

**M**INUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD  
**JUNE 18, 2025** at 6:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main, Vernal,  
Utah 84078.

**PRESENT:** Councilmembers Edward Long, Robin O'Driscoll, Randel Mills, and Corey Foley and Mayor Doug Hammond. Ted Munford was excused from the meeting.

**WELCOME:** Mayor Doug Hammond welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**INVOCATION OR UPLIFTING THOUGHT:** The invocation was given by Councilmember Corey Foley.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Ed Long.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING BUDGET WORK SESSION HELD June 4, 2025**

*Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll moved to approve the minutes of the Special City Council Meeting held June 4, 2025. Councilmember Corey Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers O'Driscoll, Mills, Foley and Long voting in favor.*

**INTRODUCTION AND BADGE CEREMONY FOR POLICE OFFICERS JOHN KIRK AND KADE BOREN - CHIEF GLEDHILL**

Chief Mike Gledhill introduced two new officers, John Kirn and Kade Boren, that had completed their Police Academy Training. He commended them for their dedication and commented that the testing and training done at the Academy is rigorous. He remarked that John and Kade are very hard workers that are positive in their work ethic. Kade Boren stated that he was very excited for the opportunity as he is a third-generation police officer and he looks forward to continuing the family legacy. John Kirk stated that he was glad to have made it to that point. For the badge ceremony, family members had the opportunity to pin the officer's badge on their uniform. John Kirk's wife Katie and Kade's parents Joe and Kim Boren pinned their badges and congratulated them on their achievements. The Mayor and Council took a few moments to congratulate the new officers and welcome them to the City.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF FINAL PLATTING REQUIREMENTS ORDINANCE NO 2025-13 - BRAEDEN CHRISTOFFERSON**

Assistant City Manager Braeden Christofferson addressed the Council regarding the approval and signature process for final subdivision plats. He explained that changes made by the 2023 Utah State Legislature removed the authority of municipal legislative bodies to approve final plats. To comply with state law, the City is updating its procedures to designate the City Zoning Administrator as the approving authority. The legal descriptions and requirements will remain unchanged; the only modification pertains to who signs the final documentation.

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Braeden further noted that the reference to the City Council will be removed from the applicable sections of City Code and replaced with the Zoning Administrator, reflecting the current process that has already been functioning in this manner for some time. Councilmember Corey Foley acknowledged that the process has been working effectively and had no additional comments.

*Councilmember Ed Long moved to approve Ordinance No 2025-13 final platting requirements. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Mills .....aye;*  
*Councilmember O'Driscoll.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Long.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Foley.....aye.*

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF NON CONFORMING BUILDINGS AND USES  
ORDINANCE NO 2025-14 - BRAEDEN CHRISTOFFERSON**

Assistant City Manager Braeden Christofferson presented a proposed amendment related to the master site plan requirements for noncomplying structures. The change was initiated following a request by Councilmember Corey Foley to consider a three-year compliance window. Mr. Christofferson explained that the existing code required revision, and the matter was reviewed by the Planning Commission. After deliberation, the Commission concluded that a three-year period was excessive while one year was too short. Since business licenses are issued on a two-year cycle, the Planning Commission determined that a two-year compliance period would be sufficient and appropriate. This timeframe would allow nonconforming businesses a reasonable opportunity to bring their properties into compliance, aligning with their licensing schedule. Mr. Christofferson noted that this amendment was brought forward by Nick Porter and Samantha Chapoose to address concerns specific to their circumstances.

Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll inquired whether the Planning Commission's vote was unanimous, to which Mr. Christofferson confirmed that it was.

Councilmember Corey Foley expressed support for the two-year compromise, stating that when considering the broader context of real estate and business operations, the timeline was reasonable. He acknowledged the challenges posed by contract timelines and stated that one year was often insufficient. Two years, he felt, provided businesses and real estate partners with the flexibility needed to remain in compliance and avoid becoming nonconforming. He also noted that, according to the Council's packet, discretion would remain with the City Council in individual cases.

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Mr. Christofferson further clarified that extending the timeline to three years could hinder progress by allowing buildings to remain vacant and noncompliant for too long. A two-year period, in contrast, encourages updates and modernization within a practical timeframe.

*Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll moved to approve Ordinance No 2025-14 for nonconforming buildings and uses. Councilmember Ed Long seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Mills .....aye;*  
*Councilmember O'Driscoll.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Long.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Foley.....aye.*

### STAFF REPORTS

City Manager Quinn Bennion provided an overview of upcoming calendaring items. He informed the Council that the UBAOG quarterly meeting will be held next Thursday in Daggett County. Councilmembers were invited to attend, and it was noted that City Attorney Mike Harrington, Mr. Bennion, and Mayor Doug Hammond will be present to give a presentation. Mr. Bennion explained that when submitting a Community Development (COD) application, a formal presentation must be made before the UBAOG board. He encouraged any interested Councilmembers to attend, emphasizing that it is beneficial for the Council to participate in at least one of these meetings.

Mr. Bennion further noted that on June 25th, the joint City-County meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m., followed by a City budget meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room. He stated that he did not anticipate the meeting would be lengthy unless the public hearings extended or additional Council questions arose. He also clarified that the meeting is scheduled near the end of the month to allow flexibility for any necessary budget adjustments.

On July 10th, which falls on a Thursday, the Council will participate in a site visit to Ashley Springs to observe recent security improvements. The group will first convene at Vernal City Hall for an open public meeting and will then move into a closed session prior to traveling to the site.

Mr. Bennion also provided an update on an experimental initiative involving the development of a tiny home village. A request for statements of interest has been distributed, and early indications show promising responses. Submissions are due between July 5th and 10th. Mr. Bennion invited Councilmembers to share the opportunity with any known builders or developers, noting that the City hopes to identify one or two development partners to help bring the project to fruition. He emphasized that while this is a new venture for the City, there is optimism about collaborating to make the project successful.

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Finally, Mr. Bennion raised the question of whether the City Council meeting scheduled for July 2nd would be necessary. He indicated that there is a possibility it may be canceled, though no official decision has been made at this time.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

During public comment, Jessie Perry Pye expressed strong concern over a proposed federal bill that could allow public lands, including areas near Ashley Springs, to be sold. She referenced a circulating map that appeared to show all public lands in the region, including Dry Fork and Dinosaur National Monument, as potentially for sale. She voiced particular concern for the protection of water sources and the local tourism economy, urging the City to be proactive and engage with senators to oppose such measures. She also expressed appreciation for recent security improvements at Ashley Springs.

City Manager Quinn Bennion acknowledged her concerns and noted that he had spoken with Joel Brown, who reported receiving over 300 phone calls on the issue. Mr. Bennion explained that while the map is alarming, it may be misleading. According to available information, the proposed legislation would only allow land sales for affordable housing within one mile of public utilities. This criteria does not apply to remote areas like Kings Peak or Ashley Springs which had been an item of concern. He emphasized that the City and County are paying close attention and are committed to protecting the springs.

Councilmember Ed Long thanked Ms. Pye for raising the issue and assured her that the City values public lands and is actively working to protect water resources. He confirmed that safety measures have been installed at Ashley Springs and that the issue remains a high priority for the Council.

Ms. Pye closed by urging continued vigilance, warning that if the community is not attentive, important lands could be lost.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business; *Councilmember Randel Mills moved to adjourn. Councilmember Corey Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.*