

**BRIDGER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES FOR A PUBLIC HEARING  
HELD ON FEBRUARY 9, 2021**

The February 9, 2021 public hearing of the Bridger Town Council was held at 108 South D Street in Bridger. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The meeting was brought to order by Mayor Shultz at 6:30 pm. Council members present were Shala Cullum, Dustin Taylor, Mark DeRudder and Doug Asbury. Others present were Dustin Timmons, Brenda Wham, Attorney Ray Kuntz, Judge Bert Kraft, Police Chief Buechler and Clerk Kirstin Sweet.

Mayor Shultz asked for public comment on the variance. Brenda Wham was present on behalf of Rolly Reamy. She commented regarding the definition of Residential A zoning. Dustin Timmons explained his plan for the property if the variance was granted. Clerk Sweet explained the background on the property regarding a different variance application submitted in January 2011. Attorney Kuntz explained how the variance would flow from property owner to property owner, it would remain as long as the use remained.

There being no further business Councilman DeRudder motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Cullum. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye. Meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm.

  
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Clifford Shultz, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Kirstin Sweet, Town Clerk

**BRIDGER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES FOR A REGULAR MEETING  
HELD ON FEBRUARY 9, 2021**

The February 9, 2021 meeting of the Bridger Town Council was held at 108 South D Street in Bridger. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and the meeting was called to order by Mayor Shultz at 7:00 pm. Council members present were Dustin Taylor, Shala Cullum, Mark DeRudder and Doug Asbury. Others present were Dillon Thomas, Dustin Timmons, Attorney Ray Kuntz, Judge Bert Kraft, Public Works Director Randy Novakovich, Police Chief Mike Buechler and Clerk Kirstin Sweet.

The next item on the agenda was public comment. Dillon Thomas read a comment written by him to the council regarding the fire department budget. His typed comment is attached hereto. Judge Bert Kraft commented that speeding tickets for less than 33 mph in a 25-mph speed limit are extremely rare. Clerk Sweet also commented that the Police Reserve Training Fund is allocated by the State Auditors Office and that money MUST be put into that fund. And the Fire Disability Fund gets the exact same amount from the State Auditors Office that is subsequently paid out to the Fire Relief Association.

Next on the agenda was the approval of the minutes from the January 5, 2021 regular meeting. Councilwoman Cullum motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye.

The next item of business was the approval of claims. The department heads answered questions regarding the claims. Councilwoman Cullum made a motion to approve the claims including check #33039 to #33072. Also, electronic checks #-98308 to #-98305. The motion was seconded by Councilman Asbury. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye.

Next on the agenda was the Payroll Summary. Councilwoman Cullum motioned to approve the payroll summary including check #32999 and #33036 to #33037. Also, electronic checks #-86737 to #-86708. Councilman Taylor seconded the motion. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye.

Committee reports was the next item on the agenda. No committee reports.

The next item on the agenda was a variance application from Dustin Timmons. Mayor Shultz reviewed the application with the council and the public. The Mayor asked for discussion. Discussion was had regarding the utilities and setbacks and the usage of the property in the past. Attorney Kuntz suggested some language to make a clear record as to what was approved. Councilwoman Cullum motioned to approve the variance application with restrictions outlined in the approval sheet. Councilman Taylor seconded the motion. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye.

The next item on the agenda was special events applications. The first was from the Jim Bridger Days Committee for a dance and dinner on March 19, 2021. A motion to approve the application was made by Councilwoman Cullum, seconded by Councilman Asbury. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye. The second application was from Androlia-Thomas Wedding for a wedding reception at the Civic Center on April 24, 2021. A motion to approve the application was made by Councilman DeRudder, seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye.

The next agenda item was lease agreements. The first lease agreement was for HDC, Inc. A motion to approve the lease agreement was made by Councilman Taylor, seconded by Councilman Asbury. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye. The second lease agreement was for the Bridger Community Food Bank. Discussion was had regarding the state of disarray in the current leased space, cleanliness of the bathrooms and the toilets that do not function properly. Discussions have been had with the previous food bank president but a reminder to the new president seems to be in order. Public Works Director Novakovich will look at the toilets. A motion to approve the lease was made by Councilman Asbury, seconded Councilman DeRudder. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye.

Next on the agenda was an agreement with ExxonMobile for temporary workspace around an existing easement they have at the Town's water tank property. Clerk Sweet, Attorney Kuntz and Mayor Shultz explained

the agreement. A motion was made to approve the lease by Councilwoman Cullum, seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye.

The next item of business was to appoint a new member to the Library Board. Library Director Zentner was not present but asked that the council approve the appointment of Dorothy Asbury to the Library Board. A motion to approve Dorothy Asbury was made by Councilwoman Cullum and seconded by Councilman DeRudder. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – abstain.

Attorney Kuntz gave an update on the Hardin v. Town of Bridger case. He also asked the council’s opinion regarding a municipal speeding ordinance. Discussion was had regarding the impacts of such ordinance. Attorney Kuntz will draft the ordinance.

Judge Kraft presented stats for January. He also commented on the stats from the criminal justice are vastly understated. If someone wanted our stats regarding court case numbers, they should stop by the court and Judge Kraft can provide them.

Library Director Zentner was not present.

Public Works Director Novakovich mentioned we may need have the water tank property surveyed.

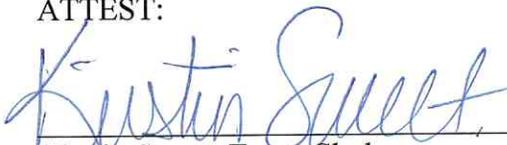
Chief Buechler presented his stats for the month of January.

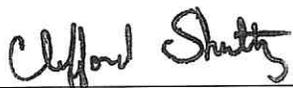
Clerk Sweet mentioned we may have found a Beartooth RC & D board member.

Mayor Shultz had nothing to report. Councilwoman Cullum reported that Free Food Delivery has been rescheduled for February 11, 2021.

There being no further business Councilman DeRudder motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Asbury. The motion carried with the votes as follows: Councilman Taylor – aye, Councilwoman Cullum – aye, Councilman DeRudder – aye and Councilman Asbury – aye. Meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.

ATTEST:

  
Kirstin Sweet, Town Clerk

  
Clifford Shultz, Mayor

## Thomas, Dillon

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**Subject:** \$13

Hello City Council,

I am making my voice heard tonight in public comment as a concerned tax paying citizen.

I've heard the city fire department has a back up battery system that is in disarray and needs repaired. The estimated cost is \$7k, the fire budget does not have the money to repair or maintain the equipment they have. In the past week or so I began looking at the city budgets; through the dollars review and a few items have me concerned on where the cities priorities lie.

1<sup>st</sup> – In the capital improvements fund there are 5 groups that equate to a total of \$197,064.00 only \$12,132.00 (~6.2%) is for fire protection and control. To add to this the fire department is the least funded account group in the capital investments fund. The rodeo grounds has an account balance of \$19,044.00. When I look at these numbers I see the city ranking the rodeo grounds as a higher priority than the fire department. When I look at these numbers I see the city prioritizing the long term investment in favor of the rodeo grounds versus fire protection. From a 5000' level it appears the fire department is not as important as the rodeo grounds.

2<sup>nd</sup> – On my home owners insurance policy, the town specifics on fire response, water pressure and availability, etc. rank really good. Because of this good "fire credit score" I receive a discount on my insurance because my insurance company believes that the Town of Bridger is adequately supplied with the resources they need to save my house and reduce the pay-out needed from the insurance company. What my HOI company does not know is the negligence that has fallen on the fire departments door step. For example, the total fire budget for the fiscal year is \$11,656.00 of which \$4,156.00 is considered "spent" on utilities and workers compensation. This leaves \$7,500.00 this fiscal year for the department to repair, fuel and replace items and machinery they use for training, etc. This \$7,500.00 is also expected to be used to replace the fire fighters PPE and the truck and equipment they use. So one day when/if my house does catch on fire the department has the resources available to save my house from a total loss. So I took a step back and started Googling replacement costs of some of the items a fire department has to deal with. Every 15 years the structure gear & SCBA's have to be replacement per NFPA and federal guidelines. This costs on average \$12K. The structure engine the city has is approaching 30 years old, on average the life expectancy of an engine is 20 years. The main reason is departments and city councils don't wait to replace the fire truck until it breaks is because the time it breaks will probably be when the school is on fire. This doesn't seem too bad, with a \$7,500 annual budget and only \$12k every 15 years as a needed expenditure. That's a \$112,500.00 account when appreciation is accounted for over 15 years. The catch is the \$12k cost for PPE every 15 years is only for ONE fire fighter. The department currently has 16 members. This would require a bare minimum budget, only for PPE, of \$192,000 over 15 years or an annual budget of ~\$13k to keep the men and women on the fire department safe and within federal compliance. This budget nor the capital improvements fund have, account for or are currently planning to set aside dollars for general facility and apparatus maintenance, repair or replacement. If my insurance company was to have this information known, I would pay much higher premiums. Affecting my monthly expenses and my families well being and safety.

3<sup>rd</sup> – The reserve police department is entitled to a training budget of \$2,507.00 per year. The fire department has \$0 for training. It appears to me the city council prioritizes the importance of training a police officer on how to give the motoring public a speeding ticket for doing 27 in a 25 over training fire fighters how to safely fight a fire and be able to return home to their families.

4<sup>th</sup> – The Police budget is allocated \$23,700.00 a year for supplies, why is the fire department supply budget not the same? If the answer is because the police are paid, then by all means pay the fire fighters so they too can have a

manageable budget. I, from the outside looking in, don't see this happening though. The city prioritizes employing 3 full times police officers when a town 6 miles away has 0 and the crime/drug stats are fairly comparable.

In closing, what are you, the city council, who oversees the city fire department going to do to ensure the fire department will be able to respond safely, effectively and in a timely manner to a house fire in 10 years.