

RIDGWAY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 2, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was held both in person and via virtual meeting portal Zoom Meeting, pursuant to the Town's Electronic Participation Policy.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Center at 201 N. Railroad Street, Ridgway, Colorado. The Council was present in its entirety with Councilors Grambley, Kroger, Montague, Schuyler, Scoville, Mayor Pro Tem Lakin and Mayor Clark in attendance.

1. Review of existing conditions and alternative analysis for the Beaver Creek Diversion Restoration Project

Memorandum and report dated 5-30-25 from RESPEC Engineering presenting existing conditions and alternative analysis for the Beaver Creek Diversion Restoration Project.

Manager Neill explained RESPEC Engineering has prepared a report outlining conditions and alternatives for the Beaver Creek Diversion project, and is seeking a consensus on which alternative to follow. After preparation of construction documents submittal will be made for state and federal approvals.

Alan Leak, RESPEC Principal Engineer in Charge, presented highlights from the analysis report and stated damage received during the August 2024 high intensity thunderstorm, initiated a one hundred year flood event covering the existing watershed. The incoming flow was heavily laden with debris, including large woody material and coarse sediments including large rocks. The channel banks eroded and widened, hydraulic force and debris rapidly eroded the adjacent bank, and the push-up dam breached under the pressure of the floodwaters. Once breached the full volume of the flood was released down the original main channel. The sudden surge transported a massive load of gravel and cobbles which were deposited across the valley floor burying the main channel under a thick layer of coarse sediment and the diversion structure and sluice channel were completely buried with small boulders and cobbles. The event caused the diversion and ditch to be completely inoperable, he noted.

Engineer Leak explained selecting the most stable site will be critical to restoring the diversion and ditch operations. Replacing the existing diversion would be the less stable option, he noted. Approximately 200 feet upstream of the current diversion, a string of glacial boulders exist which confine the valley and create a terrace above the current channel, and the bank is stable with mature trees. This location offers the most laterally stable location to construct a new diversion. Moving the headgate to this location would not trigger a change in water rights and environmental permitting should be minimal given proximity to the existing structure. 800 feet upstream the Beaver Creek Valley becomes significantly narrower and more confined by steep slopes. This confined section may offer greater channel stability and reduced avulsion risk, but the site revealed several critical limitations that make it unsuitable for a diversion structure, would trigger the need for a change in water rights, and environmental permitting could be difficult.

Design alternatives include replicating the existing diversion structure using a similar configuration of an "in-creek push-up dam" that direct water into a side channel, where it is collected by a grated intake structure that allows surface water to pass through while blocking small diameter cobbles. From the grate water flows through a sluice channel designed to further remove small diameter materials and has a side channel that returns water to the creek. Other dam options considered were a rock weir, concrete weir and sheet piling. All of the weir options would require regular

maintenance to clean out a headgate intake, and can be vulnerable to damage or displacement from landslides or high-flow events. Additional design alternatives include use of a Coanda screen in conjunction with a rock weir, to improve water quality as it provides filtration; or a buried intake/infiltration gallery, which would function by capturing subsurface flows through screened pipes installed horizontally beneath the creek bed to filter through the coarse substrate before entering the intake system. To minimize maintenance trips to the site a measurement vault with measurement equipment and instrumentation to facilitate remote reading. All of the design alternatives require channel restoration and bank stabilization. To reduce construction costs, environmental impact and landowner impact, the recommendation is to maximize the use of onsite materials such as boulders for grade control and bank stabilization and downed trees for floodplain, channel and bank stabilization.

Engineer Leak presented the alternatives: 1) restore the diversion structure at the existing location 2) rock weir with Coanda screen 200 feet upstream 2a) add an infiltration gallery 2b) add telemetry. The company is recommending Alternative 2, a rock weir with a Coanda screen and an optional infiltration gallery upstream of the weir.

Consensus was to use Alternative 2 and consider addition of an infiltration gallery and telemetry if deemed viable and worthwhile by staff and the consultants. The Council also agreed to afford latitude to the staff and consultants to determine the best path forward as they become aware of site conditions and constraints.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pam Kraft
Town Clerk