Town of Garfield
TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
October 14th, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.
Town Hall
405 W. California

CALL TO ORDER: Regular town council meeting was opened at 7pm.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Cody Lord and councilmember Roni Mundell were (phone-in), Bruce Roper, Andrea Mills, Jody Opheim, and Michael Slavish were present. Staff: Clerk/Treasurer Rebecca Pfaff and Public Works Matt Roper were present.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS: Betty Walden

Betty Walden discussed the Trunk-or-Treat event scheduled for Halloween, October 31, from 3:30 PM to 8:00 PM at 4th and 3rd downtown Garfield. LaDow residents will judge the decorated cars, and a small parade will take place. She requested that a trash can and barricades be placed out to help keep the street safe. Betty also dropped off a Veterans Day flyer and a sign-up sheet for the Trunk-or-Treat event**.**

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

There was no Fire Department meeting tonight. The council discussed the need to appoint a new member to the Joint Board. Bruce Roper volunteered to serve as the City Council representative to the Fire Department, and the council unanimously approved his appointment. Becky will send an email to Beth and Bruce with additional details.

REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING:

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: September 23, 2026, Regular Town Council Meeting and Public Hearing ~ Preliminary Budget Hearing

Michael Slavish **MOVED** to approve the previous meeting minutes. Andrea Mills **seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.**

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Matt Roper

- The council approved $1,100 for repair of screw press quoted. Matt recommended repairing the existing jetter pump rather than replacing it, as the jetter remains in good condition and repairs may be more cost-effective. Will need theses things for winter and solving the I&I.
- Colfax completed the lift station cleaning.
- Post-Harvest Fest cleanup included street sweeping, washing picnic tables and barricades, and repairing the restaurant's toilet plug.

- Trees were trimmed at the RV park and near Spokane Street and a plugged manhole by the school was cleared.
- A letter to the Department of Ecology is being prepared regarding the town's plans for the sewer plant.
- Fall cleanup went well, and the scrap and compost areas were prepared for loading.
- An account was established with DeAtley Crushing, a rock company in Sprague to reduce fuel and delivery costs of rock while dropping at Bar-Tech.
- Winter preparations included blowing out sprinklers, adding 100 gallons of diesel to the heating tank, confirming Methodist church's water was shut off, repairing Wells No. 3 and 4, and flushing all fire hydrants.
- Aquella Askins-Lovejoy is expected to begin full-time employment on November 1, with a pay assessment planned by the Mayor and City Council.
- Matt reported that he can now replace the sewer plant's UV lights himself, saving the town outside labor costs.
- Matt raised concerns about unauthorized dumping and misuse of the scrap and compost sites. Additional signs have been posted, and possible solutions include newsletter notices, fines, new fencing, PIN-code access, and solar-powered trail cameras or license plate monitoring.

OLD BUSINESS:

Fire Station Electrical Update: Mayor Lord inspected the electrical work on Sunday and reported that it looks good and meets code. Council thanked Avista, Whitman County Library and James with the Whitman County Library for their work and support, Andrea noted that everything is working well.

Avista EV Charging Program: Avista is offering a new program to install two electric vehicle charging stations in rural areas. Avista would cover all installation and operating costs, pay the electricity expenses, and collect all charging fees.

Property at California and 8th Street update: It was clarified by Tammy Howard that single-wide trailers are prohibited under current regulations and that changing the rule would require action beyond a variance/conditional use. The property's current condition remains unchanged, and a building permit is still required. The property owner must submit a plan to bring the property into compliance or face penalties. The council agreed to send Mr. Marple another notice outlining the requirements and allowing two weeks to comply. A new letter will be prepared, with Eric included for follow-up and enforcement action.

Future Ordinances: Mayor Lord raised concerns about revisiting the nuisance ordinance, sidewalk regulations, and ATV ordinance, emphasizing that these matters need to be addressed soon. Council and Mayor Lord also requested that Eric be invited to the next council meeting to discuss these topics and ensure timely follow-through on outstanding issues.

Jefferson Street Discussion: Roni Mundell requested further discussion regarding Jefferson Street and the adjacent property issues. An older survey indicates the street extends beyond the existing fence, raising questions about public access, alley status, and utility easements. Roni will provide photos and a brief presentation outlining options. The council discussed the legal requirements for selling or vacating public property and the need to consider emergency access. The council agreed that a decision should be made soon based on the information available.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **IACC Wastewater Conference Wenatchee**: Council member Jody Opheim will be representing PRWA at the IACC conference, with Cody, Bruce, and Matt also attending for two days. The team will take notes and discuss next steps, including meeting with the Department of Ecology (DOE) at the conference for the wastewater treatment plant. The town will hold off on changing its current plan or scheduling a public hearing until guidance is received from DOE. The team will also discuss addressing stormwater infiltration and inflow (I&I) concerns at the wastewater treatment plant. AWC will cover Mayor Lord's attendance, while the Port of Whitman County will cover Bruce and Matt's attendance.

- **Resolution 2026-15 Pay Resolution Reflecting Change in PW Salary:** Resolution 2026-15 proposes increasing the Public Works Supervisor's monthly salary range from $5,600–$5,800 to $5,900–$6,100.

  Andrea Mills **MOVED** to approve pay increase resolution. Roni Mundell **seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.**

- **All Town Clean-up:** The town cleanup and collection effort was very successful. Becky and Matt were commended for doing a great job coordinating the last-minute efforts. We should have a bill to refer to at the next council meeting to further discuss how cost effective it is and if there is a better approach in the future.

- **New Vacuum cleaner at the library**: Andrea Mills has requested an new vacuum cleaner, the old one is not working very well. Becky will order one.

FINANCIAL: Approval of bills to be paid

Claims:

Regular Claims	$15,410.22
TIB Final Retainage	$34,358.34
WC Sherriff's Contract 2nd Half	$13,504.50
Total	**$63,273.06**

Payroll:

10/01/2026:		$12,763.80
10/15/2026:		$3,646.54
	Total	**$16,410.34**

Total Expenses: $79,683.40

Andrea Mills **MOVED** to approve paying the bills. Jody Opheim **seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.**

MAYOR'S COMMENTS:

- **Aquella Askins-Lovejoy**: Aquella will be transitioning from part-time into a full-time position beginning November 1st, 2026. A pay resolution will need to be prepared for approval at the next council meeting. Public Works Supervisor, Matt Roper fully supports her abilities, knowledge, and qualifications to perform the job successfully.

- **Railroad Signs:** Some railroad signs around town are defective, and the railroad has requested replacements be made by the town. Matt will order new signs.

- **Late Fee Adjustments:** In January, late fees for water, sewer, and garbage were mistakenly assessed to some residents under the previous city clerk's procedures. Although the late-fee system has since been removed, a review revealed that one resident with two accounts had payments applied to only one account, resulting in $50 in late fees. Becky requested permission to remove the fees and correct the account. The council unanimously approved the adjustment.

- **Greg Parch's request for an executive session:** The council discussed it and decided to invite Greg and Dan McDaniels to the next council meeting to clarify their concerns and discuss how to proceed forward with the restaurant building. If necessary, an executive session can be considered at that time.

ADJOURN:

Andrea Mills **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. Jody Opheim **seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.** The council meeting adjourned at 8:21 pm.

ATTEST:

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Cody Lord – Mayor

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Rebecca Pfaff - Clerk-Treasurer