

**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL
MEETING**

November 10, 2025

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 7:01 pm

ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Juarez

President Neumiller

Council Butcher

Council McCarthy

Council Sutherland

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Amendment to Title 17 - Addition of Simulcasting and Gaming Regulations

Mayor closed the Council Meeting at 7:02pm

Mayor Juarez now declared the Public Hearing opened for the consideration of Amendment to Title 17 - Addition of Simulcasting and Gaming Regulations. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with the state statutes, Mills Council procedures and other applicable laws. The hearing has been set and advertised in accordance with the statutes. I could ask those individuals who wish to address the council on this issue to approach the lectern and state your name for the record. Do I have a report from staff?

Planner Casey Coates provided the staff report. He explained that the proposed changes to Title 17 are presented in the form of an amendment that anticipates potential legislative changes regarding simulcasting, gaming, and historic horse racing.

Mr. Coates confirmed that this item was reviewed and forwarded with a recommendation from the Planning & Zoning Commission.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Coates for his report. She asked three times if there is anyone in the audience wishing to speak in favor of this item? No one spoke. She asked if three times if there is anyone in the audience wishing to speak in opposition of this item? No one spoke. There being no others for or against to speak on this item she declared the public hearing closed at 7:05pm

Mayor re-opened the Council Meeting at 7:05pm

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes

2. Council Meeting Minutes 10-28-25

City Licenses

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

Financial Approvals

4. Financial Breakdown - Check Register & Future ACH/EFT Transactions
5. PAID ACH / EFT Transactions
6. Regular / Police Payroll 10-20-25 to 11-2-25
7. Fire Payroll 10-17-25 to 10-28-25
8. Transmittal Transactions
9. Voided Checks

Motion made by Council Member McCarthy to approve, Seconded by Council President Neumiller. The Mayor noted that there was a last-minute addition for the HUB insurance payment. She stated that while she did not recall the exact amount and it may not appear on the register, the Council did approve it as it is the City's regular monthly insurance payment. Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland. Motion passes.

OPEN DISCUSSION

No one spoke

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

10. ORDINANCE NO. 832 SECOND READING:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF MILLS, WYOMING, BY REZONING MOUNTAIN MEADOWS SUBDIVISION, NO. 2, LOT 2A FROM URBAN AGRICULTURE (UA) TO RESIDENTIAL ONE (R-1)

Motion made by Council President Neumiller to approve, Seconded by Council Member Sutherland.

Planner Casey Coates provided an overview for the second reading of the proposed rezone, noting that only minor updates were made from the first reading to address prior comments.

He summarized public comments and letters of opposition. Two written objections were received: one from adjacent landowner Donald Oaks, and another from Mary Peterson, both expressing opposition to the rezone.

He stated that Dan Scherlinger, an adjacent landowner and business owner, also voiced concerns. Mr. Oaks previously spoke regarding stormwater and drainage issues, noting he was not opposed to smaller-scale development but had concerns about the intensity of the proposed project.

Mr. Francis Ackley, a homeowner in the area, raised concerns about the overall suitability of the development within the Platteview Estates neighborhood and its proximity to surrounding industrial and agricultural properties. Mr. Ackley also commented on the rate of potential buildout, stating that with approximately six homes constructed per year, it could take an estimated 13 years for the subdivision to fully develop.

Mr. Ackley further noted inconsistencies in Title 17 numbering within the staff report. Staff acknowledged the error and stated that the detailed report numbering will be corrected. He clarified that the considerations and findings under Title 17 remain unchanged and consistent with the existing code.

Staff addressed housing demand, noting that completed new homes in Mills were:

- 34 in 2020
- 34 in 2021
- 28 in 2022
- 24 in 2023
- 38 in 2024
- 25 in 2025 to date

He stated that residential growth remains strong, and this subdivision would help accommodate ongoing demand.

Regarding selenium concerns, staff referenced the 2016 Natrona County Land Use Plan, page 5-13, noting that the West Belt Loop/Southern Robertson Road area is identified under Redevelopment Plan Item #4 as residential, which is expected to mitigate selenium impacts.

Staff also identified applicable sections of Title 17 related to the amendment, including:

- 17.10.5 (Purpose) – pages 34–35
- 17.10.65 (Zoning Map and Boundary Districts) – page 60
- 17.10.20 (Amendment Authorization)
- 17.10.70 (Public Hearing and Notice Requirements) – pages 60–61
- 17.14.15 (Residential 1 District)
- 17.11.5 (Urban Agricultural District)

He concluded by noting that while references and numbering will be updated, the underlying findings and criteria remain consistent with the original Title 17 standards.

Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland.

A member of the audience addressed the Council, stating that he had misunderstood when he was supposed to speak on Ordinance 832. The City Attorney clarified that public comments on the ordinance should be made during the open discussion period. The Mayor explained that the Council needed to proceed through the remaining ordinances on the agenda, and that he would be welcome to address the Council with his concerns at the appropriate time.

11. ORDINANCE NO. 833 SECOND READING:

ORDINANCE RENAMING MILLS MEMORIAL PARK AS SERVICE AND SACRIFICE PARK

A motion was made by President Neumiller to approve the ordinance, seconded by Council Member Butcher. Council Member McCarthy made a motion to table the ordinance; however, the motion failed due to lack of a second.

Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland
Voting Nay: Council Member McCarthy. Motion passes.

12. ORDINANCE NO. 834 FIRST READING:

ORDINANCE CONCERNING GAMING

Motion made by Council President Neumiller to approve, Seconded by Council Member Butcher. Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland. Motion passes.

13. RESOLUTION NO 2025-40:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ABATEMENT OF UTILITY BILLS

Motion made by Council Member McCarthy to approve, Seconded by Council Member Sutherland.

The Mayor noted that the intent of the program is to assist individuals who are without SNAP benefits or federal employees who may be without income, providing a way to help bridge that financial gap during difficult times. She added that an application process has been established to facilitate this assistance.

Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland. Motion passes.

14. RESOLUTION NO. 2025-41:

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE SITE PLAN FOR VISION BEYOND BORDERS, AUTHORIZING A DELAY IN PARKING LOT PAVING UNTIL JULY 2026

Motion made by Council President Neumiller to approve, Seconded by Council Member McCarthy.

The Mayor noted that this will be a temporary full-occupancy approval, which will take effect upon the completion of the parking lot.

Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland. Motion passes.

COUNCIL APPROVALS

15. FY 2026 Sustainable Strategies Contract

Motion made by Council President Neumiller to approve, Seconded by Council Member McCarthy. Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland. Motion passes.

OPEN DISCUSSION

The Mayor opened the floor for public discussion. Anyone wishing to address the Council is asked to please approach the lectern. Please take the time you need but be mindful of the allotted time for comments.

Francis Ackley, stated that he had spoken at the previous public hearing regarding Ordinance 832, the proposed rezoning. He thanked the Council for responding to his comments and correcting the record. He reiterated his opposition to the rezone, stating that it does not adequately consider existing surrounding uses and does not maintain the rural, urban-agricultural character that he believed had been promised by the developer on several occasions.

Francis asked under what circumstances the Council would deny a rezone request. He expressed concern that the public's opposition may not be fully considered and noted that, in his view, more residents were opposed to the rezone than in favor. He asked whether there are instances in which the Council would reject such a request.

The Mayor stated that she would allow the City Attorney to address the question, but noted briefly that when dealing with private property, the Council's authority is limited. She explained that the Council cannot deny a land-use request solely because surrounding property owners do not prefer the change, just as the City could not deny a private property owner the right to build on their land simply because neighbors object. She added that the Council must follow specific guidelines and cannot approve or deny a rezone based on subjective views of whether it is "good" or "bad."

The Mayor added that if the zoning code does not expressly provide the authority to deny a request, then the Council cannot lawfully do so. She acknowledged that this can be frustrating for both the Council and residents.

The City Attorney explained that a rezoning request may be denied if it is presented in a manner that does not comply with zoning regulations, or if the application is inadequate and fails to meet the basic criteria required for consideration. A request may also be denied if it falls outside the parameters of existing land use regulations.

He provided an example, noting that if someone were to request a rezone to allow a clearly incompatible or impermissible use—something entirely outside the city's planning framework—that request would be denied.

He clarified that there *are* circumstances under which a rezone may be rejected; however, a request that aligns with the City's land use regulations and overall planning policies generally would not be. He further noted that the proposed rezone under Ordinance 832 is not a radical departure from prior zoning classifications.

Francis responded that the explanation seemed to reinforce his point, questioning why public hearings are held if the outcome is largely predetermined so long as the request complies with the ordinance. He asked why the City holds hearings if they cannot influence the decision, stating that he felt his time was being wasted.

The Mayor explained that public hearings are required by state statute to ensure transparency, public notice, and the opportunity for public participation. She noted that the City is legally obligated to hold these hearings.

Francis raised concerns about wind erosion from ongoing construction. He noted that, being on the western edge of town, the area receives significant wind, and last winter debris and blowing dirt from nearby construction sites caused substantial issues for both the school and surrounding homes. He asked whether the Council could modify permits to require additional mitigation measures to help address these impacts.

The Mayor stated that construction activities must follow certain requirements regarding dirt movement and erosion control, and the City is currently working on enforcing those requirements on active construction sites.

Planner Coates stated that addressing construction-related wind erosion is an ongoing process and that staff is actively working to resolve existing issues. He noted that one of the primary challenges is dirt blowing off individual lots into neighboring properties. Once debris becomes airborne, the City has limited mechanisms to regulate where it ultimately travels. He acknowledged that this is an unfortunate reality for areas experiencing significant new development, and construction-related impacts are often unavoidable, though not ideal for nearby residents.

He explained that the City works closely with contractors to ensure debris is properly contained on their lots, and that the City has previously provided hydromulch or watering options to help stabilize soil when needed. He stated that these measures represent the primary remedies available to the City under current regulations.

The Mayor added that City planner and staff are actively working behind the scenes to address problem areas and hold construction companies accountable. She noted that while these efforts are not always visible to the public, staff is engaged in ongoing enforcement and coordination. She thanked the audience for bringing concerns

forward and encouraged residents to continue reaching out when issues arise, as this allows the City to respond when possible.

She then asked if anyone else wished to address the Council.

Donald Oakes addressed council stating that his property shares approximately 50% of its boundary with the proposed development site. He expressed concern that the construction of 84 residential units would not be compatible with his property and livestock operations.

He stated that changing the land use designation from Rural Agricultural to Rural Residential—and allowing a subdivision of this size—would significantly increase flooding on his property. He referenced Wyoming Statute 41-5-101, amended in 2024, which requires ditch owners to maintain their ditches so as not to adversely impact neighboring properties. He stated that if the subdivision is approved and results in flooding, responsibility would fall on either the City of Mills or the developer. He noted that he had photographic evidence from September 17, when 0.4 inches of rain resulted in notable flooding on his land, and warned that additional residential runoff would worsen the situation.

He stated that he and his attorney are prepared to litigate if necessary but would prefer to work toward a solution that prevents subdivision-related drainage from significantly affecting his property.

He further stated that the current subdivision plat does not account for a federal right-of-way maintained by the Casper-Alcova Irrigation District. He explained that an 18-inch culvert line zigzags through the property and that, based on his review, as many as 20 of the proposed homes may be located directly on top of this pipeline. Drawing from his prior federal employment involving rights-of-way, he stated that if the Irrigation District needs to access or maintain that line, it has the authority to remove structures built over it and is not obligated to replace or compensate for them. He expressed concern that this issue had not been adequately considered by planners.

He reiterated that he and neighboring landowners—including the Petersons to the southwest and the Scherlingers to the south—would not be opposed to the original concept of approximately 20 units, but the proposed 80+ units would significantly increase stormwater runoff and negatively impact surrounding properties.

Bob Moore addressed the Council, stating that he resides on Spider Lane and wished to go on record as being opposed to the proposed rezone. He shared that he agreed with the concerns previously raised by Mr. Oaks.

He explained that when he moved into the area, he understood the future development would consist of approximately 20 to 30 lots, similar in character to the existing Platteview Estates—featuring half-acre, three-quarter-acre, one-acre, or even two-acre parcels. He stated that he was not opposed to subdivision development generally, as he expected the area would eventually build out, but he is opposed to the density and layout of the proposal as currently presented.

No further attendees came forward.

COUNCIL APPROVALS

16. Oral Resolution

Oral Resolution: The Mayor asked for a motion to designate an alternative member, Brad Neumiller, for Visit Casper Board. The council clarified that this would be if Elizibeth “Morgan” Covert was unable to attend meetings. Council Member Sutherland made a motion, Council Member Butcher seconded the motion. Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland. Motion passes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

17. Legal Matter

Council Member Butcher asked for a motion to go into executive session for a legal matter at 7:30pm. Motion made by Council Member Sutherland to go into executive session for a legal matter, Seconded by Council Member Sutherland, Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland

All of council returned from the executive session legal matter at 7:35pm.

Action: Approve a Rain Payment

18. Legal Matter

Council President Neumiller asked for a motion to go into executive session for a legal matter at 7:35pm. Motion made by Council Member Butcher to go into executive session for a legal matter, Seconded by Council Member Sutherland, Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland

All of council returned from the executive session legal matter at 7:41pm.

No action is necessary.

ADJOURNMENT


President Neumiller asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:42pm. Motion made by Council Member Sutherland to adjourn the meeting; Council Member McCarthy seconded the motion. Voting Yea: Mayor Juarez, Council Member McCarthy, Council Member Butcher, Council President Neumiller, Council Member Sutherland

AGENDA SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

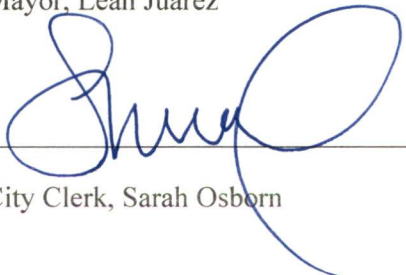
NEXT MEETING - November 25, 2025 at 7:00pm / December 9, 2025 at 7:00pm

NEXT WORK SESSION - November 25, 2025 at 6:00pm / December 8, 2025 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

