

Town of Talking Rock Monthly Meeting Minutes

November 13, 2025

Mayor James Bryant called the meeting to order at 6:57pm.

I. Attendance

Board:

James Bryant

Tony Hawf

Lynda Cagle

Jason Little

Darlene O'Connell

City Manager/Clerk: Amanda Buntin

Others in attendance:

Cheryl Sams, Jene Bryant, Jim Baumann, Mark Tanner, Dusty Eaton, Cara from the Pickens newspaper

I. Pledge of Allegiance

II. Mayor Announcements: Mayor Bryant announced that due to the proceeds collected during the Heritage Days Festival the town was able to make two five-hundred-dollar donations this year. The first check was presented to Pickens County Animal Rescue. Stacy was in attendance for the Animal Resuce to collect the check. She thanked the council, mayor and everyone who supported the festival. The other donation is going to the Pickens County Recreation Department; they cannot attend the meeting. The city manager will be dropping off their check next week. Mayor Bryant announced that the meeting tonight is solely for the purpose of discussing the FY 2026 Proposed Budget for the Town of Talking Rock.

III. Approval of Octobers Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Tony Hawf, seconded by Lynda Cagle to approve the October Meeting Minutes. All voted unanimously in favor, except Caleb Gay who was not present.

IV. Approval of October Financial Report: A motion was made by Darlene O'Connell and seconded by Jason Little to approve the October Financial Report. All voted unanimously in favor, except Caleb Gay who was not present.

V. Maintenance Report: Jim Baumann announced that he has been taking care of trimming brush back on Old Blairsville Road as well as along the creek bank to better assist citizens to make use of the creek. He also stated that the removing of leaves from the park is ongoing and will continue until they all fall off the trees.

VI. Old Business:

A. Survey of Parcel 020A 057: The city manager announced that this survey had to be pushed back due to the survey company being very busy during this time of the year. The survey is still going to take place, but we do not have an official date yet. The city manager also investigated an old survey of the parcel and found out that because the old survey did not reference the deed in any way on the survey it does not count as an official survey of the parcel of land.

VII. New Business: FY2026 Proposed Budget: Initial Review and Discussion. (Initial Presentation of the Towns Recommended FY2026 Operating Budget. Discussion to Focus on Changes from the Prior Year, Projected Revenues and Priorities for Review in Subsequent Meetings.) Mayor Bryant

showed a slide show of the new 2026 Town of Talking Rock budget and discussed everything involved. (See attached budget paperwork for more details) A few major changes to the showing of the proposed budget this year showed every category the town collects taxes from as well as a few added line items to the budget to better show detailed information about money spent. The mayor also hit on the main ways the city manager was able to save the town money or collect funds owed to the town. (See attached paperwork for more information) The last main point for the FY 2026 budget is that it is less than the FY 2025 budget, this is due to the city manager finding better, more affordable options for the town when it came to services that were needed, as well as getting rid of services that were no longer needed by the town. Cheryl Sams brought up an idea for the town to create an Emergency Fund with the remaining budget that's not been designated for other items. Mayor Bryant liked the idea and asked the council members to think about this before the next meeting in December when they vote on the proposed budget.

VIII. **Adjourn:** A motion was made by Darlene O'Connell to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Lynda Cagle at 7:38pm. All voted unanimously in favor, except Caleb Gay who was not present.

The next regular council meeting will be December 11, 2025, at 7pm with the public hearing session beginning at 6:30pm. There will NOT be a working group meeting for the month of December 2025.

James W. Bryant Jr. Mayor

Lynda Cagle

Tony Hawi

Caleb Gay

Jason Little

Assisted by: Amanda Buntin

Darlene O'Connell

Town of Talking Rock Expenses General Administration "Town Hall"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 Proposed Operating Budget	Notes
Maintenance & Repairs	\$20,000.00	\$15,000.00	DECREASE
Maintenance Contract	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00	
Town Clerk	\$40,800.00	\$41,952.00	INCREASE 3% Annual
Concil Compensation	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00	
Telephone	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00	
Power	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
Propane	\$3,067.86	\$4,200.00	INCREASE
Water	\$532.00	\$532.00	
Audit	\$2,500.00	\$3,500.00	INCREASE
Subscription/Licenses Dues	\$700.00	\$1,500.00	Changing to membership dues.
Advertising	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	DECREASE
Office Supplies	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	
Building Supplies	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	With maintenance/Repairs
Legal & Professional Fees	\$5,500.00	\$6,000.00	INCREASE

Town of Talking Rock Expenses General Administration "Road Maintenance"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 Purposed Operating Budget	Notes
Street Lights & Power	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	
Maintenance & Repairs	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	LMIG was used for 2025
NEW			
Street Supplies	0	\$1,000.00	
Total	\$5,500.00	\$6,500.00	

Town of Talking Rock Expenses General Administration "Garbage Services"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 Purposed Operating Budget	Notes
Dumpster (Waste Management) Two 8 Yard Dumpsters	\$7,319.88	\$7,116.00	New company
Trash Pickup Services (J&S Disposal)	\$4,392.00	\$4,000.00	
Supply Cost	\$500.00	\$0.00	
TOTAL	\$12,211.88	\$11,116.00	

Town of Talking Rock Expenses General Administration "Park Services"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 Purposed Operating Budget	Notes
Water	\$500.00	\$500.00	
Power	\$2,100.00	\$2,100.00	
Maintenance & Improvements	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	
Septic Services	\$500.00	\$500.00	
Vehicle Maintenance (Gator & Lawn Mower)	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	
Fuel Cost	\$1,000.00	\$500.00	
NEW			
Park Supplies	0	\$1,500.00	
TOTAL	\$8,600.00	\$9,600.00	

Town of Talking Rock Expenses General Administration "Train Car Support"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 Purposed Operating Budget	Notes
Water	\$600.00	\$600.00	
Power	\$2,200.00	\$2,200.00	
Maintenance & Improvements	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	
Septic Services	\$500.00	\$500.00	
TOTAL	\$8,300.00	\$8,300.00	

Town of Talking Rock Expenses General Administration "Tourism"	2025 Operating Budget	2026 Purposed Operating Budget	Notes
Power for Town Events	\$600.00	\$0.00	No Buildings Anymore
Heritage Days Festival	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	
Webstie Services	\$3,200.00	\$1,800.00	\$450.00 Quarterly
Video Services (Meetings)	\$600.00	\$1,200.00	\$100.00 a meeting
Various Events (TBD)	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	DECREASE
TOTAL	\$7,400.00	\$5,000.00	