

Town of Independence

Town Council Meeting

04/08/2026 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 Cathy Bingham

Others in attendance: Lauren Bolger, Sonya Duke, and Greg Cronan

1. Mayor Pro Tem Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
2. Prayer. Councilmember Ryan offered the prayer.
3. Pledge of Allegiance. Councilmember Sabey offered the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Discussion and possible adoption of draft minutes for February 4, 2026.
 - Councilmember Duke moved to approve the draft minutes for February 4, 2026.
 - Councilmember Tolbert seconded the motion.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
5. Public Hearing for Ordinance 2026-02 Fireworks Restrictions.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Wilson opened the Public Hearing at 7:10p.m.
 - Ms. Hoffman explained the Ordinance and reported that the Wasatch County Fire District would like the Town to get a Fireworks Restriction Ordinance in place as soon as possible due to insufficient snow pack this year. The Ordinance prohibits the use of fireworks at all times within the Town of Independence. The Fire Chief urged the Town to not include an ending date so the Ordinance will stay effective from the date the Ordinance is signed and stay in effect until the Town adopts and Ordinance to edit or terminate it.
 - No public comments were made.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Wilson closed the Public Hearing at 7:11 p.m.
6. Discussion and possible adoption of Ordinance 2026-02 Fireworks Restrictions.
 - Councilmember Tolbert moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-02 Fireworks Restrictions.
 - Councilmember Duke seconded the motion.
 - The motion passed unanimously.
7. Discussion regarding civility in public meetings and public outreach.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Wilson asked for this item to be continued.

8. Land Use Training.

- The Legislature requires Land Use Training for Town Councils and Planning Commissions every year. Ms. Hoffman provided the Council with an explanation of the land use duties and requirements for the Town of Independence, its Planning Commission, and staff.
 - Every Town is required to have a General Plan in place prior to adopting a zoning ordinance.
 - A General Plan is a future vision and is not a zoning ordinance.
 - A General Plan is a vision of how the community encourage property owners to develop in the future in a manner that is consistent with state law.
 - The Independence General Plan was created by getting input from virtually all property owners within the town about what they wanted to do with their property. There were a few things which they didn't want to see; traffic, crime, increase in property taxes, etc. Citizens acknowledged they didn't want to take away property rights of anyone. The major consensus of the property owners was having generational benefits (having a place for future generations) that did not cause adverse impacts on their neighbors.
 - The Independence General Plan is not like most General Plans; it does not dictate maximum densities but rather is comprehensive in detailing the requirements to obtain a zone change in a manner that does not have adverse off-site impacts, specifically with regard to infrastructure, local property taxes, traffic, and crime.
 - General Plans are not zoning codes and do not affect the current zoning codes.
 - The Town Council has legislative power, which give it the authority to approve zoning changes in a manner that is consistent with state law.
 - Subdivision law requires an administrative approval, once all objective requirements for the subdivision design and infrastructure are met. The town may only require one public hearing on a subdivision application and has a very limited time within which it must approve a subdivision application that complies with local land use regulations.
 - State legislation is continually revised to take away local discretion to control land use within municipalities.
- Councilmember Duke asked how the current infrastructure requirements and standards were put in place; Councilmember Tolbert asked if the Council can change its subdivision Standards and Codes.
 - Ms. Hoffman replied that when the Town was incorporated, the Council adopted the then-current (2008) Wasatch County Land Use Regulations, Standards, and Codes. All of these rules can be modified with Council approval. Some of them

have been since incorporation in a manner that provides additional property rights.

- Independence has contracted with AOKA Engineers to review and inspect building permits in the Town.
 - The Town currently has no building permit fees. Any cost for AOKA services is passed on to the property owner.
- Mayor Pro Tem Wilson asked if the Town has any affordable housing requirements.
 - The Town does not have any affordable housing requirements under the background zoning adopted immediately after incorporation. If a developer asks for a zone change, affordable housing requirements should be addressed to ensure that new growth results in the development of an affordable place to live for people who will work in the community .

9. Review of General Plan chapters 1 and 2.

- Ms. Hoffman and the Council reviewed chapters 1 and 2 and discussed possible ways of involving and informing the public in the review of the General Plan to help them better understand it.
- Mayor Pro Tem Wilson encouraged the Council to bring ideas to the next meeting about how to facilitate an informal get together/open house with members of the community to address some of their concerns.

10. Roads Update

- Chuck Richins of Horrocks Engineers reported to Ms. Hoffman that based on the LiDAR assessment Little Sweden Road is the #1 priority for this year's road improvement project. Ms. Hoffman asked Mr. Richins to prepare a cost estimate and scope of work for this project so it can be included in budget.

11. Development Update.

- A few cell phone companies have received building permits for improvements in the Daniels Summit Lodge area.
- The Gardner Group would like the Town to contact Wendy Fisher with Utah Open Lands about putting a Conservation Easement on their property.

12. Public Comments.

- No public comments.

13. Adjourn.

- Councilmember Duke moved to adjourn at 8:59 p.m.
- Councilmember Tolbert seconded the motion.
- The motion was approved unanimously.

Dated this 13th day of May 2026.

Bonnie Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem

Cathy Bingham, Town Clerk

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