CITY OF ROCKY FORD – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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

October 27, 2026

REGULAR MEETING: 6:00pm
Rocky Ford City Council met in Council Chambers on Tuesday, October 27, 2026. Mayor Joe Pentlicki called the meeting to order.

Those present at roll call were:

Mayor: Joe Pentlicki

Councilmembers: Nicholas Martinez and Robert Barron. Councilmembers Nicole Roberts was in attendance by Zoom. Councilmember Mosby joined the meeting by Zoom before New Business 11.1.

Councilmembers absent: Thomas Mullins

City Staff: City Manager Stacey Milenski, City Clerk Michelle Grasmick, Communications Director June Ferraro, Shania Peil, Jennifer Vargas, Fire Chief Ray Gonzales, Deputy Fire Chief Brandon Dickinson, Autumn Akers, Daniel Santistevan (volunteer fire), Public Works Director Rick Long, Public Work Foreman Cuco Ruiz, Ricky Baca, Water/Wastewater Foreman Cody Baylor, Manuel Trevizo, Zack Reed, Police Chief Matthew Wallace, Officer Tony Jones, Officer Robert Powell, Officer Anthony Trujillo, Corporal Joshua Cobb. City Attorney Dan Harvey was in attendance by Zoom.

Public attendance: JR Thompson, Gary Reed, Lonye Buck, Susan Jung, CeCe Tafoya, Viola Rodriguez, Lisa Jones, Ron Rodriguez, Krista & Jaxtyn Maes, Andrea Powell, Brian Lovato, James Budnick. Numerous others who did not sign in.

Mayor Pentlicki led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

5. PUBLIC COMMENT
Councilmember Martinez apologized to City Council, staff, and the City Attorney for his conduct during a previous executive session. He acknowledged that his actions were unprofessional and stated his commitment to improving his behavior and maintaining a more professional demeanor in future meetings. Martinez expressed his intent to better serve the community through his actions going forward.

Councilmember Barron began reading the language of Ballot Question 2A, which asks voters whether the City of Rocky Ford should approve a temporary 1.5% sales and use tax from January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2029. Councilmember Barron started to make personal comments about the measure, noting that he is retired and lives on a fixed income. City Attorney Dan Harvey interrupted and advised

that, because the matter was an active election issue and Barron serves on City Council, he should not comment on it during the meeting. Barron asked whether he could speak as a citizen, but Harvey reiterated his concern, and Barron ended his remarks without expressing a position on the ballot measure.

JR Thompson, resident and former Mayor, spoke in support of the proposed public safety sales tax measure (2A). Thompson stated that he believes the tax is a good idea and encouraged residents to vote in favor of it.

Kristine Harbert, Ward III resident, submitted a written public comment. Council accepted the written comment and added it to the public record.

6. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Martinez motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Barron.
Voting results were:
YES: Barron, Roberts, Martinez, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby, Mullins
Motion carried: 4-0

Consent Agenda Items approved were:
6.1 **Approval of Council meeting minutes from October 13, 2026** – Regular meeting at 6:00pm

7. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Martinez motioned to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Barron.
Voting results were:
YES: Roberts, Martinez, Barron, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mosby, Mullins
Motion carried: 4-0

8. PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, PROCLAMATIONS

8.1 Introduction of Police Officer Tony Jones – Police Chief Matthew Wallace

It was announced that the agenda item would need to be temporarily postponed because the individuals scheduled to participate were responding to a nearby emergency incident. Council acknowledged the delay and indicated they would return to the item later in the meeting.

8.2 Proclamation – First Responders Day

8.3 Proclamation – Public Works Employee Appreciation Day

Mayor Pentlicki read the proclamations recognizing First Responders Day and Public Works Employee Appreciation Day. Following the proclamations, first responders and public works employees in

attendance were invited to the front of the room to be recognized and participate in a group photograph with Council.

9. PUBLIC HEARING

9.1 None

10. OLD BUSINESS

10.1 None

11. NEW BUSINESS

11.1 Discussion/Action – Resolution No. 4 Series 2026 – A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocky Ford Adopting an Updated Public Records Policy

Council reviewed the updated Open Records (CORA) Policy. City Attorney Dan Harvey explained that the revisions clarify the City's existing procedures for processing records requests, update the policy to reflect current Colorado law, identify where requests must be submitted, and clarify applicable fees and administrative procedures. Discussion focused on whether records requests could be required to be submitted on the City's designated form. City Clerk Michelle Grasmick noted information received at a recent CMCA conference indicating that a local policy may require use of a specific form. Harvey confirmed that the City may adopt procedures requiring use of the City's form, provided the policy does not conflict with state law. Harvey noted that written requests generally must still be processed under CORA, even if not submitted on the official form. Councilmembers discussed adding language to the policy specifying that requests for public records must be submitted in writing and on the City's designated form, available through the City. Harvey agreed to incorporate clarifying language into the policy and conduct a final legal review.

Councilmember Martinez motioned to approve Resolution No. 4 Series 2026 – A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Rocky Ford Adopting an Updated Public Records Policy with the discussed change. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Barron.
Voting results were:
YES: Mosby, Robert, Martinez, Barron, Pentlicki
NO: None
ABSENT: Mullins
Motion carried: 5-0

11.2 Discussion/Action – Approval to apply for Division of Housing CDBG Abatement and Demolition Program (DOLA)

City Manager Stacey Milenski presented an opportunity to apply for a state-funded residential property grant program that would provide up to $75,000 per property, with grant administration managed entirely by Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc (SECED) and requiring no local match. Milenski reported that the application period opens in December and noted that several potential properties had already been identified, with additional property recommendations provided through community concerns and staff outreach. Council discussed the program's potential benefits to the community and the identification of eligible residential properties. City Attorney Dan Harvey requested updates on the

program's implementation and the State's approach to funding improvements on private residential properties.

Council reached consensus supporting submission of the grant application and authorized Milenski to proceed with the application process. Milenski will continue evaluating and prioritizing eligible properties and coordinating with stakeholders as the project moves forward.

11.3 Discussion/Action – Approval to apply for RESTORE Colorado (National Fish and Wildlife Foundation)

City Manager Stacey Milenski presented an opportunity to apply for a RESTORE Colorado/National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant in partnership with a local community organization, Wildlife Unlimited. The proposed project would focus on Crystal Lake, including the removal of tires and debris, restoration of habitat areas, and installation of pollinator gardens. Milenski reported that the grant could provide up to $250,000 and would require no local match, due in part to planning work previously completed through the GOCO planning grant. The project would support ongoing environmental restoration and beautification efforts at Crystal Lake. Council discussed the proposal and expressed support for pursuing the funding opportunity.

Council reached consensus authorizing Milenski to proceed with the grant application for the Restore Colorado/National Fish and Wildlife Foundation program.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

12.1 None

14. COUNCIL REPORTS

Council reports were presented prior to staff reports, deviating slightly from the order listed on the agenda. Councilmembers provided updates and reports on their respective boards and community events.

8. PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, PROCLAMATIONS

8.1 Introduction of Police Officer Tony Jones – Police Chief Matthew Wallace

Police Chief Matthew Wallace announced that Tony Jones has transitioned from his previous role in code enforcement and is currently participating in the department's Field Training Officer (FTO) program. Officer Jones did attend the Otero College Law Enforcement Academy and is POST-certified. Chief Wallace reported that Officer Jones is working alongside senior officers who provide daily training, evaluation, and mentoring. Due to his existing knowledge of the community, city systems, and enforcement procedures, his training period is expected to be shorter than the typical two- to three-month FTO program. Upon successful completion of the program, Officer Jones will begin serving independently as a patrol officer. Officer Jones was ceremoniously pinned by his wife, Lisa Jones. Council congratulated Officer Jones on his new role and wished him success in his continued training and service to the community.

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 City Clerk – Michelle Grasmick provided an overview of the Colorado Municipal Clerk Association Annual Conference she attended in Estes Park the previous week.

15. PUBLIC COMMENT

Susan Jung, resident and former Mayor, congratulated the Council on conducting an efficient and positive meeting, noting that it was one of the most positive meetings she had attended in a long time. Jung specifically commended the Council for recognizing city employees through the First Responders Day and Public Works Employee Appreciation Day proclamations and expressed appreciation for the positive tone of the meeting.

Deputy Fire Chief Brandon Dickinson announced that a fireworks show is planned to follow the Balloon Festival parade, weather permitting. Deputy Chief Dickinson advised that the display will be held at Meloneer Field (Meloneer Park) and encouraged community members to attend. Deputy Chief Dickinson noted that the show will be brief, lasting less than three minutes, but will feature full-size three-inch mortar fireworks with a patriotic theme.

JR Thompson, resident, recognized the Rocky Ford Fire Department for its efforts during Fire Safety Week, noting that firefighters took time to educate many local youths about fire safety. Thompson commended the department for its community outreach and public education efforts and stated that its members should be applauded for their work.

16. UPCOMING MEETINGS

16.1 November 10, 2026 – 4:30pm Work Session, 6:00pm City Council Regular Meeting
16.1 November 24, 2026 – 4:30pm Work Session, 6:00pm City Council Regular Meeting

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Mayor Pentlicki adjourned the meeting at 6:52pm.

Mayor Joe Pentlicki

City Clerk, Michelle Grasmick

Outlook

Written Public Comment for October 27, 2026 Rocky Ford City Council Meeting – Request for Inclusion in Official Record

From RinYah Harbert <yahshuaiscoming@gmail.com>
Date Mon 10/19/2026 9:38 AM
To Michelle Grasmick <mgrasmick@rockyford-co.gov>
Cc dph@hpwclaw.com <dph@hpwclaw.com>; jpentlickiward2rf@gmail.com <jpentlickiward2rf@gmail.com>; nanette.l.mosby@gmail.com <nanette.l.mosby@gmail.com>; allpronicole@gmail.com <allpronicole@gmail.com>; councilmannicmartinez@gmail.com <councilmannicmartinez@gmail.com>; robertbarron987@gmail.com <robertbarron987@gmail.com>; thomas.k.mullins@gmail.com <thomas.k.mullins@gmail.com>

Dear City Clerk, City Attorney, Mayor, and Members of the Rocky Ford City Council,

Please accept the following as my written public comment for the October 27, 2026 City Council meeting. I request that the complete statement be included in the official meeting record. Please confirm receipt and advise in writing how my request for disability accommodation for public participation will be handled.

PUBLIC COMMENT – ROCKY FORD CITY COUNCIL
October 27, 2026

Mayor and Members of the Rocky Ford City Council,

My name is Kristene Kay Harbert, and I am a resident of Rocky Ford.

I am submitting this statement because I have serious concerns about transparency, accountability, and how residents are treated when they ask questions of their local government.

For months, I have requested public records and explanations concerning city expenditures, financial oversight, and council procedures.

The City's 2024 financial audit reported expenditures exceeding appropriations in multiple funds and identified weaknesses in financial monitoring. These findings deserve clear public explanations, not silence.

I am not accusing anyone of fraud or criminal wrongdoing. I am asking for supporting documentation, explanations of spending decisions, and evidence that appropriate financial controls were followed.

On October 4, I submitted two additional Colorado Open Records Act requests. One concerned supporting documentation for public safety expenditures. The other concerned employee bonuses exceeding $500.

As of October 19, I had received no substantive response from the City Clerk to either request. I have now sent another written follow-up.

I am also concerned about how this Council handled my public participation on September 22.

Because of my disabilities, I submitted written public comments and requested that they be read aloud as an accommodation.

My statement was not read aloud. The three-minute limit became an issue, but nobody contacted me beforehand to explain that my statement needed to be shortened or to work with me on an effective alternative.

I was willing to cooperate. I simply needed communication and a reasonable opportunity to participate.

Acknowledging that a written statement was received is not the same as explaining how an accommodation request was evaluated.

Residents should not have to repeatedly ask for basic answers, chase down records, or struggle to have their concerns heard.

I respectfully ask this Council to ensure that public records requests receive timely written responses, that the City's financial findings are openly addressed, and that disability accommodation requests are handled through a clear, respectful process.

I also ask that the Council explain, in writing, what steps it will take to improve communication and accountability.

Public service requires transparency, professionalism, and respect for the people you represent.

These are not unreasonable expectations. They are fundamental responsibilities of local government.

Please include my complete statement in the official meeting record.

Thank you.

Kristene Kay Harbert