trippett, Ashley White; standing roles Town Attorney Rebecca Trent and Clerk-Treasurer Renee Collier; Council-appointed residents David Kurth and Pam Hiner approved; ongoing effort to add a school board member.

President appointees Amy LaOrange and ~~Terry Allen~~ ^{Fred Schrader + resident Ashley White}, Council appointees residents Pam Hiner and David Kurth approved.

- Utility Board composition reaffirmed: Clerk-Treasurer Renee Collier, Council President Pam Brown, and Council Member Lee Trippett; no changes.
- Council President Pam Brown stated she will remain the IMPA Commissioner.
- Advisory Council on Small Town Affairs: Fred appointed; form submitted/faxed to Area Plan; term length discussed (agency standard 4 years; currently done annually).
Storm Water Board composition remains: Scott Robinson (WWTP Operator), Doug Reed (Public Works Superintendent), and Council President Pam Brown. Meetings as needed.
- Ordinance Committee: all Town Council members, department heads, Clerk Treasurer, Deputy Clerk (optional), and Pam Hiner and David Kuth tasked with reviewing/amending ordinances.
- White County Economic Development Board: meets monthly during lunch at the Highway Department; Council Member Fred Schrader appointed. Nominated by Amy LaOrange. Seconded by Joshua Rinehart. Vote 5 Ayes to 0 Nays.
- Park Board: No council Member will serve on board. 4-5 residents serve, reports to Town Council. Current members: David Kurth, Terry Allen, Pam Hiner, Linda Allen, Marcus King; recruitment of a new Park Board president discussed (current nominees unwilling); suggestions to post on Facebook and have temporary fill-in.
- 2026 holiday schedule approved (10 paid holidays): Memorial Day (Monday, May 25), Independence Day (Friday, July 3), Labor Day (Monday, September 7), Veterans Day (Wednesday, November 11), Thanksgiving (Thursday, November 26), Lincoln's Birthday observed (Friday, November 27), Christmas Eve (Thursday, December 24), Christmas Day (Friday, December 25), New Year's Eve (Thursday, December 31). Note: New Year's Day has already passed. Motion to approve it was made by CVP Amy LaOrange. Second, by Council Member Fred Schrader. Motion carries by a vote of 5 Ayes to 0 Nays.
- 2026 Town Council meeting schedule set: second and fourth Tuesdays monthly at 6:00 PM; Memorial Day week meeting moved from Tuesday, May 26 to Thursday, May 28; only first Tuesday meetings in November and December; special

37, public hearings posted at least 48 hours prior. Motion to approve given by CVP Amy LaOrange. Second, by Council Member Fred Schrader. Motion carries by a vote of 5 Ayes to 0 Nays.

- Ordinance updates under review: title change "Street and Utilities Operations Superintendent" to "Public Works Superintendent"; clarify Utility Clerk role (deputy clerk performs functions; maintain separate pay line); Code Enforcement Officer seasonal (May 1–Oct 31), paid from police salaries, up to \$6,000; remove MVH 10% funding allocation due to insurance; reallocate 10% to Water fund; council funding percentages unchanged (40% Electric, 20% General, 20% Wastewater, 10% Water, 10% Stormwater).
- Police coverage hours: Town Marshal and Deputy Marshals up to 30 hours/week coverage; deputies typically 20 hours/week; code enforcement officer hours May–October may bring combined coverage to 30 hours; consider adding Code Enforcement Officer to 30-hour clause for audit clarity; discussion included county marshal participation.
Salary ordinance updates: multiple changes pending (percentages and figures); effective after passage/publication with figures commencing January 1, 2026; prior payroll allocation issue noted; need to specify effective dates; \$0.50/hour raise for part-time/full-time discussed; unclear if budgeted/approved; historical budget figures cited; decision to table salary/budget reconciliation until next meeting; staff to compile fund-based percentages and totals (2024–2026).
- 2026 trash rate set at \$13.65; to be entered before billing.
- Personnel policy update: current policy dated 2016; to be scanned, verified, circulated for review/amendments; final approved version to be distributed with employee and supervisor acknowledgments; comp time vs. overtime policy to be defined in personnel manual (accrual, usage, rollover, tracking).
- Records retention initiative: goal to review all records by 12-30-26; storage solutions discussed (file cabinets; avoid ladder/overhead); consider digitization per SBOA requirements; potential volunteer involvement with updated forms.
- Legion rental agreement updates: refund handling (deposit original check, issue refund check to maintain paper trail); include clause for employee-run rentals (\$25 fee and paperwork required regardless of who runs it); alcohol policy requires renter to obtain appropriate insurance and provide proof prior to event;

refund). Town Attorney Rebecca Trent will work on updating.

- Compliance: upload audio-only recordings to YouTube when video is unavailable.
- Utilities and maintenance:
 - Wastewater plant: sludge de-watered; schedule sludge pumping; vendor options discussed (Flook likely; "Godlove" mentioned).
 - Waste Water Treatment Plant: early morning vehicle noted as Scott Robinson, WWTP Operator; keys required; walkthrough and flow test by Peerless; leaking valve on old equipment; pricing to be provided.
 - Weather preparedness for expected snow; salt/sand procurement now requires weighing/ticket process; price \$50/ton.
 - Legion building: ceiling work planned; electrical work starts next week; unsafe gas water heater to be replaced with small electric unit; removal scheduled for tomorrow; funded by Legion account; paint and repairs noted.
 - Tools procurement pending; funds available on card; notify before spending.
 - Vehicle: 2005 Ford F-250 worn; bearings replaced but squeal persists; consider replacement next year.

Volunteers for snow removal: Ron Brown and Council Member Fred Schrader assisted; waivers required.

- Minutes: December 10 minutes sent day after meeting; not all received/read; approval tabled; drafts to be posted.
- Claims: 1/13, 12/31 Bank 1, and 12/31 Bank 12 presented; total claims of \$75,546.66 approved (5-0). Motion to Approve made by CVP Amy LaOrange. Seconded by Council Member Josh Rinehart.
- Dues/memberships: AIM \$971; ILMCT \$82; IMEA disaster assistance dues historically \$500—will not renew; IMPACT \$50 + \$20 per additional person—no immediate approval; cell coverage solution to seek Bowser IT quote (prior \$125 booster approval noted but not executed).
- Travel expense: Deputy Clerk Treasurer Linda Herget's December travel (19 days, 10 miles/day at \$0.70/mile) totaling \$133; pending payment after informing board.

environmental compliance. Ken working on lead and copper environmental management report submission.

- Fire department: potential township consolidation for service discussed; changes may occur in 4-12 months; details forthcoming.
- Park updates: walking path open; torn flag removed; consider ordering a 250th Betsy Ross flag; recommend seasonal/condition-based flying; park flag likely lacks lighting; consider solar lights.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:33 PM. Motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Fred Schrader. Second, by CVP Amy LaOrange. Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 0.

Common Council Meeting Minutes for January 13, 2026

Clerk Treasurer

[Handwritten Signature]

Council President

Pamela S Brown

Yay or Nay Abstain

Council Vice President

Amy LaDress

Yay or Nay Abstain

Council Member

Lee Trappett

Yay or Nay Abstain

Council Member _____

Yay or Nay Abstain

Council Member _____

Yay or Nay Abstain

Signed this 2nd day of Feb, 2026