

**Town of Empire**  
**30 East Park Avenue/P.O. Box 100 Empire, Co 80438**  
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**Board of Trustees Executive Session & Work Session Meeting Minutes**  
**November 5, 2024 ~ 6:30 pm**

**1. Call Meeting to Order** – Mayor Pro-tem Jacob Belcher called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The meeting was held in person and through Zoom.

**2. Roll Call** – The Empire Board of Trustees requires a simple majority of four trustees present at the meeting for a quorum.

**Present:** Mayor Pro-tem Jacob Belcher, Trustee Randy Horning, Trustee Denise Tennant, Trustee Jessie Reiman and Trustee Stephanie Kline. Also in attendance were Town Administrator Jeannette Piel, Town Clerk Jennifer Boswell, and Deputy Town Clerk Lisa Kunze.

**Absent:** Mayor Wendy Koch.

A quorum was present at the meeting.

**3. Approval of Agenda - November 5, 2024 Work Session Meeting Agenda**

**TRUSTEE HORNING MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR NOVEMBER 5th, 2024, TRUSTEE TENNANT SECONDED THE MOTION, CLERK BUDA CONDUCTED A ROLL CALL VOTE, ALL WERE IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSED.**

The Agenda was approved.

**4. Executive Session to discuss personnel and salary changes.**

- a. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f) The Board of Trustees is convening in the executive session to discuss personnel and salary changes.

**TRUSTEE REIMAN MOTIONED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL AND SALARY CHANGES, TRUSTEE HORNING SECONDED THE MOTION, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR PIEL CONDUCTED A ROLL CALL VOTE, ALL WERE IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSED.**

The Board of Trustees entered into executive session at 6:03 PM with Mayor Pro-Tem Jacob Belcher, Trustee Randy Horning, Trustee Denise Tennant, Trustee Jessie Reiman, Trustee Stephanie Kline, Town Administrator Piel and Town Clerk Jennifer Boswell in attendance.

The Executive Session concluded at 6:28 PM.

The Work Session resumed at 6:30 PM.

**5. Discussion: 2025 Budget**

**a. Adoption of proposed budget scheduled for Board of Trustees regular meeting on December 10, 2024**

Town Administrator Piel and the Board of Trustees discussed past and current expenditures and associated line items to assist staff in setting the anticipated 2025 budget numbers.

Highlights are as follows:

- Equipment costs, including maintenance. The majority of this line item has been paid for by grants over the past year and is often difficult to predict. After the large projects are complete we will have a better idea of projections for this line item.
- Water taps and meters are still problematic. The town has been working on this for many years and now is the time to identify problems and order more equipment (which only gets more expensive each year) to correct the problems in mobile home parks where one service line connects many units. Once the system is functioning, the town will monitor usage in order to switch from a flat fee to one based on actual use.
- The Board of Trustees requested to alert the community via the newsletter to invite all to attend the December 19, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting to discuss the options for increasing water fees up to 20% considering the above and that water fees have not been raised in years even though costs have gone up.
- Employee health insurance has gone up 10% and has large deductibles, especially for older staff.
- Vacation payout will be large for two staff members, which is listed on a new line item to not artificially inflate the employee benefits line item.
- The police department is requesting some technology to assist officers instead of hiring another officer as budgeted last year. The Board of Trustees has requested more information from the department and the vendor on license plate reader software that is solar powered and that is currently used by the county and other municipalities. This will be tentatively scheduled for the December 3rd work session.

#### **6. Discussion: Organizational Chart**

Mayor Pro-tem Jacob Belcher will be stepping in to cover the meeting and signatory duties of Mayor Koch for a few months; Trustee Randy Horning will be attending Clear Creek Fire Authority meetings and may assume her CCFA board seat temporarily as well. Other Trustees will be asked to step in as needed.

#### **7. Discussion: Code of Conduct**

The Board members held a discussion about attendance, and all agreed that Mayor Koch will not be in conflict with the Code of Conduct policy for as long as she needs. Further discussion about how to enforce the Code if a member of the Board or Planning Commission does not sign the Code that outlines ethics for all staff as well as elected and volunteer officials. Trustees were in consensus that if someone does not sign the Code, they cannot serve on the governing body. One member will be invited to discuss concerns with the Board for not signing the Code yet.

#### **8. Discussion: Minton Park Ball Field & Dog Park**

Reports of dog waste being left both in the dog park and in the ball field can become a serious health issue where these parks will have to be closed. Staff discussed better signage as well as more doggie bags, and Trustees also feel enforcing this with our community and tourists is important to protect this asset. Trustees would like more signage on the ball field to include language that it is used by children so please use the dog park and pick up your waste. Future parks planning includes seeking

funding for cameras at Minton Park as well.

**9. Update: CCFA IGA & Community Survey**

The IGA has been finalized and ready to sign. A survey will be sent out to find the citizens of the County's wishes for options to secure more funding so the Fire Authority can remain solvent.

**10. The Next Board of Trustees Regular Meeting is Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 6:30 pm. In person with remote access.**

**11. The Next Work Session/Training of the Board of Trustees Meeting is Tuesday, December 3rd, 2024, at 6:30 pm. In person with remote access.**

**12. Adjourn Meeting**

**TRUSTEE HORNING MOTIONED TO ADJOURN, TRUSTEE REIMAN SECONDED THE MOTION, CLERK BUDA CONDUCTED A ROLL CALL VOTE, ALL WERE IN FAVOR, MOTION PASSED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM.

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(Mayor Pro-tem Jacob Belcher)

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(Deputy Town Clerk Lisa Kunze)