

Minutes of Municipal Council Meeting (21/10/2026)

Present:

11 out of 12 elected members from the majority group

3 out of 3 elected members from our list, "Chalabre en commun"

Aurélie Subreville (Secretary General)

1) Presentation by Pierre FARLOTTI, representing SAFER Occitanie.

Prior to 2004, only the State could claim ownership of so-called "vacant and ownerless" properties—that is, properties for which the owner is unknown, or which are part of an estate that has remained unoccupied for more than 10 years in a rural area. Since 2004, municipalities have been permitted to claim such properties, provided they submit a formal request.

Mr. FARLOTTI outlined the procedure, ranging from identifying potential properties (analyzing land registry records, conducting site surveys, creating maps, etc.) to preparing the necessary application files.

The cost for the study is €2,000 (excluding tax), with a flat fee of €450 to €500 (excluding tax) per "property account" (a single "property account" may encompass multiple individual plots).

Mr. MAMET explained that this presentation was intended solely for informational purposes. Identifying these plots is important for managing fire risks and ensuring that each plot has an identified owner (for property tax purposes).

Mr. FARLOTTI noted that a study conducted in 2023/2024 estimated that such properties in the municipality of Chalabre cover an area of between 25 and 30 hectares.

This item will be discussed at a future municipal council meeting.

2) Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting: adopted. Virginie did not take part in the vote, as she was absent from that meeting.

3) Renovation of the Gendarmerie (police station).

Mr. Mamet explained that, following the decision to abandon plans for a new building, the focus has shifted to renovating the existing premises and bringing them up to standard. The town hall has engaged an architect from Carcassonne, Alain Cathala.

"Habitat Audois" (the regional social housing authority) will handle the renovation of the residential units, while the municipality will be responsible for the administrative section (offices and surrounding grounds).

The grant application must be submitted by October 31.

The total cost is approximately €500,000.

€63,000 has already been funded (covering the various studies conducted to date).

This leaves a balance of approximately €437,000, which would be funded as follows:

- 40% from the State (via DETR or DECI grants)
- 20% from the Region
- 20% from the Department

This leaves 20% to be covered by the municipality, amounting to approximately €80,000.

Furthermore, the Gendarmerie has agreed to an additional rent (surcharge) of 6% over a period of 17 years.

The question has been raised as to whether other municipalities—which also make use of the Gendarmerie's services—might contribute to the costs.

Mr. Mamet replies that this should have been anticipated by establishing a *Syndicat Mixte* (a joint administrative authority). This did not happen because the necessary information was not available at the time.

Mr. Bauvain Levi asks what a new Gendarmerie facility would have cost.

Mr. Mamet responds that the cost would be 2.4 million euros, excluding tax.

The resolution authorizing the submission of the grant application is adopted unanimously.

4) Presentation of the "Associations Package" by Fabrice BAUVAIN LEVI.

Mr. MAMET introduces the topic, stating that it is necessary to be able to justify why a subsidy is (or is not) awarded to an association, and that, therefore, a set of regulations is required to provide a framework for the entire process.

Mr. BAUVAIN LEVI explains that the previous method for awarding grants needed to be revised. Typically, €40,000 in grants is allocated to associations.

There are 39 associations in Chalabre. This year, 35 of them received grants totaling €35,340, plus an additional €3,000 as an exceptional grant for the flood victims in Pomas.

Nine associations received amounts ranging from €1,500 to €6,000.

He further explains that the proposed "Associations Package" aims to establish "a fair, transparent framework that is compatible with the responsible management of public funds."

The proposed regulations include "allocation criteria" for these grants.

Myriam MARTIN emphasizes that—as stated in Article 5 of the regulations—these "criteria" must serve strictly as "a tool to assist in decision-making, rather than an automatic mechanism" that would lead to bureaucratic management. Each case must be considered individually. It is not expected that every association will meet all the criteria; this point will need to be clearly explained.

Nina KLOTZ raises the issue of volunteer work, which is the very foundation of an association's existence. It cannot be quantified within a budget.

Myriam MARTIN adds that volunteer work is, in itself, an extraordinary contribution. One should not attempt to quantify everything; it cannot be factored into an association's budget. Virginie GAUDEL points out that, when she took part in the meeting with Mr. BAUVAIN LEVI, her concern was that an association does not necessarily have to be the organizer of a public event to nonetheless have an interest in the life of the village—and, on that basis, to be eligible for a grant.

Mr. Bauvain Levi agrees with this. An association does not necessarily have to be focused on organizing events. He also notes that, once adopted by the council, the "pack" (information/application package) will be sent to all associations. They will thus be informed of the allocation criteria and will be able to complete the documents with a full understanding of the requirements. The schedule sets the deadline for submitting grant applications for the end of February.

Virginie Gaudel clarifies that Article 11 establishes a threshold of €5,000 for the municipality of Chalabre, above which a formal "agreement" must be drawn up between the municipality and the

association. Furthermore, as all members of the committee are themselves involved in an association, each member will refrain from participating in deliberations concerning their own association to ensure impartiality (Article 15 – conflicts of interest).

The resolution is adopted unanimously.

5) Petrol station.

Mr. Mamet points out that the station has been busier than ever. Approximately €109,000 remains, which is insufficient to last through the end of the year, as fuel must be reordered constantly. Operating costs are around €50,000 per month (which are recouped through fuel sales). For three months, this amounts to €150,000. He requests a budget amendment.

Myriam Martin notes that this necessitates more frequent meter readings—a task that does not fall within the duties of the Secretary General.

Mr. Mamet replies that, primarily, it requires more frequent monitoring of the fuel tanks.

The budget amendment is adopted unanimously.

1) Miscellaneous questions.

Mr. MAMET states that he has met with the main market vendors. The building at risk of collapse must be secured. The vendors will be able to set up on one side of the square.

- We asked whether it might be possible to prepare the parking area next to the library before the work begins.

- ≤ This parking area will be used to store equipment for the duration of the project. It will be prepared at that time, in conjunction with the construction work.

- Is it possible to fill in the massive hole in the road on Cours Colbert—given that it poses a danger—if the work is not going to start immediately?

- ≤ We will add some gravel.

- Regarding the felling of the trees: could a meeting be held with the collective group and the Prefecture to try to de-escalate the situation?

- ≤ Mr. MAMET indicates that the Prefecture will not attend such a meeting. The collective group and the association NEO are essentially the same entity. The only body capable of resolving the impasse is the DREAL (Regional Directorate for Environment, Planning and Housing).

He has written to the DREAL to clarify whether the court hearing's deliberations—which state that "no four-season environmental study is required"—take precedence, or whether the DREAL's own opinion prevails. Such a study would delay the project by two years. In any event, if no response is received from the DREAL by October 30, the work will proceed.

Myriam MARTIN expresses regret that the Prefecture will not attend a meeting.

Mr. MAMET notes that the collective group has already been received. We have authorization to fell the trees until November 15, as replanting must take place after that date.

Nevertheless, we emphasized the need to calm the debate. It is not for us to judge the legitimacy of these individuals. They are raising questions, and we must continue to address them, even if we do not share the same point of view.

We regretted that the mayor's latest statement used an overly sharp tone, and we had hoped it would instead signal that the dialogue remained open.

For the elected members of the "Chalabre en commun" group:
Myriam Martin, Philippe Razeyre, Virginie Gaudel