

**NOTICE OF MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING OF THE
THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
May 15, 2017**

Councilmembers present: Mayor Rivera, Vice Mayor Allen, Councilman Griffin, Councilman Larson, Councilman Rapier, Councilman Bryce, Councilman Innes

Staff present: Town Manager Terry Hinton, Town Engineer Heath Brown, Police Chief Shaffen Woods, Fire Chief Mike Payne, Town Attorney Matt Clifford, Deputy Clerk Michelle Mortensen

Visitors: Johnny Howard, Brooke Curley

1. Welcome and Call Meeting to Order by Mayor Rivera at 6:00 p.m. He stated God bless our men and women in the armed forces wherever they might be, our first responders, police, and fire.

2. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Mayor Allen.

3. **PUBLIC APPEARANCES:**

PROCLAMATION of the Town of Thatcher, Arizona – United States Army's 242nd Birthday.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

A. Approve minutes of the April 17, 2017 regular Council Meeting.

B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.

C. Police Monthly Report.

D. Approval of Invoices.

E. Financial Reports.

Motion made to approve consent agenda by Councilman Rapier and seconded by Vice Mayor Allen. Motion carries unanimously.

5. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. Preliminary 2017/2018 Budget.

Terry stated that after the last meeting he had with the consultant it looks like we will equalize the rates. The Coop customers' meter charges will stay the same and ours will as well, but their rates will drop to what ours are. Their meter charges are actually more than what ours are, but we may want to increase ours at some point to match theirs. Those customers' rates will decrease while ours stay the same. There are also a few charges that the Coop has that will go away, so it should be a noticeable change on their bills.

We got some preliminary information from the county for dispatching, animal control, and the animal shelter and increased last year's rates by ten percent. He is pushing for those rates to be based off of usage rather than population. This budget also has the adjusted sanitation and sewer rates to reflect a \$2.50 increase, which would make sewer and garbage \$25. That

doesn't mean those rates are set in stone, you can change that rate next month even if you pass a tentative budget. Those are the major changes from the previous budgets. He also included the \$3,000,000 for the police retirement in case you decide to pay the whole amount off. Mayor Rivera asked what would be the indicator for us to pay the whole amount or a third. Mr. Hinton stated that the more you pay down the less your contribution rate should be but we don't know the stability of the fund. Councilman Griffin said it basically depends on the rate of return for the PSPRS vs. our rate of return.

Mayor Rivera asked council how they felt about the \$2.50 increase for sewer and garbage. Councilman Griffin stated part of that debate is having part of that money going into the general fund. Councilman Griffin stated that last month Councilman Innes brought up a good point, how often do we want to revisit these fees. Is it a two year fix or a five year fix. Mr. Hinton stated that I gave you three prices \$2.00, \$2.50, and \$3.00 and for budget purposes I went with the middle. Councilman Rapier said that if we are going to raise the rates to \$2.50, then we might as well raise to \$3 to avoid having to revisit this again. Vice Mayor Allen and Councilman Innes agreed with that.

Councilman Larson asked about the recycle cans. Mr. Hinton answered that they were staying full. Vice Mayor Allen stated that his concern in raising rates is for the people on a fixed income. Maybe we should do something like the County does with a widow's rate for property tax where it freezes the rate. Mr. Hinton stated unless we did it based on age it would be difficult to do. Councilman Bryce said that we may be able to piggyback off of the county and use whatever their method is of verifying the widow's rate. Mr. Hinton asked that council pass the tentative budget tonight for 2017-2018 for \$15,760,471.49. Councilman Rapier made the motion to approve the tentative budget and was seconded by Councilman Innes. Motion carries unanimously.

10. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

A. Town Manager's Report:

Mr. Hinton stated that the roundabout is going quite well. We think we have about eight more weeks before we can start on the paving. Mr. Brown put out a notice for an October 1 date to start on the CDBG grant. The deadline to get the money spent for the CDBG grant is January 15. Solar lights for the walking path are about \$2500 a piece. He doesn't believe it is very feasible to light the whole path. Councilman Innes asked if there were lights where the walking path intersects Church St. and 8th St. and Golf Course. Mr. Hinton answered yes. Councilman Rapier stated that it would be nice to have one at the bridge because the path crosses the road. Councilman Griffin said that he thinks there needs to be one at the bridge and another one somewhere between the railroad tracks and going up the hill. We have ordered the benches for the walking path that Mayor Rivera inquired about. Other than that things are going pretty smooth.

B. Fire Department Report.

Chief Payne stated that we will be doing all our annual hose testing the next few weeks. One thing we need to start thinking about with doing all these house burns is getting a burn room. One of the requirements to get your Firefighter I and II is to go into a live burn. We just participated in dump the drugs at Home Depot and also the mock accident at EAC. Mr. Allred, Mr. Morris and I went to a code training two weeks ago so we are looking at changing our building codes to the 2015 codes. Mr. Hinton stated right now we are using the 2009 codes.

C. Police Department Report.

Chief Woods stated that we have had some discrepancies with animal control, so we will have dispatch call out an officer before we call them out to pick up an animal. Our intent is that if we need animal control we can call them out. We took in 104 pounds of drugs at dump the drugs day. Officer Whisman just completed Firearms Instruction School and Officer Larson will be going to training. Mayor Rivera stated that he attended the mock trial and he believes the kids paid a lot of attention to that. It was very well done.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. SEAGO

Mayor Rivera stated that there is a meeting this Friday in Safford and invited the council to go.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 by Councilman Innes and was seconded by Vice Mayor Allen.

APPROVED:

Michelle Mortensen, Deputy 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 this 15th day of May 2017. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Michelle Mortensen, Deputy Clerk