

Mayor – Angela Russell  
Recorder – Rhonda Ardemagni  
City Attorney –  
Law Firm--  
City Engineer – CK Civil  
Engineering



Ward 1 Position 1 - Misty Piazza  
Ward 1 Position 2– Amber Ibarra  
Ward 2 Position 1—Daniel Montez  
Ward 2 Position 2—Larry Ardemagni  
Ward 3 Position 1—Mike Washkowiak  
Ward 3 Position 2—Tim Burress

**Committee of The Whole  
December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025  
Minutes**

**The Tontitown Committee of the Whole meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Tontitown City Hall, Tontitown, Arkansas and via Microsoft Teams.**

**Join on your computer, mobile app, or room device.**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 264 068 997 841

Passcode: eKyS39

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

- 
1. **Prayer-** Pastor Steve Borland
  2. **Meeting Call to Order**
  3. **Roll Call-**  
Amber Ibarra was absent
  4. **Pledge of Allegiance**
  5. **Approval of Agenda**

**New Business**

Add- Discussion of Employee Year-End-Bonus

Remove Item A. -A presentation from PRISM regarding Tontitown Heritage District.

Tim Burress motioned to approve the agenda with the changes.  
Second by Misty Piazza

Motion Passes Unanimously

6. **Approval of November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, COW Minutes**

Tim Burress motioned to approve November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, minutes.  
Second by Mike Washkowiak

Larry Ardemagni Voted- YES

Daniel Montez Voted- YES  
Misty Piazza Voted- ABSTAINED  
Tim Burress Voted- YES  
Mike Washkowiak Voted- YES

4 Votes- YES to 1 Vote- ABSTAINED

Motion Passes

## 7. Comments from Citizens

### **Kenneth Lovett 18702 Clearwater Rd., Fayetteville, AR**

- Some of y'all have put a lot of time and energy into stopping me from speaking in public meetings. The planning commission has removed public comments completely from their agenda.
- Tontitown has the responsibility to protect its citizens. There are ways to address the vapors emitted from Eco Vista. You should reach out to an environmental expert to direct you on next steps.
- Mr. Lovett gave detailed information to the council regarding overall effects on mental health and personality changes associated with chronic low-level or acute highly exposure to specific neurotoxic vapors.

### **Tammy Graham 1984 S. Pinalto Rd., Tontitown, AR**

- Ms. Graham requested that the information she provided to the clerk be entered into the official minutes for the record.
- I have presented my concerns to you regarding Mayor Russell's use of taxpayer dollars to reimburse private legal services. And while the principal has been repaid, the citizens are still owed the interest for that loan mayor granted herself permission to take from our coffers. I am in hope she will find the will to pursue this matter and seek reimbursement. The mayor has pleaded ignorance repeatedly. She cannot claim ignorance with this and allow it to be swept under the rug. Or portraying her as victim only empowers this sort of behavior. Citizens deserve better. Thank you.

### **Mick Wagner 409 Penzo Ave., Tontitown, AR**

- Mr. Wagner presented three documents to the council and emailed them to Mark Latham and James Clark. Three or four months ago, I pulled a permit for a house that I'm building on Arbor Acres Road, about \$8,000 worth of permits. And when my plumber got there, an individual from WWA came by and said, "You've got to buy a permit from us." I recalled when I was on the Washington Water Board, there's a state law that has been in effect since 2017 particularly noted as ACA 14208102. That law was amended in 17 to provide exclusive authority to cities regardless of the water purveyors within their city limits. Meaning that a rural water system has no authority to charge as had been previously for plumbing permits. As a result, my plumber had to pay \$250 to WWA to get that permit. Well, I'm not the only one with that problem. I spoke with the Elm Springs mayor, Mr. Down, and had the same situation going on up there. I have provided one of the documents that you'll be receiving is a cease-and-desist order that the city attorney for the city of Elm Springs has sent WWA in the last few days. In addition to that, there's an AG opinion that in September when this started, Mrs. Lundstrom contacted the AG's office, and they agreed that our reading of the law is correct and they have no provisions. So, I'm encouraging and asking the council

to please follow suit whenever y'all decide who your attorney is and send a cease-and-desist letter because there's going to be and I'm in contact with several other cities that's enjoying the same pain. So, hopefully we can get this thing finally put to bed.

- Finally, I was called out in a public meeting by the mayor last week about not using or not texting. And I FOIAed a few texts on 10/21, I think that was the city council meeting and at 6:36 p.m. from Mr. Eichmann to the mayor, it says "It's not a public comment period". That being said, I'll play by any rules y'all want, but I don't find any rules that prohibit me from texting to anybody I want to. So, what's good for the goose, good for gander? Y'all just decide what game you want to play and I'll play that. Thank you.

Kara Engle 811 Ardemagni Rd., Tontitown, AR

- Just an FYI, there's a 99% chance I might cry and it's hard for me to put all my thoughts into just a few minutes. I'm a lifelong resident, a descendant of the original Italian families. I'm employed at a Tontitown small business, and I serve on the board for the museum. I'm here tonight to stress the importance of the Tontitown Historical Museum to the city of Tontitown and to help answer any questions you may have to the best of my ability. The museum's value is far greater than the amount of money we bring in each year. Our efforts to preserve our heritage, both physically and in memories, go far beyond the small building that houses thousands of artifacts and the threshold of our doors. Our value lies in the trust that people have when they bring in their cherished artifacts of past generations and knowing how to properly care for them so that they are preserved for many generations to come. Our value lies in the community outreach working together with multiple schools in our area, homeschool groups, and the University of Arkansas, Arkansas. Our value lies in the hands of Tontitown families who've traveled across the world to be reunited with relatives and friends of our Italian ancestors. Our value lies in our story, one that has captured the attention of bordering towns, national podcasts, and television shows. It captures the hearts of every person who's watched the award-winning documentary Cries from the Cottonfield. And our value has been preserved in the memories of so many friends and relatives of Tontitown. And my hope is that all of you understand how integral our value is to the people and to the city of Tontitown. I haven't done all my homework properly, but I've made a good dent. I don't have all the answers and documents with me today, but I would love to have a conversation regarding the history of our museum and the benefit of continuing to support our efforts and watching our little museum continue to thrive. Thank you.

### **Kevin Maestri**

- I'm also on the board with Kara and I just would like to add a couple of comments because I think I have some background that may be helpful. My dad was one of the folks that got together to set up the museum initially and found it. And one of the issues they were concerned about at the time was they all had a real passion for it and they saw a future where the city was a certain size and there may not be the folks with the passion to volunteer those hours to keep the museum going. So, a decision was made at that time to make the museum a part of the city of Tontitown very similar to the way Shiloh Museum is a part of the city of Springdale and that was done so that at some point in the future when you maybe couldn't get hundreds of volunteer hours in a week or a month that you would still have the funding and the structure in place so the museum's not dependent on a certain number of volunteers, but it has a solid foundation for the city of Tontitown. And when you're looking at the budget for the future, just keep in mind that the plan was put in place like this so the museum would survive from the time they founded it in '86 for the future. So, that was my two cents on the museum tonight. Thank you.

8. Old Business:

- A. A discussion of the 2026 budget multiple items pertaining to the budget as a whole. Presented By: Danny

Discussion Only- Reference YouTube for details.

- B. A discussion of a resolution accepting the 2026 Budget. Presented by: Mark

Misty Piazza Motioned to move to tonight's special meeting.

No Second

Motion is dead

- C. A discussion of a resolution to approve bids for museum repairs. Presented by: Emily

After a roofing company withdrew its bid last month, the museum postponed the repairs to allow time for additional roofing bids. The bids received are listed below:

David's Roofing  
LRD Construction LLC  
Midcon Exteriors  
Five Star Roofing and Siding

Recognizing David's Roofing's proven skill in maintaining historic structures, the museum has appointed them for the repairs and seeks the council's backing of this decision.

Tim Burress motioned to approve David's Roofing and move this to the next City Council Meeting.  
Second by Mike Washkowiak

Misty Piazza Voted- ABSTAINED  
Mike Washkowiak Voted- YES  
Daniel Montez Voted- YES  
Tim Burress Voted- YES  
Larry Ardemagni Voted- YES

4 Votes- YES to 1 Vote- ABSTAINED

Motion Passes

9. New Business:

- A. A presentation from All AV Services regarding the AV System in the Council Chambers. Presented by: Brad/Scott Fusselman

AV Services submitted a Quote#8965 for \$47,907.28.

The council discussed raising the amount in case any changes are needed and council would like to see those changes.

**A resolution is required.**

Tim Burress motioned to approve AV Services with a budget of **NO** more than \$55,000.00 after tax and to move this to the next City Council Meeting.

Second by Misty Piazza

Motion Passes Unanimously

**B. A discussion on a closed admissions animal shelter contract with Washington County. Presented by: Corey**

**A resolution is required.**

Under the Closed Admissions contract, Tontitown residents must obtain a letter from the city verifying residency before bringing an animal to the county.

Mike Washkowiak motioned to move this to the next City Council Meeting.

Second by Daniel Montez

Motion Passes Unanimously

**C. A discussion on a cost share for road improvements for Wildcat Creek with Washington County. Presented by: Mark**

**A resolution is required.**

Tim Burress motioned to move this to the next City Council Meeting.

Second by Misty Piazza

Motion Passes Unanimously

**D. A discussion on a timeline of city attorney actions between 2015-2025. Presented by: Danny**

**Discussion Only**

Reference the city website for detailed timeline.

**E. A discussion of a resolution to appeal resolution 2015-01-505R attorney contract. .Presented by: Danny**

**A resolution to appeal is required**

That both the mayor and council may contact the City Attorney.

Resolution Restricting Access to the City Attorney

Current Resolution 2015-01-505R- reads as follow-

- Section 1: That the Mayor shall be the only city official to contact or communicate with the City Attorney(s) regarding city of Tontitown business, unless otherwise authorized herein.
- Section 2: That all City officials, departmental managers, engineers, employees, and citizens must receive authorization from the Mayor to personally contact the City Attorney(s) regarding city of Tontitown business.
- Section 3: That all City officials, department managers, engineers, employees, and citizens who seek such authorization shall submit a written request to the Mayor.
- Section 4: The Mayor shall have discretion to grant or deny the request to contact the City Attorney(s).
- Section 5: However, the City Attorney(s) shall have independent authority and discretion to communicate with or to request communications from any and all persons necessary to fulfilling the duties of the City Attorney. States the Mayor is the only official who may contact the City Attorney.

Mike Washikowiak motioned to move this to the next City Council Meeting.

Second by Misty Piazza

Motion Passes Unanimously

- F. A discussion of a resolution Declaring LOE 01-29-2025 with Harrington-Miller invalid and without legal effect due to lack of city council approval. Presented by: Danny

Reference YouTube for detailed discussion.

Daniel Montez motioned to move this to the next City Council Meeting.

Second by Mike Washkowiak

Misty Piazza Voted- NO

Mike Washkowiak Voted- YES

Daniel Montez Voted- YES

Tim Burress Voted- YES

Larry Ardemagni Voted- NO

3 Voted- YES to 2 Votes- NO

Motion Dead

- G. A discussion on a resolution for the Mayor to request a report from the DFA on businesses remitting sales tax to the City of Tontitown. Presented by: Mike

City of Tontitown requesting the Department of Finance and Administration to Provide Quarterly Reports Identifying All Businesses Remitting Sales Tax to the City of Tontitown.

Mike Washkowiak motioned to TABLE to the January 2026 Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Second by Misty Piazza

Motion Pass Unanimously

H. A discussion on how to support museum funding. Presented by: Tim

Discussion Only

Council and Museum will schedule a workshop after Christmas and discuss ideas on how to highlight the museum.

I. Discussion of Year End Bonuses for City Employees- Larry Ardemagni

**A resolution is required**

Full-time employees who worked the entire year will receive \$1,000. Employees with less than one year of service will receive a prorated amount based on their length of employment. (Less Withholding)

Tim Burress motioned to move this to the next City Council Meeting.

Second by Mike Washkowiak

Motion Passes Unanimously

10. Comments from Council Members

**Mike Washkowiak**

- Mr. Burress said a lot of good things about the museum and I've mentioned this before; I would like to see the museum incorporated with a library in Tontitown at some point in time. I think they belong hand in hand and maybe with this budget issue and bonus issue, maybe we need to add it into the 26 budget.
- Thanksgiving was great all three of my boys were home and it's first time we've had them all together in the house in a long, long time. So, it's good to see them. We had a large contingent of my wife's family over for Thanksgiving. My wife has a big family, so it was noisy and also, we got some pretty good news, there'll be hopefully a new addition to the family as my oldest son and his wife are expecting. So, I will become a grandparent at some point next summer. So that's awesome. Congratulations. So, that's it for me. Thanks for coming out, everybody.

**Tim Burress**

- I've often said, and I'm sorry that I say it, that Tuesday is not my favorite day of the week. This is the day the Lord has made, and I will rejoice and be glad in it and I'm glad that I got to spend the evening with you. So, thank you all for being here.

Misty Piazza

- Thank y'all everyone for coming out tonight.

- Some good conversation was had tonight. I'm excited to see where it could go. It's an honor to be a part of the museum and carry on tradition from my husband's family that helped start it. We're like the tourism of the town, then when they come here, they don't just come to the museum. They go and eat at the local restaurants, and they learn our history. So, we're bringing business into this town and helping them learn all the things that they brought here by the past. So, I'm excited to continue that history.

#### **Danile Montez**

- I just want to thank everybody for coming out tonight.
- Thank you to all the staff that we have in the building. We appreciate you.
- I look forward to the discussions we have with the museum. So, I hope we pick a date out in hopefully January or sometime next year and continue those discussions and I think it was a great constructive meeting tonight.

#### **Larry Ardemagni**

- I truly want to thank all our staff. I mean, from the bottom up, from part-timers, I'm sorry to them. You know, they're out there giving it there all, all the time.
- Tim talked about the museum, and I don't want to take anything away from how Tim feels, but unless you're from Tontitown, unless you've been here all your life, I just don't think anybody can get it, and it's just part of you. And so, I'm anxious to see how the workshop goes and where it goes. And again, thank you everybody and God bless.

#### **11. Comments from Mayor**

- I just wanted to say that we wrapped up the interviews with the attorney today. Um hopefully we'll be uh getting some more information out to everyone. Since we're going through this process, the scorecards are going to be sent to me tomorrow and we will hopefully try to get an attorney here as quickly as we possibly can, but we are still working on it.
- Kara Joe, you're amazing. I just want to say you did a great job.
- Thank you. Y'all have a good night.

#### **12. Comments from Attorney- No City Attorney**

#### **13. Adjournment- All in Favor**

PASSED AND APPROVED this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2025.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

**Angela Russell, Mayor**

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Rhonda Ardemagni, City Clerk-Treasurer

(SEAL)

12/2/25

**Council Members,**

I have presented my concerns to you regarding Mayor Russell's use of tax-payer dollars to reimburse for private legal services. And, while the principal has been repaid, the citizens are still owed the interest for the "loan" Mayor granted herself permission to take from our coffers.

I am in hopes you will find the will to pursue this matter and seek reimbursement.

The mayor has pleaded ignorance repeatedly. She cannot claim ignorance with this. And allowing it to be swept under the rug or portraying her as the victim only empowers this sort of behavior.

The citizens deserve better.

Respectfully,

Tammy Graham

11/4/2025

**Council Members, and fellow citizens,**

This is a continuation of the issues with public trust, fiscal accountability, and compliance with the Arkansas Constitution.

Recently, the Washington County Circuit Court ruled in Case 72CV-25-26 that the Tontitown Mayor violated **Article 12, Section 5** of the Arkansas Constitution by using public funds — specifically \$15,079.95 — for private legal services. The Court further declared that this act constituted an **illegal exaction** and permanently blocked any similar use of public funds.

That ruling has now been settled, the **principal** amount has been repaid, and attorney fees were awarded.

I asking the City **to see to see the taxpayers are made fully whole, including the repayment of interest for the time those funds were improperly used.**

When public funds are diverted — even for a short period — Arkansas law is clear: **full restitution includes interest or benefit derived from those funds.**

Not recovering interest leaves the taxpayers subsidizing private legal activities, contrary to the express findings of the Court and the Arkansas Constitution. In other words, it was an interest free loan taken from the purses and wallets of the hard-working, responsible taxpayers of this city.

**The release signed in connection with the settlement applies only to the single transaction at issue and does not bar taxpayers- individually or collectively-from ensuring full restitution to the city.**

This is a matter of **public money and constitutional duty.**

Therefore, I respectfully request:

1. That the Council direct the Finance Director or external auditor to calculate the interest owed for the period those funds were unavailable for public use;
2. That the Council publicly report the calculation; and
3. That the Mayor promptly remit any interest owed back to the City treasury.

Additionally, I ask that City staff or Legislative Audit confirm whether interest recovery is already required as part of standard fiscal corrective procedures for unlawful expenditures.

In doing so, the City will:

- Honor the Court's ruling,
- Uphold taxpayer protections,
- Strengthen public confidence, and
- Set a firm expectation that **no official should personally benefit — in any form — from public funds.**

Transparency, accountability, and fiscal stewardship are cornerstones of trusted government. Ensuring repayment of interest is not punitive — it is simply the completion of what the Arkansas Constitution requires: **full restitution of public resources.**

Thank you for your time.