

Town of Richey Council Meeting
APPROVED
Tuesday, July 8, 2025—Town Office/Fire Hall
6:45 p.m.

Open Meeting and Pledge of Allegiance: Meeting called to order at 6:47 PM.

Roll Call of the Council Members and Guests: Mayor Brown, Councilmember Ulrich, Councilmember Barnhart, Councilmember Clinton, Clerk/Public Works Chance Senner, MMIA Britani Laughery (via Microsoft Teams), Lorraine Whiteman, (Absent Councilmember Gibson)

Consent Items*: Mayor Brown called for approval of items on the consent agenda. Councilmember Clinton inquired about the claims for the vendor League of Cities, as there were additional charges. Mayor Brown stated that the additional charges were for the AFR submittal (Annual Financial Report) and above and beyond audit work. Councilmember Barnhart had asked about the four categories on the claims list of the “postage” claim. Mayor Brown responded that “postage” is split between four funds, and most of the postage charges result from purchasing of stamps, shipping of water samples, and the mailing of the income survey. Councilmember Clinton asked for clarification on item #3 for the June 10th, 2025 Council Meeting, stating that the written statement of “Med-Write dropped us” was misrepresented and it should state that Med-Write could not process the Town of Richey’s ambulance claims until the Town was enrolled with Medi-care. Motion made to accept the minutes with the corrections by Councilmember Barnhart, seconded by Councilmember Ulrich. All in favor, motion carried, see attached voting record. Motion made to accept the rest of the consent items by Councilmember Clinton, seconded by Councilmember Barnhart. All in favor, motion carried, see attached voting record.

- Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting(s)
- Monthly Bank Reconciliation
- Monthly Payroll, Claims, and Journal Entries

** **Consent Items** are those upon which the presiding officer considers no discussion should be necessary. However, at the beginning of each meeting, any Council Member may request one or more items to be removed from the consent agenda for the purpose of discussion prior to a separate vote on the item(s). The presiding officer shall schedule such discussion and vote immediately following adoption of the consent agenda.*

Correspondence:

Sheriff’s / Dispatch Report

Public Comment for items not on the agenda: None.

Mayor’s Report: See attached report. Primarily about how the changes in drafted bills from the last legislative session affect local government.

Council Reports and Concerns: None.

Committee Reports:

- Planning Board report, updates and actions

Councilmember Ulrich updated the Town Council on the most recent Planning Board meeting. He informed them that this was the first public hearing meeting, which also had a large attendance including public figures. There was discussion about showing caution implementing County zoning. The next Planning Board meeting is this Thursday with discussion to continue about the wind farm.

-Build up Richey Community Open House hosted by Eastern Plains Economic Development report

Councilmember Clinton updated the Town Council that resident Lorraine Whiteman and a representative from the Ranger Review attended the open house. She stated that the primary goal is to promote the Town of Richey, and the bottom line is the thought of trying to assemble a group of entities together (referred to as stakeholders) such as the Saddle Club, Rod and Gun Club, business holders etc. She reinforced that it was a positive event and primarily consisted of ideas and projects which would support Richey and enhance it visually. The Council discussed that all of the proposed ideas were beneficial and in support of them, but felt that it was not the governing bodies duty to administer the formation of a stakeholders group. Council agreed it would be better received and implemented if it was driven by the businesses of the community. Mayor Brown then asked for public comment on the Eastern Plains Economic Development report. See attached report in packets. Resident Lorraine Whiteman stated that she also felt it best for the Town of Richey to refrain from the decision making process. Motion made by Councilmember Ulrich to refrain from having the Town of Richey make decisions pertaining to Eastern Plains Economic and letting Eastern Plains Economic’s administration communicate with the stakeholders. Seconded by Councilmember Barnhart. All in favor, motion carried. See attached voting record.

Public Works / Clerk's Report - Delinquent accounts

Public Works/Clerk Chance Senner updated the Town Council on current delinquent accounts, having two at addresses 314 1st Street East and 212 Antelope Avenue West. Chance Senner then updated Council on recent/ongoing activities such as, hanging a new entrance sign on the east side of Richey, setting the irrigation pump in the lagoon, performing a sludge judge at the lagoon with Rural Water, addressing inspection compliance from DEQ on water system improvements, applying Biolyneceus enzymes at the lagoon for sludge treatment, getting in contact with WBI about millings piled on their property, discussing warranty issues with Great West Engineering, spreading millings along new asphalt and poor boulevards, and mowing, weeding, and spraying Town of Richey properties.

Old Business:

1. Discussion and action for Interlocal Agreement conditions between Town and County for Ambulance Services and MMIA compliance for services out of town limits.

Britani Laughry, a representative from MMIA, thanked the governing body for having her back. Brintini explained that it is her understanding that the Richey Ambulance Service is a department under the Town of Richey, but also serves residents of Dawson County, operating outside of its statutory authority, and without agreement from the County to allow the Town of Richey to operate in those areas. The Town of Richey could have liability coverage issues because of this. She stated that Mayor Brown has been working with the Town's Attorney and MMIA to form an interlocal agreement to resolve the issue. If the commissioners approve the agreement, the Town of Richey ambulance service will be able to safely operate in and out of town limits. Mayor Brown stated that she had reached out on Mayor Listserve emails for examples on ambulance interlocal agreements, and with examples received formed one for the Town of Richey. The current Interlocal Agreement draft was reviewed by the Town's attorney and approved and Britani, with MMIA, stated that it also covers what is needed for liability insurance purposes. Councilmember Ulrich asked that with the interlocal agreement, the Town of Richey Ambulance service can only operate in Dawson County. Britani responded that this is the case, however if a patient is picked up within Dawson County, the patient could be transported to a hospital in a different county. Councilmember Barnhart asked if a Driver would respond to a call outside of county limits, would the Driver then be responsible for potential liabilities? Britani and Mayor Brown responded that responsibility would fall on the Town of Richey, though it could be argued that the responder did not have consent to do so. It is best to have that outlined in policy with notice given to the EMTs and drivers. Mayor Brown then asked for further questions and comments. *MMIA's Britani Laughry thanked the Town of Richey's governing body for their time, and left the meeting at 7:13 PM.*

With the conditions of the room the meeting took place in, a 5 minute recess was taken to switch to a room with air conditioning. *Meeting resumed at 7:25 PM.*

Mayor Brown asked if council was still in agreement with the proposal of \$2,000.00 annually with Dawson County with the Interlocal Agreement. Council was in agreement. Mayor Brown then asked for a motion to approve the interlocal agreement as drafted. Motion made by Councilmember Barnhart to approve the interlocal agreement as drafted. Seconded by Councilmember Clinton. All in favor, motion carried. See attached voting record.

2. Discussion and action on ambulance billing services

Mayor Brown stated that she, Councilmember Clinton, and Clerk/Public Works Chance Senner had conference calls with ambulance billing services, mentioning in particular the company Soulstone. Mayor Brown stated that the company is very proactive, they do not charge fees, but gain commission from ambulance transport services. It was discussed that fees be put in place for stand-by ambulance services, such as football games and rodeos. This is a practice that other ambulance services do. Mayor Brown asked Council what they thought was the most logical decision for an ambulance billing provider? Councilmember Clinton suggested that the Town of Richey should first get clarification from the current billing company (Med-Write) as to if they were still in the process of re-instating the Town's activation of Medi-Care. Councilmember Clinton reinforced her support of Soulstone. Mayor Brown asked Council if they were in favor of moving forward with finding a billing company and reinstating the Town's membership with Medicare. Motion made by Councilmember Ulrich to continue pursuing a billing service company and re-activating the Medi-Care compliance and paying the activation fee. Seconded by Councilmember Barnhart. All in favor, (Councilmember Clinton abstaining as she is the department head) motion carried. See attached voting record.

- 3. Discussion and action to adopt standard practice ambulance services policies. (Tabled until the next meeting with more information and examples to be researched and drafted for Council approval.)
- 4. Muni-code ordinance recodification update (tabled until August).
- 5. Correspondence of mitigation plan of nuisance property at 305 1st Street North East.

Mayor Brown noted that correspondence was made with the property owner, and they are following through the remediation of the property. Mayor Brown then asked for public comment on the business item. (See attached correspondence)

- 6. Council action of Resolution 2025-04 for adoption of Corrective action plan to findings for 2023 audit per MCA 2-7-515.

Mayor Brown stated that the Town is now contracting with League of Cities and Towns Financial Services which offers more experience in reporting and was the recommendation of the auditor for compliance to the findings in the audit. Motion made by Councilmember Barnhart to adopt Resolution 2025-04 for adoption of the Corrective action plan to findings for 2023 audit per MCA 2-7-515. Seconded by Councilmember Ulrich. All in favor, motion carried, see attached voting record.

- 7. Updates on property damage claim by the owner at 305 1st Street East from a failed service main before the curbstop. The meeting lead was turned over to Councilmember Clinton, President of the Council, as the Mayor is the owner of the damaged property so she recused herself from administrating the meeting . The owner of the damaged property handed letters to the Town Council addressing the damages and potential actions moving forward. In the letter, the resident pointed out that per the Town of Richey’s Ordinance, the Town is responsible for all mains and water service mains leading to curb stops. The resident asked that the Town of Richey continue to reach out to the Town’s insurance company in order to resolve the issue, and requested that the Town of Richey reimburse the funds to her in a timely manner. The letter also stated that this correspondence be included as part of the minutes permanent record (See attached letter). Councilmember Clinton recommended a conference call with the Town’s insurance holder, Great West Engineering, the Town’s attorney, and potentially the contractor to work on resolving the claim. The rest of the Council was in agreement. President of the Council Clinton will also be part of that conference call.

Councilmember Ulrich announced he needed to leave the meeting, Councilmember Barnhart moved to table the remaining business items to the next scheduled meeting as there would no longer be a quorum. There was not a second to the motion before Councilmember Ulrich left the meeting.

- 8. Updates to Phase 2 warranty work to be completed and timeline.
The Council was given a list and map of warranty work to review in their council packets.
- 9. Budget preparation and discussion. A list of proposed items for each department was included in the Council packets for discussion. Reference with Capitol Improvement Plan.

New Business:

- 10. Discussion about dogs at large and review of the Town’s ordinance.
Copies of the current out-dated dog ordinances were included in the council packets.

Adjournment: The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 9:26 PM.

Public comment is listed on the agenda for individuals to discuss any public matter not otherwise specifically listed on the agenda. If any individual desires to speak about an item specifically listed on the agenda, time will be allowed and identified by the mayor as “Any public comment?” when the item comes up for discussion and/or action.

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ATTEST: _____
Chance Senner, Deputy Clerk

APPROVED: _____
NaDean Brown, Mayor