

Boulder Town Council Regular Meeting April 3, 2025, 7:00 PM Meeting Minutes

Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM on Thursday, April 3, 2025. John Veranth, Mayor Pro Tempore, conducted the roll call.

- Gladys LeFevre, Town Council Member (Online via Zoom)
- Josh Ellis, Town Council Member (Online via Zoom)
- Ray Gardner, Town Council Member
- John Veranth, Town Council Member
- Jessica LeFevre, Town Clerk.

Pledge of Allegiance

John Veranth led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approve agenda

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

Approve Minutes

Josh Ellis explained that he had used AI tools to help summarize the transcript of the previous meeting according to the agenda. John Veranth noted he had made corrections online.

Councilmember Josh Ellis moved to approve the March meeting minutes as amended. Councilmember Gladys LeFevre seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Department Report, council and administrators

Gladys LeFevre reported she had nothing to report for buildings, cemetery, and travel council.

Ray Gardner reported on the town park's septic system. He spoke with Glade Shakespeare from the health department about water coming to the surface in the leach field. The system was installed in 2015 and should process up to 600 gallons daily. Ray noted septic tanks typically need pumping every 10 years. Possible issues could be a crushed pipe, tree roots, or solids in the tank preventing good flow. The recommended first step was to pump the tank and check for backflow.

John Veranth suggested pumping both the park and town hall tanks. Ray agreed to follow up on arranging this with Royal Flush from Wayne County. Jessica LeFevre would provide a purchase order number as the town's purchasing agent.

Josh Ellis had no updates on the landfill or fire department, noting the burn ban would be discussed later.

Public Comment

Dan Pence spoke about concerns with the recent roadwork on Lower Boulder Road. He stated that despite a November listening session where residents requested no widening and only patching 3-4 bad potholes, extensive work was done, including cutting down 6 100-year-old cottonwood trees. He criticized the lack of oversight and communication from the town council during the project.

Tina Karlsson requested clarity on the Planning Commission's role in revising the general plan and getting public input on development north of town. She suggested coordinating with the Arts Council on community discussions about the future use of the town grounds.

Nancy Tosta, as Planning Commission chair, encouraged the council to act on approving the PC bylaws. She also requested more information be provided ahead of time when planning, zoning, and annexation topics are on the agenda.

Cheryl Cox reported on an opportunity for a special exhibit in the Arts Council gallery for the 2026 Fourth of July. She suggested starting planning now and potentially having the Arts Council lead a committee for next year's celebration.

Susan Kelly spoke as a resident of Lower Boulder Road, echoing Dan Pence's comments. She emphasized the need for better communication with residents before projects occur.

Jen Bach commented on the bathrooms at the park, noting that Anasazi State Park welcomes people to use their restrooms. She suggested moving highway signs to direct people there instead.

Matt Cochran spoke about the Lower Boulder Road work, emphasizing the emotional impact on residents and the loss of trees. He called for higher standards of leadership and accountability from town officials.

Jennifer Geerlings requested a sincere apology from the council regarding the road project rather than shifting responsibility. She suggested ways the process could have been improved through better communication and oversight.

Mary McIntyre detailed concerns about the roadwork and tree removal on Lower Boulder Road. She criticized the council's lack of responsiveness to resident complaints during the project.

Constance Lynn expressed deep distress over the tree removal and vegetation clearing along Lower Boulder Road. She described feeling the town was being "invaded" and criticized the lack of response to her calls for help during the project.

Donna Owen (online) expressed concerns about difficulty getting responses from town officials on various matters. She also spoke against any potential tax increases.

Steve Cox raised issues with the previous town election, including alleged violations of campaign finance laws. He called for the council to address these concerns and show integrity.

Open Discussion Regarding Lower Boulder Road

John Veranth opened the discussion for council members to respond to the public comments on the Lower Boulder Road project.

Ray Gardner stated the town has an obligation to maintain streets to reduce liability. He acknowledged the work may have gone beyond residents' expectations, but felt it improved safety. He noted challenges with long-term mitigation of sand and weeds.

Gladys LeFevre suggested revisiting the tree ordinance for clarity. She proposed encouraging residents to plant trees on private property using available programs.

Josh Ellis apologized that residents felt their input from the listening session was ignored. He explained that he had limited involvement in the project details. Josh noted the difficulties in micromanaging county work crews but expressed a willingness to support efforts to replant trees or revegetate the area.

John Veranth apologized for the loss of trees, particularly those with nesting birds. He explained that Garkane Energy had been asked by the county to trim trees and had followed their written policies, which are based on national standards. John acknowledged the need to balance aesthetics and public safety. He suggested the town could potentially help fund replanting trees away from power lines if a viable plan with landowner consent could be developed.

Mayor Appointment

John Veranth explained that by state law, the council needed to appoint a new mayor within 30 days of the previous mayor's resignation. Jessica LeFevre confirmed that Josh Ellis and Conrad Jepsen had officially put their names forward.

Conrad Jepsen expressed interest in helping alleviate problems and improve communication between the council and residents.

Josh Ellis stated he was considering running for mayor in the upcoming election and felt the interim role would provide valuable experience. He highlighted ongoing administrative initiatives he felt needed continued focus.

Gladys LeFevre voiced support for Conrad, viewing him as a neutral candidate with past council experience.

Ray Gardner asked Josh how he would transition his current projects if appointed mayor. Josh explained that most of his work aligned with mayoral responsibilities and anticipated that administrative changes would create more efficiency over time.

John Veranth praised Josh's efforts in improving administrative procedures and research skills.

Councilmember John Veranth called for a vote. Councilmember Gladys LeFevre and Councilmember Ray Gardner voted for Conrad Jepsen. Councilmember John Veranth voted for Councilmember Josh Ellis.

With a 2-1 vote, Conrad Jepsen was appointed as the new mayor. Jessica LeFevre administered the oath of office to Mayor Jepsen. Mayor Jepsen left the meeting, and John continued as Mayor Pro Tempore.

Pickleball Court- Boulder Wellness Network

Susan Kelly presented on behalf of the Boulder Wellness Network fitness subcommittee regarding the repair and maintenance of the town's pickleball court. She explained the 10-year-old court was in poor condition, with cracks creating safety hazards. The committee obtained quotes and recommended accepting a bid from Stilson and Cooch for \$13,524 to resurface the court specifically because the bid was from the contractors who performed the original surfacing work, and the contractors have a good reputation.

Kelly noted there is regular use of the court and wider interest based on a recent survey. She requested that the council consider approving the expenditure that night due to weather-dependent timing constraints for the project.

After a discussion of usage, bid details, and funding sources, the council voted to approve the project:

Councilmember Gladys LeFevre moved to appropriate \$13,524 from the capital fund to resurface the pickleball court according to the bid provided. Councilmember Josh Ellis seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Planning Commission Bylaws

John Veranth noted that the draft PC bylaws were in the meeting materials folder. As Planning Commission liaison, he had provided feedback during their development. He agreed with Nancy Tosta's earlier comment that while not perfect, they were sufficient to move forward.

Councilmember John Veranth moved to accept and approve the Planning Commission bylaws as submitted. Councilmember Gladys LeFevre seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Pelorus/CPA Call Follow-up

Josh Ellis summarized a productive call with Kyle, the CPA from Pelorus. They identified key financial reports to generate for future meetings. Josh noted that the meeting materials now have the check register directly from Pelorus rather than a manually created Google Sheet. He anticipated having the full list of Pelorus reports to review at the next meeting. Josh also mentioned that Pelorus offers additional services like monthly reconciliation, which could be considered.

Election Ordinance Analysis from the Town Attorney

Michael Winn, the town attorney, recommended adopting the state election code in its entirety rather than maintaining separate town ordinances. This would ensure the town's rules stay current with legislative changes. He suggested repealing Chapter 31 of the Boulder town ordinances, including section 31.02 on financial disclosures.

John Veranth agreed to have an ordinance drafted for consideration at the May meeting. There was some discussion to clarify the correct candidate filing dates, with Jessica LeFevre stating it would be June 2-6, 2025.

Town Restrooms Update

Keith Watts summarized his proposal to redirect bathroom signage to the Anasazi State Park, with after-hours signs pointing to the town park. He noted the park staff were amenable to this arrangement.

Councilmember John Veranth moved to follow Keith's recommendation to move the signs to the state park with an after-hours sign directing people to the town park. Councilmember Gladys LeFevre seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Fire Ban

Josh Ellis noted that while there had been recent snow, Fire Chief Corry Johnson supported implementing the fire ban now.

Councilmember Josh Ellis moved to approve a fire ban resolution to change the beginning fire ban date to April 15th for 2025. Councilmember Gladys LeFevre seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Planning for July 4th

The council discussed planning for the 2025 and 2026 Fourth of July celebrations. For 2026, Cheryl Cox had expressed interest in the Arts Council being involved, but Elizabeth Julian cautioned that formal approval from the Arts Council board would be needed first. Once the details are clarified, the council agreed to revisit this at the next meeting.

For 2025, Jessica LeFevre noted that only one person (Cindy Wilson) had responded to a call for volunteers. Gladys LeFevre suggested asking Cindy to chair the committee. Ray Gardner offered to assist as the council liaison but emphasized that more help would be needed. The council agreed to contact Cindy Wilson and Jen Bach, who also offered to help, to begin forming a committee.

Progress Report on Administrative Procedures

Elizabeth Julian (online) provided an overview of ongoing work to improve administrative functions, including email and calendar configurations, mapping staff roles and responsibilities, and documentation organization. She outlined priorities for the coming weeks, including the digital organization of records, pursuing website improvements, implementing online submissions and payments, and analyzing administrative expenses. Elizabeth reported working just under 25 hours for the town in March.

The council approved a motion for a 3-month trial of ClerkMinutes:

Councilmember Gladys LeFevre moved that the town council purchase ClerkMinutes for \$99 per month for 3 months, specifically for April, May, and June, to allow for a thorough evaluation and review of the software as a long-term, cost-effective, and efficient solution for producing and posting draft minutes. Councilmember John Veranth seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Planning, Zoning, and Annexation Discussion

John Veranth briefly addressed a citizen's question about the annexation of county land. He noted that under state law, the town cannot pursue annexation without an annexation policy plan, which the council had voted against developing in October 2021.

Discussion of Planning Commission Work Items

This item was not explicitly discussed during the meeting.

Revenue Discussion Option

Josh Ellis noted this topic would require more research on referendum procedures and deadlines. The council agreed to revisit it at the next meeting, potentially with input from the town attorney on the process for putting a tax increase to public vote.

Staff Upcoming Work & Priorities

The council briefly touched on upcoming priorities, including obtaining third-quarter financials, proceeding with the pickleball court project, and continuing work on administrative improvements.

Approval for March checks issued

The council approved the March checks by unanimous consent.

Upcoming business for May

The council identified several items for the May agenda:

- Election Ordinance Repeal (with public hearing)
- Follow-up on Pelorus CPA meeting
- Clarification on Arts Council plans for the 2026 Fourth of July
- Continued 2025 Fourth of July planning
- Administrative Procedure Updates
- Tree City Ordinance Review
- RSTR ordinance (with public hearing)
- Initial Budget Discussions
- Potential Tax Increase Options and Procedures

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 PM.

Date Minutes Approved: May 01, 2025



Jessica LeFevre, Town Clerk