# CITY OF ROCKY FORD – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

## City Council Chambers | 203 S. Main Street, Rocky Ford, CO

***November 10, 2026***

***REGULAR MEETING: 6:00pm***

Rocky Ford City Council met in Council Chambers on Tuesday, November 10, 2026. Mayor Joe Pentlicki called the meeting to order.

Those present at roll call were:

Mayor: Joe Pentlicki

Councilmembers: Nicholas Martinez, Robert Barron, and Nicole Roberts. Councilmember Thomas Mullins was in attendance by Zoom.

Councilmembers absent: Nanette Mosby

City Staff: City Manager Stacey Milenski, City Clerk Michelle Grasmick, Police Chief Matthew Wallace, Willand Fire Captain Colin Brown, Cody Kurtz, James Leoffler, Sarah Atteberry (volunteer fire), Nikki Shannon, Autumn Akers. City Attorney Dan Harvey was in attendance by Zoom.

Public attendance: JR Thompson, Gary Reed, Brad Roe, Jonathan Rodriguez, Ashley Haun, Eric Haun, James Budnick, Gwen Carter, Ben Carter, Laura Hicks.

Mayor Pentlicki led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmember Roberts read aloud the City of Rocky Ford's Mission Statement.

***5. PUBLIC COMMENT***

Gwen Carter, Ward I resident, proposed implementing photo speed enforcement cameras to improve public safety and generate revenue for Police, Fire, and EMS services. She cited speeding concerns within the City and shared information from the Town of Blanca's program, including reported reductions in speeding and increased citation revenue. Carter encouraged the City to explore the program as a potential funding source for public safety.

Ben Carter, Ward I resident, expressed concerns about the condition of Veterans Park ahead of Veterans Day, noting that the flags were weathered, faded, damaged, or missing and that maintenance issues, including overgrown grass and clogged gutters, had not been addressed. Carter stated that he had personally performed much of the upkeep over the past two years and urged that the park be properly maintained to honor local veterans.

Councilmember Mullins thanked Carter for bringing the matter forward, acknowledged the concerns, and stated that replacement flags would be installed. Commander Jonathan "Rod" Rodriguez of the American Legion explained that delays in obtaining replacement flags had occurred due to vendor issues, but that new flags had been ordered through an alternative supplier and would be installed by Veterans Day. Rodriguez also clarified that Veterans Park is owned and maintained by the American Legion, not the City. Councilmember Mullins further noted that, while the property is not City-owned, it remains an important part of the community and offered assistance if future issues arise.

James Budnick, county resident, asked whether the City has ordinances, codes, or approval processes governing what types of businesses may locate in Rocky Ford. Budnick expressed interest in whether residents have an opportunity to vote on or provide input regarding certain business types and stated that this was the third time he had raised the issue before Council.

Councilmember Roberts stated that the City generally does not have authority to approve or deny a legal business if it complies with existing ordinances and zoning regulations. Councilmembers discussed an example of a business in a neighboring community that required Planning Commission review due to zoning restrictions, noting that zoning compliance is typically the mechanism through which such matters come before a municipality. Mayor Pentlicki stated he would research the question further and provide any available information to Mr. Budnick.

***6. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA***

Councilmember Roberts motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martinez.
Voting results were:
YES: Barron, Mullins, Roberts, Martinez, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 5-0

Consent Agenda Items approved were:
6.1 **Approval of Council meeting minutes from October 27, 2026** – Regular meeting at 6:00pm
6.2 **Application for Liquor License Renewal** – Hwy 50 Bar & Grill – 606 Elm Avenue, Rocky Ford
6.3 **Application for Liquor License Renewal** – Taqueria Mexico #2 – 1720 Elm Avenue, Rocky Ford

***7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

Councilmember Roberts motioned to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martinez.
Voting results were:
YES: Mullins, Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 5-0

***8. PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, PROCLAMATIONS***

8.1 Hospice and Palliative Care Month Proclamation – Arkansas Valley Hospice

Mayor Pentlicki read a proclamation declaring November 2026 as Hospice and Palliative Care Month in the City of Rocky Ford. The proclamation recognized the compassionate, patient-centered services provided by Arkansas Valley Hospice, the organization's support of patients and families, and the contributions of its staff, volunteers, and community supporters. The proclamation was accepted by Laura Hicks on behalf of Arkansas Valley Hospice. Council expressed appreciation for the organization's work serving the community.

8.2 Veterans Day – American Legion

Mayor Pentlicki read a proclamation declaring November 11, 2026, as Veterans Day in the City of Rocky Ford. Commander Jonathan "Rod" Rodriguez and Brad Roe accepted the proclamation on behalf of the American Legion and provided information about Wreaths Across America, including efforts to place flags and wreaths at veterans' graves, upcoming flag placement along Main Street and Highway 50, and partnerships with the Police and Fire Departments. They encouraged community support through wreath sponsorships and volunteer participation, noting the ongoing need for additional volunteers to assist with veterans' recognition activities. Councilmembers expressed appreciation for their service and discussed opportunities to increase youth and community involvement in supporting local veterans' programs.

***9. PUBLIC HEARING***

9.1 None

***10. OLD BUSINESS***

10.1 Discussion/Action – **Ordinance No. 1000** – An Ordinance of the City of Rocky Ford, Colorado Establishing and Implementing a Program to Charge Mitigation Rates for the Deployment of Emergency and Non-emergency Services by the Rocky Ford Fire Department – **on second and final reading**

This item was introduced at a work session on August 4 and discussed further before receiving first reading on October 13. All required public notices have been published. There was no further discussion.

Councilmember Roberts motioned to approve Ordinance No. 1000 – An Ordinance of the City of Rocky Ford, Colorado Establishing and Implementing a Program to Charge Mitigation Rates for the Deployment of Emergency and Non-emergency Services by the Rocky Ford Fire Department, on second and final reading. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martinez.
Voting results were:
YES: Mullins, Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 5-0

10.2 Discussion/Action - **Ward II Vacancy**

City Clerk Michelle Grasmick reported that no letters of interest had been received by the application deadline for the vacant Ward II council seat. Council discussed statutory requirements related to filling the vacancy, including the potential need for a special election if the position remains unfilled, and whether the seat could remain vacant while the Council maintains a quorum. City Attorney Dan Harvey

was asked to research how a potential special election could affect council terms and report back. Council reached consensus to extend the application deadline to November 23, 2026, at 5:00pm, directed staff to increase outreach through regular Facebook postings and other publicity, and revisit the vacancy at the November 24, 2026, meeting.

***11. NEW BUSINESS***

11.1 Discussion/Action – Approve Employee Medical Benefits Renewal (Cigna)

Council considered renewal of the City's employee medical benefits plan with Cigna. The proposal had been previously reviewed during a work session, including an approximately 11% premium increase. Staff recommended remaining with Cigna. There was no further discussion.

Councilmember Barron motioned to approve employee medical benefits renewal with Cigna. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martinez.
Voting results were:
YES: Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Mullins, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 5-0

11.2 Discussion/Action – **Resolution No. 5, Series 2026** – A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocky Ford Providing Signatory Authority to the City Manager for the Community Development Block Grant Application

Council considered Resolution No. 5, Series 2026, authorizing City Manager Stacey Milenski to execute documents related to the Community Development Block Grant. Milenski explained the resolution is a requirement of the grant process for the abatement and demolition of blighted properties. There was no further discussion.

Councilmember Roberts motioned to approve Resolution No. 5, Series 2026 – A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocky Ford Providing Signatory Authority to the City Manager for the Community Development Block Grant Application. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martinez.
Voting results were:
YES: Martinez, Barron, Mullins, Roberts, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 5-0

11.3 Discussion/Action – **Resolution No. 6, Series 2026** – A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocky Ford Approving a Citizen Participation Plan for the Community Development Block Grant Application

Council considered Resolution No. 6, Series 2026, approving a Citizen Participation Plan as required for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application process related to the abatement and demolition of blighted properties. There was no further discussion.

Councilmember Martinez motioned to approve Resolution No. 6, Series 2026 – A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocky Ford Approving a Citizen Participation Plan for the Community Development Block Grant Application. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Barron.
Voting results were:
YES: Barron, Mullins, Roberts, Martinez, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 5-0

11.4 Discussion/Action – **Resolution No. 7, Series 2026** – A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocky Ford Approving an Agreement with the Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc Concerning the Community Development Block Grant Application

Council considered Resolution No. 7, Series 2026, approving an agreement with Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc. related to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application process for the abatement and demolition of blighted properties. The agreement was noted as a required component of the grant application process. There was no further discussion.

Councilmember Barron motioned to approve Resolution No. 7, Series 2026 – A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocky Ford Approving an Agreement with the Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc Concerning the Community Development Block Grant Application. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martinez.
Voting results were:
YES: Mullins, Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 5-0

11.5 Discussion/Action – **Ordinance No. 1001** - An Ordinance Levying General Property Taxes for the Year 2026 to Help Defray the Costs of Government for the City of Rocky Ford, Colorado for the 2027 Budget Year, and for the Mill Levy on Each Dollar's Worth of Property as Per the Assessed Value Thereon, as Shown by the Assessor of Otero County for the Year 2026, as Fixed by the Board of Equalization, **on first reading**

Council considered Ordinance No. 1001, levying general property taxes for tax year 2026 to help defray the costs of government for the City of Rocky Ford's 2027 budget year. The ordinance establishes the mill levy based on property valuations certified by the Otero County Assessor and fixed by the Board of Equalization. It was noted that the mill levy currently remains unchanged from the previous year. There was no further discussion. The ordinance was presented on first reading.

Councilmember Martinez motioned to approve Ordinance No. 1001 - An Ordinance Levying General Property Taxes for the Year 2026 to Help Defray the Costs of Government for the City of Rocky Ford, Colorado for the 2027 Budget Year, and for the Mill Levy on Each Dollar's Worth of Property as Per the Assessed Value Thereon, as Shown by the Assessor of Otero County for the Year 2026, as Fixed by the Board of Equalization, on first reading. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Roberts.
Voting results were:

YES: Mullins, Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 5-0

11.6 Discussion/Action – **Ordinance No. 1002** - An Ordinance Summarizing Expenditures and Revenues for Each Fund and Adopting a Budget for the City of Rocky Ford, Colorado, for the Calendar Year Beginning on the First Day of January, 2027, and Ending on the Last Day of December, 2027, **on first reading**

Council considered Ordinance No. 1002, which summarizes projected revenues and expenditures for each City fund as part of the 2027 budget. Mayor Pentlicki noted that the budget has been discussed in multiple work sessions and that additional budget work remains before final adoption. There was no further discussion.

Councilmember Barron motioned to approve Ordinance No. 1002 - An Ordinance Summarizing Expenditures and Revenues for Each Fund and Adopting a Budget for the City of Rocky Ford, Colorado, for the Calendar Year Beginning on the First Day of January, 2027, and Ending on the Last Day of December, 2027, on first reading. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martinez.
Voting results were:
YES: Martinez, Barron, Mullins, Pentlicki
NO: Roberts
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 4-1

11.7 Discussion/Action – **Ordinance No. 1003** - An Ordinance Appropriating Sums of Money to the Various Funds in the Amount of and for the purpose as Set Forth in the Ordinance, for the City of Rocky Ford, Colorado, for the Year 2027 Budget Year, **on first reading**

Council considered Ordinance No. 1003, an ordinance appropriating funds to the City's various funds and purposes for fiscal year 2027. There was no further discussion.

Councilmember Martinez motioned to approve Ordinance No. 1003 - An Ordinance Appropriating Sums of Money to the Various Funds in the Amount of and for the purpose as Set Forth in the Ordinance, for the City of Rocky Ford, Colorado, for the Year 2027 Budget Year, on first reading. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Barron.
Voting results were:
YES: Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Mullins, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby
Motion carried: 5-0

***12. EXECUTIVE SESSION***
12.1 None

***13. STAFF REPORTS***

13.1 City Manager – Stacey Milenski summarized written City Manager's report to Council. Milenski included updates that occurred after the report was written.

13.2 Museum Curator, Rob Marshall – written only

***14. COUNCIL REPORTS***

Councilmembers provided updates and reports on their respective boards and community events.

***15. PUBLIC COMMENT***

Nikki Shannon, Fire/EMS employee, requested that monthly revenue and expense reports be broken down by public safety department to provide greater transparency and context regarding revenues generated by Fire/EMS. She stated that council and the public should consider both revenues and expenditures when evaluating department finances, expressed concerns regarding transparency in the budget process and communication of proposed budget reductions, and encouraged Councilmembers to review and understand the financial data in detail.

Colin Brown, Wildland Fire Captain, stated that Fire/EMS had implemented operational changes requested by Council and demonstrated success in doing so. He expressed concern over proposed budget reductions, emphasized that the department's primary responsibility is public safety rather than revenue generation, and encouraged Council to focus on economic development and long-term revenue generation for the community

***16. UPCOMING MEETINGS***

16.1 November 24, 2026 – 4:30pm Work Session, 6:00pm City Council Regular Meeting
16.2 December 8, 2026 – 4:30pm Work Session, 6:00pm City Council Regular Meeting

***ADJOURN***

There being no further business, Mayor Pentlicki adjourned the meeting at 7:38pm.

Mayor Joe Pentlicki

City Clerk, Michelle Grasmick