

West Valley Community Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 14, 2026 | 6:00 p.m. | Frenchtown Fire Station, 16875 Marion Street

Council members in attendance: Reagan Mecham, Tom Tucker, Kelley Durbin-Williams, Dave Thompson

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The April meeting minutes were provided to Council members before the meeting. A motion was made by Reagan to approve the April meeting minutes. Tom seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no opposition noted.

3. Treasurer's Report

Kelley provided the Treasurer's Report and explained that, as part of the updated community council process, finances are being brought back under County oversight. WVCC will still be able to request up to \$1,000 per year in County assistance, if approved in the County budget, but the Council will no longer personally handle funds.

- Kelley reported that the annual financial report will be submitted by July 1 and will include a summary of the past 12 months and an estimate of anticipated needs for the next 12 months.
- The account balance as of the meeting date was reported as \$757.41.
- Check #1042 was written to Reagan Mecham in the amount of \$331.80 for 2025 and 2026 Zoom subscription invoices.
- The remaining funds were discussed as previously approved for Frenchtown Senior Citizens and the Keeping Frenchtown organization. The transcript reflects a correction during the discussion, with the intent to bring the account balance to zero after checks clear.
- Once the checks clear, Kelley will close the WVCC checking account, and the financial process will move under County oversight.

Tom made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed unanimously, with no opposition noted.

4. Communications, Reports, & Correspondence

County Communication: Attendees were reminded to sign up for the Missoula County West Valley newsletter to receive County news and updates related to the West Valley area, including zoning and other neighborhood updates.

Correspondence: No new correspondence was reported, other than items held for later agenda discussion.

Development Projects: No new development projects were reported under this agenda item.

5. Community Activities, Updates, and Announcements

Frenchtown Fire - Chief Damian Frisby

Chief Frisby provided an update on Frenchtown Fire District activities, growth-related service needs, and ongoing discussions related to the Y area and the TED/TIF funding structure.

- The Fire District has been attending meetings with County representatives and other partners to better understand funding options and the impact of growth on emergency services.
- Chief Frisby discussed concerns that the District's revenue is not keeping pace with increased call volume and development. He emphasized the need for fire protection, law enforcement, medical response, staffing, apparatus, facilities, and water supply to be included early in planning conversations.
- The District is exploring whether TED/TIF funds may be used proportionally for apparatus or improvements connected to growth in the Y area. Chief Frisby noted that a ladder truck may eventually be needed to adequately serve larger industrial and commercial buildings, although this is still preliminary.

- Chief Frisby reported that impact fees are now being collected more accurately for both commercial and residential development.
- The District continues to review development plans and work with partners to address fire suppression, road access, turnarounds, and response needs, including projects near the Y, Waldo Road, and Grass Valley Gardens.
- Station 7 was discussed as the likely location for future improvement or expansion, although Chief Frisby emphasized that apparatus and staffing needs must be addressed first.
- Chief Frisby reported that apparatus is currently ready for wildfire season, relationships with DNRC and Forest Service partners are strong, and the District continues to seek contracts and grants for seasonal firefighting capacity.
- The District did not receive funding for its mitigation program because the funding source is no longer available. Chief Frisby stated that the District is actively looking for other funding opportunities, as the program has been valuable and has residents already signed up for future mitigation work.
- Discussion included fire suppression water, hydrants, the Y water system, and concerns about emergency access to water sources. Chief Frisby stated that the County's anticipated involvement in the water system should help resolve access concerns.
- Council and community members asked how they could support the Fire District. Chief Frisby encouraged continued public questions and advocacy around fire, law enforcement, and emergency medical service needs as growth and planning discussions continue.

Council members discussed the possibility of meeting with Chief Frisby separately to identify more specific ways the Council could support the Fire District, including letters of support or attendance at relevant meetings.

Frenchtown Community Coalition - Reagan Mecham

Reagan Mecham provided an update on Frenchtown Community Coalition activities:

- FCC partnered with the prom planning committee to support a safe and memorable prom night. FCC helped cover the cost of the venue at The Wilma, provided \$5 Big Dipper gift cards for students who purchased prom tickets, and sponsored after-prom bowling at Westside Lanes from 10:00 p.m. to midnight. Reagan reported that more than 150 students attended bowling and that students were respectful and positive throughout the event.
- FCC updated the Narcan supply throughout the school district so that supplies are no longer expired. Reagan noted that the district has an opioid overdose reversal plan and that faculty and staff receive training on recognizing and responding to opioid overdose.
- FCC is still considering whether to host an end-of-school event, and Reagan noted that FCC will have summer activities even if a last-day-of-school event does not occur.
- FCC is also supporting the senior all-night party by helping cover the venue at City Life Center and working with students and parents to identify additional activities that may encourage participation.

Frenchtown School District - Les Meyer

Les Meyer was not present. Attendees were reminded that school board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the middle school commons.

Frenchtown Senior Citizen Activities - Jim Shireley

Tom provided an update in Jim Shireley's absence. Brookshire Realty sponsored the recent senior lunch, and Skye Johnson arranged the meal, which included pulled pork and sides. Members of the school honor society attended, shared some of their post-graduation plans, and helped put away tables and chairs. Approximately 64 people attended. Mother's Day was also acknowledged during the gathering.

Frenchtown Smurfit-Stone Community Advisory Group - Jeri Delys

Jeri Delys was not present. Attendees were reminded that the Frenchtown Smurfit-Stone Community Advisory Group meets at the Frenchtown Fire Station at 6:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month.

6. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Public comment was opened for items not on the agenda.

- A community member reported attending an informational open house regarding a proposed 17-home development around the Johnson Brother's gravel pit. The proposal had not yet been filed with the County,

according to the report, but may be filed later in the summer. The community member noted that nearby residents expressed concern and that the proposal appeared to include one well and one septic system.

- Julie Van Hise, a newly appointed WVCC member, introduced herself and shared her interest in helping connect more voices from Nine Mile and Frenchtown to community processes. Discussion included appreciation for increased community involvement and the value of broader representation from Nine Mile.
- Tom relayed a public comment he received by phone regarding concern about bright lighting around service stations, including a comparison to a similar concern in Thompson Falls. The comment was shared for awareness before the Town Pump discussion.

7. Future Meeting Agenda Items (Council and Public Input Welcome)

Reagan reported that Commissioner Josh Slotnick has confirmed he will attend the June meeting. Jason Mitchell, Public Works Chief Officer, has also been invited, but Reagan had not yet received a response. The June meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 11, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The Council will discuss at the June meeting whether to take July and August off, as has been done in the past.

- Reagan asked for more specific direction about what the Council and public would have Tim Worley address if he attends a future meeting. Discussion suggested that his involvement may be more useful later in the planning process.
- There was discussion about inviting planning staff, including Andrew, during the upcoming planning process and about discussing how to engage communities that may not regularly attend meetings.
- A future agenda item was suggested to help the public learn more about the Fire Board, including who serves on it and what the board does. Chief Frisby offered to help coordinate Fire Board representation if needed.

8. Old Business: Town Pump Update

Dave provided an update related to the Town Pump issue, speaking as both a Council member and community member. He reported that the primary current issue is the zoning proposal for the area north of the freeway. The County Commissioners have held meetings on the proposal, but public comment had not yet concluded and no vote had occurred at the time of the WVCC meeting.

- The next County Commission meeting related to the issue was identified as May 28 at 2:00 p.m., with the possibility that public comment and voting may continue depending on the agenda and time available.
- Dave explained that several avenues are being used to hold the project accountable, including the gambling permit process, review of water permit applications, and traffic-related review. He noted that community members and attorneys are involved in these processes.
- A traffic study prepared for Town Pump was discussed as being focused on the intersection of Deschamps Lane and Frenchtown Frontage Road. Dave reported that community members hired their own traffic engineers because of concerns that the initial study did not fully account for school-related traffic and broader impacts.
- Dave stated that the zoning proposal is the mechanism most likely to prevent commercial development on the land north of the interchange, while the other processes are aimed at reducing impacts or requiring mitigation if a project proceeds.
- Dave clarified that the concern is not simply opposition to Town Pump as a company, but concern about the specific location and the type of commercial development that could occur there, including impacts related to traffic, students walking, water, and underground fuel tanks.
- Discussion included the relationship between zoning, land use planning, older planning documents, and the upcoming County planning process. Community members emphasized the importance of public participation when the County begins the updated planning process.

9. New Business: Discussion to Close WVCC Bank Account

The Council discussed the need to formally close the WVCC bank account after the outstanding checks clear and the account balance reaches zero, consistent with the Treasurer's Report and County direction.

Kelley moved to close the checking account once the checks had cleared and the account had a zero balance. Dave seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with no opposition noted.

10. Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn. Hearing no opposition, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:23 p.m.