YAMPA VALLEY HOUSING AUTHORITY

COMMUNICATIONS MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

2:00PM

Team members present included: Lou Tortora, Catherine Carson, Laraine Martin, Elliot Lawrence, and Sarah Newman. Remote attendance: Daniel Buri, John Spezia, Sandy Jacobs and Emily Katzman. Minutes prepared via AI with formatting edits for ADA compliance by Sarah Newman.

Key Topics Discussed:

1. WEBSITE AND SOCIAL ANALYTICS

- August had about 1,700 site visitors, mostly direct traffic. Cottonwoods was the top page.
- The team wants year-over-year comparisons, faster reports (trailing 30 days), and a plain-language summary for the board.
- Posts featuring real people and faces get the most engagement. Followers are growing slowly.
- Paid social and short YouTube videos (possibly with Steamboat Media) were suggested ahead of the mill levy.

2. FARMERS MARKET DEBRIEF

- Participation was seen as worthwhile, especially for time with council members, but engagement was passive.
- Ideas included informal community events (coffee or happy hour), piggybacking on OPG's October resident event, a rotating slideshow of projects, and a regular seat at Coffee with Council.

3. ANNUAL REPORT

- The team agreed to skip a fall 2026 report and release the next one in early 2027, aligned with audited financials.
- This fall's content will focus on YVHA's 10-year accomplishments to build toward the mill levy.
- Quarterly public updates to City Council were favored over monthly ones.

4. MILL LEVY MESSAGING

- The team wants to lead with simple top-line numbers: people housed, the value of square footage created, and outside dollars leveraged (roughly $11M in, $100M+ out).
- "Admin/overhead" should be reframed as program management and given a human face through staff profiles.
- Housing wonk terms like "subsidy" should be avoided.
- The approach should be honest and humble ("we listened and learned") and include a "promises made, promises kept" report card.
- Future commitments will need different framing, with more emphasis on preservation (e.g., Hillside) and dependence on partners.
- Messaging should be driven by board and staff within this committee, with more meetings as needed. The deadline is August 2027.
- The team may bring in citizens and former opponents (e.g., Brown Ranch critics) later.
- Annexation and Slate Creek messaging stays with its own committee.

5.ACTION ITEMS

- **Laraine:** Pull historical analytics, send earlier monthly reports with summaries, develop storytelling concepts from the spreadsheets, and work with Catherine on the Fish Creek history timeline.
- **All:** Identify past "House Our Community" volunteers and potential citizen participants.
- **Board:** Set direction on the 10-year mill levy commitments.