

Minutes of the Altamont Town Council Meeting
August 14, 2025

Present:

Clyde Watkins

Scott Allen

Glen Jessen

Russell Sorensen

Craig Kettle, Town Employee

Amanda (Mandy) Gardner, Town Clerk

Russel Sorensen was not present

Clyde Watkins called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Public:

Suzzy Rowley left 7:13 pm

Shane Rowley left 7:13 pm

Minutes Approved

A Motion was made by Glen Jessen to approve the minutes of July 10, 2025 as written. Motion seconded by Scott Allen. Motion carried unanimously.

The agenda was adjusted to move the cemetery discussion up on the agenda.

Cemeteries

The council deliberated on an agreement for an access easement pertaining to the cemetery, with the objective of encompassing both parties and mitigating future litigation.

- **Access Easement Agreement:** An agreement for access easement was presented for review.
- **Purpose:** The agreement aims to protect both involved parties and provide a "way of resolving something if something comes up down the road in 75 years and we're not here and to keep it out of litigation."
- **Survey Details:** Ryan Allred provided an email quoting the survey cost at \$1800.
- The survey will establish "20-foot access into the pond, the whole pond area inside the fence. 20-foot access up the pipeline." This ensures easement for pipeline maintenance.
- Property lines will be delineated along fence lines, and land will be exchanged beneath the hill, relocating the fence to the bank.
- Two parcels of land associated with "Western a credit" will be separated for trading purposes.
- **County Involvement:** The county prefers to allow the boundaries to be moved and just be included in the partial numbers that already exist for both properties, thereby avoiding the creation of new parcel numbers. This was confirmed by Ryan after consultation with the county.
- **Next Steps:** The council intends to finalize the agreement over the next several months, aiming for a final draft for signing by the subsequent meeting after residents have had an opportunity to review it. The survey will then be recorded.

The fire department: Protection agreement and department update

- **Fire Protection Agreement:** The agreement was reviewed and deemed satisfactory.

- **Major Change:** A new clause grants the county fire department the authority to assume control of a fire if deemed necessary. This addition addresses other instances occurring within the county to ensure proper management should a local department not be fulfilling its responsibilities adequately.
- **Financials:** The agreement stipulates an increase from the preceding year, along with a consistent annual increment of 2.5%. The council considers this a favorable arrangement, asserting that they have consistently cooperated and that the county has demonstrated considerable understanding.
- **Motion to Approve:** A motion was made by Glen Jessen to "accept and sign the 2025 fire agreement, which was seconded by Vickie Jessen and unanimously passed.
- **Department Update:**
 - **Tender Truck:** The fire tender has been at Monroe fire for the past month, estimated to have generated approximately \$100,000.
 - **Assistance to Other Areas:** Personnel assisted Deer Creek Fire (south of Moab, recently released) and aided South and Neola and Monarch with a brush fire the preceding weekend.
 - **Non-Fire Call:** Responded to an "extrication" at a trailer park where a child fell from a roof into a metal shed.
 - **Local Incidents:** A small grass fire occurred locally when "a bird had got in the transformer pole. And the bird blew up, caught on fire, and started a little grass fire."
 - **Equipment & Staffing:** The department is actively searching for new trucks, decent used are ones costing 150 to 175 thousand dollars.
 - Concern was raised about not short handing ourselves here by deploying too many personnel outside the county. Josh, from the county, has also expressed this concern.
 - **Training:** A wildland fire training was scheduled for that evening.

Crossing Guard

- **Candidate :** Anna Lounsbury is under consideration.
- **Backup:** Deb Jenkins was contemplating applying for the position, potentially for interim duties, which would be crucial as the current capacity is lacking.
- **Equipment:** New equipment, including a sign and a new cone, was deemed necessary due to the poor condition of the current cone ("all beat up"). The council discussed providing additional equipment.
- **Equipment Storage:** Concerns were raised regarding her not possessing a vehicle. Ideas for storing equipment included a "tin up on each side of the road," a "box on one side or the other with a lock," or a "rigid tool box." The council ultimately decided to "just talk to her and see what it'll work for her" prior to constructing any storage solutions. The possibility of the school storing the equipment was discussed.

Roads

- **Chipping Project:** The recent chipping and oiling project, especially on the "bottom part of town," "looks so nice."

- **Cost:** The county provided an approximate quote of \$20,000 prior to the final spray. The council concurred that a cost of \$20,000 would represent a favorable agreement.
- **County Relationship:** The county expressed a preference for a discreet acknowledgment rather than extensive public advertisement. They suggested a simple "thank you." The council praised the "county crew" for their commendable efforts.
- The project included both cemeteries, specifically detailing the Altonah cemetery from the road near Shane's, extending uphill and encircling the cemetery grounds.
- **Potholes at the Park:** The potholes located in front of the park are in poor condition and have undergone numerous repairs.
- **Potential Contractor:** A proprietor of a private business, will evaluate the paving requirements in the vicinity of a broken water line and potentially the road crossing near the former Woodhouse residence.
- **Sidewalk Issues & Fees:** The previous homeowner failed to replace a section of sidewalk following excavation for water and sewer connections. The municipality possesses a cutting fee of \$1000 designated for the repair.
- **Recommendation:** The council is of the opinion that the fees for crossing permits and sidewalk cutting permits may need to be increased to adequately cover repair costs.
- **Future Discussion:** It was suggested that a future meeting should include a review of all fees to ensure they are current.

Altonah Cemetery Oil Lease

The council discussed the renewal of an existing oil lease for the Altonah Cemetery.

- **Existence of Lease:** Several council members indicated they were unaware of an existing oil lease.
- **Current Returns:** The lease typically generates approximately \$7 annually.
- **Proposed Terms:** The new lease agreement with Crescent Uinta LLC is for a five-year term, commencing February 17, 2026. This agreement stipulates a 1/16 royalty and a bonus of \$200 per net acre for a total of 3,600 bonus acres. These terms are consistent with offers extended in other regions.
- **Potential for Horizontal Wells:** A significant alteration would only materialize if horizontal wells were to be established in this area, rendering the endeavor exceptionally lucrative. Nevertheless, Shell Oil retains ownership of the deeper rights (Wasatch zone), thereby introducing complexities for deeper drilling operations.
- **Resolution:** The council unanimously passed a resolution authorizing the mayor and clerk to sign all documents related to the lease. The resolution requires signatures from three council members and notarization. *The motion was proposed by Glen Jessen and seconded by Scott Allen. The vote proceeded as follows: Glen Jessen, AYE; Scott Allen, AYE; Vickie Jessen, AYE; Russell Sorensen, absent.*

7. Utilities

- **Pond Levels:** The pond's current level is less than half capacity, which is considered critical.
- **Water Flow:** Current water inflow is half a second-foot.
- **Drought Conditions:**
 - The mountains are experiencing drier conditions than in 2020, when significant fires occurred.

- Altona's water allocation has been reduced to half-foot streams, an unprecedented measure in recent years.
- River flow at the beginning of the water year is currently less than it was in the previous year.
- **Conservation Measures:**
 - The park has demonstrated excellent conservation efforts by initially shutting off half of its watering system, then reducing the remaining watering to one day per week, and finally ceasing all watering.
 - The council has consistently advocated for conservative water use and urges residents to significantly reduce their consumption.
- **Communication:**
 - Notices have been posted via the Town website and Facebook. Word-of-mouth communication is encouraged.
 - It was suggested that notices also be printed and posted at the post office and grocery store.
- **Future Actions:** The council may need to implement mandatory water restrictions, such as designating specific watering days for different areas of town (e.g., south town waters on one day, north town on another) and limiting watering to once a week.
- **Consequence of Non-Conservation:** Failure to adhere to conservation measures, such as continuing to water every other day without reducing overall use, will lead to water depletion. Should water levels become critically low, the water supply will be shut off. If the pond reaches a critically low level or if residents fail to conserve, the water supply will be terminated.
- **Tips:** Residents are advised to mow their lawns at a longer length to promote self-shading and reduce water evaporation.

The next council meeting, September 11, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

A Motion was made by Glen Jessen to end the meeting at 7:57 p.m. Motion seconded by Scott Allen. Motion carried unanimously.

Read and approved this 11 day of September, 2025.
 Minuets of the meeting prepared by Amanda Gardner Town Clerk