

Stevensville Town Council Meeting Minutes

for THURSDAY, OCTOBER 09, 2025, 6:30 PM 206 Buck Street, Town Hall

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mayor Michalson called the meeting to order, Councilmembers Bragg, Barker, Brown and Smith were all present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comments (Public comment from citizens on items that are not on the agenda)

Jenelle Berthoud: I have two emails that were received by email.

Sue Devlin: is that correspondence?

Jenelle Berthoud: no this is public comment.

Councilmember Brown: point of order. That should be under the minutes shouldn't it.

Jenelle Berthoud: no, the email stated that he wanted this read under public comment. (Jim Crews: public comment via email, 10/9/2025 @ 4:53 pm. Public comment (2) was read by Jenelle Berthoud, Town Clerk.) (public comments have been added to the end of these minutes.)

Mayor Michalson: it has been suggested to move new business item (a) in front of item 4.

Councilmember Smith: I move to move 7 ahead of 4.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd.

Mayor Michalson: motion and a 2nd. Discussion from the council? Public comment? Seeing none, Jenelle please take the vote.

Councilmember Bragg: aye.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Michalson: passes 4-0

7. New Business

a. Discussion/Decision: Dickerson Park (6th Street Park) as a Community Garden

Mayor Michalson: introduced new business item a. Discussion/Decision: Dickerson Park (6th Street Park) as a Community Garden.

Councilmember Brown: I would like to make a motion to table this, I have talked to some of the people where the park is and I also talked to Ken. Actually, we are not quite ready to bring this to council I would like it to be moved to like the first council meeting in February. So that Ken has time to get with the neighborhood over there we did bring that point up during the Park Board meeting that the residents needed to be notified they needed to be talked to, we have the problem on how the water was going to be handled, can we put a meter on that, who is going to be in charge of it. Yes, one person in the audience cleaned up the last community garden and it was a mess, tires over there for growing potatoes, next person just through them aside. I think this is a good idea and I think if we can come together and discuss it and probably work some of these problems out, things might be better.

Councilmember Smith: 2nd.

Mayor Michalson: motion and a 2nd to table this until a later time. Discussion from the council?

Councilmember Barker: I did take a drive over there, and walked that area, I did not know where the park laid, I had always heard of the Dickerson Park, but I was never really fully aware there is no fencing along the one house that is there, it just goes strictly to the back. I think that it is a great idea, however I do have to agree that we need to look a little more into it. I did come to town hall asking about water and how many gallons of water was being used on there and I found out that we did not even know that there was not a meter on there. Gina said that she did not realize that it was being watered as much as it was. I think that we do need to look into it a bit more and figure out and do some research on how other community gardens are doing this. Missoula, Thompson Fall, Plains, I know that some of them do charge fees and of course we want to make it more community and give back to the community, and I understand that. I think that there a lot of different scenarios that we need to look at before we make a decision.

Mayor Michalson: any other comments on tabling this? You said the first meeting in?

Councilmember Brown: first meeting in February. That will be about the time people we start to think about gardens again and when people are starting to plan, there are a lot of ideas out there. It can be, I am hoping that it can be something that people can come together and work around and have some better information for the residents there.

Mayor Michalson: motion and a 2nd. Council discussion? Public comment?

PUBLIC COMMENT

Karen Wandler: provided public comment to the council, town clerk. (public comments have been added to the end of these minutes.)

Sue Devlin: Stacie when you went there today I took out a tape measure, and the actual access is between thirteen and fifteen feet. There are personal property yards that I think will be trampled. Again, thirteen to fifteen feet wide are people going to single file.

Councilmember Barker: it seemed that it was wider, so I am going to assume that there is an easement.

Sue Devlin: correct, I took it from the fence to that bush which is basically the property line. It is just not accessible, it is a great idea, and I don't think that it is feasible.

Ken Scrivner: I want everyone to know that I appreciate your concerns, I understand the logistics of a project this size. We are not dead set on that park it was just a convenient place. We look forward to working these details out, I did not even know that the school would be a place. That would be a wonderful option and would love to sit down and work through the logistics. Our desire is to give back to the community. All of the building of the raised beds would be done by us all of the labor done by us. We want to be a part of the process, and we want the community to be involved as much as possible. We are doing forward motion.

Councilmember Bragg: I have a question, it was mentioned in here about lots, would you have the garden be for everyone and not give private lots, or would there be private spaces. I do not know much about community gardens.

Ken Scrivner: upfront I can tell you about conversations that I have had with other people that I have been discussing this with, and I feel that the garden is for who wants to commit to it, ultimately it is our responsibility. The goal is to plant enough to contribute to the single moms, low income, food bank, and then the people that are contributing to it. I would personally not take any unless there is something left

over. I know that there are people like that, they want to do the work. I know of people that run huge gardens on their own property and there is a lot of skills already. The goal is to start a process forward and be a part of our community and then a conclusion that we can all agree on. If we get all of the buy in, we have a homeschool co-op and other groups in our church and that is 150 people already between the co-op and the church that are potentials, and that is before talking to anyone else in the community, that is potentially 200 plus people.

Councilmember Smith: has this been presented to the FAA or the 4-H club?

Ken Scrivner: never crossed my mind it is a great thought. Would love to have more of this conversation outside of this, I live on 6th Street, camper in the driveway. This is not until next spring; I am all on board and letting this take its natural course. I would be the leader or oversight of the project and some other gentlemen from the church. We have a small board already set up and

Question from the audience: as far as the watering, the watering system at the park is automatic sprinklers I am not aware of any water spicket in the park.

Ken Scrivner: there is one, and it is close enough for a hose. We would provide all of the labor, all of the hoses. Just a start on an idea, more than egg on to discuss possibilities. There is a whole lot across the street from our church that is empty I contacted the person through email, and I have never heard back, it has water and a meter on it already, it would be a good location, would put up a fence, just not sure how to get a hold of the person that owns it. Any questions please contact me, Wally, Stacie, Bob and these ladies all know how to get a hold of me.

Mayor Michalson: any other comment on tabling it. Seeing none, Jenelle please take the vote.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Councilmember Bragg: aye.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Mayor Michalson: passes 4-0

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Special Town Council Meeting Minutes 09/23/2025

Mayor Michalson: introduced special town council meeting minutes 09/23/2025.

Councilmember Barker: I make a motion to approve special town council meeting minutes 09/23/2025.

Councilmember Brown: 2nd.

Mayor Michalson: motion and a 2nd. Council discussion? Public comments? Seeing none, Jenelle please take the vote.

Councilmember Bragg: aye.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Michalson: passes 4-0

b. Town Council Meeting Minutes 09/25/2025

Mayor Michalson: introduced town council meeting minutes 09/25/2025.

Councilmember Barker: I make a motion to approve town council meeting minutes 09/25/2025.

Councilmember Bragg: 2nd.

Mayor Michalson: motion and a 2nd. Council discussion?

Councilmember Brown: on the top of page twenty-three you have Barker voting twice and I would have had to abstain, because I was on vacation. And yes I did notice on page 33 that the comments from Pat Groninger were all cut short.

Mayor Michalson: any further comments from the council? Public comments?

PUBLIC COMMENT

Comment from the audience: did you address Jim Crews' letter concerning statements about him.

Mayor Michalson: it was noted. Any other comments from the public? Seeing none, Jenelle please take the vote.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: no

Councilmember Smith: no.

Councilmember Bragg: aye.

Mayor Michalson: 2-2, I will not break the tie, motion fails.

5. Approval of Bi-Weekly Claims

a. Claims #19947-#19981

Mayor Michalson: introduced bi-weekly claims #19947-#19981.

Councilmember Smith: I move to approve claims #19947-#19981.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd.

Mayor Michalson: motion and a 2nd. Council discussion?

Councilmember Barker: #19952 starter for the sweeper. And then there is a credit right below it. Missoula Motor Parts Company, starter for the sweeper. We just got the sweeper, isn't this the one that we just purchased?

Mayor Michalson: correct, they used it one time and then the starter went out on it. We had used it a couple of times.

Councilmember Barker: why is there a credit underneath it.

Gina Crowe: that is a credit for Missoula Motor Parts, they are the ones that gave us the credit on the starter. What we do when they put a credit on the account we credit it back to that invoice.

Councilmember Barker: #19967 Greg Overstreet, I see a couple of different things in here, line items regarding Councilmember Smith for \$528.00 and another one for Jim Crews for \$247.50. the airport litigations, is that the one that we just went over recently.

Mayor Michalson: yes. Do you want to speak to the ones about Wally and Jim, Gina.

Gina Crowe: I am sorry what did you say.

Councilmember Barker: what are these in regards to.

Gina Crowe: the one with Councilmember Smith, he reached out to the attorney to find out if the mayor could start litigation on the airport, he had to do his research

and send out his opinion and there was a charge for that. The same with the emails from Jim Crews back and forth, that took time, and he charges us for that.

Councilmember Barker: my question was I thought that we had a protocol set in place for when councilmembers were able to contact the towns attorney and I thought it was to go through our council president and then to our mayor for referral, did that process happen?

Mayor Michalson: no, it didn't.

Councilmember Smith: in this case, with me how did I.

Mayor Michalson: you asked me and sent me an email. You wanted to know if I had the authority to do the lawsuit on the airport, I got an opinion from Greg and I have a clear right to do. And we gave you that opinion.

Councilmember Smith: to answer Council Barkers question, the mayor sent it over to the attorney not me.

Councilmember Barker: thank you, that is what I wanted to know.

Mayor Michalson: he asked the question, and I got an opinion from Greg, he sent that to you right?

Councilmember Barker: I appreciate that, thank you.

Councilmember Brown: starter for the sweeper, is that back in service now, it is leaf time. 19978, Glen which is an ongoing thing that I understand but my biggest concern or question is are we any closer to having them certified at the water and sewer plant. Completely certified.

Gina Crowe: the certifications are really hard to get; Montana Rural Water has been working with our guys on test tactics to work on that. So, it is very difficult, and some people are really good test takers, and some aren't. and it is not just the test; there is experience needed as well.

Councilmember Brown: I was just wondering if we are getting closer.

Gina Crowe: that is hard for me to say, that would be a Steven thing, I know that they are working on it.

Mayor Michalson: I think that there is a training class coming up in November.

Councilmember Bragg: it is under #19975, pool and well field, what is that.

Mayor Michalson: it is the utilities, Northwestern, pump house and well field. Any other comments from the council? Public comment? Seeing none, Jenelle please take the vote.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Councilmember Bragg: aye.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Mayor Michalson: passes 4-0

6. Administrative Reports

a. Airport

Brian Germane, Airport Manager: report provided in the packet. Maintenance, wrapping up mowing now, just cleaning up around taxi lights. Changing over to plowing. One broken taxi light that we need to order parts for. On Wednesday of last week, we discovered that our phone lines had gone down, one of them is critical to the weather station and one is for the fuel tank, credit card processor. CenturyLink did not communicate an outage and never indicated what had happened, but the lines were repaired and back up and running by mid afternoon on Thursday. May have been related to the eastside highway work that is going on. CIP projects, I know that I have said in past meetings that the FFA has been extremely slow with issuing the grant paperwork. The fuel farm is moving along, and notes have been reviewed and first set of comments have been given to the contractor. The asphalt project, it looks like we are going to miss our window for the asphalt maintenance this year, the contractor is still trying to get out here before the end of the month to do the crack repair. Look at spring of 2026. They have agreed to hold their pricing and there will be no cost to the town. We have not received any of the grant funds yet, they are really behind and poor communications. Fuel for September 2585 gallons sold, this fiscal year 8066 gallons. Another 4000 gallons were ordered. We are expecting to see the sales fall off over the next 4-6 weeks. Lease information, US Forest Service did not have to do their lease agreement this year. Lastly, new draft plan is nearly complete and as soon as I have that I will get that over to Jenelle so that she can distribute to everybody. A lot of focus on generating revenue and a lot of community involvement up watching the skydiving and coming up to watch the airplanes, so we are looking at a community viewing area at the airport.

b. Building Department

Report provided in the packet.

c. Finance

Gina Crowe, Finance Officer: report provided in the packet. First off we passed the budget on September 25, 2025, and we received a call from the state on September 30th stating that our budget was due on 1st of October, so, we thought that it was October 15th, but it was October 1st. we got that in on time and they were happy to see that, and you can view that online, any budget from any municipality at this website mtlgsb.my.site.com you can find our budget there. You have three reports one is the cash report with the available funds, and everyone looks good right now. If you go to the second page you will see a negative \$62,000 under the airport that was the payment for the new fuel tank the FAA did send us a reimbursement for \$59375.00 and then Montana Aeronautics will be sending us the remaining amount so there is no net cost to the town on that. If you go to the expenditure report budget versus actual there are two reports one is for the general fund, and everything is looking good as far as budget goes. If you look at the next report it has all of the other funds under planning there is a negative amount and that is because before we passed the budget part of the salaries were coming out of the planning fund, and that has been corrected since we printed this report. As far as everything else goes it looks like it is going along pretty good. Being that we passed the budget, it is approved to order the server and as soon as that comes HDR and First Call will be working on getting that installed at the wastewater.

Councilmember Brown: thank you Gina for bringing this report and putting it with the agenda package, is there a chance that we can get one monthly.

Gina Crowe: yes, every month.

Councilmember Brown: thank you so much. Wonderful, thank you.

d. Fire Department

Jeff Motley, Fire Chief: report provided in the packet. We have three brand new students taking EMT classes, they are up there right now. Tuesdays and Thursdays, between here and the district and will be done by the first of the year. I did mention that we were successful in our radio grant, we will be getting together with the other two departments, four all together, the town, rural, Florence and Sula. We will get together with all of the participants of the grant, and we will start hammering out which radios we want and who gets what. We should be somewhere in that

budgeted grant match in the budget. We have been approached by Corvallis Fire; they would like to donate their 1995 ladder truck and that would replace our 1985 ladder truck. They had it listed for \$30,000 for the last nine months. If they gifted it to us we would look at doing the same. Depending on Corvallis' board, this month's meeting will be a determining factor and giving that to the town. It would be good for the town, ours still does work but it is due for some repairs. It would be a nice move for us, and we can accommodate it. If they need it is easy to us for mutual aid.

e. Police Department

John Boe, Police Chief: report provided in the packet. I would like to thank Mr. Newsom of Newsom Towing he fixed one of our police cars that had a flat tire free of charge. Our newest officer has completed his 12-week field training and now he is in the shadow phase, and he is on evenings, I should be out there with him, but I need to give my report.

f. Public Works

Report provided in the packet, Stephen Lassiter, Public Works Supervisor is out sick today.

Mayor Michalson: Steve is off sick today. I will report that the street sweeper was out on Main Street before Scarecrow Festival and on Spring Street. They fixed a leak that was detected on Pine Street. There are three more leaks in town that they are going to be tackling that were found by leak detection.

8. Board Reports

Councilmember Barker: P&Z Board Meeting was last night; I was not in attendance, but I was excused. I heard that it went well. There is an open house on 10/22/2025 we encourage the public to come in and ask questions and that is progressing quiet rapidly and I am excited with what we are putting together for everybody.

9. Town Council Comments

Councilmember Barker: I want to give a shout out to the Scarecrow Festival. I actually did not attend Friday night, but I was down there on Saturday, and it was still very well attended and the crew that put that together did an amazing job especially for the 20th Anniversary, from what I was told were over the top Friday night and families came out in hordes and at a quarter to nine the town was still hopping. The sculpture in the park is amazing hope you get a chance to look at that. She did an amazing job.

10. Executive Report

Mayor Michalson: on 9/30 I had a meeting online with Ross Miller and Jared Bean regarding our water rights. Next week I will be attending the fall conference regarding MMIA which I serve on the board of directors, in Billings Tuesday through Friday, Councilmember Brown will be the acting mayor in my absence. Gina will also be going down there as well. I would like to thank the Scarecrow Festival I was lucky enough to do the DJ work on Friday and Saturday, it was one of the best experiences that I have ever had since I have been in Stevensville; to see over 100 kids and their parents line dancing in the rain, it was a lot of fun. Saturday night at 9:30 they were still dancing. Loey Knapp told me they had between 5,000-7,000 people that went through there. Lastly, I put out some campaign flyers and put the wrong number on them, I put the mayor phone number on them which I cannot do. I want to thank Jim Crews that notified me and let me know that I cannot do that. I got a hold of political practices, and I want to give a shout out to Jim Crews for coming forward to give me the blessing to say I was wrong. And when I am wrong I admit it.

11. Adjournment

Councilmember Smith: motion to adjourn.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd.

APPROVE:



Bob Michalson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jenelle S. Berthoud, Town Clerk

RECEIVED
10/9/25

4:33pm via email

Public comment regarding Council Minutes for September 25, 2025 Town Council Meeting and Mayor's Letter to the town.

To be read into the record during public comment on anything not on the agenda during the October 9th Town Council meeting.

Mayor Michalson, you have spread false intelligence in your September 30th, Mayor's Campaign Letter in the Bitterroot Star, 10th paragraph.

In the letter as printed by the Bitterroot Start you stated, "My opponent has indicated an intention to fire all town employees if elected.

I almost fell off chair when I read the statement. It is an immoral act and unlawful to do what you suggest.

It simply is not true. You have spread this misinformation in my opinion to poison the minds of the citizens of this town and the employees. Do you not realize that doing such a deed could be considered Political Terrorism. Trying to coerce town employees and citizens with an untrue statement about someone who cannot even stand in front of the council to defend themselves!

Why would you do that?

I am absolutely ashamed of my town government for attacking someone who cannot even stand before the body and counter the claim. You are an appointed Mayor. You took an Oath to the State and US Constitutions. You have a legal obligation to obey state and local law.

Have a great day.

Jim Crews

RECEIVED
10/9/25
4:53pm
via email

Public comment regarding the content of the Minutes of the Council meeting on September 25, 2025,

Mayor Michalson made the comment during the introduction of Montana Rural Water Systems about the opposing candidate in the upcoming Mayor's Election that is untrue. This needs to be retracted by the mayor and a correction to the minutes should be made and published for the public. I would not approve these minutes tonight as they are not complete.

The mayor made a false and misleading comment in the recording at about 18 minutes to the extent of the following:

"So there has been a lot of misconception, a lot of concerned citizens and we all know since we raised the water rates last August, uh there's been a lot of stuff flying around everywhere and I will just come out and say it. There is an election going to happen in a few weeks and the other candidate is running on lowering water rates. So just going to lay out the facts out here and the let the public decide for themselves." I think you should publish a written apology in the paper for what you did.

Mayor Michalson, you used a public building, time and other resources to push your own campaign. And never once did you make an attempt to contact me to find out the real truth. My platform is published. I am not going to say it here. The purpose of the comment is to show the public how the mayor misuses town resources.

Secondly, you allowed a former mayor to speak and spread gossip and inuendo along with misinformation using a public venue and then the minutes tonight have been trimmed so as to eliminate part of his comments. I want the minutes to be corrected to show what was actually said. The audio is clear and this is what was said:

The speaker admitted it was hearsay but he said he was going to say it anyway. The comment made was "there's going to be a lot of people getting fired."

Well, there you go, a mature responsible adult telling folks how to act while repeating false information, rumors and gossip and it appeared to be used to push a political agenda. Where he came up with that piece of illegitimate intel is beyond me.

You can hear it for yourself at about 43 minutes into the meeting. You can watch that video at the following web address: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_AGMXIUQG&t=2448s

Shame on you Mr. Groninger, and shame on you Mayor Michalson for making and allowing political speeches and comments to be made during a council meeting especially when the information is not true.

Jim Crews

RECEIVED
10/9/25
@Town Council
meeting

To the Mayor and City Council in Stevensville, MT

We request that the City Council and Mayor consider the following issues BEFORE approving a Community Garden in the Dickerson Park:

- 1) Water issues – There is currently a water line to support the parks automatic sprinkler system that the city pays for. A meter should be installed to bill the users of the park for the personal usage of the garden. Who would pay for it. The citizens of the town should not be billed for this private use.
- 2) No parking is available except at residents homes. Excess traffic on a 1 way street.
- 3) Who would manage and supervise?
- 4) From our prior issues with the community garden:
 - a) Clients neglected their spot shortly after planting.
 - b) Theft, fights over invasion of space, invasion of weeds and neglect of individual lots (people not taking care of their lot).
 - c) Water problems – Watering on specific sites and neighboring sites have different watering needs.
- 5) An eight foot fence would need to be installed for deer control. Who would purchase needed materials, install and maintain this fence. The garden would attract MORE deer to the neighborhood that is already deer burdened.
- 6) Currently the only right of way access is between 308 and 310 6th street. It is small and facilitates letting the city enter the park with a riding lawnmower.

We request that this proposal be denied .

We also suggest that an agreement be presented to the Stevensville School System to use school property for a Community Garden. This would benefit the FFA and the entire community.

Respectfully

Don Wandler & Karen Wandler

Don and Karen Wandler
311 Sixth Street
Stevensville, MT 59870