BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Thursday, May 14, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Palmer Lake Town Hall – 28 Valley Crescent, Palmer Lake, Colorado

MINUTES

Call to Order/Roll Call

Meeting Called to order at 6:00PM

Present: Tony Beltran, Roger Moseley, Dennis Stern, Atis Jurka, Beth Harris, John Marble, Michael Beeson

Invocation – John Marble

Pledge of Allegiance

Consent Agenda - *Items under the consent agenda may be acted upon by one motion. If, in the judgment of a board member, a consent agenda item requires discussion, the item can be placed on the regular agenda for discussion and/or action.*

1. Monthly Financials March 2026
2. Checks over $15,000
3. Approval of Minutes of April 23, 2026, Special Meeting and the April 23, 2026, Regular Meeting

   Motion to approve Consent Agenda. (Beltran, Moseley) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Staff/Department Reports

4. Administrator
5. Police

   Interim Administrator Smith gave a notice that traffic enforcement will be increasing due to speeding issues, especially with the onset of summer traffic.

6. Town Clerk/Treasurer/Administration

   Town Clerk Erica Romero thanked the BOT her receipt of a full Colorado Municipal League conference scholarship and also reported that a designated handicap parking space is being added to the reservoir trailhead, noting that users remain subject to the standard $5 parking and it will be enforced. The board addressed town records from former Town Attorney Scott Krob; Town Attorney Kent Whitmer clarified that town records and communication with the former legal counsel are retained and if JVAM has any questions they can reach out to Scott Krob. It was discussed that staff is to reach out and coordinate with CDOT to mitigate severe highway safety hazards caused by oversized vehicles parking across from O'Malley's along Highway 105, exploring interim options like compact cars only signage pending a long-term sidewalk project. Town Clerk Romero referenced the memorandum clarifying the statutory roles of the Deputy Clerk and Clerk Pro Tem as she was directed by the board at the last meeting. Kent Whitmer confirmed he reviewed and supported this memo as well.

7. Attorney

The board reviewed the town's legal priorities, noting that an update to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) code is urgently required to comply with a state statute passed over six months ago, which will route through the Planning Commission. Town Attorney Kent Whitmer also presented a confidential legal memorandums regarding the investigation into Trustee Moseley, along with draft ordinances outlining a future process for the removal of public officials. While several trustees requested additional time to review the complex materials, the Board voted to waive attorney-client privilege and directed the attorney to provide the memorandums to the Clerk for public release. The documents were entered into the record as supplemental packet materials for community review over the next two weeks, with formal discussion of the findings tabled until the next meeting

8. Water

No report given.

9. Public Works including Roads & Park Maintenance

10. Fire

Fire Chief John Vincent reported on staff training activities, out-of-state deployments, and a new county partnership for local wildland fuel sampling. Chief Vincent responded to trustee questions regarding mountain pine beetle mitigation and potential residential slash day options, explaining that the town's chipper is not available for private property use due to staffing and operational limitations. He stated crews currently conduct mitigation activities for approximately two hours daily as part of training operations and utilize a borrowed water department vehicle while maintaining emergency response readiness. Chief Vincent also discussed the possibility of a secured community slash drop-off location, noting it would require monitoring to prevent unauthorized dumping. He reminded the Board of an upcoming joint hazard mitigation workshop at the next workshop.

Business Items

Motion to recognize the citizens of Palmer Lake at every meeting. (Beltran, Marble) "Aye" Vote. Motion Passed Unanimously.

Trustee Beltran recognized and thanked Richard and Lindsay Willan.

11. Discussion and Possible Action on Draft Ordinances Establishing Procedures for the Removal of Public Officials

The Board tabled review of a procedural draft prepared by Town Attorney Kent Whitmer and directed the item to a future public workshop for additional review and editing by trustees.

Attorney Whitmer stated the draft was developed using examples from other jurisdictions and applicable state law due to the limited availability of comparable Colorado municipal procedures. The Board directed that the related legal memorandum be released publicly prior to the workshop to allow for feedback. Discussion clarified that the framework and training was requested to establish procedures for addressing complaints related to board member conduct. Town Clerk Romero was directed to coordinate trustee availability and schedule the workshop, with the intent of developing a final resolution or ordinance.

Public Comment

Christi Birkeland – Commented on a drafted misconduct policy for failing to protect staff from hostile work environments created by officials. She highlighted a critical gap where administrators can discipline standard employees but lack the authority to hold elected officials accountable, even when harassment findings are proven. Ultimately, she asked the board that the policy establish clear consequences for officials and prevent them from using public hearings to challenge verified facts or revictimize witnesses.

12. Discussion and Possible Approval of an Ordinance 02-2026 Prohibiting the Use of Graywater and Installation of Graywater Systems

The board reviewed a proposed graywater ordinance, focusing on a grandfather clause for existing systems, coordination with neighboring sanitation districts, and safety concerns regarding new construction.

Public Comment

Martha Brodzik – Provided a comment to the previous meeting's minutes, noting that her earlier comments regarding gray water systems had been mischaracterized. She clarified that her feedback focused on existing residences that already have gray water infrastructure built into them, sharing a past construction experience to highlight how builders pre-install these systems, and requested that the board take this existing infrastructure into consideration.

Motion to add that provision effective date to May 15th, the signing date be May 15th and to add discretionary power for new Graywater construction to the Water Supervisor. (Harris, Marble) Roll Call Vote.

Accept: Stern, Marble, Harris, Beltran, Moseley, Jurka

Motion passed unanimously.

13. Discussion and Possible Approval of an Ordinance 04-2026 Amending the Palmer Lake Municipal Code to Remove the Bond Requirement for the Town Treasurer

Motion to approve ordinance 04-2026 as amended. (Stern, Moseley) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

14. Discussion and Possible Approval of Ordinance 05-2026 Amending Section 13.24.020 of the Palmer Lake Municipal Code to Modify Water Conservation Guidelines

The board reviewed a memo from Water Supervisor regarding updates to the town's water conservation code. Staff explained that the current code is written too specifically, locking in a specific watering schedule that prevents the water department from making routine adjustments. The proposed modification would grant the Water Supervisor/ORC in coordination with the Town Administrator, the administrative flexibility to adjust watering times, schedules, and days based on operational expertise. Staff stated that this change is strictly for routine conservation management and does not alter the town's emergency ordinance protocols, allowing for proactive water management without forcing the town into an unneeded emergency status.

Motion to approve ordinance 05-2026 (Beeson, Beltran) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

15. Discussion and Possible Approval of Resolution 23-2026 Adopting the 2026 Pikes Peak Regional Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

The board discussed the five-year 2026 Pikes Peak Regional Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Fire Chief John Vincent highlighted that while the town boasts excellent response times, a high wildfire risk coupled with moderate adaptive capacity underscores a critical need for increased fire staffing and multi-department mitigation. He also noted that adopting the plan secures a seat at the table with county, state, and federal entities, directly unlocking eligibility for vital pre- and post-disaster grants.

Public Comment

Paul Olivier – Addressed the fire chief regarding a local hazard report, stating that the rockslide estimates for the area are inaccurate. Drawing on past mayoral experience, he noted that multiple rockslides from a local mountain have previously closed roads and reached residential doorsteps and requested that the report be updated to reflect the town's actual rockslide history more accurately.

Motion to approve resolution number 23-2026 adopting the Pikes Peak multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan. (Stern, Marble) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

16. Discussion and Possible Approval of Additional Expenditures Outside the Scope of the 2024 Hinkle & Associates Contract

Town Clerk Romero stated that it has been a concern of the Board regarding how contract amendments are approached to ensure full transparency and proper approval procedures. She further stated that no formal process has yet been established and that consultation with the Town Attorney he didn't feel an official amendment would be required for this but agreed it would be best to inform and update the board appropriately.

The Board discussed an additional invoice in the amount of $2,415 from the Town Auditor related to a session addressing specific financial questions received from a trustee. Town Clerk Romero confirmed with the Board of Trustees their approval for that request and the need to pay the invoice in order to maintain audit services for the 2025 cycle. The Board discussed with the Town Attorney how to incorporate "not-to-exceed" provisions into future contracts and amendments.

Public Comment

Martha Brodzik – Stated that Trustee Moseley did not request the March 27th educational workshop, but rather accepted the auditor's offer for an offline conversation to address specific questions about the 2024 audit. She referenced the meeting minutes and transcript records, she noted that the workshop was instead a staff-supported initiative to educate the board on general accounting standards. She emphasized that accuracy in the record matters and suggested the board reconsider approving the $2,415 workshop invoice if they felt misled about its purpose.

Motion to approve it. (Stern, Beeson)

Accept: Stern, Marble, Harris, Beltran

Deny: Moseley, Jurka

Motion Passed.

17. Discussion and Possible Approval of an Interim Agreement with SAFEbuilt for Planning and Land Use Services

    Interim Town Administrator Smith requested Board approval to enter into an interim agreement for planning services with SAFEbuilt, a national municipal services firm, to address immediate land-use and planning needs until a new Town Administrator is hired. Interim Town Administrator Smith stated that SAFEbuilt provides comprehensive building, engineering, and planning services for small municipalities and was identified as the most cost-effective option reviewed by staff. Staff recommended that the agreement be used on an interim basis, with any long-term strategy for land-use and planning services to be determined in coordination with the future Town Administrator.

    Motion to approve the interim agreement with Safe Built for Planning and Land use services (Beeson, Beltran) "Aye" Vote. Motion passed unanimously.

18. Discussion, review and action on Mayor Pro Tem

    Mayor Stern put forth a nomination for Tony Beltran to be appointed Mayor Pro Tem (Stern, Moseley) Roll call vote.

    Accept: Stern, Marble, Harris, Beltran, Moseley, Jurka

    Deny:

    Nomination Confirmed.

19. Discussion, review and action on the Interim Town Administrator, Police Chief.

    Motion that the board of trustees terminate the employment of Glen Smith as interim town administrator of the town of Palmer Lake effective immediately. the pursuant to the town's at will employment policy established in the Palmer Lake employee handbook adopted by resolution 22-2020 and most recently advised of resolution 17-2025. I further move that the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem be directed execute and deliver written notice termination to Mr. Smith upon adoption of this motion. (Jurka, Moseley) Trustee Moseley withdrew his second. Motion was Withdrawn by Trustee Jurka.

    Discussion focused primarily on whether the Board had followed the appropriate legal process for considering the removal of an appointed official. Trustee Moseley stated that he had previously provided Interim Town Administrator Smith with a written list of concerns and complaints and argued that the Board could proceed with removal under the Town's at-will employment provisions. Interim Town Administrator Smith responded that he had received the complaints approximately 40 hours earlier and requested a formal hearing and due process before any action was taken.

The Town Attorney advised that Town Code and state statute governing the removal of appointed officers require written charges and an opportunity for a hearing. Differing interpretations were expressed regarding whether an appointed officer serving at will could be removed immediately or whether additional procedural steps were necessary.

Several trustees voiced concerns about moving forward without a clearly established process, adequate review of the allegations, or sufficient time for Board members and Interim Town Administrator Smith to evaluate the complaints. Trustees also expressed concern regarding the timing of the action while the Town is actively recruiting a permanent Town Administrator.

Discussion included references to allegations regarding administrative decisions, hiring of outside legal counsel, personnel matters, and concerns raised by members of the public. Some trustees emphasized the need for accountability and review of complaints, while others stressed the importance of due process, fairness, and avoiding actions that could expose the Town to legal risk.

The Town Clerk addressed the Board and public, emphasizing the importance of following established personnel processes, maintaining professionalism, supporting staff, and focusing on Town priorities and operations. She expressed concern regarding the effect of ongoing public disputes on employees and Town business.
The Board continued discussion regarding the appropriate process for reviewing complaints and potential disciplinary action involving Interim Town Administrator Smith. Debate centered on procedural requirements, due process considerations, and the timing of any future action. It was agreed upon a workshop to discuss the compliant process and proper procedure is needed before moving forward and allowing the board members more time to evaluate the information.

Public Comment

Martha Brodzik – Comments were made regarding the drafted misconduct ordinance and the distinction between standard employees, appointed officials, and elected officials. It was stated that appointed staff should not be afforded the same protections as elected officials and that current matters should be addressed without delaying action pending the hiring of permanent administrative staff. Reference was also made to prior periods of administrative transition within the Town.

Darren Fike commented on the Town Attorney's interpretation of local code regarding the removal of an appointed officer. He referenced case law and at-will employment provisions in support of his position that the Board has the authority to remove an appointed official after providing an opportunity for the individual to speak prior to a vote.

Laura Mcguire – Expressed appreciation for a trustee Harris's words and requested that the town attorney comment on the legal risks facing the town. They noted that the evening's discussions, allegations, and timing may have significantly increased the town's vulnerability to an additional lawsuit from a staff member.

Trustee Beltran requested permission to read correspondence from Amy Hutson into the record.

Trustee Beeson made a request for this matter to be delayed for more time to review the charges against Interim Town Administrator Smith.

Public comment

David Parks – Acknowledged community divisions and noted personal observations of the administrator's difficult management style. While supporting the board's efforts to address long-standing issues, he suggested tabling the proposal to allow for a full review and urged a thoughtful, collaborative approach to resolving the town's problems.

Trustee Beeson emphasized that holding individuals accountable is a necessary but difficult duty, taking no joy in the process. Trustee Beeson then raised a serious concern regarding a breach of trust, explaining that an internal email about board availability for a special meeting was leaked to a citizen, resulting in false accusations and harassment on social media.

Town Clerk Romero clarified that while the meeting notice was legally posted, staff did not publish the internal availability details or specific names. Trustee Beeson concluded that such leaks damage community trust and make public service increasingly difficult.

Public comment

Angela Fike – Stated with the town's hostile atmosphere, noting that she and her husband have been treated as outsiders. She alleged that the town administrator once made a threatening throat-slashing gesture toward her at a meeting and that she was later confronted by the wives of two local figures. Questioning if actions against Mr. Moseley were retaliatory, she concluded that the town needs significant healing.

Interim Administrator Smith asked for clarification on his expected response to the allegations.

The board determined that the procedural rules for handling both appointed and elected official removals must be finalized first. The board unanimously agreed to address these procedural rules and ordinance requirements in an upcoming dedicated workshop provided by the Town Attorney.

20. Discussion, review and action regarding the cojoining the Town Administrator and Police Chief into one individual.

Public Comment

Trina Shook – Public comment was received regarding prior board actions, current Town matters, and personnel concerns. Comments included statements regarding community involvement, concerns related to administrative actions, and support for continued review of Town operations and governance practices.

The board discussed the interim arrangement of Glen Smith simultaneously serving as Town Administrator and Police Chief, it was agreed upon this discussion would be part of the workshop pertaining to chapter two.

Public Comment

Martha Brodzik – Stated concerns over the board's delay in scheduling workshops, noting that lists of requested topics, including a water workshop, have been compiled for months. She criticized the ongoing hesitation as a redundant plan for a plan and urged the board to schedule the current workshop immediately rather than holding another meeting just to plan them.

21. Discussion, review and action on engagement of Liza Getches

    Trustee Moseley and Interim Town Administrator Smith discussed the hiring of outside labor attorneys to oversee an HR investigation. Trustee Moseley asserted that Interim Town Administrator Smith violated Resolution 31-2025 and town code by executing contracts without board delegation, accusing him of misspending funds without authorization and requesting the immediate cancellation of the contracts. Interim Town Administrator Smith stated his actions, counter-arguing that town policy grants him the administrative authority to secure investigative and legal services to protect the town and noting that the spending did not exceed his signing authority limit.

    Town Attorney Whitmer referenced a legal opinion he had previously provided to the Board of Trustees via email. In that opinion, he stated that it was the Town Administrator's responsibility to investigate allegations of staff harassment in order to protect the Town's legal interests and preserve potential legal defenses. Whitmer further cited the Town's procurement policy, noting that investigative services and related legal counsel are expressly exempt from standard procurement requirements and fall within the authority of the Town Administrator. Based on those provisions, he concluded that the decision to retain outside investigative and legal services was both authorized and prudent.

    Public Comment

    Martha Brodzik – Shared her opinion regarding comments were made regarding the Town's purchasing policy and the practice of bringing contracts before the Board for approval. Reference was made to a prior consulting agreement entered into following the withdrawal of a major development application. Concerns were raised regarding the absence of defined timelines, deliverables, and objectives within the agreement, as well as the lack of reports or invoices submitted for Board review through the end of March.

22. Discussion, review and action on engagement of Employers Council.

    The Board discussed questions regarding the Town's engagement with Employers Council in relation to an ongoing workplace investigation. Attorney Whitmer referenced his confidential legal memorandum and the Board agreed to waive attorney-client privilege and release the memorandum publicly. Trustee Moseley requested additional information regarding the matter and potential criminal concerns. Trustee Harris stated that the Town Attorney serves as the Board's legal authority on the matter. Discussion also addressed questions regarding whether Employers Council was acting as legal counsel for the Town. It was further clarified that the investigation process and legal counsel functions operate separately under the consulting agreement.

23. Discussion, review and action on BOT policies and adherence by both BOT members and town staff

The Board of Trustees and town staff discussed communication, highlighted by a trustee's recent legal inquiry that went unanswered during the Mayor's absence. Mayor Stern and Town Clerk Romero clarified that to control legal costs and comply with open meetings laws, all agenda items and attorney requests must route collectively through the board, Mayor, Clerk, or Administrator, with the Mayor Pro Tem now added as a backup. Town Clerk Romero noted that her temporary agenda-setting guidance remains in effect until the trustees formally codify a policy, while another trustee referenced a previous roles-and-responsibilities memo, urging everyone to show grace and reduce conflict as they navigate these administrative processes.

Public Comment - *Public comments are encouraged to be emailed to the Town office at info@palmer-lake.org with subject line of Public Comment (24 hours prior to meeting) and shall be distributed and read at the meeting. Otherwise, please be recognized to speak, sign in, and address the Board on matters not on the agenda. Thank you!*

Kathleen Biebesheimer – Expressed deep distrust of local law enforcement, questioning the town's police department finances and alleging that municipal grant money was used to invest in unauthorized psychological equipment. She also shared frustration regarding their personal legal history, stating that they recently had 23 tickets dismissed across two courts and questioning the procedures surrounding their past court appearances. Additionally, she stated that they were denied a police report until after their cases were resolved, concluding that they no longer trust the police department.

Martha Brodzik – Criticized the Interim Town Administrator's behavior at board meetings as insubordinate and dismissive of public input. She defended the accuracy of their research regarding contractor CMI, asserting that the town paid invoices without active contracts and potentially duplicated a $12,700 payment. Quoting Trustee Moseley to correct the record, the resident clarified that the trustee had simply called for an inquiry into these financial discrepancies rather than demanding a workshop, concluding that municipal staff must avoid mischaracterizing comments from the public and the board.

Paul Olivier – Highlighted the significant expansion of the municipality's administration over the years, noting that operations once required fewer than ten total employees, including a minimal law enforcement presence and only two administrative staff. While acknowledging that increased state and federal regulations place pressure on small communities, he found it remarkable that the workforce had grown to 35 employees despite only minor population growth, emphasizing how drastically the operational scale has changed.

Angela Fike – Expressed concern over the town's financial state and questioned the large law enforcement presence at the meeting. Pointing to a dismissive communication style and an allegedly threatening gesture made toward them, she requested a formal written apology and asked the board to place the Interim Town Administrator and Police Chief on administrative leave pending review to help rebuild community trust.

Board Reports

Trustee Marble – Thanked the town staff for their work on the local baseball field, sharing that seeing the teams and children out playing brought them great joy and appreciation.

Trustee Harris – Thanked the citizens in attendance for remaining present and engaged, acknowledging the difficulty of sitting through a four-hour meeting.

Trustee Jurka – Noted that a neighboring municipality is seeking assistance regarding the regional impacts of a potential Buc-ee's development at the county line, following a past local vote against the establishment. The trustee requested that the town administrator and attorney evaluate the potential fire safety and public works impacts on the town, and look into options for submitting official comments on the application as an interested party.

With the Mayors approval a response from Interim Town Administrator Smith stated his concern and cautioned the board regarding taking an official stance on the development or annexation while related legal matters are being unwound, questioning if a statement from the dais could create legal liabilities. While wanting to provide data on emergency response and call loads, they suggested consulting the town attorney first.

Mayor Stern – Reported on their attendance at a Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) meeting, expressing appreciation for the organization's supportive work across the three-county region of Park, Teller, and El Paso counties.

Trustee Moseley – Made a request of agenda items to be put on the agenda for next meeting. The first request was regarding the Development Review Team (DRT), operational control, and municipal spending. The second request focused on expediting the subdivision and sale of the Elephant Rock property by bypassing specific land-use code requirements.

Next Meeting and Future Items

Next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting is May 28th at 6:00PM.

Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn. (Marble, Jurka) Meeting adjourned at 10:45PM.

Town Clerk - Erica N. Romero

Mayor Dennis Stern