

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Palmer Lake Town Hall – 28 Valley Crescent, Palmer Lake, Colorado

MINUTES

Roll Call

Present – Atis Jurka, Roger Moseley, Dennis Stern, Tony Beltran, John Marble, Beth Harris, Michael Beeson.

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:00pm

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Convene to Executive Session

Motion to enter into executive session. (Beeson, Beltran) "Aye" Vote motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) for the purpose of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions regarding the withdrawal of the Monument Ridge West, LLC application for annexation by letter dated February 4, 2026.

The Board Motioned to reconvene into open session.

Introductions/Presentations

1. Hinkle & Company - 2024 Draft Audit

Jim Hinkle of Hinkle and Company CPAs presented the 2024 annual audit, issuing an unmodified opinion on the Town's financial statements, internal controls, and federal award compliance. The auditor confirmed that no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies were identified and noted that the Town maintains proper segregation of duties and transparent accounting practices. Discussion ensued regarding the \$900,000 Highway Planning and Construction grant and the reporting of interfund debt between the General and Water funds, with Mr. Hinkle explaining that a change in reporting methodology, rather than a debt reduction, accounted for variances from the prior year. While some concerns were raised regarding the presentation of tax-supported versus fee-based funds and the specific language used for grant compliance opinions, the auditor clarified that the report follows

standard AICPA and uniform guidance requirements. Mr. Hinkle concluded by offering to host a future work session to further detail governmental accounting structures for the Board.

Consent Agenda - *Items under the consent agenda may be acted upon by one motion. If, in the judgment of a board member, a consent agenda item requires discussion, the item can be placed on the regular agenda for discussion and/or action.*

2. Minutes February 26, 2026, Special Meeting, February 26, 2026, Regular Meeting
3. Financials - January 2026

Motion to Accept the Consent Agenda. (Moseley, Beeson) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Staff/Department Reports

4. Interim Administrator

Public Works is currently constructing a retaining wall in Glen Park to mitigate recurrent flooding and debris accumulation on the tennis courts. In response to community inquiries, it was clarified that no strip mining is taking place; rather, the project involves using rock to shore up the area and redirect drainage more effectively. Although a full engineering solution involving a subterranean culvert into the creek was previously quoted at a cost beyond the Town's current reach, the current retaining wall project was presented as a more palatable and immediate option for managing the site's drainage issues.

5. Police
6. Town Clerk/Administration/Treasurer

Town Clerk Erica provided a memo requesting Board support for a scholarship application to attend the Colorado Municipal League (CML) annual conference. The scholarship would cover registration fees, travel, and lodging expenses. The Board expressed no opposition to the application, and the Mayor agreed to sign the required authorization letter following the meeting.

Management Specialist Christi Birkeland addressed concerns previously raised by Trustee Moseley regarding uncollected development cost reimbursements. She clarified that the reported \$63,000 discrepancy was primarily due to an incomplete records request (CORA) response, in which staff accidentally provided eight invoices instead of nine. It was confirmed that all nine invoices related to the Buc-ee's project had been issued and paid in full. Trustee Moseley acknowledged that the missing invoice, 2025-1, resolved the bulk of his inquiry. She reiterated town staff's commitment to transparency and good faith in resolving financial questions, noting that further discussions regarding the accounting system and procedures would continue in upcoming workshops.

7. Water

Water Supervisor Chaz Roubidoux announced that water operator Andrew Rudnicki will attend the Colorado Rural Water Conference next week. He also continued that Andrew will be awarded the Rookie Water Operator of the Year for the State of Colorado.

8. Public Works including Roads & Park Maintenance

9. Fire

Business Items

10. Discuss and Possible Action – Approval of Resolution No. 17-2026 Accepting the 2024 Audit (Hinkle & Company)

Roger wanted to have an offline conversation with the auditor

Motion to approve the 2024 audit and with the stipulation that the questions Trustee Moseley had be answered within a week, but that the audit be approved regardless. (Jurka)
Motion withdrawn.

Motion to accept Resolution 17-2026 (Harris, Stern) “Aye” Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

11. Discussion and Possible Direction – Retention of Hinkle & Company, P.C. for the 2025 Audit
Staff provided a recommendation of retaining Hinkle & Company, P.C. for the 2025 Audit. The Board of Trustees provided staff direction to have Hinkle & Company, P.C. proceed with the 2025 Audit for the town.

12. Discuss and Possible Action – Consider Approval of Resolution No. XX-2026 Accepting Withdrawal of the Annexation Application and Directing Staff to Conclude the Annexation Proceedings

Motion to table business item twelve. (Stern, Marble) “Aye” Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

13. Discussion and Possible Action - Approval - Resolution 18-2026 to Appoint Citizen Member to Parks Commission Vacancy

Motion to accept resolution 18-2026. (Harris, Stern) “Aye” Vote. Motion passed unanimously.
Immediately after being appointed Commissioner Kincade swore an oath of office.

14. Discussion and Possible Direction – Direction to Interim Town Administrator regarding Legal Services/Town Attorney (proceed/not proceed with Negotiations and Contract Review)

Public Comment

Amy Hutson – Shared concerns regarding independent outreach conducted by Trustee Moseley to the Town of Florence concerning attorney services. She continued that this contact occurred without Board authorization during an active RFP process and prior to the termination of previous legal counsel. Furthermore, it was noted that while a CORA response indicated no relevant records existed in Trustee Moseley’s personal email accounts, a subsequent CORA response from the Town of Florence revealed correspondence involving both Trustee Moseley’s and Trustee Harris’ personal email addresses. Ms. Hutson emphasized that such actions are inconsistent with collaborative governance and deviate from CIRSA and CML training, which recommends the exclusive use of Town-issued email and devices for official business to ensure transparency and statutory compliance.

Trustee Harris stated for the record that while she was copied on the email she neither consulted nor asked to participate in that correspondence and did not participate in this correspondence.

Trustee Moseley responded he would decline to recuse himself from the selection of the Town Attorney, stating that his outreach to the Town of Florence was a direct effort to find legal referrals as requested by staff. He clarified that he has no prior relationship with the applicant and contacted the other municipality only to learn how they navigated similar transitions, subsequently passing the recommended firm's name to the Town. Addressing the allegations of an inaccurate CORA response, Trustee Moseley explained that the original email had been deleted from his personal email due to limited storage capacity. He maintained that while the correspondence existed as a forwarded attachment held by the Town of Florence, he could not produce the original record from his own files once it had been deleted, and therefore he denied any intentional misrepresentation of public records.

Public Comment

Paul Olivier – Commented regarding the legal firm interviews held during the afternoon workshop. Having observed both presentations, Mr. Olivier recommended that the Board select the first firm interviewed, noting they appeared highly qualified across multiple relevant disciplines. He specifically highlighted the firm's expertise in water law and planning as being of significant importance to the Town of Palmer Lake.

Kathy Keeley – Suggested that the Town explore cost-saving alternatives to having full legal representation present at all meetings. The suggestion included utilizing a paralegal for administrative legal tasks, such as advising on motions, or potentially hiring a Town Manager with a paralegal background to perform double duty. She questioned whether the Board had discussed these avenues to reduce legal expenses and suggested exploring these options before committing to a permanent firm that attends every session.

Mayor Stern Proposed negotiating with JVAM – Roll call vote for acceptance or non acceptance

Accept: Beeson, Beltran, Stern,

Non Acceptance: Harris, Marble, Moseley, Jurka

The Board provided staff direction to proceed with contract negotiations with WHF.

15. Discuss/Review - Resolution 4-2018 Financial Policies for Banking Services

Management Specialist Birkeland addressed the interpretation of Resolution 4 of 2018, clarifying that staff satisfies section 4 number 9 by providing a register of bank-issued checks, and that after extensive research with the Community Banks of Colorado, it was confirmed that the bank does not issue check registers. She further explained that the resolution does not and should not require bank statements be provided monthly; that they are subject to CORA; and they are subject to statutory requirements to redact sensitive information like account numbers and online reference IDs. Looking forward, the Board was informed of a shift in terminology to "Water Enterprise Fund" and "Water Enterprise Capital Fund" at the recommendation of the new accounting firm, as well as an explanation on January cash management transfers into ColoTrust, which were consolidated into a single wire to minimize transaction fees.

Trustee Mosley addressed the Board regarding Resolution 4 of 2018, advocating for the monthly provision of full bank-issued statements instead of just check registers to ensure a higher level of fiduciary oversight and the ability to track deposits such as development cost reimbursements. He pointed out that while staff explained the assumed CMI check error was resolved internally, a bank statement would have provided a more transparent view of whether funds actually cleared the account. During the exchange, staff clarified that the Town maintains separate General and Water checking accounts, but has consolidated check-writing into the General fund since approximately 2021 to prevent vendor confusion and improve administrative efficiency. The Board also confirmed that per current policy, checks over \$5,000 require two signatures, while those exceeding \$15,000 require specific Board approval. Ultimately, the Board reached a consensus to defer any formal amendments to the resolution until new legal counsel is retained, at which point a comprehensive workshop will be scheduled to modernize the Town's financial procedures and reporting standards.

Public Comment

Martha Brodzik – Commented on previous reports of a single checking account and current staff updates. Staff clarified that while the Water Fund checking account remains open to handle internal transfers, all external checks are consolidated through the General Fund to prevent vendor errors and improve efficiency. The discussion also addressed the use of multiple savings accounts for restricted funds and cash management strategies like ColoTrust. The Board acknowledged the confusion and agreed that the upcoming financial workshop would provide a comprehensive map of all active accounts and their specific municipal purposes.

The Board provided staff direction to add this matter to the workshop list.

16. Discussion and Possible Direction - Community Institute Matters- Planning Consultants

The Board discussed the sudden resignation of the town's planning firm, Community Management Inc. (CMI), with Trustee Bon expressing significant frustration that the resignation letter was presented as a "bombshell" tabletop handout during the meeting rather than being included in the advance agenda packet. Staff and the Town Administrator explained that while the letter was received two days prior, it was handled as supplemental information to remain compliant with Open Meetings Law and to allow for last-minute mediation efforts, which ultimately proved unsuccessful due to long-standing friction between certain officials and the firm. Acknowledging that CMI's departure leaves the town without in-house planning expertise, the Board directed staff to move forward with a Request for Proposals (RFP) for new planning consultant services, with a specific request to review the statement of work before it is finalized. Staff noted that the simultaneous vacancies in legal and planning representation will lead to immediate delays in processing land-use applications and Development Review Team (DRT) activities, and they are currently notifying affected applicants of the revised timelines.

17. Discussion/Update - Strategic Government Resources (SGR) Town Administrator Recruitment

The Board discussed re-engaging Strategic Government Resources (SGR) to reactivate the recruitment process for a new Town Administrator, with representative Marsha regarding the previous recruitment brochure and competitive salary benchmarks. Staff relayed SGR's

recommendation that the proposed salary range of \$130,000 to \$160,000 is necessary to attract qualified candidates in the current market, though Trustee Moseley questioned the basis of this range, noting that comparable Colorado municipalities often pay between \$80,000 and \$120,000. SGR also strongly advised that the Town secure legal representation before finalizing the recruitment, as a Town Attorney is essential for contract negotiations and to lead a work session on Title 2 roles and responsibilities within the Town's council-manager form of government. The Board reached a consensus to submit individual suggestions for the recruitment brochure to staff by March 18, 2026, allowing for a formal public discussion and finalization of the document at the next regular meeting.

18. Discussion/Update - Mayor Pro Tem Vacancy

Trustee Beeson led a discussion regarding the appointment of a Mayor Pro Tem. Mayor Stern clarified that under the Town Code, which he noted is more restrictive than the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) on this matter, the Mayor holds the exclusive authority to nominate a Mayor Pro Tem, and since his initial nominee was previously rejected by the Board, he is not currently required to provide a new name. Trustee Beeson expressed frustration over the lack of advance communication regarding these technicalities, describing the oversight as an embarrassment and calling for better collaboration. The Mayor concluded the item by reaffirming his decision not to nominate anyone at this time, though he acknowledged that the Board would follow an established process to select a presiding officer should he ever become incapacitated.

19. Discussion/Review - Board of Trustees Agenda-Setting Process

Town Clerk Romero opened the discussion on the agenda-setting process, focusing on balancing administrative efficiency with Colorado Open Meetings Law, as Town Clerk Romero expressed concerns that the current ad-hoc email method creates "chain meeting" risks and a heavy workload for staff. In response, Town Clerk Romero presented a memo advocating for a "Meeting-First" approach where new items are proposed during the "Future Items" section of public meetings to ensure transparency and clear direction, though she suggested an interim protocol for urgent items requiring the Mayor's approval or the support of at least two trustees. Next steps will be consistent with Town Clerk Romero's recommendation to be plan a work shop when all key players are available to best identify agenda setting

20. Discussion/Review - Resolution 37-2024 Regulating the Carrying of Firearms in Sensitive Areas

Trustee Jurka initiated a discussion regarding the regulation of firearms in "sensitive areas," such as Town Hall and municipal offices, citing concerns over heightened agitation at recent public meetings. Under current Colorado law, municipalities have the authority to designate specific government buildings as gun-free zones, but Palmer Lake previously opted out of these restrictions, allowing concealed carry in public meetings. Interim Town Administrator Smith expressed strong support for revisiting this policy, stating that while he is neutral on the Second Amendment, he believes designated "safe spaces" for the Board, staff, and the public are standard in modern governance and that the Town's police officers are more than capable of providing professional security without the need for armed civilians. Other Board members echoed these sentiments, expressing concerns over potential accidental discharges and the tactical risks of untrained individuals attempting to intervene during an emergency. Ultimately, the Board reached a consensus to defer the matter until a new Town Attorney is

officially retained, at which point they will formally review the Town Code to consider establishing specific safe space ordinances.

21. Discussion/Review - EcoSpa

The Board of Trustees engaged in a discussion regarding the Elephant Rock / Eco Spa lease and property development, as partners Richard and Lindsay Willins requested a reconsideration of existing restrictions, specifically seeking to allow overnight lodging and the use of the new "Creekside Event Center" for micro-weddings. While the current lease does not explicitly prohibit these uses, the Town Administrator and Board members emphasized that the project is currently in a transitional phase involving a Planned Development (PD) process and eventual purchase agreement. Staff strongly advised against modifying lease terms mid-construction, noting that any shift from a day spa to a lodging or wedding venue would first require a land-use review and a formal recommendation from the Planning Commission once a certificate of occupancy is issued.

Public Comment

Reid Wiecks – Expressed frustration over a year-long stall in trail improvements at Elephant Rock, alleging that a previous boundary expansion cut off the town's perimeter trail and left the commission hesitant to invest further without a guaranteed, permanent easement.

Town staff reaffirmed that a permanent easement and the continued use of the maintenance building by Parks would be codified within the final PD and subdivision filings. The project remains on a dual track, completing the immediate spa construction for a targeted soft opening by Christmas 2026, while simultaneously navigating a major subdivision and MS4 stormwater certification for the broader 28-acre site, with the Board deferring any final decisions on expanded usage until legal counsel is secured to untangle the overlapping lease and development requirements.

22. Discussion/Review - Economic Development

Trustee Jurka proposed resuming the Town's economic development efforts, noting that previous leadership is no longer involved and expressing concern that the local Chamber of Commerce currently prioritizes Monument over Palmer Lake. While suggesting potential partnerships with the Small Business Administration, county-level economic development corporations, and grassroots organizations like Strong Towns, the Board discussed whether these responsibilities should formally fall under the purview of the incoming Town Administrator. Staff confirmed that community and economic development are integral parts of the new administrator's job description

Public Comment

Laura Mcguire – Commented that Discover Palmer Lake, the citizen-led economic development group, remains active and intentionally operates as a private grassroots entity to avoid administrative burdens on town staff and maintain financial flexibility. While acknowledging the need for updated promotional materials and the future role of a Town Administrator, she advised the Board to defer any formal municipal takeover of these duties until the current political climate stabilizes and a Town Attorney is retained.

Public Comment - *Public comments are encouraged to be emailed to the Town office at info@palmer-lake.org with subject line of Public Comment (24 hours prior to meeting) and shall be distributed and read at the meeting. Otherwise, please be recognized to speak, sign in, and address the Board on matters not on the agenda. Thank you!*

Cindy Henson – Admonished the Board on what she perceived as name calling and mockery regarding the earlier comments given about “Strip Mining.”

Jim Adams – Expressed strong opposition to the unauthorized removal of boulders and the subsequent environmental damage in town open space, characterizing the Public Works project as "strip mining" that was never approved by the Board or the Town Administrator. Mr. Adams criticized the lack of communication from staff and the dismissal of the Parks Commission’s advisory role, questioning who would be financially responsible for repairing the site and warning that such disregard for citizen oversight and natural preservation would have consequences in future elections.

In a direct rebuttal, Interim Town Administrator Smith corrected the resident’s account of their recent phone call, clarifying that while the Parks Commission is indeed an advisory body, this does not equate to a lack of responsibility or oversight. Interim Town Administrator Smith confirmed he was aware of the Public Works project, had personally inspected the site as promised, and only instructed staff to cease direct communication with the resident due to their "nasty demeanor" and unprofessional conduct toward town employees. While expressing a willingness to continue a civil dialogue now that he has returned to the office after being on leave, the Administrator firmly rejected Mr. Adams public mischaracterization of their previous conversation.

Gene Kalesti – Addressed the Board to advocate for professional land restoration and respectful civic engagement following recent disturbances in town open space. He rebuked the Mayor and Board for dismissing a previous resident's concerns with mockery, emphasizing that curiosity and investigation should be the standard response to citizens reporting potential damage to public land. Highlighting the removal of large boulders without a visible plan for erosion control or slope stabilization, Mr. Kalesti proposed a proactive solution: inviting regional stewardship experts, such as the Rocky Mountain Field Institute, to lead a workshop on Leave No Trace and sustainable restoration practices. The comment concluded with an urge for the Board to adopt the high professional standards used across the Front Range to ensure Palmer Lake’s natural landscape is responsibly managed and restored.

Reid Wiecks – Provided comment in response to Mr. Kalesti’s comment. Starting with his Nextdoor posts being tonally the opposite of Mr. Kalesti’s demeanor. Noting that repurposing local boulders for flood mitigation at the tennis courts saved taxpayers up to \$50,000. Wiecks clarified that the area in question is technically undesignated town land rather than a formal park or open space, while firmly defending the commission’s professional competence and its active list of over 100 projects. He urged the Board to ignore calls for a work stoppage and instead support the current commission’s successful partnerships with the Air Force Academy and Mile High Youth Corps.

Gene Kalesti – Voiced his opposition to Mr. Wiecks comment.

Martha Brodzik – Called for a return to decorum and leadership, urging the Board to enforce rules against personal bashing and the naming of specific individuals during meetings. Emphasizing that the community cannot move forward while residents, staff, and trustees continue to tear one another down, she requested that the Board set a professional tone to encourage mutual respect and unity, regardless of the specific disagreements at hand.

Carol Nolan – Provided a letter to the Board stating her observations and complaints about a neighboring trailer park. Continued to elaborate on the wide variety of code violations she had observed of the trailer park, and asked why she had not gotten a response from either the Board or Town Staff to the correspondence she sent.

Response from Town Staff was that they were aware of the code violations and had started various processes to bring them into compliance. As to the lack of response it was later determined that the correspondence had been sent to an email not managed by the Town.

Board Reports

Trustee Moseley asked staff a for a proposed workshop schedule at the next meeting.

Trustee Beltran addressed the earlier laughter, stating that it was not a mockery of anyone and that the Board takes such matters very seriously.


Trustee Harris asked a question on when donations for the Easter egg hunt would end. With the response being two days before the event.

Trustee Harris asked if adding row numbers to town documents such as the budget would be possible for easier referencing. Staff added this item to the workshop list.

Next Meeting and Future Items

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn. (Marble, Beeson)


Town Clerk- Erica N. Romero
Mayor Dennis Stern