

VERNAL CITY

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

TO THE PUBLIC AND RESIDENTS OF VERNAL CITY: Notice is hereby given that the **VERNAL CITY COUNCIL** will hold a regular meeting on **January 7, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Vernal City Council Chambers at 374 East Main St, Vernal, Utah.

A G E N D A

OPENING CEREMONY

1. Invocation or uplifting thought
2. Pledge of Allegiance

STANDING BUSINESS

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting held December 17, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING

4. Public Hearing for the EPA Brownsfield Cleanup Grant Application - Quinn Bennion

POLICY AND LEGISLATION

4. Consider Amendment to Vernal City Fee Schedule for Sewer Fees, Resolution 2026-01 - Keith Despain
5. City Council Committee Appointments for 2026 - Mayor Corey Foley
6. Appointment of Planning Commission Members - Braeden Christofferson

STAFF REPORTS

CLOSED SESSION

By motion of the Vernal City Council, pursuant to Utah State Code Title 52, Chapter 4, sections 204 and 205, the City Council may vote to hold a closed session for any of the purposes identified in that chapter.

ADJOURN

NOTE: Supporting documentation for this meeting can be found by visiting the Vernal City website at www.vernal.gov and in the Utah Public Notice Website www.utah.gov/pmn

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations during this meeting should notify Sara Bell, City Recorder, at 374 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078 or phone (435)789-2255 at least three days before the meeting.

The order of agenda items may change to accommodate the needs of the City Council, staff, and/or public.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor & City Council

From: Quinn Bennion, City Manager

RE: Agenda Items for January 7, 2026 Council Meeting

POLICY & LEGISLATION

- 3. Public Hearing for the EPA Brownsfield Cleanup Grant Application** - Quinn Bennion. The City is preparing to submit a grant application to the EPA to assist with environmental cleanup at the former Basin Laundry and Lamplighter property. In preparation for the grant application, the properties have undergone a Phase 1, Phase 2, Limited Site Investigation and ABCA studies. The properties have groundwater contamination from previous dry cleaning establishments in the area, asbestos in the brick hotel and possible petroleum impacted soils at a previous gas station location. Terracon has assisted the City in the preparation of the reports and grant. State Brownsfield funds have assisted with the costs. The public hearing is scheduled and noticed for public input, feedback and comments as required.
- 4. Consider Amendment to Vernal City Fee Schedule for Sewer Fees, Resolution 2026-01** - Keith Despain. This rate increase is a strict pass through from the recent increases from the Ashley Valley Sewer Management Board. The rate increase was applied to the city's rate structure. The City may explore another rate increase to cover capital costs in the future.
- 5. City Council Committee Appointments for 2026** - Mayor Corey Foley
- 6. Appointment of Planning Commission Members** - Braeden Christofferson. The Vernal City Planning Department is proposing to Council the approval and appointment of the following individuals to the Vernal City Planning Commission in order to fill current vacancies and confirm continuing service: Stephen Lytle, Ryan Balch, Troy Stephens, and Brittany Young. In addition, Aaron Bancroft and [Name to be provided] are proposed as new members to the Planning Commission. These appointments will ensure the Planning Commission remains fully staffed and able to effectively carry out its advisory role on land use and development matters in accordance with City Code.

1 **MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD,**
2 **DECEMBER 17, 2025** at 6:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East
3 Main, Vernal, Utah 84078.

4 **PRESENT:** Councilmembers Robin O'Driscoll, Randel Mills, Ted Munford Corey Foley and Ed
5 Long and Mayor Doug Hammond.

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

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

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

10 **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD**
11 **DECEMBER 3, 2025** *Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll moved to approve the minutes of the
12 Regular City Council Meeting held December 3, 2025. Councilmember Randel Mills seconded the
13 motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Munford, Mills, O'Driscoll, Long, and Foley
14 voting in favor.*

15 **CONSIDER THE AMENDMENT OF THE VERNAL CITY COMMUNITY ROOM**
16 **RENTAL PACKET - SARA BELL**

17 City Recorder Sara Bell provided an overview of proposed updates to the Community Room
18 Rental Packet, noting that the revisions resulted from a comprehensive review to correct outdated
19 language, clarify rules, and improve consistency in administration. Key changes include a clarified
20 reservation schedule allowing use Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., with
21 weekend and holiday use requiring advance coordination and the presence of a volunteer City
22 employee for the duration of the event. The revised packet also refines user responsibility
23 provisions, emphasizing accountability for supervision, damages, and cleanup, including for City
24 employees using the facility for personal events.

25 The revised fee schedule proposes modest increases to better offset wear and tear on City facilities.
26 Meeting or private event fees with light refreshments would increase to \$35 for a two-hour block,
27 while banquet or reception events would increase to \$60 for a two-hour block with a \$100
28 refundable deposit. Fee waived reservations for nonprofit, community, and governmental
29 organizations would be limited to four reservations per year to ensure broader availability and
30 reduce excessive recurring use that has limited City and Youth Council access to the room.

31 Mayor Hammond opened the discussion for public comment. Dorraine Robbins, a Girl Scout
32 leader, expressed concern that the new fee structure would make weekly meetings unaffordable
33 for volunteer-based youth programs. Councilmembers acknowledged the concern and emphasized
34 that the intent of the policy changes was not to exclude community groups. City Manager Quinn
35 Bennion suggested alternative options, including exploring subleasing space at Whitehouse
36 Academy or the county-owned Scout House. Dorraine clarified that four troops meet together,

**MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
DECEMBER 17, 2025**

45 totaling approximately 25 girls. Councilmembers recognized that long-term, recurring reservations
46 have limited availability of the room for City and Youth Council use. Councilmember Corey Foley
47 suggested exploring a service-in-kind option coordinated with a City department as a potential
48 way to offset fees, noting that any such option would need to be applied equitably to other
49 organizations.

50
51 *Councilmember Ted Munford made a motion to approve the amendment of the Community Room
52 Rental Packet as presented, and instructed staff to explore options discussed to help find a solution
53 for the groups affected. Councilmember Ed Long seconded the motion. The motion passed with
54 the following roll call vote:*

55
56 *Councilmember Munford..... aye;
57 Councilmember Mills..... aye;
58 Councilmember O'Driscoll..... aye;
59 Councilmember Long..... aye;
60 Councilmember Foley..... aye;*

61
62 **CONSIDER THE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2025-19 AMENDING THE VERNAL
63 CITY PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL REGARDING THE PTO
64 CAP AND CARRYOVER POLICY - QUINN BENNION**

65 City Manager Quinn Bennion reminded the Council of the recent changes made to the employee
66 leave policy and recommended a follow-up adjustment to improve implementation for both
67 employees and supervisors. The City is working toward lowering the cap on accumulated leave
68 hours, and while an initial one-year reduction period was adopted, staff is recommending
69 extending that timeline by an additional year. Mr. Bennion explained that allowing more time
70 would provide flexibility and help avoid staffing challenges that could occur if multiple employees
71 attempted to use or reduce large leave balances within a single year.

72
73 Councilmember Ed Long stated that this situation reflects the original intent of the policy change
74 and noted that the City has taken a step in the right direction. He expressed support for extending
75 the timeline as recommended by management, stating that the adjustment should be guided by
76 what makes the most practical business sense for City operations.

77
78 *Councilmember Ed Long motioned to approve Resolution 2025-19 amending the Vernal City
79 Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual regarding the PTO Cap and carryover policy.
80 Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll
81 call vote:*

82
83 *Councilmember Munford..... aye;
84 Councilmember Mills..... aye;
85 Councilmember O'Driscoll..... aye;
86 Councilmember Long..... aye;
87 Councilmember Foley..... aye;*

**MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
DECEMBER 17, 2025**

88 **CONSIDER THE APPROVAL OF \$20,000 TOWARDS A GEOTHERMAL NETWORK
89 STUDY - PHASE 1 - QUINN BENNION AND KEITH DESPAIN**

90 City Manager Quinn Bennion reviewed Vernal City's prior participation in a geothermal district
91 heating and cooling feasibility study, funded through a CIB planning grant with contributions from
92 Uintah County and the City. The concept builds on the existing geothermal field at City Hall and
93 would allow multiple buildings to share heating and cooling through a district system. The
94 completed feasibility study resulted in a report exceeding 300 pages and concluded the concept
95 was technically feasible. Quinn noted that County economic development funds totaling \$30,000
96 have been set aside for a related Phase 1 study, with a proposed \$20,000 contribution from Vernal
97 City, for a total of \$50,000, to advance the project to the next stage.

98 Public Works Director Keith Despain explained that the system would use water as an energy
100 transfer medium, extracting heat in the winter and rejecting heat in the summer, effectively using
101 the ground as a thermal battery. Phase 1 would refine energy demand data, potential service areas,
102 locations, and system modeling to generate more accurate figures. Keith stated the Phase 1 effort
103 would take approximately six months and would precede a potential Phase 2, which would further
104 address financial and implementation details.

105
106 Councilmembers expressed concerns regarding financial viability, long-term costs, and return on
107 investment. Councilmembers Randel Mills and Ed Long emphasized the need for preliminary cost
108 estimates, project scale, and payback timelines before committing City funds. Questions were
109 raised regarding whether the project could represent a multi-million-dollar investment and whether
110 benefits would justify a long-term payout period. Mr. Despain acknowledged that while technical
111 feasibility had been established, additional scoping and economic analysis would be necessary.
112 Analysis would include infrastructure costs, building retrofits, and potential funding sources such
113 as tax credits and grants. Staff agreed to return with preliminary cost scenarios, comparisons to
114 similar projects such as Hayden, Colorado, and clearer financial parameters. The item was tabled
115 to allow for additional analysis and information before further consideration.

116
117 **STAFF REPORTS**
118 For his final City Council Meeting, City Staff presented Mayor Doug Hammond with an engraved
119 plaque to honor his terms of service as Mayor of Vernal City.

120
121 **ADJOURN:** There being no further business; *Councilmember Randel Mills moved to adjourn.*
122 *Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote*
123 *and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

124
125
126 _____ Mayor Corey Foley
127 ATTEST:
128
129

130 Sara Bell, City Recorder (S E A L)

RESOLUTION 2026-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL AMENDING THE CHARGES FOR SERVICES FOR SEWER USER FEES.

WHEREAS, the cost from the sewer treatment plant has increased; and

WHEREAS, the City needs to adjust the fees to pay the increased costs; and

WHEREAS, the Vernal City Council of Vernal City desires to amend charges for service.

NOW THEREFORE, be it ordered and resolved by the Vernal City Council as follows:

SECTION 1. CHARGES FOR SERVICE.

Fee: Sewer User fee:

In-City:

Residential - Single Family	\$28.65 <ins>\$29.32</ins> / month
Commercial:	
1st 8,000 gallons of water usage	\$35.15 <ins>\$35.98</ins> / month
Over 8,000 gallons of water usage	\$5.15 <ins>\$6.06</ins> / 1000 gal
Duplex	\$57.30 <ins>\$58.64</ins> / month
Multi-Family	\$28.65 <ins>\$29.32</ins> / living unit / month
Based on 100% occupancy	
Manufactured Home Parks	\$28.65 <ins>\$29.32</ins> / living unit / month
Based on 100% occupancy	

Out-of-City:

Residential - Single Family	\$32.50 <ins>\$33.26</ins> / month
Commercial:	
1st 8,000 gallons of water usage	\$42.25 <ins>\$43.24</ins> / month
Over 8,000 gallons of water usage	\$5.15 <ins>\$6.06</ins> / 1000 gal
Duplex	\$65.00 <ins>\$66.52</ins> / month
Multi-Family	\$32.50 <ins>\$33.26</ins> / living unit / month
Based on 100% occupancy	
Manufactured Home Parks	\$32.50 <ins>\$33.26</ins> / living unit / month
Based on 100% occupancy	

(Amended 2024-14)

SECTION 2. SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this resolution shall be severable and if any provision thereof or the application of such provision under any circumstances is held invalid, it shall not affect any other provision of this resolution or the application in a different circumstance.

SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE. This resolution shall become effective the 1st day of January, 2026.

PASSED, AND ADOPTED this 7th day of January, 2026.

Mayor Corey Foley

ATTEST:

Sara Bell , City Recorder (S E A L)



2026 MONTHLY USER RATES

Adopted & Approved Resolution # 11182025-1

RATE TYPE	2023 RATE	2024 RATE	2025 RATE	2026 RATE	RATE CHANGE	RATE CHANGE %
RESIDENTIAL	\$14.74	\$14.74	\$15.30	\$ 15.66	\$0.36	2.35%
MULTI FAMILY UNITS TRAILER PARKS	\$14.74	\$14.74	\$15.30	\$ 15.66	\$0.36	2.35%
COMMERCIAL CONNECTIONS	\$19.56	\$19.56	\$20.40	\$ 20.88	\$0.48	2.35%
COMMERCIAL OVERAGE PER 1,000 GALS OVER 8,000 GALS.	\$1.63	\$1.63	\$1.98	\$ 2.33	\$0.35	17.68%

Max Haslem

Max Haslem / Chairperson

11-18-25

11/18/2025

Randell Mills

Randell Mills / Board Treasurer

11-18-25

11/18/2025

VERNAL CITY COUNCIL
2026 COMMITTEE AND BOARD ASSIGNMENTS

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Ted Munford
Robin O'Driscoll

AFFORDABLE HOUSING
SUB-COMMITTEE & REGIONAL
HOMELESS COMMITTEE

Nick Porter

AIRPORT REPRESENTATIVE

Randel Mills

ANIMAL SERVICES DISTRICT

Nick Porter

DOWNTOWN VERNAL ALLIANCE

Corey Foley

VERNAL MEMORIAL CEMETERY
BOARD

Nick Porter

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Robin O'Driscoll

CONSOLIDATED DISPATCH
GOVERNING BOARD

Robin O'Driscoll

FIRE SUPPRESSION DISTRICT
Robin O'Driscoll

HEALTH CARE SERVICES DISTRICT
Ed Long

INTERFAITH COUNCIL
Randel Mills

MOSQUITO ABATEMENT

Ted Munford

UINTAH COUNTY / VERNAL CITY
INTERLOCAL AGENCY

Randel Mills
Ed Long

VERNAL EXCITEMENT

Ted Munford

USSD #1

Ed Long

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Randel Mills
Ted Munford

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Ed Long
Nick Porter

SEWER MANAGEMENT BOARD
Randel Mills
Corey Foley

UBAG & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
BOARD / RLF BOARD
Corey Foley

UINTAH BASIN NARCOTICS STRIKE
FORCE GOVERNING BOARD
Robin O'Driscoll

VICTIM ADVOCACY
Ted Munford

YOUTH CITY COUNCIL ADVISOR
Robin O'Driscoll

Council Board and Committee Assignments 2026 Year Summary

Corey Foley (Mayor)

- Downtown Vernal Alliance
- UBAoG & Economic Development Board / RLF Board
- Sewer Management Board - Paid Position

Nick Porter

- Affordable Housing Sub-Committee & Regional Homeless Committee
- Vernal Memorial Cemetery
- Public Works Committee
- Animal Service District -Paid Position

Ted Munford

- Administrative Committee
- Mosquito Abatement - Paid Position
- Vernal Excitement
- Public Safety Committee
- Victim Advocacy

Robin O'Driscoll

- Administrative Committee
- Consolidated Dispatch Governing Board
- Fire Suppression District - Paid Position
- Uintah Basin Narcotics Strike Force Governing Board
- Youth City Council Advisor
- Chamber of Commerce Board Rep

Randel Mills

- Interfaith Council
- Uintah County/Vernal City Interlocal Agency
- Public Safety Committee
- Sewer Management Board Currently Board Treasurer - Paid Position
- Airport Board Rep

Ed Long

- Health Care Service District
- Uintah County / Vernal City Interlocal Agency
- Public Works Committee
- USSD1 (Rec Board) -Paid Position