

**TOWN OF DUNE ACRES
COUNCIL MINUTES
March 17, 2026**

The Town of Dune Acres Town Council met for its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at the Clubhouse. Council President Richard Hawksworth called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm., with Council member Paul Woidke; Clerk-Treasurer Bonnie Hawksworth; and Town Attorney Adam Mindel in attendance. Commissioners present were Shawn Fitzpatrick (Parks) and Lee McKinley (Security).

The meeting was broadcast live and recorded via Zoom. The recording will be archived online for 90 days and can be accessed at:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/wa2ZMCi-uA2evYQkMC03Ez_LdhetWp5JZZyniSVqpc-63zq5MorFFqwsCxfhofMAs.VcpVqNI5VobnQocZ

Passcode: YR!3?3V6

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There was a motion and second to approve the minutes from the February 17th meeting. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

End-of-year activities have been completed. The State Board of Accounts audit is ongoing; this covers the years 2021 through 2025.

Clerk-Treasurer Hawksworth presented the February month-end financial report. The combined bank account balance as of February 28 is \$705,940.19. At this point in the year, approximately 21% of our budget has been expended. This seems like a lot, however, it includes large items such as snow removal and the annual insurance premium. Year-to-date revenue is \$57,610.90.

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 March in the amount of \$54,198.55 (http://duneacres.org/apv/apv_2026-03.pdf). This includes an invoice for roadside mowing from 2025 that had not been received last year, as well as the front loader rented to clear sand at East Beach. It was moved and seconded to approve the APVs. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

BEACH: None

BUILDING: The council members reviewed Building Permit 2026-01 for roofing work at 20 Summit. There was a motion and second to approve the permit. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

President Hawksworth overviewed work proposed for Building Permit 2026-02 for Frontier Communications/Ervin Construction to include fiber optic. This will be further investigated before proceeding.

ENVIRONMENT: None

FIRE: None

MAINTENANCE: None

PARKS: None

ROADS: None

SECURITY: Commissioner Lee McKinley reported that security operations are running smoothly. Train blockages were about 4 hours in the past month, which is consistent with previous months.

OLD BUSINESS:

Garbage RFP Submissions: President Hawksworth reported that final details are being addressed with Republic Services and that the new pricing should be implemented before the next quarter's billing cycle.

Ordinance 2026-01, Amendment to Chapter 34 – Traffic and Vehicles, Article II – Parking & Vehicle Operations: President Hawksworth presented a draft ordinance to amend the Town's parking permit system and related frost law regulations under Chapter 34. The draft ordinance can be found at this link: duneacres.org/downloads/chapter-34-draft-amendment.pdf

The ordinance clarifies and codifies eligibility for Vehicle Parking Permits. Under the proposed amendments, permits may be issued to vehicles registered to a Dune Acres property address, to a property owner of record in Porter County tax records, or to an individual holding a valid residential lease of twelve months or longer. Additional language addresses vehicles held through trusts, LLCs, or similar ownership structures.

The ordinance also codifies the annual guest pass system, which has operated informally, and formally distinguishes it from temporary day passes managed by the Security Office. Fees and permit durations for both resident permits and guest passes would be set periodically by Town Council resolution rather than written into the ordinance itself, allowing for future adjustments without requiring a full ordinance amendment.

Amendments to the frost law section (Sec. 34-31) would allow the Town to issue single-trip Frost Law Permits authorizing overweight vehicles to enter during frost-restricted periods, at a fee of \$250 per trip. Issuance would remain fully discretionary and subject to review by the Roads Commissioner.

The ordinance received a first reading and was approved for advancement. A companion resolution establishing the fee schedule and permit terms was described by Council President Hawksworth and will be presented for a vote at a subsequent meeting. The full text of the proposed ordinance is attached.

Park Improvement Project:

Parks Commissioner Shawn Fitzpatrick presented on behalf of the Playground Improvement Committee, which recommends a two-phase improvement process. Under the committee's proposal, playground equipment would be purchased and installed in 2026, with a permanent shelter and additional improvements planned for 2027. The projected budget is \$198,000 for Phase 1 and \$130,000 for Phase 2, with funding proposed from three sources: the town (\$126,000), DACIF (\$202,000), and private donations. Discussion included questions about cost, competitive bids, and project scope. Commissioner Fitzpatrick agreed to provide additional information about the specified equipment and recommended that council members visit two locations with similar installations. No action was taken. Note: Fitzpatrick's Power Point presentation was not visible to Zoom participants. Please see the following link:

duneacres.org/downloads/playground-presentation_2026-03.pdf

NEW BUSINESS:

Clubhouse Rental: The council reviewed Clubhouse rental requests for Saturday, April 25 and Saturday, June 20, 2026. There was a motion and second to approve the rentals. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS:

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm. The next regular meeting of the Town Council is on Tuesday, April 21, 2026 at the Clubhouse.

RICHARD HAWKSWORTH, Town Council President

PAUL WOIDKE, Town Council Member

ALEXANDER STEMER, Town Council Member

BONNIE HAWKSWORTH, Clerk-Treasurer