



**Stevensville Town Council Meeting  
Agenda for  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 08, 2026  
6:30 PM  
206 Buck Street, Town Hall**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Public Comments (Public comment from citizens on items that are not on the agenda)
4. Approval of Minutes
  - [a.](#) Special Town Council Meeting Minutes 08/31/2026
5. Approval of Bi-Weekly Claims
6. Administrative Reports
  - a. Airport
  - b. Building Department
  - c. Finance
  - [d.](#) Fire Department
  - [e.](#) Police Department
  - f. Public Works
7. Guests
  - a. Mr. Konen, Stevensville Public Schools Superintendent
8. New Business
  - [a.](#) Discussion/Decision: Consent for Appointment of a Planning & Zoning Board Member
9. Board Reports
10. Town Council Comments
11. Executive Report
14. Adjournment

## **Welcome to Stevensville Town Council Chambers**

We consider it a privilege to present, and listen to, diverse views.

It is essential that we treat each other with respect.

We expect that participants will:

- ✓ Engage in active listening
- ✓ Make concise statements
- ✓ Observe any applicable time limit

We further expect that participants will refrain from disrespectful displays:

- ✗ Profanity
- ✗ Personal Attacks
- ✗ Signs
- ✗ Heckling and applause

## **Guidelines for Public Comment**

Public Comment ensures an opportunity for citizens to meaningfully participate in the decisions of its elected officials. It is one of several ways your voice is heard by your local government. During public comment we ask that all participants respect the right of others to make their comment uninterrupted. The council's goal is to receive as much comment as time reasonably allows. All public comment should be directed to the chair (Mayor or designee). Comment made to the audience or individual council members may be ruled out of order. Public comment must remain on topic, and free from abusive language or unsupported allegations.

During any council meeting you have two opportunities to comment:

1. During the public comment period near the beginning of a meeting.
2. Before any decision-making vote of the council on an agenda item.

Comment made outside of these times may not be allowed.

Citizens wishing to speak during any public comment period should come forward to the podium and state their name and address for the record. Comment may be time limited, as determined by the chair, to allow as many people as possible to comment. Comment prior to a decision-making vote must remain on the motion before the council.

**Thank you for observing these guidelines.**

**File Attachments for Item:**

- a. Special Town Council Meeting Minutes 08/31/2026

## **Stevensville Special Town Council Meeting Minutes**

**for MONDAY, AUGUST 31, 2026, 6:30 PM 206 Buck Street, Town Hall**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mayor Crews called the meeting to order. Councilmembers Bailey, Ross, Wandler and Smith were all present.

2. Public Comments (Public comment from citizens on items that are not on the agenda)

NONE

3. New Business

a. Discussion/Decision: On Personnel Third-Party Investigation Contract

Mayor Crews: introduced new business item a, Discussion/Decision: On Personnel Third-Party Investigation Contract. We need to hire a special attorney to do an investigation on grievances, and the mayor and the human resource officer cannot do the investigation. So, this is what we have to do.

Councilmember Smith: I move that we accept the personnel third-party investigation contract.

Mayor Crews: is there a 2<sup>nd</sup>? Okay, motion dies on the floor.

Councilmember Bailey: can you give us any kind of background information to what is going on, I am sure that it is confidential but is there anything that you can say.

Mayor Crews: there has been a grievance filed against the mayor and a grievance filed against the human resource officer by an employee. We cannot move forward with the grievance at this time because the employee, halt me if you need to.

Christine Lindley: for the record I am the town attorney. So, the scope of what we can and cant talk about, that grievance is still being processed, it is really limited. As the employee has stated that they are waiving their right to have this meeting closed it is going to be open. Ordinarily, employees right to privacy is so strong normally you close it and talk back and forth. What the, as Mayor Crews has stated a grievance has been filed usually the human resource would manage that grievance but since she has been listed in that grievance she cannot process it. Mayor Crews has also been listed in that as well, usually he is the individual to process it and he can't. This is bringing in an outside party that is neutral to resolve the situation.

Councilmember Bailey: why does it need to be another attorney?

Christine Lindley: I would recommend to the town council that there be another attorney, for one they are very aware of all the rights of the employee and the implications of that for the town and the employee. So, they are stepping in and doing it, basically like a resource officer. This is not an uncommon practice in business to have an attorney to do this, does that answer your question?

Councilmember Bailey: yes.

Councilmember Ross: I guess it is for you to avoid any conflict of interest.

Christine Lindley: I cant process that as a totally neutral party on the employees behalf because I represent the town. That is the second half I am not totally neutral, as a advise the town and that could be an issue if that grievance is higher.

Councilmember Bailey: did we collect bids on other attorneys that would be willing to do this and other rates?

Christine Lindley: I requested bids from three different law firms this is the one that did not have a conflict. Due to a timeline that the grievance would need to be processed, and we have not been granted an extension.

Councilmember Bailey: but we have to post it publicly that we are asking for bids instead of reaching out to individual people.

Mayor Crews: I do not think so, not because of the cost.

Councilmember Bailey: we are entering into a contract for a high rate per hour, when we contracted with Christine we posted it and reviewed it and opened it in a town council meeting, so why are we treating this differently.

Christine Lindley: again, we can do that if you like, but it is likely by the time you get bids opened up this grievance period is going to be over and the town is not going to follow its policy. So, there is a bit of risk involved that. We could also formally open this up more to process this later if you like but this is the situation that we are in, unfortunately the personnel policy has a very tight deadline. We would have more time to do this.

Councilmember Ross: I think that you already answered this, but it is mostly that our policy is a short window, that is the timeline crunch.

Christine Lindley: yes. Unfortunately, it is short.

Councilmember Ross: question for Robert, how is this going to impact the budget.

Robert Underwood: depends on how long it will take. We may have to do a budget amendment at the end of the year. (unclear audio) I don't think it will take very long at all, it shouldn't.

Councilmember Ross: so, this will come out of the general fund/?

Robert Underwood: yes.

Councilmember Wandler: was there a limit on how much we are committing to this.

Mayor Crews: it is \$450.00 an hour.

Councilmember Bailey: there is no cap on it.

Mayor Crews: the investigation should not take very long at all.

Councilmember Bailey: is there any language in our bid process that allows for emergency bids to be awarded without public posting? I am just worried about our town policy being violated and at the same time our bid process.

Mayor Crews: let me look. Robert how much do we have in for legal services right now.

Robert Underwood: \$25,000, but we are going to have to up that already.

Councilmember Wandler: does this have to be handled by a lawyer, or can it be handled by a person that is trained in human resource issues.

Christine Lindley: yes, it could be. I don't know who you are going to find to do it. but you could use someone trained in human resource.

Councilmember Ross: for the record what is our policy on the time window for it and how long have we been aware of this.

Christine Lindley: so, we received the grievance on the 21<sup>st</sup> I know the response is due on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. We gave this to our insurer to, but they did not want to provide coverage at this stage.

Mayor Crews: just give me a second to finish looking up the code.

Christine Lindley: in the policy it is 10 working days.

Councilmember Bailey: it has to be detailed in that response

Christine Lindley: you have to be detailed in that response in this case, all of those involved, collecting all of that and hearing all sides and determine what to do from that point. What more reason for brining in an attorney to assist with that, they would provide that to the town. (unclear audio) Once again with our

reporting structure, we do not have the resources in-house to do that because of the parties involved.

Mayor Crews: other professional services per the towns policy, any contract should be approved in advance by the town council, regarding a contract for professional service including non-construction services as defined in 18-204, 19 professional services totaling up to \$1,500.00 per agreement, the department can purchase with supervisors approval. Professional services totaling between \$1,501.00-\$25,000 at least three written quotes must be accumulated, with the lowest most-responsible vendor selected. For purchases contained in the departments current fiscal year budget or the town current capital improvement budget, department supervisors need only get confirmation by the mayor prior to purchasing. For purchases not contained in the departments current fiscal year budget or the towns current capital improvement budget, department supervisors must obtain prior purchase approval from the mayor and the town council.

Councilmember Ross: my understanding of that would be we need to get three quotes.

Mayor Crews: she has tried.

Christine Lindley: I have tried, but they had conflicts.

Councilmember Ross: could you walk us through what the rest of the steps would be if we were to approve this tonight, kind of what would the next couple weeks look like.

Christine Lindley: so, as far as the grievance process looks like or the scope of work that the contractor would be doing look like.

Councilmember Ross: I guess we have to have this response by September 3<sup>rd</sup>, and then at that point it will go into arbitration.

Christine Lindley: no, under the personnel policy what will happen, is the investigation period, all parties involved state their side of things, and you try to resolve. Then there is an additional five working days I believe that the employee can still try to respond to that and try to still resolve this prior to any human rights bureau complaint or ending in district court depending what happens in the process.

Councilmember Ross: so, there is really no limit to how much we could be charged.

Christine Lindley: this is only for the investigation piece and then it would stop there and again we are on a tight deadline for that, September 4<sup>th</sup> and then that

would be September 10<sup>th</sup>, you aren't even looking at two weeks of worth under this. That is going to be interviewing town employees, town officials and coordinating that process during that time.

Councilmember Wandler: if this is not resolved and a suit is filed against the city, would they continue with this or would they turn it over to you.

Christine Lindley: if this continued and a claim was filed in District Court or the human rights bureau then our insurer would allow coverage for this. Right now, during this portion of the process that they will not provide coverage.

Councilmember Bailey: so, what sort of safeguards are we going to put in place to make sure that this amount that we are spending does not get out of hand.

Mayor Crews: the investigator is going to do the investigation and come up with an answer and that should be the end of it, once we have the answer we can go forward with our process, am I correct?

Christine Lindley: pretty much, again one of the safeguards is time, within two weeks, in the amount it depends on how long those investigative meetings go with individuals involved. I can't guarantee how much time that will take, it depends on what is said in that process. I wish I could provide you a more concrete answer, the hard part is this contract, and I don't think that they would accept an amendment as well.

Councilmember Bailey: it is unfortunate because it is like we are backed into a corner here the timeline again, we can't change the contract, we have no control over anything we are just expected to accept this, and it is frustrating. Can a response be that we are looking for a third-party group to help us with the investigation, is that not response in itself.

Christine Lindley: not is this scenario, I don't see that as a possibility, we have already requested an extension and we were denied that. So, no.

Councilmember Bailey: so, roughly two weeks of work. Some where around \$30,000 to \$40,000 in attorney fees, if they are working two weeks.

Christine Lindley: you are going to be working with someone that is not going to work all that time. For context to, in that contract it talks about working in increments similar to what I do. The nice thing with that is that you are working with a minimum. That is the lowest threshold per hour that you are going to get. I wish we would have had more time to get bids.

Councilmember Wandler: this has been on the table since the 21<sup>st</sup>?

Mayor Crews: I am sorry.

Councilmember Wandler: this was originally filed on the 21<sup>st</sup>. a week has gone by before it was even presented to us?

Mayor Crews: we do not normally present grievances to the council.

Councilmember Wandler: the question concerning the hiring another attorney.

Christine Lindley: it took several days to get this contract, let alone to be able to present it to you because we have the minimum 48-hour meeting rule as well.

Robert Underwood: the attorney will only be dealing with the grievance, right? We won't need them later if this blows up?

Christine Lindley: there is a possibility items outside of the original grievance could be raised, but I can't imagine that those would be outside of the investigation. Right now, we are just dealing with one, it should be limited to that scope.

Robert Underwood: there is a lot more going on than we can tell at the meeting. Having an open-ended contract with an employee that has a grievance at \$450.00 per hour could cause to be very expensive. And if the employee continues to have grievances and grievances and not addressing the contract before the hours, something happened and then the grievance. We can't get to that, but I just want to make sure that somehow.

Mayor Crews: has everyone read the grievance policy? To make sure in our personnel policy manual, if someone says or does something that immediately offends you do you know what your immediate action is supposed to be. Right then and there you make a statement "I don't like that please don't do that again."

Christine Lindley: there is a time cap on that when the grievance is filed, these were the 21<sup>st</sup> and then the 31<sup>st</sup>. We were already in the middle of it. Again, talking about the substance of the grievance without the employee on public record even though they requested it to be open. I hate doing this from a risk perspective, if we don't process this grievance correctly and we don't have a neutral party coming in and handling this under our policy it is potentially risky on the town's side. In the future if a claim is raised then, yes, we might have coverage but how much of that and how long with the town's resources be able to handle that, there is a risk.

Councilmember Bailey: what is the term of this contract? I did not see any term in there.

Christine Lindley: it is by scope to handle this one. that is the term. It is not too late to get an extension it is just unlikely

Councilmember Smith: hypothetically if this contract was not on the table and you could not find another outside attorney what would be the steps, what would we have to do.

Christine Lindley: the steps for processing?

Councilmember Smith: no, what would we have to do if there were no other outside attorneys available.

Christine Lindley: no other, the problem is with our current reporting structure, Robert is the assistant HR director, he is under the current HR director the town would be accepting the risk of having him processing that grievance. He is slightly lower because again he is not the individual that was named but again it is accepting that and trying to process it but basically without the inability to provide a totally neutral party.

Councilmember Bailey: okay, lets say we accept this contract we do the investigation and things are resolved and then we get another grievance six months down the road are we going to come back to this contract again or what processes are we going to put into place to make sure that we don't get backed into a corner like this.

Christine Lindley: I would recommend that we extend out the deadlines in our current personnel policy so that the town has the ability to have time to get more bids, get other parties interested and get involved in this but at the same time right now it is what we have, and it is difficult to go against your own personnel policy.

Councilmember Bailey: I would be curious if MMIA has some sort of consulting group that we could take a look at. I am sure that this is not the first time that this has happened for a town and it probably wont be the last time for a town, so what is the standard.

Mayor Crews: we have already consulted with MMIA about this.

Councilmember Bailey: once we have more time, I am curious what groups are available for this besides just attorneys.

Mayor Crews: I guess we can talk to MMIA about that, I can't answer that.

Councilmember Wandler: I have a question; in this contract the firm will generally ask client to pay any expenses exceeding \$2,500.00 why is that in?

Christine Lindley: that is just language that they stick in for all their contracts. If you look at the first part, that is the part that applies to this contract and this scope of work. It is just stating that if there is a cost associated, example court

fees, or large amount of documents, or a significant number of charges, that is why.

Councilmember Wandler: one more, how much involvement, how much time would you be putting in on this or just going directly to them and you would be bypassed. Would we also be paying you for general work?

Christine Lindley: so, the scope of work that you would be paying me for is if the mayor and the HR director contacted me about something else related to this grievance possibly, but beyond that I would be cut out. I would not be doing these investigations.

Councilmember Bailey: so, who do they report to, if the two people that normally get that information, how do they find out the results of the investigation, will the council be aware of that.

Christine Lindley: the council does not process the grievances normally, when we have a final investigation I am sure that I will be in contact with that attorney and know what is going forward the problem is we do not know how it is going to be resolved. If it is not resolved I cant give you an answer to what that would be.

Robert Underwood: question, they are going to give us a report and tell us this is what happened, they cant resolve any of it. what is the next step after that.

Christine Lindley: they could make action steps, if there are some corrective action steps if they were favorable for both parties involved and try to work out a resolution between them, but that is about the extent of it.

Mayor Crews: any public comment?

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Stacie Barker: so, you as a council have, are being pushed into a corner just so you know we have a purchasing policy we have an advertising bid process where did that get done. Was it on the website, where was this. You guys are responsible for the town and its monies and to be pushed into a corner over a grievance with what we have with two town employees is ridiculous this could be prevented if it would have been handled right in the first place. You guys don't let them push you to make a decision tonight, do your homework find your avenues out. Them pushing you is wrong, this is my taxpayers dollars right now, \$415.00 per hour is ridiculous. Where are those bids, who were they those are the questions that you guys need to be asking. You are responsible for our money.

Mayor Crews: thank you. any other council discussion? I will entertain a motion. Okay, item dies on the floor.

4. Adjournment

Councilmember Smith: motion to adjourn.

Councilmember Bailey: 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**APPROVE:**

**ATTEST:**

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**James Crews, Mayor**  
**Town Clerk**

**Jenelle S. Berthoud,**

**File Attachments for Item:**

d. Fire Department



## STEVENSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

206 BUCK STREET

### Activity Report – September 2026

## Calls for the Month of September: 71

Calls for Stevensville Town: 25

Calls for Stevensville Rural: 45

Mutual Aid: 1

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Medical Response: 66

Fire Calls: 2

Motor Vehicle Crash: 3

Total Calls: 71

Missed calls: 12 (Town: 3, Rural: 9)

## Calls for the Year to Date: 576

Calls for Stevensville Town: 250

Calls for Stevensville Rural: 311

Mutual Aid: 15

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Medical Response: 449

Fire Calls: 86

Motor Vehicle Crash: 41

Total Calls: 576

Missed calls: 61

**File Attachments for Item:**

e. Police Department

# Stevensville Police Department Monthly Activity Report 2026

|                                | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| <b>CALLS FOR SERVICE</b>       | 77  | 49  | 77  | 76  | 109 | 97  | 105  | 92  | 91   |     |     |     |
| <b>ARRESTS ADULT/JUV</b>       | 0   | 4   | 3   | 1   | 2   | 2   | 1    | 3   | 2    |     |     |     |
| <b>TRAFFIC CITATIONS</b>       | 14  | 7   | 7   | 2   | 10  | 12  | 8    | 10  | 3    |     |     |     |
| <b>TRAFFIC STOPS</b>           | 18  | 9   | 5   | 7   | 20  | 25  | 28   | 30  | 20   |     |     |     |
| <b>TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS</b>       | 5   | 4   | 3   | 2   | 4   | 5   | 3    | 3   | 2    |     |     |     |
| <b>VEH TOWS</b>                | 1   | 1   | 0   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 0    | 1   | 0    |     |     |     |
| <b>HOMICIDES</b>               | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |     |     |
| <b>ROBBERIES</b>               | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |     |     |
| <b>BURGLARIES</b>              | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |     |     |
| <b>THEFTS</b>                  | 2   | 1   | 5   | 8   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 3   | 1    |     |     |     |
| <b>ASSAULTS OR PFMA</b>        | 0   | 1   | 2   | 0   | 1   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 1    |     |     |     |
| <b>SEX CRIMES</b>              | 0   | 0   | 1   | 3   | 2   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 1    |     |     |     |
| <b>FRAUD CRIMES</b>            | 1   | 0   | 1   | 2   | 0   | 2   | 1    | 2   | 1    |     |     |     |
| <b>CRIMINAL MISCHIEF</b>       | 1   | 0   | 0   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 1   | 1    |     |     |     |
| <b>PRIVACY COMMUNICAT</b>      | 1   | 0   | 0   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0   | 0    |     |     |     |
| <b>THREATS OR INTIMIDATION</b> | 1   | 2   | 9   | 1   | 1   | 3   | 0    | 2   | 2    |     |     |     |
| <b>SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY</b>     | 3   | 1   | 1   | 6   | 3   | 5   | 7    | 2   | 2    |     |     |     |
| <b>DISTURBANCE</b>             | 1   | 0   | 3   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 2    | 1   | 1    |     |     |     |
| <b>UNATTENDED DEATHS</b>       | 0   | 0   | 0   | 2   | 0   | 0   | 1    | 1   | 0    |     |     |     |
| <b>WELFARE CHECKS</b>          | 3   | 4   | 2   | 3   | 2   | 7   | 0    | 5   | 0    |     |     |     |
| <b>LOST/FOUND PROPERTY</b>     | 0   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 3   | 1   | 5    | 8   | 1    |     |     |     |
| <b>BURG ALARMS 911 HANGUPS</b> | 0   | 1   | 2   | 2   | 4   | 5   | 3    | 5   | 7    |     |     |     |
| <b>VICTIM NOTIFICATION</b>     | 0   | 0   | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0    | 1   | 0    |     |     |     |
| <b>Public Assist</b>           | 0   | 8   | 3   | 10  | 8   | 15  | 10   | 7   | 11   |     |     |     |

**File Attachments for Item:**

a. Discussion/Decision: Consent for Appointment of a Planning & Zoning Board Member



## Stevensville Town Council Meeting

### Agenda Item Request

To be submitted **BEFORE Noon** on the Wednesday immediately preceding the Thursday agenda publishing deadline (8-days ahead of the meeting).

|                                              |                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Agenda Item Type:                            | New Business                                                           |
| Person Submitting the Agenda Item:           | Jim Crews                                                              |
| Second Person Submitting the Agenda Item:    | EnterName                                                              |
| Submitter Title:                             | Mayor                                                                  |
| Submitter Phone:                             | 406-777-5271                                                           |
| Submitter Email:                             | mayor@townofstevensville.gov                                           |
| Requested Council Meeting Date for Item:     | EnterDate10-8-26                                                       |
| Agenda Topic:                                | Council consent for appointment of a Planning and Zoning Board Member. |
| Backup Documents Attached?                   | Yes                                                                    |
| If no, why not?                              |                                                                        |
| Approved/Disapproved?                        | Approved                                                               |
| If Approved, Meeting Date for Consideration: | 10-8-26                                                                |
| Notes:                                       | Appointment of supplemental board member                               |

RECEIVED  
9/15/2016

BOARD APPLICATION FORM  
STEVENSVILLE, MONTANA

\*Disclosure: any information on this application is available for public view

Name: Jay Herbert

Home Phone: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] 2nd St

Work/Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: Stevensville

State: MT Zip: 59870

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Business or Occupation: Owner, Sawtooth Builders LLC

Board or Committee applying for: Planning and Zoning

- ✓ Please describe your experience or background which you believe qualifies you for service on this Board or Committee (attached additional sheets if needed):

I own Sawtooth Builders LLC and work in residential construction in the Bitterroot Valley. My work involves reviewing plans, coordinating projects, and working through practical questions about land use, access, utilities, and Building requirements. As a Stevensville resident, it would bring with a builder's perspective and an interest in how decisions affect our community.

- ✓ Why do you wish to serve on this Board or Committee?

I want to help Stevensville grow thoughtfully while respecting the people who already live here. I'm interested in fair, practical decisions that consider housing needs, infrastructure, and the long-term character of the town.

- ✓ Additional information which you feel is pertinent:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: Jay Herbert

Date: 9-15-2016

Return Application to: Town of Stevensville, P.O. Box 30, Stevensville, MT 59870