

DRAFT

TOWN OF CLYDE PARK
Town Council Meeting Minutes
July 8, 2026 – 7 p.m.
Clyde Park Town Hall

1. Call to Order

Mayor Sydney Wiley called the Regular Meeting of the Clyde Park Town Council to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call - Present: Mayor Sydney Wiley, Council Member Teresa Saari, Council Member Joshua Koch, Council Member Cathy Romey (via phone), Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Mills (via Zoom), Deputy Clerk Louann Barr. A quorum was present.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Visitor Comments - Mayor Wiley opened the floor for public comment regarding items not listed on the agenda.

Roger Chandler commented on three matters: 1. He asked about what he believed to be a payroll audit and expressed the opinion that any audit involving the Town should be made public. 2. He confirmed that the individual mowing Town property was employed as a seasonal employee. 3. He requested that the Town maintain an unmowed section of Town-owned right-of-way located near Second and Third Streets.

Mayor Wiley stated the maintenance was being performed by a town employee and that the right-of-way concern would be investigated and thanked Mr. Chandler for his comments.

Shaun Jones requested that the Council consider requiring the contractor who installed the new school water line to repair the roadway settlement occurring. Mr. Jones stated he believed the roadway had not been adequately compacted and felt the contractor should be responsible for correcting the issue.

Mayor Wiley thanked Mr. Jones for his comments.

With no additional comments offered, Mayor Wiley closed the public comment period.

5. Appointment of Council Members to Fill Vacancies

Mayor Wiley announced that the Council would fill two vacant council seats:

- The unexpired term previously held by Brian Eckenrod, expiring December 2029.
- The unexpired term previously held by Carol Amunrud, expiring December 2030.

Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Mills explained the appointment process. Each sitting council member independently reviewed and ranked the four submitted applications:

- Austin Bryington
- Abbigail Ungaretti
- Caitlin Boyd
- Carla Williams

The rankings were combined using a numerical scoring rubric. The applicants with the lowest combined scores were presented to the Council first for consideration. Clerk Mills explained that appointments required a unanimous roll-call vote of the sitting council members.

Motion: Council Member Teresa Saari moved to appoint Austin Bryington to the Clyde Park Town Council.
Second: Joshua Koch.

Roll Call Vote: Appointment of Austin Bryington Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Council Member	Vote
Teresa Saari	Aye
Joshua Koch	Aye
Cathy Romey	Aye

Motion: Council Member Teresa Saari moved to appoint Abbigail Ungaretti to the Clyde Park Town Council.
Second: Joshua Koch.

Roll Call Vote: Appointment of Abbigail Ungaretti Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Council Member	Vote
Teresa Saari	Aye
Joshua Koch	Aye
Cathy Romey	Aye

Mayor Wiley noted that because neither appointee was present, they would be sworn into office at a future meeting.

Mayor Wiley thanked Austin Bryington, Abbigail Ungaretti, Caitlin Boyd, and Carla Williams for their willingness to serve the Town and encouraged future participation on Town committees.

6. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Council reviewed the minutes of the previous regular meeting. Following discussion and minor corrections, the following action was taken - **Motion:** Teresa Saari moved to approve the meeting minutes as corrected.
Second: Joshua Koch.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

7. Mayor's Recognition

Mayor Wiley recognized and thanked the following organizations and individuals for their successful Red, White & Barbecue event celebrating America's 250th Anniversary:

- Teresa Watts
- Livingston American Legion Post 23 Honor Guard
- VFW Post 2154
- Montana America 250 Commission

8. Mayor's Notes and Announcements

Mayor Sydney Wiley provided the following announcements:

- Staff continue preparing the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and encourage council members and residents to submit priorities for upcoming projects.
- Residents were reminded to trim overgrown trees and bushes, mow tall grass, remove yard debris, and control noxious weeds to reduce wildfire hazards. The Town has sent notices to property owners who remain out of compliance.
- The Mayor reported a recent dog bite incident involving a loose dog. She reminded residents that Town ordinances require dogs to be on a leash or otherwise under their owner's control at all times.

Residents experiencing issues with stray animals were encouraged to complete an incident report through Town Hall or by using the forms available outside Town Hall or on the Town website.

9. Department Reports

Public Works Report

Mayor Wiley informed the Council that Bo Danysh was no longer employed by the Town as of June 30, 2026.

She reported that several important water system repairs had recently been completed, including:

- Peak Water Systems replaced the burned-out reservoir outflow pump.
- Electrical repairs were scheduled to restore wiring associated with the pump installation.
- The Town chlorinator was repaired.
- The Town's SCADA monitoring system was restored after experiencing a system fault. Peak Water Systems advised that the aging computer controlling the system will likely need replacement in the near future.
- Staff continued responding to routine requests, including operating curb stops and assisting residents with water service needs.
- A seasonal part-time employee had been hired to assist with mowing and general maintenance throughout Town.

Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Mills provided an update on the Taylor Lane street name change, noting that:

- Notifications had been completed to emergency services, 911 dispatch, and appropriate state agencies.
- Google, Apple Maps, and other mapping services had not yet updated their databases.
- Once the new street signs arrive, both the former and new street names will be displayed temporarily until mapping services reflect the change.

Clerk/Treasurer Report

Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Mills presented the financial report for July 8, 2026.

Clerk Mills reported that she was completing fiscal year-end reconciliation by reviewing every account to ensure all transactions were posted correctly before submitting required year-end reports and the Town's annual budget to the State. She anticipated that the preliminary budget would be ready for Council review during the third week of August.

Payroll Audit Question - In response to an earlier public comment, Clerk Mills stated that the Town had not conducted a payroll audit. The Town continues working toward obtaining a complete financial audit, which will be publicly announced once scheduled.

Preliminary Budget Meeting - Following discussion, Council agreed to schedule a preliminary budget review meeting for: Thursday, August 20, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. This meeting will allow the Council to review the preliminary budget before the required public hearings are held.

Ordinance Committee No report was presented.

Planning Board Report

Council Member Teresa Saari reported that:

- The Planning Board met to review the Jones Subdivision Preliminary Plat, which would appear later on the evening's agenda for Council consideration.
- The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2026, at 7:30 p.m.
- Council Member Saari noted she would be unavailable during the Old Settlers festivities due to prior commitments

Cemetery Board Report

Council Member Cathy Romey reported that the Cemetery Board did not meet in July because its regular meeting date conflicted with community holiday activities. She summarized actions from the previous meeting, including: Discussion regarding informational brochures to educate the public about the cemetery and assist with fundraising. Approval of a donated memorial bench to be placed in a location that would not interfere with cemetery maintenance. The next Cemetery Board meeting is scheduled for the first Wednesday of August at 9:00 a.m. Council Member Cathy Romey then shared a message from Marsha Leffingwell, expressing appreciation to the Council and Town staff for correcting an earlier cemetery burial record issue.

Town Hall Committee Report

Carla Williams, Committee member, expressed concern that meetings had been difficult to schedule because access to Town Hall had not always been available. Discussion centered on the status of previously approved Town Hall improvement projects. Carla Williams stated that receipt of SLIPA information had not been provided. Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Mills reported that: Requested grant documentation had been provided to the committee via email June 9. Exterior painting of Town Hall remains approved under the existing grant and must be completed by the end of 2027. Previously approved interior improvements remain eligible for completion under the grant. Mayor Wiley requested that future committee meetings be coordinated through Town Hall so meeting space could be opened and added to the Town calendar. Discussion ensued prioritizing remaining grant-funded improvements, including interior lighting, flooring, and repairs, so work could move forward while maintaining flexibility to address current water system needs. Committee members agreed to schedule a meeting in August, to notify town hall of the meeting, and to establish project priorities.

10. Consent Agenda - The Mayor presented the Consent Agenda, which included:

- Approval of meeting minutes.
- Approval of the Treasurer's Report and Claims.
- Acceptance of the site permit for the Jones property.
- Acceptance of the site permit for the Bryington property.
- Acceptance of septic permits received for both projects.
- Authorization for the Clerk/Treasurer to transfer Town certificates of deposit (CDs) to higher-yield accounts, when advantageous, without requiring separate Council approval for each transfer.

Clerk Mills explained that one Town CD earning 0.80% interest had recently been transferred, with the Mayor's approval, to an account earning approximately 3.45%, significantly increasing the Town's investment return while leaving the principal funds unchanged. She requested formal Council authorization to continue making similar transfers when necessary to secure the best available interest rates.

Motion - Teresa Saari moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Second: Joshua Koch. Vote: Motion carried unanimously.

11. HRDC Community Needs Assessment Presentation

Mayor Sydney Wiley welcomed Park County Commissioner Jennifer Vermillion, who presented highlights from the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) Community Needs Assessment completed for Gallatin, Park, and Meagher Counties. Commissioner Vermillion explained that the assessment is conducted every three years to identify community needs and assist local governments and organizations with long-term planning and resource allocation.

Commissioner Vermillion reported that the top concerns identified by respondents in the Clyde Park area included:

1. Jobs that provide a living wage.
2. Access to mental health services.
3. Safe and affordable housing.
4. Assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness.
5. Services for older adults and senior citizens.

She noted that affordable housing has remained the highest community concern for approximately fifteen years and that many working households continue to spend more than the recommended percentage of their income on housing costs. She also reported a significant increase in concerns regarding wages that keep pace with the cost of living. Commissioner Vermillion encouraged the Council to utilize the assessment findings during future planning and budgeting efforts and offered HRDC's assistance in providing additional information or presentations regarding the data.

Council Discussion

Council members discussed the challenges facing rural communities, including:

- The shortage of affordable housing.
- Difficulty attracting and retaining employees.
- Increasing construction and land costs.
- Limited opportunities for young families to purchase property.
- Workforce recruitment challenges experienced by both public agencies and private businesses.

Discussion also included the importance of encouraging appropriate residential development, balancing growth with available infrastructure, and exploring public-private partnerships that could increase affordable housing opportunities within the region. No Council action was requested or taken following the presentation.

Mayor Wiley thanked Commissioner Vermillion for her presentation and for the work being done through HRDC and Park County.

12. (203 Lathrop Street West) Subdivision Preliminary Plat

Mayor Wiley opened discussion regarding the proposed 203 Lathrop Street West Preliminary Plat.

Present for the agenda item were: Shaun Jones, applicant, Eric Garberg, Courtney Long, Great West Engineering.

Council Member Teresa Saari, speaking on behalf of the Planning Board, reported that the Planning Board had completed its review of the subdivision application during its June meeting. She stated that the application included comprehensive engineering and technical documentation addressing:

- Fire protection
- Law enforcement services
- Utility infrastructure
- Access
- Lot configuration
- Easements
- Street access
- Other subdivision requirements

The Planning Board recommended approval of the Preliminary Plat with several minor revisions to language contained within the Conditions of Approval. The revisions primarily updated agency names and clarified responsible service providers.

Courtney Long advised the Council that one additional condition had been incorporated into the recommendation following the Planning Board meeting.

The added condition requires the applicant to submit final construction documents to the Town at least **ten (10) working days** prior to construction so the Town has adequate time to review and approve the plans before work begins. Council noted this additional review period would also provide sufficient notice to residents should temporary water shutoffs or other service interruptions become necessary during construction.

Public Comment

Mayor Wiley opened for comments regarding the preliminary plat.

Discussion included:

- Fire hydrant locations serving the subdivision.
- Shared driveway access.
- Utility availability.
- Engineering review.
- General support for the proposed subdivision.

No objections to the preliminary plat were presented.

Motion

Joshua Koch moved to approve the Preliminary Plat for the 203 Lathrop Street West Subdivision, subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval. Second: Teresa Saari.

During discussion, Council Member Cathy Romey temporarily lost her Zoom connection. The Council briefly delayed final action until she was able to reconnect by telephone.

Following reconnection, Clerk/Treasurer Stacy Mills confirmed Council Member Romey's vote.

Roll Call Vote

Council Member	Vote
Teresa Saari	Aye
Joshua Koch	Aye
Cathy Romey	Aye

Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Mayor Wiley thanked the applicants, Great West Engineering, and the Planning Board for the extensive work completed on the subdivision review.

13. Variance Request – Leash Ordinance

Mayor Sydney Wiley introduced a request submitted by **Mark Hoffman** seeking a variance from the Town's leash ordinance for his dog, Bailey. The request had been received and included in the Council packet for consideration.

Public Comment

Roger Chandler, from Clyde park, stated that Bailey had lived in town for several years without causing significant problems and expressed concern that granting or denying a variance for one dog could be viewed as inconsistent when other dogs also roam throughout town. He noted that previous complaints regarding loose dogs had not always resulted in enforcement action.

Additional Public Discussion Discussion included concerns that:

- Granting a variance for one dog could create expectations that similar requests would be approved in the future.
- Residents have reported encounters with loose dogs while walking throughout town.
- Some residents feel uncomfortable or intimidated by dogs running at large, regardless of whether the animals are considered friendly.

- Consistent enforcement of the Town's animal ordinances is important for public safety and fairness.

Council Member Cathy Romey stated that while the Council may wish to review the Town's animal ordinances in the future, the current ordinance should be enforced consistently until amended. She noted that making an exception for one resident would not be equitable to others.

Council members also discussed the ordinance language requiring dogs to be on a leash or otherwise under the owner's control, acknowledging that the phrase "under the owner's control" may warrant future clarification during ordinance review.

Council Action

Following discussion, the Council determined that the existing ordinance should continue to be enforced as written.

Motion

Cathy Romey moved to affirm enforcement of the current Town ordinance requiring dogs to be on a leash or otherwise under the owner's control. Second: Teresa Saari. Voice Vote: Ayes unanimous. Motion carried.

14. Public Works Staffing Discussion

Mayor Wiley informed the Council that following the departure of Bo Danysh on June 30, 2026, the Town needed to determine how best to provide water system operations, street maintenance, and general public works services moving forward.

The Mayor explained that several alternatives were being explored, including:

- Contracting with the City of Livingston for certified water operator services.
- Obtaining a proposal from Peak Water Systems for ongoing operation and maintenance services.
- Exploring a shared employee arrangement with the Town of Wilsall.
- Continuing to contract specialized excavation and water line repair work as needed.
- Hiring Town employees to perform routine maintenance and daily operational duties.

Council discussed the financial challenges of maintaining a full-time employee, increasing personnel costs, and difficulties recruiting qualified applicants. Members also discussed comparing the long-term costs of subcontracted services versus direct employment before the upcoming budget process.

Several members of the public offered comments regarding staffing needs, expressing differing opinions on whether one employee could adequately perform the Town's maintenance responsibilities or whether additional staffing or contracted services would better serve the community.

Mayor Wiley emphasized that no final staffing decision had been reached and that staff would continue gathering information for Council consideration.

Following discussion:

Motion – Advertise Positions: Teresa Saari moved to advertise the previously approved part-time Water Operator and part-time Town Maintenance positions, with the option of combining them into a full-time position if a qualified applicant were identified. Second: Joshua Koch. Voice Vote: Ayes unanimous. Motion carried.

Motion – Explore Alternative Service Options: Council discussed continuing to evaluate alternative methods of providing water system and public works services, including subcontracting and cooperative agreements with neighboring communities.

Motion: Teresa Saari moved to authorize staff to continue exploring alternative service options, including subcontracting and intergovernmental partnerships, for public works and water operations. Second: Joshua Koch. Voice Vote: Ayes unanimous. Motion carried.

15. Community Service Officer Title

Mayor Wiley explained that the title Community Service Officer (CSO) has created confusion because the position primarily performs public works and utility maintenance functions rather than law enforcement duties. She recommended changing the position title to Public Works Operator and updating the Town Code accordingly as the ordinance review process continues.

Motion - Joshua Koch moved to direct staff to prepare a resolution changing the title of Community Service Officer to Public Works Operator. Second: Teresa Saari. Voice Vote: Ayes unanimous. Motion carried.

16. Adjournment

With no further business before the Council, Teresa Saari moved to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor Wiley declared the meeting adjourned at **8:46 p.m.**