

Stevensville Special Town Council Meeting Minutes

for MONDAY, FEBRUARY 02, 2026, 6:30 PM 206 Buck Street, Town Hall

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mayor Crews called the meeting to order. Councilmembers Bailey, Ross and Smith were all present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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

NONE

4. New Business

a. Interviewing of Town Council Applicants for Ward 2

Mayor Crews: we have two applicants tonight the council can choose who they would like to interview first. We have a set of questions that you are going to ask, please, because we have two applicants please do not deviate from the questions.

Councilmember Smith: what?

Mayor Crews: do not deviate from the question, if you ask one a question you have to ask the second, if you stick with the plan you won't have to worry about the second applicant. Who would council like to interview first?

Councilmember Smith: we can go by alphabet or by chivalry.

Mayor Crews: does that mean that you want to interview Ms. Wandler first?

Councilmember Smith: if she wants to go ladies first.

Mayor Crews: the way that we will do this, you will need to go out and wait, because you cannot be privy to the questions.

(Karen Wandler was interviewed first.)

Councilmember Smith: Wanda, Tell us about yourself, your qualities, or special talents and why you are applying for the Town Council.

Karen Wandler: I was born and raised in Stevensville and probably one the oldest citizens in town, I worked for the forest service for 37 years and retired I am married going on 60 years, have three children. I am running for city council because I interested to see the change that is going on in Stevensville and I would like to be a part of it, I have seen a lot of changes in Stevensville and I am real glad that we have

new blood on the council it is not part of the political era that has gone on before and I will be anxious to work with any of you and be a part of our small town in Montana.

Councilmember Ross: Have you discussed with family and friends about becoming a council member and about the time and commitment that the position can require.

Karen Wandler: yes I have, I was on council before, I stepped in when someone quit and my husband encouraged me to put in for it I would like to be a part of the change coming up in Stevensville. The reason that I put in again was I got a lot of people asking me to put in for it because of my performance last time on the council.

Councilmember Bailey: What do you hope to accomplish as a councilmember.

Karen Wandler: I would like to see things become more even again and it is a good opportunity now because Jim is aware of laws and regulations. When I was on the council before we had a couple of runs about that, he does it. This council is going to be the ones that change this whole situation around.

Councilmember Smith: As a councilmember, how do you plan to involve our residents in the decision process?

Karen Wandler: I like to walk around town, I like to talk to people, I like to listen to people. My idea is to be honest with them and why I would or would not agree with them. Be totally honest. If they have an idea that might be better than mine, I have to lick my wounds and say okay.

Councilmember Ross: with the town facing growth and the current water issues, how do you plan on addressing these concerns.

Karen Wandler: especially the water and sewer issue. I know that there are a lot of complaints about the water and sewer and I would get involved in what I know about it make suggestions and recommendations, visit with the people and find out why they are upset. It is going on all over and it is something that we have to adjust for.

Councilmember Bailey: what do you believe to be the most significant challenges facing our community?

Karen Wandler: water and sewer and just the maintenance of city. I am sure that there will be changes made with Jim taking over, I am very happy with the performance of the fire department and police department I think the problem is getting people to talk about their problems and help them to resolve their problems.

Councilmember Smith: Wanda, How will you balance your current personal commitments with your duties as a Town of Stevensville Council Member. And being on the council there are a few duties as you know.

Karen Wandler: I am a quilter, when taking on this it will become my number one priority, when there is a meeting I don't have to sew or quilt. It will be my top priority.

Councilmember Ross: How would you handle a conflict of interest while serving as a town council member?

Karen Wandler: laws, regulations and orders. I was faced with that when I worked for the forest service and I don't know of any instance where there would be a conflict of interest, but I do know being on the council and it is not working with your best friend it is a business. Sometimes we have to work, you don't have to like everybody, but you do have to get along.

Mayor Crews: council appoints their own.

Karen Wandler: I am happy to be able to apply.

Mayor Crews: we have an eight-question form and then when we are done you will

Daniel Revell was interviewed second.

Councilmember Bailey: Tell us about yourself, your qualities, or special talents and why you are applying for the Town Council.

Daniel Revell: my history is, yes I am from California, I lived in Lake Tahoe, came out of marriage and had seen Montana and with that got an idea of what Montana was like I became a regional director for Oregon, Idaho, Washington and Montana so I took another trip through Montana. (described his time in the service). I saw Montana again and then moved to Libby Montana. (talked about his ex-wife and the title to his car). Taught at Flathead Community College and lived in Kalispell for 10 years and then moved farther down 93. With that I am a retired architect and have done several buildings down 93 and Sun Valley. (discussed the buildings that he was an architect on). Volunteered as a driver. Drove for them and with that there is community involvement from that. One of the attractions in the area coming from Lake Tahoe is mountains, blue sky and big trees and Stevensville has the same. With that I am offering my experiences as an architect.

Councilmember Ross: Have you discussed with family and friends about becoming a council member and about the time and commitment that the position can require.

Daniel Revell: I happen to run into the mayor on occasion and pleasantly so. In Oregon I was involved with civic things, Eugene Oregon is very involved with the citizens.

Councilmember Smith: What do you hope to accomplish as a councilmember? And by the way I am Wally Smith, and it is nice to meet you.

Daniel Revell: in a humorous way I look at the word Bitterroot and if you change the (i) to an e it becomes betterroot. With that I know that won't be done but with that I had experience in my own office working with younger people and that leads to a nourishing environment and with that I would like to lead with that.

Councilmember Bailey: As a councilmember how do you plan to involve our residents in the decision process?

Daniel Revell: I have thought about that, contact can be difficult; it is not that people just walk up to you every day and say are you a councilor. One approach to that I could offer my cell phone number, in architecture in training you have a lot of input on other people and to design a building, that is a quality that should exist, taking other people's comments and concerns and then come up with an idea that serves the design to all of those involved.

Councilmember Ross: With the town facing growth and the current water issues, how do you plan on addressing these concerns.

Daniel Revell: that gets back to what is kind of unfortunate in the transfer of the federal government, about 2 ½ years ago I was on the Planning & Zoning board here on my own, I got in touch with the USDA lab and found out that there were two individuals that were quite beneficial to the town of Stevensville one man was in charge of water and sewer and the other man was in charge of solar energy, when I asked about it I was asking about putting solar panels on the this building, at that time the budget was \$17,000 for electricity and that is when I thought about energy conservation for this building. At that time, they had an eye towards Stevensville and putting in a solar farm. There are other avenues to look into, the electrical company provider is interested in lowering some of the electrical bills, I would be interested in learning more about this, we do not have a lot of money in this little town, so looking into other avenues on how to help would be one of my interests.

Councilmember Smith: What do you believe to be the most significant challenges facing our community?

Daniel Revell: my sense of humor enters into that again, (told a story about being on a phone call and how small Stevensville is). There is a character about the town, we are rural and people are attracted here because of that. For those that have lived here a long time it is important to keep it that way. What is attracting people to our town, and whatever is attracting lets keep it that way. We can't control the growth, but we can make it minimal and still attractive and rural.

Councilmember Bailey: How will you balance your current personal commitments with your duties as a Town of Stevensville Council Member.

Daniel Revell: my personal position is that I have been in retirement for at least 12 years. I do have the time and opportunity to express the community in a good way and hope for what is decided and what I might share in. Let's see how we can make it work.

Councilmember Smith: How would you handle conflict of interest while serving as a Town Council Member.

Daniel Revell: somehow it enters into political parties, there are red and blue states, and I am in the middle, people can express their concerns but lets keep in neutral.

Mayor Crews: can I intervene, I do not think he understood the question. Not politically but more on a personal relationship of being on the council.

Daniel Revell: I have looked at interest; I live in an assisted living senior center so that it not much conflict. I do not have any concerns or conflicts when it comes to money.

Mayor Crews: that concludes the questions so, what we need to do now is move to the next phase of this operation and for you to step out and sit with Ms. Wandler and council will bat this around and then come back and make a decision.

b. Discussion/Decision: Appointment of an Applicant to the Town of Stevensville Town Council, Ward 2

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item b. Appointment of an Applicant to the Town of Stevensville Town Council, Ward 2. You folks need to bat it around and some point you will have to make a motion to appoint a particular candidate. Any council discussion?

Councilmember Smith: I move that we nominate and elect Daniel Revell as the next ward 2 councilmember.

Mayor Crews: motion to appoint Daniel Revell.

Councilmember Ross: can I ask a question to clarify that motion.

Mayor Crews: yes.

Councilmember Ross: making that motion is just for us to discuss not actually approving.

Mayor Crews: that is correct.

Councilmember Ross: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: the motion on the floor is to appoint Daniel Revell. Council discussion?

Councilmember Bailey: I thought that he had extensive knowledge in working with government agencies, it sounded like that from being an architect and all of the permitting that goes into that. I think that is great experience for the council, and that would be my comment on it.

Councilmember Ross: I agree I think with his teaching background he has experience interacting with people and engaging and bringing in advice or experience and knowledge.

Mayor Crews: any further discussion? Would the public like to weigh in on this.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Sue Devlin: I disagree, I looked at his application there are a bunch of blank spots, that were not filled out, if you are not going to answer a question than put a line through it or make some notion that you have read the application. The only reference that he gave was a neighbor. He has lived her for seven years and says that he has worked for the senior citizens center and that is wonderful and working with disabled veterans is wonderful I do not believe that he understood a number of the questions that were asked of him nor did he answer the actual questions. we heard a lot about California and Lake Tahoe and yes he has some good background experience, but he did not pay attention to the application he did not answer the questions that were asked of him, and I just really don't feel that he would be a good asset to the council. Again, with ignoring the questions on the application not answering the questions asked of him how is he going to handle being on the council with questions being asked, research having to be done. He said he is tech no. A lot of what is going on here has to be researched, laws and regulations. If he is not going to follow simple things how is he going to handle some of the in-depth problems that come up with the town. That is my perspective.

Mayor Crews: anyone else?

Sharon Gee: I was a little concerned with his answer to the last question. I felt like he may not really have a grasp on the things that are going on in Stevensville. I do not think that he has his finger on the pulse of the town, that was just my takeaway.

Mayor Crews: any further discussion from the council.

Councilmember Ross: can I, I think there was a little bit of confusion with the motion, can I make a motion to table the motion to have discussion about both individuals.

Councilmember Smith: you can discuss both of them, it is open for discussion.

Mayor Crews: wait a minute, Wally. You have a motion on the floor and a 2nd. and right now, the motion on the floor is to appoint Daniel Revell if you would like to or someone would like to withdraw the motion there is a process to do it or you can vote as it is right now. The person that made the motion with Councilmember Smith and he would have to withdraw the motion.

Councilmember Ross: I would like to discuss the other candidate.

Mayor Crews: okay, you can do that because there is a motion on the floor so you could do that.

Councilmember Ross: in that case, what I liked about Karen has former council experience she is pretty familiar with the towns ongoings as was mentioned. I felt that she answered the questions pretty directly and gave good answers to all of those questions.

Councilmember Bailey: I agree I think she would be beneficial to the people because she is from Stevensville and has that experience of living here for a long time and think that is very valuable and agree with what you said as well.

Mayor Crews: you have an option right now, Councilmember Smith could withdraw his motion and council to vote to accept the withdrawal, or you could vote on the current motion.

Councilmember Smith: do we even have a 2nd?

Mayor Crews: yes.

Councilmember Smith: so, you would rather me withdraw the motion and go another way?

Mayor Crews: that is your decision.

Councilmember Bailey: do you want to take a vote then?

Councilmember Smith: we certainly can.

Mayor Crews: Jenelle would you please call for the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: no.

Councilmember Ross: no.

Councilmember Smith: no.

Mayor Crews: motion fails 3-0. Is there a new motion on the floor.

Councilmember Ross: I make a motion that we appoint Karen to the council.

Mayor Crews: the motion on the floor is to appoint Karen Wandler to the council.

Councilmember Smith: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. is there any public comment or further council discussion? Jenelle, please call for the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: yes.

Councilmember Ross: yes.

Councilmember Smith: yes.

Mayor Crews: motion carries 3-0. Would you please bring in the candidates, and we will swear her in. I want to thank both of you for applying it takes a lot of guts to put your name in the hat. It is not always a fun job when you are sitting at this table especially when you are making complicated decisions regarding people's lives. In this case the council has come to a decision and the decision is to appoint Karen Wandler as the ward 2 representative. Thank you Daniel very much for putting your name in the hat.

Daniel Revell: we been talking out there and she will be wonderful.

c. Swearing In of New Town Councilmember

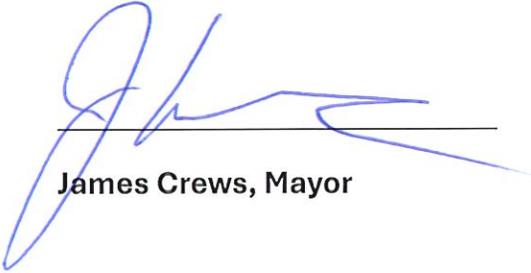
Mayor Crews: Karen Wandler was sworn in by Mayor Crews. Karen Wandler signed her oaths.

5. Adjournment

Councilmember Smith: motion to adjourn.

Councilmember Ross: 2nd.

APPROVE:



James Crews, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jenelle S. Berthoud, Town Clerk