

Town of Independence

Town Council Meeting

06/10/2025 7:00 p.m.

In attendance: Mayor Pro Tem Rose Heaton, **Councilmembers** Gary Ryan, Bonnie Wilson, Tracy Sabey and Jim Tolbert.

Staff attendance: Jodi Hoffman, Cathy Bingham.

Others in attendance: Wayne Heaton, Kim Tolbert, Chuck Richins, and Randy Stocks.

1. Mayor Pro Tem Rose Heaton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Prayer. Councilmember Tolbert offered the prayer.
3. Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmember Sabey offered the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Review and possible adoption of draft minutes for May 20, 2025.
 - Councilmember Sabey moved to approve the draft minutes for May 20, 2025.
 - Councilmember Wilson seconded the motion.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
5. Road Update.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Rose Heaton told the Council that at the May 20, 2025 meeting the Council decided to hold off on the crack sealing project for the 2025-2026 Budget year because the State had issued a \$6 million grant for improvements of the Center Creek Irrigation Reservoirs. Mayor Pro Tem Rose Heaton asked Ms. Hoffman to tell the Council what she knew about the project.
 - Ms. Hoffman reported that this project is a Center Creek Irrigation project who is also working with the Gardner Group, the developers of the Kimball property. This grant is awarded by the State of Utah project and not a Town Project. As of today, she is uncertain if this grant includes funds for the repairs of roads if damaged by the heavy equipment used for the project. Ms. Hoffman will reach out to the Engineers doing the plans for the Center Creek Irrigation project to see if any funds are included for repairs of the road. Ms. Hoffman asked Chuck Richins, with Horrocks Engineers (the Towns' Engineer) to present options for analyzing the Towns' road conditions which would aid the Town in developing a long-term plan for repairs and reconstruction of the Towns roads. If the Council agreed, this analysis, if completed before the Reservoir project began could be used to determine the extent of damage, if any, that the Reservoir project caused.
 - Mr. Richins gave the Council a brief explanation on a LiDAR instrument. This instrument is attached to a vehicle and using artificial intelligence takes 360-degree imagery of asphalt roads showing imperfections, failing, cracking, potholes, etc. This instrument does not pick-up imperfections on gravel roads or concrete. The estimated cost for this service is

approximately \$6,250.00 which includes the equipment, set up and up to 32 miles of roads. In addition to the service, a video of the dirt portions of Center Creek Road could be added for an additional \$800.00

- Councilmember Wilson asked if doing a manual survey of the roads would be cheaper.
 - Mr. Richins explained the manual survey might be less expensive, but wouldn't be near as accurate as the LiDAR.
- Councilmember Tolbert asked what the benefits of the LiDAR system would be.
 - Councilmember Ryan thought the benefits would be to establish road conditions now before the work on the reservoirs begin and to get a base line of conditions to prioritize and budget repairs more accurately in the future.
 - Ms. Hoffman also said the LiDAR could be used in calculating square footage to determine each scope of work for bids to repair damaged portions of the roads.
- Wayne Heaton asked what the price difference would be in a manual assessment vs. the LiDAR since the Town only had a few miles of paved roads.
 - Mr. Richins said the cost would be about the same, but the LiDAR findings would be a lot more accurate and valuable.
- Ms. Hoffman is concerned about the amount of money spent on road repairs in the past and would like to see an objective record of the road conditions to have a schedule of repairs prepared.
- Council had concerns about the condition and repairs of the gravel road. Until the road is engineered to remove drainage issues, a new subbase is set, and the road is paved, grading is about the only way to repair it.
- Ms. Hoffman suggested the Council consider the LiDAR system, which would probably save money in repairs in the long run and would enable the Town to objectively prioritize repairs.

- Councilmember Wilson moved to approve the purchase of the LiDAR evaluation of the Town's paved road and the video survey of the dirt road.
- Councilmember Ryan seconded the motion.
- The motion passed unanimously.

6. Interview and possible appointment of Wayne R. Heaton for Mayor.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Rose Heaton introduced Wayne Heaton as a Candidate for Mayor to fill the remaining term of prior Mayor Phil Sweat, who resigned unexpectedly on May 20,

2025. Mayor Pro Tem Rose Heaton asked the Council to review Wayne Heaton's Letter of Intent to apply for the open Mayoral seat. She then recused herself from discussion.

- Councilman Tolbert liked Mr. Heaton's resume and asked Mr. Heaton how his philosophy of the Town differs from the prior Mayor's vision.
 - Mr. Heaton reported that he didn't know what the prior Mayor's Town philosophy was, but he did know that the prior Mayor had lived in the area all his life and that Mayor Sweat wanted to keep the Town the way it has always been. Mr. Heaton has only lived in the area 20 years and loves the way it is too. He also realizes the community is changing and keeping the Town the way it was years ago is not realistic. He would like to help control and direct the growth.
 - Councilmember Wilson asked Mr. Heaton if there was anything else he would like to add to his resume and asked if he had a personal interest in the town.
 - Mr. Heaton said he would like to see the Town progress and wants the Council to direct that progress. He also stated that he is just a residential property owner, has no financial interest in developments proposed in the Town, and will hear and consider the opinions of the Council and the residents of the Town in all matters, especially as it relates to new development.
 - Councilmember Sabey also liked Mr. Heaton's resume and had no other questions for him.
 - Councilmember Ryan said he read over Mr. Heaton's resume and by knowing Mr. Heaton and his views, Councilman Ryan is comfortable in appointing Mr. Heaton as Mayor.
- Councilmember Wilson made a motion to accept the appointment of Wayne R. Heaton as the Mayor of the Town of Independence.
- Councilmember Tolbert seconded the motion.
- The motion passed unanimously.

7. Swearing in of Jim Tolbert as a new Councilmember, and possible swearing in of Wayne Heaton as Mayor

- Cathy Bingham, Town Clerk swore in Jim Tolbert as Councilman until the term ends December 31, 2025.
- Cathy Bingham, Town Clerk swore in Wayne R. Heaton as Mayor until the term ends December 31, 2025.

8. Councilmember Heaton informed the Council that with the resignations of Mayor Sweat and Councilmember Bill Duke, she was the only authorized signatory for the Town's bank

account. Since she cannot sign her own check, nor the new Mayor's check, she asked the Council to approve additional signatories on the account. The Council designated Mayor Heaton, and Councilmembers Bonnie Wilson and Tracy Sabey as additional, authorized Town Bank account signatories. The Council acknowledged that any current Councilmember or Mayor are appropriate, authorized signatories on the Town bank account if they so choose. Councilmember Heaton noted that the Town should direct the bank to remove former Mayor Phil Sweat and former Councilmember Bill Duke as authorized signatories on the account.

9. Possible adoption of Resolution 2025-03 adopting an amendment to FY 2024-2025 Budget and approval of the FY 2025-2026 Budget.

- Ms. Hoffman explained the estimated ending budget for FY2024-2025. At the May 20, 2025, she projected a possible transfer of \$6,000 to the reserve fund. The surplus amount will probably be less due to an invoice from Larsen and Company for independent auditing services, which is required by the State.
- The FY 2025-2026 budget was changed after discussion at the May 20, 2025 to incorporate the following items.
 - \$200,000 was taken out of the road budget due to postponing the Center Creek Road chip sealing project until the repairs of the irrigation reservoirs are complete.
 - Additional funds were added to the administrative budget for a salary increase for the Town's Accountant.
 - The road budget consists of funds for snow removal, repairs and the cost of the LIDAR system and the video.
 - Councilmember Sabey and Kim Tolbert mentioned that the intersection of Duke Lane and Little Sweden Road needs to be repaired soon.
 - Ms. Hoffman will include said repairs in the FY 2026-2027 budget.
- Mayor Heaton asked Councilmember Tolbert if he would like to meet with Dave Sanderson, the Towns accountant to review and go over the accounting procedures. Councilmember Tolbert agreed and Ms. Hoffman and Councilmember Heaton will be invited to be a part of the discussion.
- Councilmember Sabey moved to approve Resolution 2025-03 adopting an amendment to FY 2024-2025 Budget and to approve the FY 2025-2026 Budget.
- Councilmember Wilson seconded the motion.
- The motion passed unanimously.

10. Development Update. Ms. Hoffman reported on current development applications/inquiries:

- Chuck Richens with Horrocks Engineers finished his review of the Signature Development. Ms. Hoffman will review the plans and when all requirements are met, the development will be sent to the Planning Commission for approval.
- A building permit has been issued for a Barn in the Deer Meadows subdivision.
- A property owner near the Benson Preservation Subdivision inquired about a possible RV Park on their property.
- The Gardner Group is finalizing plans with adjoining property owners for a road at the toe of the slope to keep traffic off the top of the hill on Center Creek Road.

11. Public Comments.

- Randy Stocks asked the Council if there was a way to inform Town residents of meetings to get more people involved in the decisions.
 - Ms. Hoffman replied that the meeting schedule was published in January of every year. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. except July and December. Meeting materials and notices are published on the Utah Public Notice Website.
 - Councilmember Wilson also suggested that word of mouth could also inform residents and neighbors.

12. Adjourn.

- Councilmember Wilson moved to adjourn at 8:55 p.m.
- Councilmember Sabey seconded the motion.
- The motion was approved unanimously.

Dated this 8th day of July 2025.



Wayne R. Heaton, Mayor



Lauren Bolger, Acting Town Clerk