# TOWN OF DE BEQUE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**JULY 22, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on July 22, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

in the Community Center, 381 Minter Avenue, De Beque, Colorado. Present were the following:

Mayor: Shanelle Hansen

Trustees: Cindy Farris, Sarah Hambrick, NJ Fulmer, Vern Bruse, and Walter Wood

Absent: John Giffin

Staff Present: Town Manager Care’ McInnis, Town Clerk Lisa Rogers, Town Attorney Chris McAnany, Deputy Marshal Shawnie Higgins, Deputy Marshal Matt Surad, Deputy Marshal Jeff Meyer, and Marshal Bob Dalley

Also Present: Samantha and Wade Sorenson, Christian Anderson, Pat Van Guilder, Dawn Palmer, Kaylea and Cody Graham, Dustin Sandidge, Jeanette Refior, Diane Sandelin, Summer Montover, Alaina Tannenbaum, Chris Lemke, Jim Roberts, Mary Kramer, Sam Flores, Dave and Bev Swenson, Beth and John Belger, Myron Tannenbaum, Melissa Matis, Johnny Crabb, Dan Savoca, Tyler King, and Michael Tanner

# CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Mayor Shanelle Hansen. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

# ROLL CALL:

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.

# DELETIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA:

There were no deletions or corrections to the agenda.

# OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

Wade Sorenson (475 Charles Avenue) stated that he was speaking on behalf of the community and that there were questions that the community were seeking answers to. The questions included wanting to know who was responsible for ensuring that the fire hydrants work and is there an action plan going forward to ensure this does not happen again. Is it true that the Fire Chief came to Town Hall wanting to flush the lines and was turned away? How does the Town plan to expand when there currently is not proper infrastructure? Will there be water bill relief for those who helped fight the fire? Who is being held accountable? How does the Town intend to regain the trust of the community? Mr. Sorenson thanked the Board.

Pat Van Guilder (448 Stewart) thanked the community for saving her home.

Tyler King (480 Beaman Avenue) questioned how the Town could justify spending money on a

community center when the water and sewer systems do not work properly, and the grass is not

taken care of.

Kaylea Graham (481 Greig Avenue) asked if any of the community’s questions would be

answered tonight. Mayor Hansen stated that she was listening to everyone and then address as a

whole. Ms. Graham stated that there was disconnect between the community and Town

administration. She also stated that there needs to be communication as there are many rumors

floating around.

Mayor Hansen stated that she felt sincere distress that day. She stated that there are always

things that could be done better/differently. She also stated that she would try to get answers on

how this happened and how to prevent going forward. Mayor Hansen also stated that she had

heard the rumors regarding DFPD wanting to flush the lines and not being allowed to, and that

she would get to the bottom of that. Mayor Hansen also addressed the Mesa County

Community Center and said that no De Beque money was spent on it. She knows that there are

issues with the MCCC grounds being watered properly. Mayor Hansen stated that the Town has

reached out regarding the watering issue, but it is a Mesa County issue. Mayor Hansen also

addressed that the new sidewalks in Town were mostly grant funded and needed to be upgraded

to meet ADA compliance. Mayor Hansen also stated that she had not heard from Chief Matis.

She knew that the sidewalk contractor had damaged and replaced the hydrant in question, but

she was not sure why it had not been turned back on.

Mr. Sorenson stated that he expected the process to be transparent and to know who was talked

to during the investigation. He asked how the community would get updates. He also asked if

the fire hydrants were being assessed to ensure that they are in working order.

Sam Flores stated that the hydrant in question was brand new and that the previous one had been smashed/broken. When this new one was installed, it had been turned on, flushed, and put online. As to why the fire hydrant was offline, he did not know. Mr. Flores stated that in 2020, the DFPD flushed the hydrants. In 2023 and 2024, requests had been sent to the DFPD regarding flushing the hydrants. Mr. Flores stated that safety is a priority. He also stated that two public works employees who were on scene got the hydrant working immediately. He stated that he sees a lot of division in town. He stated that the Board of Trustees is one of the best he has seen, and the Town Manager is outstanding. Mr. Flores stated that the MCCC was a blessing to the Town. Ms. Graham stated that Chris Lemke and Greg Lippoldt (Town employees) were some of the first on scene. Discussion ensued regarding the other recent tragedy in the community. Mr. Flores stated that Public Works had done traffic control. He stated that the Town had been through a lot of traumas recently and asked that everyone work together and not blame each other. A member of the audience stated that Public Works should not have been doing clean-up. Mr. Flores stated that the employee took it upon himself and was not directed. Diane Sandelin and Jeanette Refior both stated that they have seen Sam flushing hydrants in the past. A member of the audience asked if the key to the hydrant could be left at the hydrant. Another member of the audience stated that it would create bigger security issues to do that.

Mayor Hansen stated that she will follow up after the meeting to find out what happened and create a plan so that this does not happen again in the future. She also stated that the Town will update the community in the newsletter. It can be picked up at Town Hall, the Post Office, and the Country Store.

Mr. Flores told the community that the sewer lines are in immaculate shape and that the water system is in good shape. He stated that Public Works did have to replace eight valves last year. Public Works is getting ready to move the self-haul water filling station to Town property up by Beers Trucking. It should be completed between August – September. After that, ground will be broken for the new water plant. Katherine Boozell stated that there are $4.5 million in grants for the new water plant and $1.24 million in grants for the sewer system—all with $0 match.

Mayor Hansen stated that there are many upgrades in progress behind the scenes. Town Manager Care’ McInnis stated that she is always available to meet. Another member of the audience asked for an after-action report. Trustee Hambrick stated she wanted to hear what Chief Matis has to say. Mayor Hansen stated that she would need to meet with Chief Matis, Marshal’s Department, and Public Works. Ms. Graham stated that she had an hour-long conversation with him and that he is happy to meet with others.

Mr. Sorenson stated that he is worried about gentrification. He has seen it happening in other towns like this one. He stated you see things like water and sewer upgrades and pickleball courts going in to attract millionaires. De Beque already has its culture. Trustee Hambrick stated that the Town is trying to attract visitors. Mr. Sorenson stated he has seen before where towns try to attract certain types of people instead of worrying about infrastructure. He talked about forced expansion. Mayor Hansen said that the comp plan is asking the town if it wants to expand and how.

Diane Sandelin asked who will conduct the investigation about the fire. Mayor Hansen responded that the DFPD must do one for the fire and the Town will produce a plan to prevent this from happening in the future. It will include the Marshal’s Department, Public Works, the Town Manager, DFPD, and the Mayor. Kaylea Graham asked when the last time was that our emergency plan was updated. Trustee Farris suggested practice drills. Ms. Graham suggested a volunteer program in case the DFPD is on another call. Dawn Palmer stated that everyone needs to get together, produce a mitigation plan, and report to the community. She stated that it is everyone’s responsibility to find out what is going on in their community. She suggested a process that does not revolve around blame but rather to prevent going forward.

Trustee Wood stated that he thought that residents should not have to pay for water used to help fight the fire. Cody Graham stated that every house spigot available had a hose on it. Ms. McInnis stated that the Town would be initiative-taking in writing off excess water that was used to fight the fire. The Town will try to look for the anomalies, but if someone is missed—they should come talk to Town Hall.

# BOARD COMMENTS:

Trustee Wood asked about the fiber optic line redirect. Ms. McInnis stated that she would cover that in her manager report.

Trustee Hambrick stated that the Farmers Markets were fabulous and enjoyable for all. She stated that the wares are incredible, as well as the food trucks, breads, and perfumes. She loves to see how the community comes together.

# TOWN MANAGER REPORT:

Ms. McInnis started her report by letting the Board and community know that we do have a hazard mitigation plan with Mesa County. She also stated that Sam Flores and Mayor Hansen did a wonderful job as well as the community.

Ms. McInnis stated that she wanted to touch on the recent unfortunate event at Gazebo Park. She knows that it has impacted families and the community. She stated that the Town had held an event with crisis clinicians on hand to provide resources for dealing with the tragedy on Monday, July 14th. Unfortunately, the county only reached out to staff an hour before they arrived. Ms. McInnis stated if there is interest, she could try to bring them back in a few weeks.

Ms. McInnis gave some dates to remember. The next Steering Committee meeting will be held Thursday, July 24th at 5:30 p.m. The hope is to narrow down to a couple of alternatives based on the input/data received. Wild Horse Days will be August 22nd-24th. There will be a Board Workshop on August 19th at 5:30 p.m. It is to discuss the possibility of moving to a once-a-month payroll cycle due to the recommendation of the auditor.

Ms. McInnis stated that in terms of business matters, she would give the worst news first. Jeremy Gilliam with WestWater Engineering had taken a position with CPW. It was an offer to be Western Regional Manager of all their projects, and he just could not refuse. Jeremy is a piece of almost every project that the Town has, and he will be missed. WestWater Engineering will still be there, but not Jeremy. WestWater has the contract for the water plant. Staff is collaborating with Jeremy to transition to others on a project-by-project basis. There will be a meeting Monday, July 28th between Jeremy, Katherine, Sam, and Ms. McInnis. Ms. McInnis thinks that Jeremy will continue to assist in the background through a little moonlighting. It is fortunate as it will provide a soft landing for the Town.

Xcel will be on-site July 24th for power service installation for the new fill station. Sam will have to have the sight clear and ready for the work.

A new dump truck was selected and requested; however, Ms. McInnis just found out that it was sold and no longer available. Staff will keep looking.

Sara Flores has been acting as the Town’s ORC temporarily while Jim Taylor is out for a few weeks.

Ms. McInnis updated the Board on their request to create a “how to” for a citizen to apply for a code change. Ms. McInnis stated that she understands that there is a desire to change the code from current to allow “small family farming in Town residential. There is a ticket pending in municipal court and other residents currently taking or have taken steps to comply voluntarily. As such, this will not be addressed until the current alleged violation is resolved through the court process.

There has been some consternation regarding the trapping and spaying/neutering of cats that has occurred in June and July. At least twelve cats were fixed and returned. Two kittens were rehomed. The numbers are probably larger by now. There is an upcoming low-cost spay/neuter clinic coming up the first week of August. The Town has been working on one targeted location and the Town is working with resident to catch/fix/re-release. Carlina obtained ten more slots for the clinic. The Town needs residents to participate for there to be success with this issue.

The horse statue has been evaluated and not only is the base damaged; but also, there are cracks throughout. The base will cost $2150 to repair. It is unknown at this time what additional costs there may be, as the sculptor works on it crack by crack. It is not budgeted for so a supplemental budget may need to be submitted.

Marshal Dalley did not think that there were any more items for the surplus property/silent auction that will be held during Wild Horse Days. He determined that there was an old truck and likely two ATVs that the Town does not use. Ms. McInnis stated that if there were no objections, she would add it to the list.

There are a lot of grant request in the queue. In the packets is an article from the Daily Sentinel announcing the award for AGNC. That will likely dry up next year. Staff is looking into a grant for the horseshoe pits. Staff also applied for a grant with CWCB for a secondary water source. The Riverfront Park project struggles in terms of grants. Which comes first, the chicken or the egg? GOCO will not consider the Town without engineering. There are no DOLA dollars available right now for engineering. Staff is trying to think out of the box and produce alternatives. The Mesa County Federal Mineral Lease may be a possible path to ask for engineering. We anticipate their funds should be dwindling as well. Ther is a high likelihood that we would be chosen as we were awarded funds in the not so distance past, but…if you do not ask, you do not get. Staff is also exploring a Lions Club grant for the Riverfront, perhaps for a pavilion or engineering. Also looking at the Middle Colorado Watershed for options concerning conservation and tourism. Katherine and Ms. McInnis met last week with AGNC reps and Middle Colorado. The question is do we want and do we have the bandwidth to be a part of the Garfield County Group as well as the Mesa County one. Cost (staff time and attendance) vs. benefit of potential grant monies. But this process is all about networking! Staff is looking into a block funding grant from CDBG for the old firehouse. Staff is also looking Brownsfield (EPA) grant for the Firehouse. As for housing, Prop 123 may offer some grant money for low-income housing projects. There is a lengthy “tool kit” we need to complete to access to applications for housing funding.

In terms of on-going grant award work, Ms. McInnis reported that her updates may seem pretty slim. She stated that actually the opposite is true, as all projects and grants have their issues.

She is grateful for the grants that we have received and now it is just dealing with the logistics/issues of the projects. For the drainage study, which is largely not known by the public, grant monies were used to do an evaluation the drainage and infrastructure for parts of Town. It is these little steps that go on behind the scenes that the Town needs to maintain the infrastructure. It should be closed out soon. Two-thirds of the bike trails project has been invoiced. Our largest project, the water plant, is always on-going. In terms of sewer, staff is working diligently to jump through the federal hoops to maintain the $1.2 million award before our second case manager is terminated and before the funding is frozen. This is why the EPA item is on the agenda tonight. Every month, there is a new requirement. For broadband (another significant project), we finally got the railroad permit. Details are in the packets. We are waiting on the Mesa County permit for the shelter. Hopefully, on-site construction will start the first week of August. For the fiber route piece, our team (NeuComm) is ready to go. However, railroad flaggers are required, and it can take weeks to get them scheduled. Ms. McInnis stated that she had attended the final CDOT review meeting for all municipalities and counties last week. CDOT will look back in when De Beque is ready to go live. We definitely are still shooting for a 2025 completion date. Fingers crossed that we can get an update/presentation from Region 10 scheduled for an upcoming Board meeting. It should be highly informative. In terms of the Shoshone Water Rights, $40 million in federal funds have been frozen. De Beque is a part of this. This plays a huge role in future water rights to the Western Slope. The Eastern Slope will contest the project. All Western Slope communities are submitting letters requesting that the award funds are unfrozen.

# CONSENT AGENDA:

* 1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**: June 24, 2025
  2. **BILLS AND EXPENDITURES**: June 2025

# DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING RESOLUTION 2025-17: A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING THAT THE TOWN OF DE BEQUE COMPLIES WITH APPLICABLE NON-DISCRIMINATION STATUTES AS REQUIRED BY 40 C.F.R. PARTS 5 AND 7, WITH RESPECT TO EXPENDITURE OF EPA GRANT FUNDS.

* 1. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING RESOLUTION 2025-18: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE TOWN OF DE BEQUE’S APPLICATION FOR A GRANT ADMINISTERED BY THE MESA COUNTY FEDERAL MINERAL LEASE DISTRICT FOR FUNDS FOR AN ENGINEERING PROJECT FOR THE DE BEQUE RIVER PARK PROJECT.**

**Discussion Before Motioning on the Consent Agenda:**

Mayor Hansen asked if anyone had any questions or comments on the Consent Agenda items. There were none.

# Motion:

Trustee Hambrick motioned to approve all items on the consent agenda. Trustee Farris seconded the motion.

Motion carried 6-0.

# REMAINING BILLS AND EXPENDITURES: EXPENDITURES RELATED TO THE COUNTRY STORE:

**Motion:**

Trustee Hambrick motioned to approve expenditures related to the Country Store. Trustee Wood seconded the motion.

Mayor Hansen abstained.

Motion carried 5-0 with 1 abstaining.

# DISCUSSION AND ACTION REGARDING RESOLUTION 2025-19: A RESOLUTION APPROVING, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS, A SANITARY SEWER SERVICE WAIVER APPLICATION FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 361 W 2ND STREET, DE BEQUE, COLORADO 81630

# Ms. McInnis stated that the Swenson has applied to waive the requirement to hook to the Town sewer system. Although they are required to, it is not feasible. Ms. McInnis stated that she does not like the word waiver as it equals favor. However, there are unique circumstances in this case and the Town recommends approval. Town Attorney Chris McAnany explained that in this case hooking onto the system is cost prohibitive due to the fact the property would require a lift (pressurized system) station in order for the sewer function. The estimated cost to the property owner is ~$70,000. The Swenson’s will have the septic system professionally engineered. Mayor Hansen stated that she was familiar with the property and understood the challenges. Mr. Swenson asked the Board to please approve his application.

**Motion:**

Trustee Farris motioned to approve Resolution 2025-19.

Trustee Wood seconded the motion.

Motion carried 6-0.

# DISCUSSION REGARDING DEPUTY MARSHAL PAY RATES:

# Ms. McInnis explained that Town Treasurer Katherine Boozell would be taking this topic. Ms. Boozell stated that the Town was trying to stay competitive so they could retain/attract officers. CML data was used for the salary survey using eight communities within the recruitment area. This would give the officers a slight bump. For the Marshals Department, they did not receive a full COLA at beginning of year due to mid-year increases this last year. Ms. Boozell hopes that we can get all staff on the same increase cycle for 2026. This year’s mid-year increase is already in the budget. For 2026, that would take Board approval of the budget. In addition to the slight increase, there is a $3.00 differential for corporal and $6.00 differential for sergeant. Ms. McInnis stated that this would be retroactive to July 1st.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Hansen asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting.

# Motion:

Trustee Hambrick motioned to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Farris seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Approved by the Board of Trustees

Lisa M. Rogers, Town Clerk Shanelle Hansen, Mayor