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Searching for news in Watkins, Bennett, Strasburg, Byers, Deer Trail and Agate

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Bennett adopts state zoning mandates

Trustees reluctantly approve accessory dwelling language; ArapCo Sheriff's compact OK'd

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

BENNETT — The same night the Bennett Board of Trustees voted 5-2 in favor of 2,100-plus new homes with the annexation of the Prairie Grass subdivisions, the same split occurred when approving updated language allowing easier processes for accessory dwelling units.

During its Nov. 4 special meeting, the board ap-

proved an ordinance updating town zoning code to comply with House Bill 24-1152, which requires municipalities to allow one ADU on lots with single-unit detached homes. The revisions also allow local standards for ADU size, placement and utilities while staying within state parameters.

The two dissenting votes were again cast by Larry Vittum and Denice Smith while Mayor Whitney Oakley, Mayor Pro Tem Kevin Barden, and trustees Steve Dambroski, Donna Sus and Royce Pindell

voted in the affirmative.

During his statement of opposition, Vittum restated his longstanding opposition to any outside influence to local governance by the state, while Smith added that she isn't a fan of backyard residences, noting she is a neighbor to such structures.

"In my opinion, the state of Colorado has become the most liberal state in the United States, more

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Thank You Veterans!

JACLYN PELTON/For The Scout

Corridor veteran Alyssa Egloff receives a hug from daughter Makenna during Byers Elementary's Veterans Day assembly Nov. 11 as fellow vet Robert Rhodes smiles from the neighboring chair. For more Veterans Day coverage, **SEE PAGES 11-13.**



STEVEN VETTER/The I-70 Scout

Patrick Duff, left, Mike Cowell and Reagan Hahn take the oath of Deer Trail School District director Nov. 6 as board member Steven Musser, seated, looks on.

DT walking bridge slated for spring

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

DEER TRAIL — A newly seated Deer Trail School Board received word earlier this month that construction of a new walking bridge between the south side of campus and neighboring housing subdivision will commence next spring.

During the Nov. 6 school board

meeting, which included swearing in of two sitting members and one former director, Superintendent Mike Jobman said that installation of the long-awaited walking bridge between Bijou Estates and the south side of the school is expected to start May 1.

"Completion of the bridge structure itself is expected around April 29 but I

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'Burg School District foresees 10% jump in property values

by **Steven Vetter**
Managing Editor

STRASBURG — During a meeting dominated by discussion of fall activities and holiday preparations, the Strasburg School Board received word that property values across both counties in the district are on the rise.

During the Nov. 10 regular meeting of Strasburg School directors, Finance Director Nancy Taylor said that preliminary reports from both Arapahoe and Adams county assessor offices show district-wide property valuations are increasing by 10%.

The projection for next

month's 2025 assessed valuation is \$144,358,161, compared to the 2024 actual figure of \$130,921,375. In addition, property tax abatements are anticipated to jump from \$1,309 last year to \$15,758 this cycle.

The amount of property tax to be realized in the school district's general fund is expected to be more than \$5.563 million, compared to \$5.336 million-plus last year. The mill levy to be assessed to property owners across the district is expected at 38.539 mills, more than 2 points down from the previous rate

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SCOTT GERRARD/For The Scout

Widespread atmospheric instability resulted in several days of spectacular presentations of northern lights, aka Aurora Borealis, last week. Above, the bright colors associated with the phenomena are at peak brilliance between 6-7 p.m. Nov. 11 as a plane flies over Fort Morgan.