

**NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE
THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
January 10, 2011**

Present: Mayor Bob Rivera, Vice Mayor Bill Mulleneaux, Councilman Wayne Griffin, Donald Innes, Eric Merriman, Charles Morris

Staff present: Terry Hinton Manager, Heath Brown Engineer, Chief Mark Stevens Police, Chief Mike Payne Fire Department, Lona Duncan Town Clerk

Absent: Councilman Ken Larson, Attorney Dudley Welker

Visitors: None

AGENDA

Mayor Rivera welcomed everyone calling the meeting to order at 7:00pm stating there was a quorum. He said God Bless our Troops their families and God Bless America. Mayor Rivera asked that we take a moment of silence for the all victims in Tucson tragedy.

Pledge of Allegiance was lead by Lona Duncan

Roll Call.

OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

None

PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

None

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Approve minutes of the December 21, 2010 Regular Council Meeting.
- B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.
- C. Police Monthly Report.
- D. Approval of Invoices.
- E. Financial Reports.

Councilman Morris made motion to approve minutes and reports. Councilman Griffin seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous Motion passed

OLD BUSINESS: Discussion, consideration and possible action

- A. Health Insurance renewal.

Terry said he had given them a spread sheet will be renewal rates. We do not have to convert to the Obama Care until 2014 but the new Heath Savings is only four to five cents different than the old policy and the new has some increased benefits. The renewal on the old PPO plan which is not Obama Care compliant, but that is what I am recommending because it is quite a bit cheaper than the new plan. Our overall rate of increase was about 10% with the old plans. The first thing I suggest is that we make the Health Savings the base for all employees where we pay 100 % of

premium and that includes the dental and the vision. If they want to go to the PPO let employee buy up to the more benefit rich plan. If we leave everything the same including the contribution rate the employee cost to buy up to the PPO will be 90 for employee, 110 for employee/spouse and employee/ family will be 125 a month. The contribution rate has four tiers employee, employee spouse, employee children and family, right now we are contributing 150 for employee and 300 for everyone else. I am suggesting changing the contribution rates to 100 for employee, 200 for employee/ spouse or children and 300 for family. If we keep renewals base on what we have with the buy up we will be paying 8300 a year more than last year, if we lower the contribution amounts we will be paying about 1200 less than what we are paying now. If we go with the reduced contribution rate it will cost less for the employee to buy up on the PPO. This make it 15 a month for employee spouse and employee or employee children would not cost and family would be 125 of the PPO. The reason I am looking at doing it this way is because next year budget is going to be tight do to the sales tax lost of 435 thousand dollars from Wal Mart. Councilman Merriman ask if the Health Saving prescription will still be paid by the Town and the answer was yes there is a thousand dollar allowance with a co pay of twenty dollars. Heath ask if the match money the Town gave form the HRA of 1250 going to be there with this proposal and Terry said yes that will stay the same.

There are a lot of places we may need to cut this next year. Any equipment we need will probably have to come from Electric because it has a little surplus, the sanitation may need to be raised to start making up some of the money we lose there. The sewer is in the black, the project we are doing with the school will help because the street department will be working on their money. Vice Mayor Mulleneaux asked what he was thinking of raising sewer to. Terry said the sewer I wasn't thinking of raising it is the black. Vice Mayor Mulleneaux said we might want to raise the sewer and garbage at the same time from 7.50 to 10.00 a month. Terry said we had talked about it before but you have to remember the retired people on a fixed income. We could also think about raising the base amount on the meters and not the electrical rate. Mayor Rivera said I believe last June we said we wanted to go up in garbage if we need to for the good of the Town. Councilman Morris said maybe we should increase taxes by a half percent to be the same as Safford. Mayor Rivera said we need to talk about these things but at a later time. Terry said these are things you need to think about and talk to others and see what they think.

Councilman Merriman asked if the amount the employee has to pay out of pay check can it be pre tax and Terry said yes we have a cafeteria plan. Terry said tonight we need to at least approve the renewals of the Heath Savings and the PPO and if you want to wait on the reduced contribution until next month you can. Mayor Rivera asked is this what you are recommending, answer was yes. Terry said is you are a employee/ children there is no fee for PPO and employee /spouse will be \$15 and family will be \$125 stays the same. The contribution rates on the Heath Savings will be 100, 200 and 300 which If things start going up you can adjust the contribution rate but up.

Councilman Morris made motion to approve renewal with the reduction of contribution rate on Heath Savings and the buy up on the PPO. Vice Mayor Mulleneaux seconded the motion. Councilman Innes said we need to require a six month review for the contribution rate. The vote was unanimous Motion passed

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion, consideration and possible action

- A. Food Bank electricity donation.

Terry said the Mayor and I have both talked to Edie Smith they are opening up a shop at Andy McDonald, which was an office, then an apartments and now is vacant. It is off Reay Lane. Edie is asking for the Town to help which we can give because they will be one of our electric customers. I am just asking Council if you want to help with garbage, trash or electrical and if so how much. Mayor Rivera said I would like to say when I talked to her she said there was three food banks in the valley one is St Vincent De Paul, a Methodist group and Thatcher Food Bank which is federally founded out of Tucson. They get the food they distribute in on a certain day of the week they then put it in the pantry that is open to everyone. You do not have to qualify on your income level there are no questions asked. Terry said they are also the ones that go out to the ball field once a month. Mayor Rivera said I believe they are getting some kind of help from Mr. McDonald on the rent, Terry said right know I think it is free. Mayor Rivera said I was concerned about the parking and she said they will be open four days a week and A through D people will come on Mondays and so on so the traffic should not be bad. We are helping museum and have for a long time by paying the electricity. Mayor Rivera said I would like to ask Council to help them with the electricity and garbage this will benefit the Thatcher residents. Councilman Morris said he needed to withdraw himself from voting because his sister and bother in law are on the board. Councilman Griffin asked are we establishing precedents for a non-profit organization what is the criteria. Terry said at present we do not have any written policy on who we can help maybe on the motion it should be said due to the financial needs of the Food Bank we have agreed to provide help until they can afford to pay it and be reviewed once a year.

Councilman Innes made motion to waive electric and trash fees due to financial needs and will be reviewed annually. Councilman Merriman seconded the motion. Councilman Morris abstained from voting. The vote was unanimous Motion passed

- B. RESOLUTION NO. 581-2011:** A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, ARIZONA, DECLARING AS A PUBLIC RECORD THAT CERTAIN DOCUMENT FILED WITH THE CITY CLERK AND ENTITLED "THE AMENDMENTS TO THE THATCHER TOWN CODE FOR THE USE OF FIREWORKS".

Terry said he and Mark have read and talked about this a lot and I am not sure it will make that much difference than what our Town Code says right now. Terry asked Mark what he thought. Mark said I agree I talked with the County and they are going to go with the way the law is written right now you can't have anything that leaves the ground. Terry said our code is no different and those novelty items are an exemption to the State statue and we can't outlaw those anyway. This new law does say if you cause a fire or problems you have to pay for it so I guess it does make a difference because ours currently does not say that. It also gives Chief Payne the opportunity to issue permits. I am going to recommend we pass it.

Vice Mayor Mulleneaux made motion to approve Resolution No 581-2011. Councilman Merriman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous Motion passed

- C. ORDINANCE NO. 162-2011:** AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, ARIZONA, AMENDING THE TOWN

CODE; CHAPTER 11, SECTION 11-1-4 "FIREWORKS" BY ADDING REGULATIONS FOR THE USE OF FIREWORKS.

Terry said this is the Ordinance that implements the public record we just made. The Ordinance is what is posted in the paper.

Councilman Innes made motion to approve Ordinance. Councilman Morris seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous Motion passed

- D. **RESOLUTION NO. 582-2011:** A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, GRAHAM COUNTY, ARIZONA, AUTHORIZING THE TOWN TO ENTER INTO AN AMENDED AND RESTATED AGREEMENT FOR ELECTRIC SERVICES FOR THE TOWN OF THATCHER WITH THE GRAHAM COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE.

Terry said this is a restatement of our 1973 agreement. There are two changes one being we only have to give three years notification instead of five and in exchange for that we agreed to use them exclusively to wheel power to us. It seemed to me and our consultants that it is a good trade off to get the notification time reduced to three years. What we are doing is re negotiating the 1973 agreement. Vice Mayor Mulleneaux asked if we are going to make a purchase. Terry said on May 26th our five year notice for the area which includes Allred Lane, the two new hotels, the east side of 1st Ave. and the vacancy fields. Terry said he and Steve had already talked about it and they will start putting it together and bring back to Council and see if it is something you want to purchase.

Vice Mayor Mulleneaux made motion to approve resolution No 582-2011 and Council Merriman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous Motion passed

- E. **RESOLUTION NO. 583-2011:** A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, GRAHAM COUNTY, ARIZONA, AUTHORIZING THE TOWN TO ENTER INTO A FIRM POWER WHEELING AGREEMENT WITH THE GRAHAM COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE.

Terry said our wheeling agreement ran out Dec 31st and we all forgot. It is about the same as before. The rate is the same rate as currently it has in the agreement the rate can go up by 2.25 percent every two years. The earliest our wheeling rate would go up would be 2013 and it would go up .00005 cents. This has worked for us for the last 20 years and this agreement is for the next 20 years. Our consultants and power attorneys have looked at it and agree, I recommend we pass it.

Councilman Morris made motion to pass Resolution 583-2011. Councilman Merriman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Motion passed

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- A. Town Manager's Report:

Terry said Mayor Rivera, myself and Councilman Merriman went to the State Capital and greeted our newly elected representatives Mr. Crandall, Mrs. Barton. Then we went to see Sylvia Allen and Richard Crandall and introduced ourselves we are trying to cultivate those relationships more this year. Anything we can do to keep them going and asking us what we need is better for all of us.

Mayor Rivera said the main topic was the four year college it seems like they are all supporting this. Terry said when I talked to Richard Crandall he was for the college he told me about a limited bill that would offer two four year degrees in business and education here at the college and the college should be able to do it without having to get money from the State he thinks that might have a chance. Mayor Rivera said Chester Crandall had nothing but positive to say about that. Terry said I believe this will be a way to help boost our economy we need more jobs that are not tied to the copper industry.

Terry said Monday is Martin Luther King Day and we will be closed. I believe the garbage service will run and if it is we will put a public announcement on the radio.

Terry said the sidewalks in Daley Estates are close to being done. Heath said we should be finished pouring sidewalks this week and all we will have left is to widen the bridge where both sides will have sidewalks.

As we leave there we are going to Ellsworth Lane the two culverts are washed out we are going to pour some wing walls and put some guard rail up. Probably our next project will be Reay Lane from the Hwy to the canal we are going to widen that road and put in curb and gutter. During the summer we will start the school project the school is working on the IGA. This will help on budget because they have 430 thousand dollar they want to spend it will pay for our materials and labor it will help the town with curbing and sidewalks around the streets. Terry said Heath did a good job with the design.

Councilman Innes said when it rains on Church Street there seems to be a lot of drainage issues. Terry said until we can pave curb to curb there is not much you can do there is going to be puddles. Church Street is going to be a high dollar project when you decide to spend that much it will be on hold. Mayor Rivera asked can we do it in phases and Terry said yes we could. Councilman Innes asked if there were any grants answer was no, we do not have the low to moderate income ratio that would qualify us. The State doesn't have any money so everything is going through the Federal Government.

Councilman Merriman asked about Allred Lane. Terry said that is on our list for next year. We have to do plans on it and right now we are working on the walking path and the school then Allred will be next.

B. Fire Department Report.

Chief Payne said we have the house burning coming up on Feb 26th. We looked at the monument item and we have some ideas. Chief Stevens said he took some pictures for fire department to look at. Chief Payne said it is going to be a process. We have had no fires but some false alarms it has been slow.

C. Police Department Report.

Chief Stevens said we made the front page with the registered sex offenders. We pasted out 200 flyers to let people know. I was notified today that there is a level three sex offender out at hot wells, we torn out once, and he has a structure built out there. Chief said he took Officer Cauthen with him and told the gentleman he has to be out by Friday or he will be arrested for criminal trespassing.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Safe House- Vice Mayor Mulleneaux said he had not received a call.

- B. Chamber of Commerce- Councilman Merriman said the meeting is tomorrow. There is a ribbon cutting for Jason Hewitt located next to Domino Pizza, Tops in Lexington Pine Clubs at 6:00. On Feb 12th the Chamber is putting on a Valentine Ball the cost will be 75 dollars each. We had a Chamber breakfast last Friday and they presented to Mr. Konopnicki a plaque for doing a good job for the valley over the years.
- C. SEAGO- Mayor Rivera said our meeting is next month the 25th. They are having this Thursday from 10 to 2 a strategic meeting to let Seago know which way we would like them to go. They would like a mission statement to help them move forward. Chief Stevens said that he and Chief Griffin and Sheriff Allred went to a medical marijuana meeting it will go into effect April 13th. You can get two and half ounces every two weeks and you have 12 plants if you live 25 miles from a dispensary. Also if you are a care taker and they the people you are caring for require it you can have 12 plants per person up to 60 plants in a house. Chief said if your friend that uses marijuana runs out you can give him some of your but you can not sell it. There is no age limit to get it but you have to be 21 to work in the dispensary. This is going to be very interesting to control.
- D. Arizona Foundation. None
- E. Library Committee- Councilman Morris said there was a meeting on the 15th of December talked about getting the program going again going out and talking with the Councils to see what direction to go. We have another meeting this coming Wednesday. Terry said he had heard that they want the County just to do it again and I know the Board of Supervisors is not going to form a district they will force it to the vote of the people. Councilman Morris said yes and it would have to be a property tax I don't hold out a lot of hope for it.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Innes made motion to adjourn meeting the motion was seconded Vice Mayor Mulleneaux the meeting adjourned at 8:50pm

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Lona Duncan, Town Clerk

Robert Rivera, Mayor

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular/special meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Thatcher held on the 10th day of January, 2011. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Lona Duncan, Town Clerk