

Stevensville Town Council Meeting Minutes

for THURSDAY, JULY 09, 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, Wandler and Smith were all present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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

John Schneeberger, Climate Action Group: provided information about the pine beetle here in the valley.

Mayor Crews: had questions for John Schneeberger.

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Town Council Meeting Minutes 06/25/2026

Mayor Crews: introduced approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes 06/25/2026.

Councilmember Bailey: I move that we approve Town Council Meeting Minutes 06/25/2026.

Councilmember Wandler: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. public comment? Council comments? Jenelle take the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: aye.

Councilmember Ross: aye.

Councilmember Wandler: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Crews: okay.

5. Approval of Bi-Weekly Claims

a. Claims #20469-#20505

Mayor Crews: introduced approval of bi-weekly claims #20469-#20505. Any questions for Gina on the claims, direct your questions directly to Gina. Gina do you have any comments on the claims?

Gina Crowe: no, I am confused we have never do that before.

Mayor Crews: Gina also has the cash report, any questions.

Jenelle Berthoud: that is part of the administrative reports.

Mayor Crews: public comment?

Councilmember Smith: I move to approve claims #20469-#20505.

Councilmember Ross: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. public comment? Council discussion? Call for the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: aye.

Councilmember Ross: aye.

Councilmember Wandler: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Crews: okay.

6. Administrative Reports

a. Airport

Brian Germane, Airport Manager: report provided in the packet. Gave updates on the inspections done by the FAA.

Mayor Crews: who has access to the data sheet, tracking sheet.

Brian Germane: me.

Mayor Crews: would it be a benefit to Brian to use Q-Ware to track his maintenance issues. It will help you track what jobs, materials, completing the jobs.

Brian Germane: I would look at that.

Gina Crowe: I can get with Brian about that.

b. Building Department

Report provided in the packet. Mayor Crews read the report to the council. We are trying to stay on top of permits, we see someone doing something in town, and if we

don't think that they have a business license, we check and then we check for permits.

c. Finance

Gina Crowe, Finance Officer: report provided to the council at the meeting. Started out with the cash report, in the general fund we have received our check for June, and we were about \$25,000 short. Everything else looks pretty good. Budget vs. actual, this has been a really busy week, and we are trying to get everything closed out for June. The final close will probably be in August. We have had an expense in our prosecution services. (Touched on Tree services, we will be getting that money back for disaster funds). All of the other funds, things look pretty normal. Building department and Airport is over. Revenue side of things says that we are over by \$5,000.00.

d. Fire Department

Chief Motley: report provided in the packet. Training, we have a grant application out, and in the works for new sets of bunker gear and we have a Rapp Family Grant Application out for the grant writer. Radio grant is all wrapped up.

Councilmember Smith: can you tell us if there were any problems on the 4th.

Chief Motley: pretty quiet.

e. Police Department

Chief Boe: report provided in the packet. Pretty much business as usual.

Councilmember Ross: what are the fraud crimes.

Chief Boe: those are usually attempts to garnish money from our elderly community.

Councilmember Smith: same question to you, how was the 4th.

Chief Boe: we managed, there were a lot of fireworks going off. I also need to point out and thank Gina and the town hall staff that we received our tasers and completed our training here at town hall. Social media is going well due to Kenny and Otis has started a program that every Friday during the summer months we all meet up at the park and hand out popsicles to the kids. We partner with the Lions Club on this; we hand out things to the kids. Allows us to engage with the community. Next big thing coming up is the Creamery Picnic.

Mayor Crews: I want to make a comment on the speed limits; they have moved the limits further south. DOT moved those out to try and slow down people coming into town.

Chief Boe: they have also moved the speed limit by the Living Center.

Mayor Crews: we also have a lot of people that do not use the stop signs.

Councilmember Smith: I am still seeing people park in front of the coffee shop.

Chief Boe: yes, we are and we are writing tickets.

Mayor Crews: one more thing, the mayors office is working with the police and parks department to lock and unlock River Park gate. Gina ordered the gates for Lewis & Clark Park.

Gina Crowe: Murdock's did not have them in stock, but they are ordered and paid for.

Mayor Crews: we got quotes up to \$4,000.00 to fix those gates we are not going to spend that kind of money; we cannot afford these outrageous prices anymore.

f. Public Works

Stephen Lassiter, Public Works Supervisor: report for Q-Ware provided in the packet. June was pretty busy, the pool and splash pad opened up pretty easy. It went well best ever, and that has to do with us making sure that it was put to bed last fall correctly. Working through some personnel issues right now, so there are some things that need to get caught up on, but we will get to it. Had our DEQ review and went through with flying colors. There are a few things that do need to get done and we will get those wrapped up thanks to Ian and Gerry for their help.

Mayor Crews: for those of you that have been paying attention we still have season openings to cut grass and two water assistant jobs open.

7. Guests

a. Mayor's Sewer & Water Advisory Committee Report

Mayor Crews: introduced Brinda Barnett.

Brinda Barnett: provided a report to the council, (report will be included with the minutes of this meeting).

8. New Business

a. Discussion/Decision: Approval of Stevensville Harvest Valley Farmers Market for 07/25/2026

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item a, Approval of Stevensville Harvest Valley Farmers Market for 07/25/2026.

Councilmember Smith: I move that we accept Stevensville Harvest Valley Farmers Market for 07/25/2026.

Councilmember Ross: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. Public comment? Council Discussion?

Councilmember Ross: there was some discussion last time about removing this requirement, where are we at with that.

Mayor Crews: I looked at that we are looking at maybe doing a resolution to relax that, but I can't so we are going to have to change the ordinance. It is on our list to get done and we will try to get it done this year. Jenelle take the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: aye.

Councilmember Ross: aye.

Councilmember Wandler: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Crews: carries 4-0

b. Informational: Stevensville Civic Club Creamery Picnic

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item b, Stevensville Civic Club Creamery Picnic.

Eli Madero, SCC President: last month we had the circus come into town, huge success. Last weekend we had the picnic for the 4th of July, about 200 people.

Creamery coming up in less than a month, we have submitted an approval for beer garden and traffic plan for Main Street closure. Everything is flowing along and falling into place. On our road closure plans we have the parade and then asking for road closure for fireman games.

c. Discussion/Decision: Closure of W 2nd Street for Fireman's Games During Creamery Picnic

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item c, Closure of W 2nd Street for Fireman's Games During Creamery Picnic.

Eli Madero: we have all of the road closures on Main Street through MDOT and now we need the street closure on W 2nd for fireman games.

Councilmember Ross: I move that we approve the closure of W 2nd. Street for Fireman's Games During Creamery Picnic.

Councilmember Smith: 2nd

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. Public comment? Council discussion? Jenelle take the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: aye.

Councilmember Ross: aye.

Councilmember Wandler: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Crews: okay.

d. Discussion: Dissolve the Mayor's Sewer & Water Advisory Committee

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item d, Dissolve the Mayor's Sewer & Water Advisory Committee. Usually, temporary committee lasts 6 months and this is over 6 months. My questions are, do we need to continue with this committee, I would like to see it continued but as a standing committee under the council.

Mayor Crews: can I ask the council to suspend council rules and place item F about item E.

Councilmember Smith: I move to suspend council rules and move item F in place of item e.

Councilmember Wandler: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. council discussion?

Councilmember Ross: is there a point to this if the committee is going to be dissolved, wouldn't the council do the bylaws.

Mayor Crews: the council's decision.

Councilmember Bailey: if we become a board do we need to create new bylaws?

Mayor Crews: I think that is a good idea.

Councilmember Ross: that was my point, that they need to be adjusted.

Mayor Crews: do the councilmembers that are on the committee think that this should continue.

Councilmember Bailey: I think so, we did not convene the committee until March, and we could consider that our start date, regardless there is work to do either as a board or a committee.

Mayor Crews: what we be more beneficial.

Councilmember Ross: doesn't it make sense to vote on the suspension before discussion.

Mayor Crews: call for the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: aye.

Councilmember Ross: aye.

Councilmember Wandler: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Crews: thank you.

f. Discussion/Decision: Adopt the Mayor's Sewer & Water Advisory Committee as a Board

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item f, Adopt the Mayor's Sewer & Water Advisory Committee as a Board.

Councilmember Smith: I think to go as a board.

Councilmember Ross: if we do go to a board we consider the implications of having two council persons on the board.

Mayor Crews: the new board would have to convene and pick their own.

Councilmember Smith: I move to Adopt the Mayor's Sewer & Water Advisory Committee as a Board.

Councilmember Wandler: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. public comment? Council discussion? Jenelle take the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: aye.

Councilmember Ross: aye.

Councilmember Wandler: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Crews: it is now a council board. as such the committee bylaws should be removed from the agenda.

Jenelle Berthoud: are there any issues of there never being any bylaws adopted by the committee.

Mayor Crews: I do not think so.

e. Discussion/Decision: Approval of the Mayor's Sewer & Water Advisory Committee Bylaws

Mayor Crews: Removed item e from the agenda tonight.

g. Discussion/Decision: Montana DNRC Local Government Fire Forces Incident Rental Agreement

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item g, Montana DNRC Local Government Fire Forces Incident Rental Agreement. Chief Motley this is yours.

Chief Motley: news to me did not know that.

Jenelle Berthoud: it is on the agenda tonight.

Councilmember Smith: are these pretty standard rates.

Chief Motley: we have been doing this agreement for years, the reason that it is in front of you tonight is because the mayor is the only one that can sign this agreement.

Mayor Crews: Councilmember Ross you may need to abstain.

Councilmember Ross: I will abstain.

Councilmember Smith: I move to adopt Montana DNRC Local Government Fire Forces Incident Rental Agreement.

Councilmember Wander: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. public comment? Council discussion? Jenelle take the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: aye.

Councilmember Ross: abstain.

Councilmember Wandler: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Crews: okay.

h. Discussion/Decision: Preliminary Approval to Proceed with the Exploration of a Bike Path at Stevensville River Park

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item h, Preliminary Approval to Proceed with the Exploration of a Bike Path at Stevensville River Park. We have River Park and in the park we have various foot paths, some are along the river and are dangerous. I have talked to the parks manager about moving some of those trails and developing a bike trail. This would open up areas for more trails and paths. We looked out there and realized that we could get about one mile of trail. For the most part it is not going to cost us any money. I will put together the 310 permit; I have talked to them. We are also looking at down by the river where the fishing access is at there is a debris field that needs to be cleaned up. I am putting a lot of my personal time into this. I will not bring a final plan to the council until I have all of the permits in.

Councilmember Bailey: Jim I think the park is really pretty because of the open space I think that it is a little bit much to have a walking path and a bike path.

Mayor Crews: the bike path will serve as a walking path too.

Councilmember Bailey: so, they are going to double over each other. It skips away from that open space. I am worried that this bike path will take away from that.

Mayro Crews: the people have actually been driving in there and we need to stop that, we are locking the gate down there, we do not have a lot for the kids or the adults. You go out there along the bank some of it is following down, we have not been maintaining the park. Cindy and I have been traveling around and using bike trails, so many people using them. We don't have anything like that around here. We are not talking about a very large space, I know that it looks like it is criss crossing around, but we need to get out there and walk it. I think that it would be good for the kids and the adults. The walking path is pretty narrow; no one could get down there with a wheelchair.

Councilmember Bailey: is it going to be paved?

Mayor Crews: no. it will be natural, cut the grass down remove some weeds and make it passable.

Councilmember Smith: would we consider putting in a couple of benches along the way.

Mayor Crews: I would like that. Someone has already put one in there, don't know who did it. There are some there that need to be painted.

Councilmember Ross: if we are going to have a natural path is there a concern of people crashing their bikes because it is uneven.

Mayor Crews: they are already down there riding.

Councilmember Wandler: I think the issue here is you are requesting for approval to proceed with exploration of bike path but that is not to go out and do that right now.

Mayor Crews: that is right. In order to get this done, I have to submit the appropriate permits. We have to go out there and walk this down and make sure that this is doable.

Councilmember Ross: would you be apposed to maybe doing less back and forth and just do one loop.

Mayor Crews: I am not opposed to that. I just sat down with Google Earth and made this. We need to open the park for everybody. If someone wanted to be pushed in a wheelchair we would not be able to do that.

Councilmember Bailey: if you are not going to pave it then how are you going to get someone in a wheelchair down there.

Mayor Crews: we will smooth it out.

Councilmember Bailey: I don't think that is effective enough. You would have to get somebody down that grade and then over a bed of rocks to get to the river, without paving it I don't think it is doable.

Mayor Crews: we do what we can do. If this is for a bicycle or a tricycle they can.

Councilmember Wandler: the refuge has good paths.

Mayor Crews: I have talked to the refuge, and they do not want to have anything to do with bicycles. E-assist bicycles help people get out there and ride. (gave examples of people that use E-assist bicycles)

**discussion continued about the definition of a bicycle. And the towns code about bicycles.

Mayor Crews: any public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Brinda: will there be a study on impact of wildlife.

Mayor Crews: that is one of the things that the permitting system will do.

Brinda: and will this make more patrols for our police department.

Mayor Crews: no more than normal, thing is without the permits we already have people riding around down there.

Councilmember Smith: if approved to proceed and you go through the permitting process what is the cost of the permits.

Mayor Crews: no cost at all. If it did cost us money, the mayor would pay for it out of his own pocket.

Councilmember Smith:

PUBLIC COMMENT

Eli Madero: are you limiting the path to 36 inches for the path.

Mayor Crews: it will be limited to the standard bike path width. If I am not mistaken I think that it is 36 inches.

Eli Madero: if it was proposed at the 36-inch width I would not necessarily like the idea that an E-assist would share that path. All of the examples that you gave of riding were on roads.

Mayor Crews: we will cut the path at 36 inches. (discussion about bollards). I am looking at this trail as a one way.

Councilmember Ross: sounds like we are going to have other things, signs and markers. Do we need to change laws for this to happen?

Mayor Crews: I don't think so, if we put back the original fence we would be fine.

Councilmember Bailey: for me there is already a path cut, and I would be in favor of improving the existing path but to cut a new path for bikes could get messy for such a small space. It could get busy.

Mayor Crews: the final design would come to the council for final approval.

Councilmember Bailey: if this is approved tonight what would be your next step.

Mayor Crews: it would be to submit a 310 permit, what you use to open a path. I need councils permission to do this and if it does not get approved I will not touch this again. We are not going to submit a final plan to them until we have a plan. (explanation on the River Park boat launch).

Councilmember Bailey: I would like to see the whole proposal that you are taking with and lumping into the bike path.

Mayor Crews: would you like to make a motion.

Councilmember Bailey: I make a motion to table item h, until August 13.

Councilmember Ross: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. Public comment? Council discussion? Jenelle take the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: aye.

Councilmember Ross: aye.

Councilmember Wandler: aye.

Councilmember Smith: no

Mayor Crews: 3-1

i. Discussion/Decision: MDT Aeronautics Tractor Grant – Agreement

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item i, MDT Aeronautics Tractor Grant – Agreement.

Brian Germane: back in March we presented the offer and it was approved at that meeting. this is the acceptance agreement. There is a copy of our grant, the amount and the notice to proceed that MDT has to be filled out when obtaining these funds. I worked with them on how to fill this out and this is what it is. This is the official acceptance, as soon as the council approves this the attorney will sign and then it will take about two weeks to get our funds.

Councilmember Smith: I move that we adopt the MDT Aeronautics Tractor Grant – Agreement.

Councilmember Wandler: 2nd.

Mayor Crews: motion and a 2nd. public comment? Council discussion? Jenelle take the vote.

Councilmember Bailey: aye.

Councilmember Ross: aye.

Councilmember Wandler: aye.

Councilmember Smith: aye.

Mayor Crews:

9. Board Reports

NONE

10. Town Council Comments

NONE

11. Executive Report

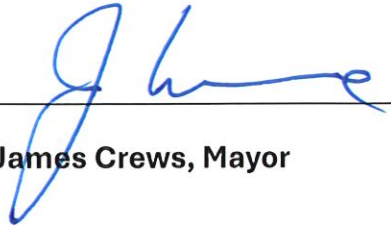
Mayor Crews: Fireworks were a disaster. I drove around town watching this going on, people shooting fireworks across the street at others. I do not like the idea that I have to sedate my pets, and there were a lot of people that have come forth that also do not like it. we will be brining fireworks to the council to discuss. The night of the 5th people were shooting off fireworks. Part of the problem is that there is so much paper waste from the fireworks, it can get into our sewer system.

12. Adjournment

Councilmember Smith: motion to adjourn.

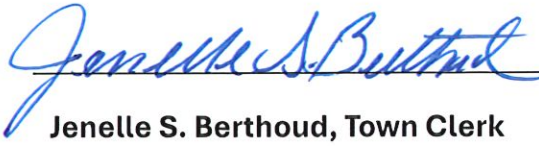
Councilmember Wandler: 2nd.

APPROVE:



James Crews, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jenelle S. Berthoud, Town Clerk

Stevensville Mayor's Sewer & Water Advisory Committee

The first meeting was held on March 19, 2026 and have continue to meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month since as a ~~6~~⁴ person committee.

The following is a list of what we have done:

1. Developed Goals and questions, areas we wish to explore and prioritize them
2. Establishment of By-Laws
3. Establishment of Mission Statement to include
 - a. Growth
 - b. Cost
 - c. Quality
4. We visited/toured the Water and Sewage plant to understand the setup and process
 - a. developed a number of questions
5. The Town finance gave us a general understanding of the numbers
 - a. Want to do a more in depth look at the last 5-year numbers
6. Started doing a review of the Water and Sewage Bonds
7. Started looking at Water quality to include PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) which is part of Forever Chemicals.