

Town of Independence

Town Council Meeting

10/07/2025 7:00 p.m.

In attendance: Mayor Pro Tem Bonnie Wilson, Councilmembers Gary Ryan, Will Duke, Tracy Sabey, and Jim Tolbert.

Staff attendance: Jodi Hoffman and Lauren Bolger (acting Town Clerk).

Others in attendance: Kim Tolbert, Bud Remund, and Greg Cronin.

1. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Prayer. Councilmember Duke offered the prayer.
3. Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmember Sabey offered the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Swear in new Councilmember Will Duke.
 - Acting Town Clerk Lauren Bolger swore in Will Duke as a Councilperson.
5. Discussion and possible adoption of a new Town Treasurer.
 - Ms. Hoffman explained that due to the resignation of Rose Heaton, the previous Town Treasurer, the Town needs to appoint a new Treasurer. Ms. Hoffman said the Treasurer needs to be bonded. Some of the duties include attesting and signing documents required by the State Auditor's Office.
 - After discussion, the Council decided to tentatively appoint Councilmember Tolbert as the Town Treasurer. Councilmember Tolbert asked to meet with Ms. Hoffman to go over the requirements and get the necessary paperwork in order before accepting the appointment at the November meeting. The appointment and acceptance will be voted on at the November meeting.
6. Discussion and possible adoption of draft minutes for September 9, 2025.
 - Councilmember Sabey moved to approve the draft minutes for September 9, 2025.
 - Councilmember Ryan seconded the motion.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
7. Discussion and possible approval of the Larson and Company, PC Engagement and Representation Letter for annual audit
 - Ms. Hoffman explained to the Council that because the Town has over \$350,000 in annual revenues, the State Law requires an independent audit of the Town's finances. Larson and Company, PC provided this service to the Town last year and is interested in performing the work again this year. The contract fee for this work is \$4,100.00. Councilmember Tolbert asked if the Company accepts any liability. Ms. Hoffman explained that they only prepare a report, and if the audit reveals any concerns with the Town's practices or procedures, the Town will need to correct those items.

Councilmember Ryan noted the contract didn't say anything about the Company accepting any liability.

- Councilmember Ryan moved to approve the Larson and Company, PC Engagement and Representation Letter for the Annual Audit.
- Councilmember Sabey seconded the motion.
- The Motion passed unanimously.

8. Discussion of rules for General Public Comment at Public Meetings.

- Since there were no public attendees, Mayor Pro Tem Wilson suggested this item be continued until next the next meeting. Councilmember Tolbert thought it would be a good idea for the Council to discuss this item now before it was presented to the public.
- Ms. Hoffman explained that the League of Cities and Towns has a handout called the "Dignity Index" which rates discussions from 1-8, 8 being the highest most dignified way to communicate and 1 being the least, ie; number 1 being "*I think anyone who disagrees with me is evil and I don't want to listen to anything they say*"; number 8 being "*I treat everyone with respect and value their opinion and welcome it because I might learn something*".
- Public comment is on the agenda when the Council thinks it is necessary. It is not required. Ms. Hoffman and Mayor Pro Tem Wilson think comments are better dealt with on a one-on-one basis. The Town does not discourage communication. However, when public comments are heard at public meetings, some people can be inclined to "grandstand" and say hurtful things that they would not say in a more personal setting. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson would like to see more positive and respectful comments and eliminate the negative comments and feelings.
 - Budget and Land Use Decisions are items that statutorily require Public Hearings. These items require a 10-day notice and public comments must pertain to the agenda item being discussed.
 - General Public Comment can be added to the agenda and only require a 1-day notice. These comments are for items that are not on the agenda and are usually limited to a few minutes each. These comments are usually informal.
 - Councilmember Tolbert suggested the Council add 1 or 2 specific items to the agenda about which the public has voiced concerns. The Council could also discuss the correct process for comments. Councilmembers Tolbert and Duke feel that the public needs to be educated about the Town's policies, but they also feel it is not necessarily the Council's responsibility to educate them. The public should take the initiative to find out the facts. Councilmember Duke would like to clear up rumors that have been circulated in a respectful way and he acknowledged that it's ok for people to disagree.

- Mayor Pro Tem Wilson would like to minimize public comments at meetings. She noted that Ms. Hoffman has offered to meet with individuals to discuss their concerns. Councilmembers can also meet with individuals so long as there are less than 3 Councilmembers attending. More than 3 Councilmembers attending a meeting or discussion is considered a quorum, that would require noticing of a public meeting, recording of the meeting, and then meeting minutes prepared. Councilmember Ryan also liked having smaller meetings and discussion. Ms. Hoffman also suggested that it could be valuable to meet with the larger property owners within the Town and the original petitioners to see if their vision for their property has changed since incorporation.
- Mayor Pro Tem Wilson would like to see more discussion with the Council on rules regarding public comments and how to effectively present facts about the Town's processes at the next meeting. She would then like to add a further discussion of public comment to the agenda for the following meeting. The Council felt that public comments were an important part of Council meetings.

9. Update on Town email addresses for Mayor, Councilmembers and Planning Commission.
 - Ms. Bolger is continuing to work on the transition from Gmail accounts to .Gov addresses and should have everyone ready to convert by the next meeting.

10. Roads Update.

- The LiDAR study on the roads has been completed. Ms. Hoffman and Ms. Bolger were able to see the report and were shown how to read the report. Ms. Hoffman reported that Duke Lane and Little Sweden Road are in need of repair. Ms. Hoffman asked Chuck Richins (the Town Engineer) to prepare and prioritize a scope of work that prioritizes the order of the repair work that needs to be done. The Town Council will then review the estimated cost and the budget for each of these repairs and staff would prepare and send out invitations to bid for the authorized work.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Wilson asked if there were any developments that are close to being ready to be approved that could be required to improve any part of these roads.
 - Ms. Hoffman responded that there are no active conversations regarding developments in that area that could be required to improve many of the worst sections of our roads.
 - Ms. Hoffman reported that Mr. Richins will analyze the reports and objectively determine what type of repairs need to be made to ensure that the roads are safe. Future developments will be required to improve roads along their frontage up to the current road standards.
 - Ms. Hoffman replied that the corner of Duke Lane and Little Sweden Road just needs to be repaired. Councilmember Duke and Sabey said that it needs fixed better than the last time it was repaired, which did not hold up long.

11. Development Update.

- Ms. Hoffman reported that the postcard mailer language is ready, which includes the updated website and email addresses. Mailers could be sent out within the next month.
- Mayor Pro Tem Wilson asked the Council to review the proposed plaque to be presented to Rose Heaton. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson will make recommendations and will send a proof out for Council review.
- Ms. Hoffman, Ms. Bolger, and Dave Millheim met with Wasatch County Manager Dustin Grabau and cleared up some of the misconceptions that have been rumored throughout the County about the Town. Ms. Hoffman also attended a County-wide inter-local planning meeting with local jurisdictions and water and sewer districts. Some of these jurisdictions had also heard rumors of what was going on in the Town. Ms. Hoffman will continue to attend these meetings to represent the Town and provide accurate information for the attendees.
- A partial grading/infrastructure permit will soon be issued to Signature Development so they can get some of the water pipes in the ground while the water in Center Creek is low. The full construction/infrastructure permit for Phase 1 will be issued within the next month. The construction drawings and preliminary plat have been approved. Final Plat approval will happen when all outstanding comments have been addressed.
- Another company wants to add a repeater to one of the cell towers at Daniel Summit. They need approval from the land owner before the Town will accept the application.
- The Gardner Group received some interesting information from Twin Creeks Special Service District about their proposed water and sewer plans. The Gardner Group had initially planned to connect to the TCSSD Sewer Line. However, TCSSD told them they would not be able serve their development with sewer at this time. Ms. Hoffman will follow up with TCSSD.

12. Adjourn.

- Councilmember Tolbert moved to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.
- Councilmember Duke seconded the motion.
- The motion was approved unanimously.

Dated this 11th day of November 2025.

Bonnie Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem

Cathy Bingham, Town Clerk