

Mayor

Doris Underwood

Commissioners

Christopher Carlson

Edward Lowery Jr.

Daniel McColl

Tony McVickers

Benjamin Mahaffey

Attorney

Sarah Price



Town Clerk/Finance Officer

Raymie Day

Utility Clerk

Lana Penfield

Interim Chief of Police

John Micheals

Public Works Director

Joe Penfield

Code Enforcement Officer

Tina Odom

TOWNHALL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES June 17rd, 2025

Overview

- **Internal control policy** and ARPA compliance updates discussed; 45 days to address missing items
- **Approval for new computers** and Signarama vinyl work for Town Hall/Police Department approved and are to be added as a consent item
- **Grant planning**: need clear vision and department lists for future needs
- **Trash, water, and sewer rates**: detailed discussion on increases, annual escalators, and profitability
- **Commercial and out-of-town rates**: proposals for higher increases and annual escalators
- **Police department consultation**: discussion on hiring, consulting contracts, and part-time officer status
- **Emphasis on long-term planning** and financial sustainability for the town

NEW

Police Department Consult

- Police chief recruitment consultant fee: \$5,000 for search, \$16,000/year for consulting (includes audits, budget assistance, policy review, budget help, recruitment).
- Consulting firm guarantees chief candidate with potential; recommends new hire be required to perform specific duties within a 30–90 day evaluation period followed by reevaluation.
- Discussion on converting part-time officers to 1099 status to save on benefits.
- See secondary minutes created from this meeting for more detailed information.

ARPA Compliance & Internal Controls

- Larissa from DEQ reviewed ARPA compliance, not a formal audit.
- Identified missing documentation; 45-day deadline to resolve.
- Internal control policy required, similar to a job description.
- Draft policy created; feedback requested before submission.
- Six compliance items total; internal control policy is a main priority.
- Board approves the internal controls.

IT Upgrades: Computer Quotes & Approvals

- Current computers are outdated and unreliable; frequent crashes and freezes reported.
- Netcom (Glenn) provided a quote for new, Windows 11-compatible computers.

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- New computers will be compatible with future needs; no replacement of other hardware planned.
 - Netcom is the current IT provider and previously assisted with QuickBooks setup.
 - Discussion on whether additional quotes are needed; board members expressed no objections.
 - Board approves purchase of the new office computers.

OLD

Signarama Vinyl Work for Town Hall & Police

- Signarama provided the quote for vinyl work on police department and town hall doors/windows.
- Perforated vinyl will be used; offers partial privacy, especially at night; additional tint can be added for more privacy.
- Designs include police shield, gold color, white lettering, address, and non-emergency number;
- mock-ups were provided to signarama.
- Final mock-up review available after deposit.
- Concerns raised about old car tint damaging glass if not removed.
- Board approves moving forward with the signarama work on the building.

Grant Planning & Long-Term Vision

- Grant application process for Parkton discussed with COG representative (Darrin Locklear).
- COG requires a detailed list of long-term (10–30 years) needs for town hall and departments before researching suitable grants.
- All commissioners were requested a list to submit comprehensive future needs, including space, staffing, and facilities. (e.g., drive-through window, conference room, maintenance office) for their department.
- Combining town hall, police, and public works may improve grant eligibility.
- Decision on facility combinations and future requirements needed before proceeding.

Trash rate increases

- Trash fee set at \$16/month since 2020; contract cost is \$5,145 for 350 customers (avg. \$14.70/customer).
- No profit currently made on trash service due to debris pickup and contract terms.
- Recycling is mandatory for all residents; each must have at least one trash and one recycling can.
- No option for residents to opt out of recycling or select a la carte service; must maintain bundled service.
- Potential trash fee increase discussed due to rising costs and need to break even or generate revenue.
- Proposed rate increase conclusion is set at \$2.00 per can with a \$.50 increase per year.
- Discussed raising trash and recycling fees by **\$2 per can** immediately.

- Considered implementing **annual automatic increases** (e.g., **\$0.50 per can** each July) to keep up with costs.
- Referenced other towns using **2% annual increases** without board approval.
- Explored limiting septic tank pump-outs to every **36 months** to generate **\$120–\$360 per customer**. Lana stated this was not a great idea and did not recommend following through with this change.
- Emphasized need to review contracts and set policy for future increases to maintain profitability.
- \$2 immediate increase with a 2% annual increase each July to be approved as a consent item at the July 1st, 2025 meeting.

Water and Sewer Rate Increases

- Last water rate increase occurred in 2016.
- Board discussed raising water rates by \$2 due to economic recovery and financial necessity.
- Proposed 5% increase for in-town water and sewer rates.
- Sewer base rate to increase by \$2.
- Annual 2% increase suggested for both water and sewer rates.
- Out-of-town water rates proposed to increase by 10%.
- Cost increases driven by chemicals, maintenance, and need for savings.
- Proposed annual rate increases: **3% for commercial, 10% for out-of-town** accounts.
- Commercial sewer base rate discussed: options include **\$3.00, or 25% increase**.
- Church rates to stay the same as residential.
- School accounts excluded from changes; Their current rate is **\$108 per 10,000 gallons**.
- Rate changes to be voted on in public forum; effective for **July billing (for June services)**.
- The following rate increase is to be added to the consent agenda for July 1st, 2025.

ITEM	IMMEDIATE INCREASE	YEARLY
In Town Water	5%	2%
In Town Sewer	\$2.00 (5% per tiers)	2%
Out of Town Water	10%	3%
Commercial In Town Water	10%	3%
Commercial In Town Sewer	\$3 (25% per tiers)	3%

Maintenance Shop Updates

- No proposals/info have been returned to Tina as of now.
- Proposal to contract for temporary office/shed with window unit for cooling.
- No resolution created. Item to be added to old business.

Marquee Sign

- Commissioner McColl requested Commissioner Lowrey to obtain three bids for a new marquee sign to be presented at the next meeting.

May 6, 2026

Re:

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- Concerns raised about lack of recent town improvements and need for increased revenue to avoid financial shortfalls.

Action Items

Commissioner List Request

Each commissioner to create a list of needs/wants for a new town hall. Requested to consider growth of the town in the next 20/30 years.

Computer and signorama order

Raymie to complete the computer and signorama orders.

Submit Internal Control Policy

Raymie will send the signed internal control policy to Larissa at DEQ for ARPA compliance review.

Prepare Rate Increase Documentation

Lana to draft documentation for proposed trash, water, and sewer rate increases, including annual escalators for the July 1st, 2025 Town Hall Meeting.

Add Rate Increases to Agenda

Lanas proposed rate increases and annual escalators will be added as a consent item for the 1 July, 2025 Town Hall Meeting.