

**TOWN OF DUNE ACRES
COUNCIL MINUTES - DRAFT
September 16, 2025**

The Town of Dune Acres Town Council met for its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at the Clubhouse. Council President Richard Hawksworth called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m., with Council members Alexander Stemer and Paul Woidke; Clerk-Treasurer Bonnie Hawksworth; and Town Attorney Adam Mindel in attendance. Commissioners present were Lee McKinley (Security) in person and Shawn Fitzpatrick (Parks) via Zoom.

The meeting was broadcast live and recorded via Zoom. The recording will be archived online for 90 days and can be accessed via this https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/K-28UuJ1hWNO9Wo7-HkCNIMMTiJuz7j2nEUe1yZTL66tnYUFDswo_jL37uNKLXiA.YF64tR6qVoaq2tg6
Passcode: MmUx3ST\$

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilmember Woidke requested a reference to deck “repairs” (Duneland Landscape Proposal for East Beach Stairs) in the August minutes be changed to accurately reflect the nature of the project, which was to extend the stairway by adding a wood walkway. With this amendment, the vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Clerk-Treasurer Hawksworth presented the August month-end financial report. The combined bank account balance as of August 31 is \$932,065. Year-to-date revenue is \$704,558.

It was moved and seconded to approve the financial report. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS:

Clerk-Treasurer Hawksworth asked the Town Council to approve Accounts Payable Vouchers for September (http://duneacres.org/apv/apv_2025-09.pdf) totaling \$74,349.52. This includes the payment to Duneland Landscape for the Beach Drive stair project (to be finished this week), as well as a pre-payment of \$6,200.00 to Malgarzota Sawczuk for the conservation of an original, 1920s-era painting depicting the planned layout for Dune Acres. Note that \$3000 of this amount will be reimbursed by DACIF through the generous contribution of Bill and Dee Dee Spence. The clubhouse coordinator has submitted a request to DACIF to consider funding the balance of the work. It was moved and seconded to approve the claims. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

CORRESPONDENCE: President Hawksworth summarized a report from Senator Rodney Pol regarding Local Income Tax. Because of changes to funding mechanisms authorized by state legislation, the Town of Dune Acres will lose approximately \$14K in 2026, more than \$18K in 2027 and \$25K in 2028. The council will assess these budget impacts and develop a plan to recover this revenue moving forward through fee and/or permit increases and other means.

EXECUTIVE REPORT:

Council President Hawksworth presented his executive report for the preceding month including the following activities:

TRAIN CROSSING:

Since the August meeting, the Mineral Springs Road crossing was blocked five times for a total of approximately 1 hour 41 minutes—an average of 32 minutes per incident. Hawksworth noted this was an improvement over recent months, and roughly half the number of incidents and total time versus August.

TRASH AND RECYCLING COLLECTION:

A community survey related to trash and recycling collection was distributed to ascertain how much residents are paying to Republic Services. Sixty-one responses were received. About two-thirds of residents pay for the “standard” curbside service — weekly trash and bi-weekly recycling — with quarterly rates ranging from \$107 to more than \$700. About 15% of residents have so-called “door to curb” service, with rates ranging from \$132/quarter to more than \$900/quarter.

STORMWATER/ALTERATION OF TOWN ROW:

The town has been assessing stormwater run-off issues along Ridge Drive. President Hawksworth noted that unauthorized alterations to the town right-of-way have contributed to the problem. Hawksworth distributed two draft ordinances for council member review: one governing building or landscaping in the town ROW; the other requiring the retention of stormwater on private property. These draft ordinances will be discussed at the October meeting.

ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE:

It was suggested that the town reconsider the animal control ordinance that was introduced and then tabled at the April town council meeting. There was a lack of enthusiasm for the measures at that time. Hawksworth distributed a copy of that draft ordinance to other council members for their review. Council member Stemer asked if the draft ordinance regulated specific dog breeds. The measure will be considered at a future date.

CALUMET BIKE TRAIL:

President Hawksworth related a report from a resident of a near-miss vehicle-bicyclist collision on Mineral Springs Road where it intersects the Calumet Bike Trail. Hawksworth stated that he reported the incident to the county, which controls the bike trail, and asked for safety improvements, including installing an additional bollard and installing warning signs on the bike trail. Hawksworth has also asked the National Park Service to maintain the tall vegetation at the intersection and offered the town’s cooperation.

EVENT PERMITS:

There has been a growing interest in using town facilities for events. President Hawksworth suggested the council should revise the idea of requiring event permits to enable the town to better anticipate needs for parking, security, and other resources. It was agreed that some structure could be beneficial and also allow the town to control the frequency and nature of public events.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

BEACH: None

BUILDING: President Hawksworth presented a building permit request for 4 Crest Drive for replacement shingles and decking. It was moved and seconded to approve Building Permit 2025-27. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

ENVIRONMENT: President Hawksworth stated there will not be a formal fall town cleanup. A dumpster will be available for residents to use from October 15-22 for yard waste. An additional dumpster will be available at the Clubhouse for resident trash from October 22-29. Brush chipping is tentatively scheduled for October 27th.

FIRE: President Hawksworth reported that Porter Fire Chief Jay Craig will be contacted to begin coordination of the fire contract renewal for next year. An estimate was reviewed to bring the Clubhouse sprinkler system up to compliance. The council agreed to the \$3,125 expenditure for these services.

MAINTENANCE: A resident suggested the town establish a formal maintenance schedule for buildings and other infrastructure. The same resident noted the stairs/decks at Crest Drive and Circle Drive required cleaning and sealing.

PARKS: Commissioner Shawn Fitzpatrick stated he will meet with a second contractor as a potential resource for tennis court repair. Crack repair sealant will be tested on developing cracks. Council member Stemer inquired about the status of the playground. Fitzpatrick said he will provide a proposal by the end of the week and convene a meeting with interested parties to discuss playground improvements.

ROADS: None

SECURITY: Commissioner McKinley presented Angie Burk as a candidate for a security position. A probationary period of 90-days will be implemented for new hires. Attorney Mindel will draft an ordinance. It was moved and seconded to proceed with the hire. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed. Security is moving to electronic timecards and will be implementing other Google documents for its processes. A protocol will be established for the use of epi-pens at security. Golf cart safety regulations will be reviewed, and residents will be reminded of the town's requirements for vehicles and operators.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ordinance 2025-01. 2026 Budget Appropriation and Tax Rates, Second Reading and Adoption: President Hawksworth conducted the second reading of the Ordinance 2025-01, 2025 Budget Appropriation and Tax Rates. It was moved and seconded to approve the ordinance. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

Garbage: An RFP will be developed to procure estimates for town-wide service for waste removal with uniform, tiered pricing for all residents.

NEW BUSINESS:

David's Lawn Care Proposal for Snow Removal: The council reviewed a proposal from David's Lawn Care for snow removal with pricing consistent with what the town paid last year. It was moved and seconded to accept David's Lawn Care for snow removal for the '25/'26 season. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

Social Committee/October Party: The social committee has requested use of the town park for a party in October or November, details and date to be determined. The council approved this use by consensus.

ATVs Use on the Beach: A resident noted the significant increase in "dune buggy" traffic on the beach and asked the council to take action.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Michele McClead reported that the restoration of the Dune Acres historical painting will be presented to DACIF for potential funding. In the interim, the town will cover this expenditure from the general fund.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm. The next regular meeting of the Town Council is on Tuesday, October 21, 2025 at the Clubhouse.

RICHARD HAWKSWORTH, Town Council President

PAUL WOIDKE, Town Council Member

ALEXANDER STEMER, Town Council Member

BONNIE HAWKSWORTH, Clerk-Treasurer