



2019 Ridgway Town Councilors

Mayor John Clark



Mayor Clark is a native Coloradan and has lived in Ridgway since 1982. After making his living as a glass artist for a quarter century, John made the rather unconventional switch to being a Macintosh computer consultant. "I enjoy helping people get along with technology, instead of feeling like they're always fighting it," he says. John was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Ridgway Town Council in 2000 and was elected mayor in April 2012. He is now in his sixth term on Council and in his second term as mayor. Additionally, he has been on the Ridgway Planning Commission for well over 20 years, with the exception of a one-year hiatus in 1983-84. Regarding his tenure on the Town Council and the Planning Commission, John says, "I really enjoy working in Town government. I care very much about looking out for the Town's best interests and strive to keep it moving in a positive direction and, most importantly, at a manageable rate. Now that we're finally coming out of the recession that began in 2008, I believe it's time to find ways to grow our community in a truly innovative and productive direction. We need to build a vibrant and resilient Ridgway so that we not only survive but also thrive, wherever the 21st century takes us."

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Mayor Pro Tem Eric Johnson



Mayor Pro Tem Johnson has been serving on the Town Council since April 2003. Eric has been a resident of Ridgway since 1997. He is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner currently practicing at the Telluride Medical Center. He received a B.S. in Nursing in 1991 from Idaho State University and a Masters in Nursing from the University of Utah in 1995. About serving on the Town Council Eric says, "I value the sense of community in Ridgway and see my service on Town Council as a way to preserve and enhance Ridgway's environment, culture, and businesses." Eric is married to Kaye Middleton; they have two dogs. He is a "sometimes" writer who enjoys cooking, gardening, skiing and most outdoor activities.

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Councilor Robert (Robb) Austin



Councilor Robb Austin was elected to the Town Council in April of 2016. He has served on the Town Parks and Open Space Committee since December of 2015 and serves on the Ridgway Chautauqua Society, dba The Sherbino Theater. He also represents the Town on the Ouray County Housing Advisory Committee. Robert (Robb) Austin recently retired as the Chief Executive Officer of the Moab Regional Hospital in April of 2015 after working 40 years in the health care industry. His previous positions were as the Chief Executive Officer of the Estes Park Medical Center (CO), President of the Gunnison Valley Hospital (CO) from 1984-2003 and the Director of Business Development & Outreach for the Poudre Valley Health System (Fort Collins, CO). Robb

received his Master of Science degree in Business & Health Fiscal Administration from the University of Wisconsin, Madison and his B.S. degree from Moorhead (MN) State University. Robb's wife is Betsy Baier, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), recently retired from working as the Bereavement Coordinator for Hope West in Montrose. They have 3 children--Elyse, Emily and Erik and five grandchildren.

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Councilor Ninah Hunter



Councilor Ninah Hunter describes herself as a "music lover, travel bug, outdoor enthusiast, techno-geek, and real estate professional." During a brief 9-month retirement from mortgage lending, she was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Town Council in 2018. She was elected for another term in 2019. She also reactivated her real estate license and is now a broker associate with Ridgway Real Estate. Ninah is a former family law attorney from San Diego, California and switched careers to real estate when she moved to Ridgway in 2003. She lived outside the town limits in Dallas Meadows until 2015, when she and her wife, Annabel Clarke, moved into town in 2015. They love it! Ninah, an avid camper, road tripper, and international traveler, obtained her B.A. in French, and an M.A. in Spanish, languages which come in very handy both locally and worldwide. She is active on the internet and recently started writing for a local publication about Ridgway and real estate. She and Annabel rent out a room in their town home on Airbnb, which has given them an opportunity to meet many amazing people all over the country and to be enthusiastic ambassadors of Ridgway. Ninah also serves as the Council liaison on the Ridgway Creative District Creative Advocacy Team (C.A.T.). "It's been a great way to re-activate my right brain," she says, "and to give back to this community which is so precious to me."

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Councilor Russell (Russ) Meyer



Councilor Russ Meyer started on Ridgway Town Council in April, 2019. He also serves on the Ouray County Joint Planning Board and Ouray County Water Users Association. Prior to living in Ridgway, Russ worked for Exxon/ExxonMobil for 36 years in a number of roles and assignment locations around the world including, but not limited to, Russia, China, Canada, Chad, Cameroon, and Angola. Having finished his career as a project manager on various IT/Telecommunications projects, Russ decided to run for Town Council to ensure the voice of the community was being represented. He strives to maintain the sense of community that helps to make Ridgway what it is. Russ and his wife, Crista, have been in the Ridgway area since 2012, and moved here full time in 2017.

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Councilor Tessa Cheek

Tessa Cheek joined Ridgway's Town Council and Planning Commission in April of 2019. When not at Town Hall, Tessa works in the offices of local candle company Bluecorn Beeswax, and



local arts nonprofits, The Sherbino and Weehawken Creative Arts. Tessa is the co-director of the Open Bard Literary Series, a poetry editor and a practicing creative writer. She received her MFA in Creative Writing from Hollins University (VA) and her undergraduate degree in Philosophy from Grinnell College (IA). Prior to attending graduate school, Tessa was a reporter for The Colorado Independent and a member of the Colorado

Capitol Press Association. A Colorado native, Tessa grew up in Colorado Springs and moved to Ridgway in 2017.

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Councilor Beth Lakin



Beth Lakin was sworn in on Town Council in April 2019. She has made Ridgway home since 2013 and teaches high school science in Ouray. Beth studied chemistry at Bates College (BS, 2008) and oceanography at Oregon State University (MS, 2010) before being called to the mountains. Beth is passionate about Ridgway, her chosen home, and is proud to look out for its best interests as a councilmember. When not teaching, attending council and committee

meetings, or attending to projects at home, she can usually be found in the mountains with her beloved pup.

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