

**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL
MEETING**

February 10, 2026

7:00 PM

City Hall



CITY OF MILLS
EST. 1921

Mayor:

Leah Juarez

Council President:

Brad Neumiller

Council Members:

Cherie Butcher

Sara McCarthy

Tim Sutherland

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Juarez

President Neumiller

Council Sutherland

Council McCarthy

Council Butcher

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes

1. Council Meeting Minutes 1-27-26

City Licenses

2. New / Renewal Business / Contractor Licenses and Home Occupation Permits

Financial Approvals

3. Financial Breakdown - Check Register & Future ACH/EFT Transactions
4. PAID ACH / EFT Transactions
5. Regular / Police Payroll 1-12-26 to 1-25-26
6. Fire Payroll 1-21-26 to 2-1-26
7. Transmittal Transactions
8. Reserve Transfers
9. Treasurer's Report
10. Court Report
11. Voided Checks

Motion made by Council Member Butcher, Seconded by Council Member Sutherland, Voting Yea: Council Member McCarthy, Mayor Juarez, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland, and Council Member Butcher, motion passes

OPEN DISCUSSION

Scott Clamp addressed the council regarding the historic significance of the original Mills fire hall and several associated artifacts. Scott explained that years ago, when the former fire hall and community building were being considered for demolition, he gathered over 600 signatures to preserve the structure. He noted that the building held important historical value, including being the first pre-cast building in the State of Wyoming and formerly serving as the emergency evacuation site for the Mills School. He also recalled that the land was originally donated to the Town of Mills with stipulations that if the building were ever demolished, ownership of the land would revert back to the county.

Scott shared that past councils had secured a grant of approximately \$750,000 for improvements to the old fire hall, and although the full extent of that investment is not visibly apparent, the community ultimately succeeded in preserving the structure.

He also discussed the history of the town bell and hose cart, explaining that these items were intended to remain at the old fire hall site as historic features. Although the bell was previously removed, Scott noted that it had been donated back to the Town—not specifically to the fire department—and a prior council had voted to return the artifacts to their original location. This relocation never occurred.

Scott expressed support for now incorporating the bell and hose cart into Service & Sacrifice Park, given the direction of the current project. He suggested constructing a dedicated memorial feature using the bell and placing engraved bricks around it to honor past Mills firefighters, police officers, former mayors, council members, and other community contributors. He emphasized the importance of installing any masonry elements at least 18 inches above ground level to prevent deterioration from snow and moisture.

Scott also offered to speak with local stone engravers and monument companies to determine whether they would be willing to assist with brick engraving at a reduced cost or as a community partnership. He explained that previous attempts to engrave bricks personally were not successful, but he believes a professional engraver may be willing to support the project, especially if acknowledged at the site.

Council thanked Scott for providing the historical context and for bringing forward ideas that could enhance the Service & Sacrifice Park project.

Merrily Johnston, known in the community as “Merrily the Clown,” spoke regarding the cancellation of Summerfest. Marily stated she has been a vendor at Summerfest for the past five to six years and emphasized the importance of the event to small businesses, families, and the broader community.

She described Summerfest as one of the most successful and enjoyable events she participates in each year, noting it provides a positive, family-friendly atmosphere, draws community members together, and offers local vendors meaningful opportunities to connect with customers, grow their businesses, and generate needed income. She expressed her disappointment in learning that the event had been cancelled, stating that many vendors rely on events like Summerfest to supplement their income throughout the year.

Merrily asked the council whether there were specific concerns or challenges—such as staffing or resource limitations—that contributed to the cancellation, and whether the event could be reconsidered if adequate community volunteers were willing to assist. She noted that many residents and vendors value the event deeply and would likely step forward to help if given the opportunity. She requested clarification on what would be required for Summerfest to return and how the vendor community could work collaboratively with the City to support those needs.

She concluded by sharing how meaningful the event is to her personally, stating that hearing children recognize her as “Merrily the Clown from Summerfest” highlights the positive impact the event has on families. Merrily reiterated her belief that, especially in challenging times, community events like Summerfest help bring people together around a positive shared goal. She thanked the council for their time and for considering the perspectives of vendors and community members.

Larry Seems addressed the council regarding the display of United States flags at City facilities. Larry stated that he drives through the area frequently and has observed that although there are flagpoles—with lighting—in front of Mills City Hall, and between the Mills Police Department and **Mills Fire Department, flags are not being flown at these locations.

Larry noted that because the poles are illuminated, flags could legally be flown 24 hours a day. He also mentioned that the flagpole at the City’s maintenance facility is maintained by the fire department, but the primary civic buildings do not currently display a flag. He asked the council why flags are not being flown at City Hall and at the police station/fire station area.

Wil Gay responded to the concerns raised regarding the absence of flags on the flagpoles at Mills City Hall and between the Mills Fire Department and Mills Police Department.

Chief Gay explained that the City Hall flagpole is currently unusable due to a broken lanyard, which had previously been replaced shortly before former Public Works employee George retired. After a windstorm brought the flags down, the lanyard snapped again. He noted that the City does not have equipment tall enough to safely reach the top of that pole for repairs. The last repair was made with the assistance of Enoch, who provided a bucket truck.

Regarding the shared police/fire flagpole, Chief Gay stated that those flags were removed due to high winds repeatedly shredding them. Approximately a week and a half ago, authorization was given to reinstall the flags; however, they have not yet been put back up.

Chief Gay added that similar lanyard issues have occurred at other City locations, including the flagpole at the park on 13th Street, which required assistance from Bar D Signs to make repairs. He recommended contacting them again to assess and repair the City Hall pole.

He also noted that the rope diameter on the City Hall flagpole has been an ongoing challenge; after previous replacement, staff had difficulty operating the pulley system due to improper sizing.

Chief Gay and members of the council briefly discussed flag durability. Larry had suggested using black-lined or reinforced flags for better wind tolerance; however, Chief Gay explained that reinforced edging and heavier material do not necessarily extend longevity. Both the City and Veterans organizations typically replace flags at Veterans Park and Memorial Park as needed due to wind damage, generally flying 4x6 American flags and 3x5 service or secondary flags.

Chief Gay stated the City will reach out to Bar D Signs to inspect the poles and assist with repairing or replacing the lanyard. At minimum, efforts will be made to reinstall the flags at the police/fire station promptly.

Mayor Juarez responded to the public comment regarding the cancellation of Summerfest. Mayor Juarez stated that she had hoped Council Member McCarthy, who previously served as chair for Summerfest would speak on the matter. She explained that Council Member McCarthy had recently stepped down from her role overseeing the event.

Mayor Juarez acknowledged that Summerfest has historically been a well-loved community event and noted that many residents and vendors have expressed how meaningful it is to them. She emphasized, however, that the event requires significant preparation, coordination, and a large number of volunteers, and that volunteer availability has been a major challenge.

She added that although the City recognizes the value Summerfest brings to the community, the decision to step back from hosting it this year was made due to the substantial workload and limited staffing and volunteer resources available to support it.

Mayor Juarez further explained that the intention was not to end Summerfest permanently, but rather to pause the event for this year with the goal of revisiting the event next year. She noted that Summerfest is one of the City's largest annual community draws and remains an event the City values.

Mayor Juarez also referenced the importance of event sponsors, acknowledging that Summerfest has historically relied on strong sponsorship support. She indicated that any future relaunch of the event would need to include early coordination with sponsors, volunteers, and community partners to ensure the workload is manageable and the event can be delivered successfully.

Council Member McCarthy added further context regarding the challenges surrounding Summerfest. She noted that many of the businesses and organizations that typically sponsor Summerfest are now committing their sponsorship funds to the Service and Sacrifice Park.

Council Member McCarthy explained that this shift in community sponsorship support has made it difficult to ask those same sponsors to "double dip" and financially support both projects at the same time. She stated that this has been a significant struggle when evaluating the feasibility of holding Summerfest this year, as adequate sponsorship is essential to covering event costs.

Council Member McCarthy also shared that she recently learned the Summer Hits at Hat Six event, typically held at the Hat Six Travel Center, is also taking a pause this year. She noted that while this information may or may not influence the City's decisions regarding Summerfest, the fact that another major regional summer event is stepping back highlights the broader challenges communities and organizers are facing with staffing, volunteer capacity, and event coordination.

Mayor Juarez added that many organizations and communities are currently recalibrating their finances, noting that several costs have increased more than anticipated this year. She stated that these broader financial pressures are affecting events across the region, not just Summerfest.

Mayor Juarez encouraged attendees to stay engaged with activities at the Ford Wyoming Center, explaining that the facility has significant events planned that will offer community members additional options for summer entertainment. She expressed optimism that residents would continue supporting local and regional activities while the City evaluates future plans for Summerfest.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

12. ORDINANCE NO. 833 - THIRD AND FINAL READING

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AN APPEALS BOARD FOR THE CITY OF MILLS, WYOMING

Motion made by Council President Neumiller, Seconded by Council Member Sutherland,
Voting Yea: Council Member McCarthy, Mayor Juarez, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland, and Council Member Butcher, motion passes

13. ORDINANCE NO. 834 - SECOND READING

ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR ASSERTING LIENS ON CERTAIN PROPERTIES WHICH HAVE DELINQUENT WATER AND SEWER BILLS

Motion made by Council President Neumiller, Seconded by Council Member Sutherland,
Voting Yea: Council Member McCarthy, Mayor Juarez, Council President Neumiller, Council Member
Sutherland, and Council Member Butcher, motion passes

14. ORDINANCE NO. 835 - SECOND READING

ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR ADJUSTMENT OF CERTAIN WATER BILLS

Motion made by Council President Neumiller, Seconded by Council Member Sutherland,
Voting Yea: Council Member McCarthy, Mayor Juarez, Council President Neumiller, Council Member
Sutherland, and Council Member Butcher, motion passes

COUNCIL APPROVALS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

15. Legal Matter

Motion made by Council President Neumiller to go into an executive session legal matter at 7:20pm, Seconded by
Council Member Sutherland,
Voting Yea: Council Member McCarthy, Mayor Juarez, Council President Neumiller, Council Member
Sutherland, and Council Member Butcher, motion passes

All members of council returned from the executive session at 7:29pm.

Motion was made by Council Member Butcher to authorize the medical biller to write off certain medical bills for
the deceased and or bankrupt, Council President Neumiller seconded the motion. Voting Yea: Council Member
McCarthy, Mayor Juarez, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland, and Council Member
Butcher, motion passes

Mayor Leah Juarez asked the City Attorney whether the council should address the pending specific appeal at this
meeting or handle it separately under a broader policy discussion.

The City Attorney advised that the council should address the individual appeal at this meeting to ensure proper
authorization in case the matter is time-sensitive. A comprehensive review of the appeals policy can then be
scheduled for discussion at a future council meeting.

Motion was made by Council Butcher to authorize the fire chief and the medical biller to appeal on Medicaid and
CMS payments when they feel are necessary. Motion was seconded by Council Sutherland. Voting Yea: Council
Member McCarthy, Mayor Juarez, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland, and Council
Member Butcher, motion passes

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Butcher made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm, motion was seconded by Council
McCarthy, Voting Yea: Council Member McCarthy, Mayor Juarez, Council President Neumiller, Council
Member Sutherland, and Council Member Butcher, motion passes

AGENDA SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

NEXT MEETING - February 24, 2026 at 7:00pm / March 10, 2026 at 7:00pm

NEXT WORK SESSION - February 24, 2026 at 6:00pm / March 9, 2026 at 9:00am

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons who need accommodation in order to attend or participate in this meeting should contact City Hall at 307-234-6679 within 48 hours prior to the meeting in order to request such assistance.

Mayor, Leah Juarez

City Clerk, Sarah Osborn