



# TSVR Newsletter – October 2022

## It's General Election Time!

The **2022 General Election** is **November 8, 2022**. For TSVR residents, the polling location will be upstairs at Town Hall (an elevator is available for those who may need it).

**Absentee ballots** are available from the **County Clerk's Office** 45 days prior to the election. To request a **ballot**, you may call the **County Clerk's Office** at (307) 877-2027 or (307) 877-2021 or by e-mail to: [jpainter@lcwy.org](mailto:jpainter@lcwy.org) or [abrunski@lcwy.org](mailto:abrunski@lcwy.org)

**Make sure you vote!** The 2022 slate of TSVR candidates is as follows:

Candidates for Mayor: **Don Baillie & Kathleen Buyers**

Candidates for Council: (2 seats/4-year term) **Lee R. Hansen, Kirsten Merrill, & Ruzena Rok**



*Check out pages 3 through 7 of this newsletter for candidate biographies and also links to candidate video interviews.*

### Scheduled Meetings

#### Planning & Zoning Board

Oct 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> at 5pm

#### Finance Advisory Board

October 18<sup>th</sup> at 2pm

#### Town Council Meeting

October 19<sup>th</sup> at 6pm

#### Natural Resource Board

October 27<sup>th</sup> at 2pm

#### Water Utility Board

October 31<sup>st</sup> at 1pm

### Contacts

Town Hall

307-883-8696

[clerk@starvalleyranchwy.org](mailto:clerk@starvalleyranchwy.org)

Special Municipal Officer

307-880-2666

## TSVR Mission & Vision Update

The Vision and Mission workgroup has completed the development of updated Town of Star Valley Ranch (TSVR) Vision and Mission Statements. This has been the culmination of a year and a half of intensive effort on the part of many individuals. The statements were developed based on the results from the TSVR five focus groups and surveys that went out to over 1,400 residents last January. The workgroup committed to fully incorporating the ten priority areas identified by the town residents and those priority areas are included in the vision and mission statements. The Vision and Mission statements were accepted unanimously by the Town

Council on September 21, 2022. Copies of the Vision and Mission statements, with an explanatory introduction, will be posted to the TSVR website sometime within the next few weeks.

## From the NRB Parks & Landscaping Committee

Huge thanks to all the volunteers who came out the morning of September 17<sup>th</sup> to help with the final phase of the community garden project. All work was completed just after 11:00am. Four new oval tanks were placed and filled, making a total of six ovals all ready to grow next season! The tanks were placed in the alley between the Crop Circles Community Garden and Canine Commons Dog Park and will be used to "*grow a little extra*" for the Thayne Food Bank.



The installation of these additional tanks was made possible by the Wyoming Hunger Initiative Infrastructure Grant received by the Star Valley Ranch Community Garden to facilitate expansion of the garden's infrastructure.

If you are interested in growing food for your own table and *grow a little extra*, send your name to [svrcommunitygarden@gmail.com](mailto:svrcommunitygarden@gmail.com) and we will put you on the 2023 growing season list. In the event we have more requests for garden tanks than tanks available, we will draw names lottery style at the end of February.

## TextMyGov: A New Way to Stay Informed of Things Happening in Town



You now have the option to use your mobile phone's text service to get information and report problems to the Town. Send a text to 307-248-7321 to report problems or find information. This number will respond and guide you through the reporting process.

You can also opt-in to receive text alerts to your phone for water outages, road closures, special meetings, etc. Text TSVRALERTS to 91896 to opt-in. This number will not respond and is only for sending alerts.

For more information you can visit our [website](#).

Other ways to stay informed of Town happenings include submitting your email address at [Town of Star Valley Ranch, WY \(starvalleyranchwy.org\)](http://starvalleyranchwy.org) to facilitate receiving the Town newsletter and other email updates. And, you can also *Like* "Town of Star Valley Ranch" on Facebook.

## TVSR 2022 Candidate Guide



### Ruzena Rok SVR Town Council Candidate

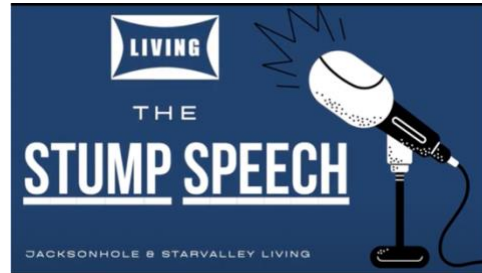
My name is Ruzena Rok; most people know me as “Ru”. A Star Valley Ranch (SVR)

homeowner since 2009, I have spent more than 20-years working in program management and cost analysis for the Federal Government to include serving in a leadership role for an organization of more than 160 people. I love the outdoors, am an avid gardener, mom, and grandmother. I’m also a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and current member of the SVR Natural Resources Board.

Why am I running for Town Council? Given that Wyoming Municipal elections are non-partisan it’s my belief there is real opportunity to accomplish things at the local level and for citizens and government to work more closely together in order to solve problems. With that in mind, I am running for SVR Town Council as I believe I could be an asset to our local government based on my experience and enthusiasm for living in our beautiful town.

Over the past two years SVR has experienced exponential growth (our population is up 24% since 2020) and we have seen more than 40 new home starts. A recent survey of town residents showed their #1 priority to be preserving the rural lifestyle of the Ranch; I am in complete alignment with that view. If elected to the Town Council I will work to ensure decisions made by our local government

reflect the desires of our residents and are in the best interest of SVR. I invite you to visit my website to get to know more about me: <https://rok4theranchwy.com>



Click the image above to watch Ruzena Rok’s video interview or use this link <https://youtu.be/d6mFUNEFkKE>



### Kirsten Merrill

#### SVR Town Council Candidate

##### **My Connection to Star Valley Ranch:**

Star Valley Ranch always symbolized family legacy and tradition for me. In 1983 my husband’s grandparents built their home on the Ranch and served on the HOA. They were very active in the community and embraced all that the community embodied. Over the years in Star Valley Ranch, we have built lasting memories with his family and carried on those same traditions with our own family. A decade ago, we bought our home on the Ranch, knowing we wanted to raise our kids in this valley. Our two young children love the people, recreation, and lifestyle here as



## TVSR 2022 Candidate Guide

much as we do. We feel very blessed to call Star Valley Ranch home, where our children can safely experience the recreation and beauty it holds.

**Reasons I want to serve Star Valley Ranch:** The growth of our beautiful town has proven that there is a need for a more elaborate infrastructure. While roads and water will be high on my agenda, we must also explore additional ways to keep and protect the rural life we appreciate. We have been a town for 17 years, and it is time to focus on things that will bring us together as a community and keep us safe and sustainable as we mature. Such as fire and emergency services, continued collaboration and cooperation with the HOAs, finding grants and funds to aid our town, more indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities, more services for our retired townspeople in the winter, and communicating information to the community so they are updated on the productivity of our town council. After serving on boards and committees for Star Valley Ranch and listening to the townspeople, I intend to meet the wants and needs of our beautiful community. When given the opportunity, I will significantly make an impact and work efficiently by serving our community as a town councilwoman.

**Work Experience:** I have been a massage therapist for 16 years. I have owned a successful massage clinic in Oregon with multiple therapists for 12 years and have recently opened another massage clinic in Alpine. In addition, I have maintained my EMT certification for many years. As an independent business owner, I have multiple areas of expertise such as communication and active listening, budgeting, management, leadership, vendor management, contracts, conflict resolution,

website content creation, and community outreach, to name a few. These skills, along with my strong work ethic and adaptability, qualify me and will enable me to serve on the town council.

**In Closing:** I welcome any opportunity to listen and communicate with the people of Star Valley Ranch so that we can evolve and preserve our unique town and continue the family legacy the way our ancestors intended.



Click the image above to watch Kirsten Merrill's video interview or use this link <https://youtu.be/s3pT9y3ki5M>



Lee Hansen  
SVR Town  
Council  
Candidate

I'm Lee Hansen and I am seeking re-election to the Town Council of Star Valley



Ranch. Linda and I have been residents of Wyoming for 37 years, 18 of which have been here on the Ranch. My first involvement with the Town's activities was serving on the Planning and Zoning Board, covering a span of almost 10 years. During



## TVSR 2022 Candidate Guide

that time, our building code requirements were established, plus the Board took the lead on many of the ordinances that set the standards that guide the town today.

The last two years, I have been the Council liaison to the Water Board. This Board has the critical function of ensuring that the town meets its financial obligation to maintain sufficient funding to repay the loans we have taken on in the complete upgrade of our water system.

During the past 4 years, we have taken many important steps to maintain the lifestyle that the citizens of our community love. First and most important, we have maintained a sound financial foundation for our Town. Managing our spending is crucial when the sources of revenue are controlled by the State of Wyoming and Lincoln County especially during some very uncertain times. Both the pandemic and the curtailment of carbon usage were huge concerns for possible impacts to our sources of revenue. My goal has been, and will continue to be, to maintain control of our spending by requiring a thorough evaluation of all proposed projects before proceeding.

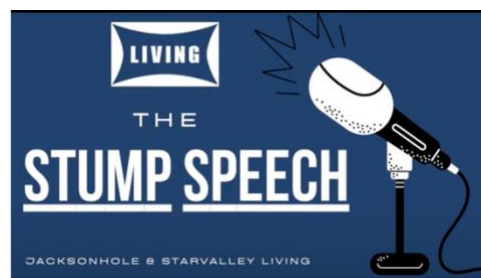
The next important item in the process of creating trust with our citizens is to receive and send prompt and accurate information. I pledge to be a fair and honest conduit of communication to and from our citizens of Star Valley Ranch. Some of the most recent items that are foremost on the minds of our citizens are fire protection, short-term rental permitting, control of nuisances, the condition and maintenance/upgrade of our roads, and the completion of our water system upgrade, just to name a few. Of these, our most pressing work is to complete the upgrade to our water system. The rules keep shifting and funding options are different from what they were just a few years ago. I will

continue to work to ascertain the best option available to the town. Once this is complete, we can focus on what is the best option for putting our roads into a condition that will be acceptable to most of our residents.

The issue of fire protection is presently getting a lot of attention. The cost has escalated significantly, over 5 times, in a short period of time with no significant change to the protection we are being provided. While citizen sentiment is to maintain fire protection at any cost, questions must be asked, and evaluations must be made.

Finally, maintaining the environmental integrity of our town, specifically in encouraging our residents to be proactive in the proper maintenance of their septic systems, needs to be a top priority. This is increasingly important because of all the new building taking place as well as for any potential developments around our borders.

I am dedicated to the belief that Star Valley is the most beautiful area in Wyoming and I will work to keep it that way. You can reach me at [lee Hansen123@gmail.com](mailto:lee Hansen123@gmail.com) or by phone at 307-248-1519. I appreciate your consideration for support of my candidacy.



Click the image above to watch Lee Hansen's video interview or use this link <https://youtu.be/UndpTIYStcY>



## Kathleen Buyers SVR Town Mayor Candidate



Our Town has made significant progress in many areas over my past two terms, but we still have challenges to address and new opportunities to pursue together. If you choose to re-elect me to serve you on November 8th, I will continue to work hard for our community, council, boards, and staff to effectively strengthen our Town throughout my term:

**Quality of Life;** Our community has been very clear that they moved to Star Valley Ranch because of the rural lifestyle. Our Town is beautiful, safe, close to nature and we love outdoor activities. If elected, I will continue to support improvements to our parks, trails and be an advocate for a safe place to walk or bike on the sides of our roads. I will continue to look for new ways to control speeding in our community.

**Water;** As your mayor I have secured \$15 million for water improvement projects which have added 130 fire hydrants and replaced 98,000 feet of water line. If elected, I will ensure that we complete the remaining \$3 million in water improvement projects and ensure that we properly plan for the future, so we never again have to replace an entire water system.

**Roads:** In the past 8 years under my leadership, we have chip sealed or paved 15 miles of road, we continue to pursue proper drainage on the roads so additional roads may be improved. We continue to develop more efficient ways to manage snow and ice

on the roads to ensure the safety of our citizens.

**Communication:** Together we will continue to improve communication by improving the Town website, email, text, newsletters, public meetings and listen to community members and accommodate diverse opinions while working together for our future.

**Experience and Dedication;** I will continue to be an active board member of the Lincoln County Economic Development Board to advocate for business in Lincoln County. I will continue to be a Board member for the Wyoming Association of Municipalities and continue to be an advocate at the County, State and Federal level for Star Valley Ranch.

Now as I run for re-election, I'm asking for your support and your vote. I know that by working together and looking out for each other, we can ensure that Star Valley Ranch remains a great place to live. As your Mayor I look forward to fulfilling that commitment every day.

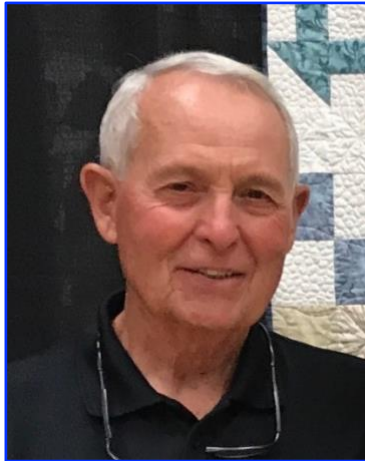


Click the image above to watch Kathleen Buyer's video interview or use this link <https://youtu.be/5-XfCB4gqFI>



Don Baillie

### SVR Town Mayor Candidate



Hello, my name is Don Baillie and I am running for the office of Mayor for the Town of Star Valley Ranch.

My wife Judy and I have called the Town of Star Valley Ranch home since 2003, both of us are lifelong residents of Wyoming residing in Cheyenne before moving to Star Valley Ranch. We are and have always been year-round residents.

I am currently a Town Councilman, having been elected in 2018. My service with the Town started with Planning and Zoning Board in June 2010 and I served as chairman until June 2015. I took a short leave and rejoined the Board then served until I was elected to the Town Council.

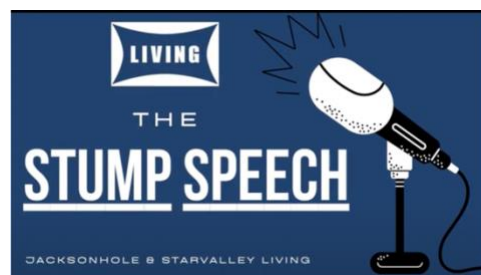
During my time as a Councilman, I have served as the liaison to the Planning and Zoning Board and the Natural Recourse Board. I have been heavily involved in the development and passage of the ICC Building Codes from 2006 Edition to the 2018 Edition, Liquor Licensing, Contractor Registration, and the Nuisance and Short-Term Rental ordinances. I also lead the effort to go from a manual paper system of logging building inspections to an electronic system using a phone or tablet. I also lead the effort to Codify Town Ordinances.

The Town's water projects are winding down, with the transmission line on Vista Drive our primary project needing

replacement. The Town is currently seeking grants through the ARPA program for replacement of this line. As the Town continues to grow decisions will need to be made about water storage, possible additional tanks, and maintenance of the tanks and wells. The town has a software program to control pumps, valves and to gather real time data. The data gathering side of this program is not being used. The Water Board, staffed by talented people, is not getting this needed information. This information is needed to assists the Council in the decisions of well and storage tank maintenance, minimize rate increases, identify future needs and location of major components of the system.

Roads are the major concerns of residents, dust, potholes, failed pavement or lack of pavement. We need funding to manage any significant upgrade to our roads. One way to do this would be the 6<sup>th</sup> penny tax. I would support this as Mayor and would work to make this happen if this is an approach that the Town would like to pursue.

I would appreciate your vote. I can be reached at [dbaillie@silverstar.com](mailto:dbaillie@silverstar.com) or (307) 690-8062.



Click the image above to watch Don Baillie's video interview or use this link <https://youtu.be/4EoTfGiceBU>



# Water Rates & Rate Setting Objectives



The Water Utility Board published the “Board’s Goals and Objectives” in the April Town Newsletter.

[https://files4.1.revize.com/starvalleyranch/Document\\_Center/Community/Bulletins%20&%20Newsletters/2022/2022%20-4%20TSVR%20Newsletter%20FINAL.pdf](https://files4.1.revize.com/starvalleyranch/Document_Center/Community/Bulletins%20&%20Newsletters/2022/2022%20-4%20TSVR%20Newsletter%20FINAL.pdf)

This month is our Rate Setting Objectives. This set of objectives, except for a couple of updates, has been used for many, many years.

From the beginning, the basis of the Water Utility’s Goals and Objectives have been greatly influenced by the works of Carl Brown Consulting, LLC and his book “Getting Great Rates”.

## **Town of Star Valley Ranch, Water Utility, Rate Setting Objectives**

### **→ Honor commitment to the Wyoming Water Development Commission and the State Loan & Investment Commission**

- **Increase water fees by 10-15% each year until self-sufficiency** (*We are self-sufficient*)
- **Establish a \$500,000.00 Reserve** (*We have a \$500,000.00 - WWDC Sinking Fund Reserve*)  
[https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/starvalleyranchwy/latest/starvalleyranch\\_wy/0-0-0-1059#JD\\_52.03](https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/starvalleyranchwy/latest/starvalleyranch_wy/0-0-0-1059#JD_52.03)
- **Encourage conservation** (*We have Water Meters & charge for water used*)

### **→ Strive for affordable rates and keep them as low as financially feasible.**

### **→ Distribute costs equitably among the various types of users.**

### **→ Reflect the Water Department’s actual costs.**

### **→ Solicit user input.**

### **→ System Development Fee should reflect the economies of those users who bought in early as well as those who buy in later.**

### **→ Utilize experienced professional help.**

### **→ Establish an annual rate review cycle.**

### **→ Communicate rate philosophy clearly and precisely.**

The consumer commitment most focused on is:

**“The most consistent, smallest increase possible to maintain the Financial Viability of the Water Utility.”**

*(FINANCIAL VIABILITY: ability to maintain an effective balance between long-term debt, asset values, operations and maintenance expenditures, and operating revenues.)*

**Thoughtful, solution-oriented input is always welcomed.**