

**WORK SESSION OF THE  
THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL  
January 15, 2019**

Councilmembers present: Mayor Bob Rivera, Vice Mayor Allen, Councilman Bryce, Councilman Welker, Councilman Rapier, Councilwoman Smith, Councilwoman Howard

Staff present: Town Manager Heath Brown, Town Engineer Tom Palmer, Police Chief Shaffen Woods, Fire Chief Mike Payne, Deputy Clerk Michelle Mortensen

Visitors: David Sowders

1. Welcome and Call Meeting to Order by Mayor Rivera at 7:02. He stated that we do have a quorum.
2. Pledge of Allegiance led by Tom Palmer.
3. Call to the Public.

None

4. Paving Bid Award

Mr. Brown stated that we have bid out the paving project. We added an alternate bid in there in case they came in low. CKC is the low bid. They did call and ask if we would accept the bid with a delay in time because they have several big projects going on. My opinion is that it wouldn't hurt to wait. Mr. Palmer stated that we did give that option to all the companies bidding with the alternate bid. Mr. Brown stated that I recommend accepting the low bid by CKC. Vice Mayor Allen asked if we were going curb to curb. Mr. Brown answered no we are not. Mayor Rivera asked about giving the part of the street back to the residents. Councilman Bryce asked if it would Vice Mayor Allen stated that we would still have to maintain the right of way for the utilities. Mr. Palmer stated that I would say that there would be some instances where we could give back the right of way. Mr. Brown stated that one idea would be to put in long linear or a wide median type of basin. Mayor Rivera stated so staff is recommending CKC. Vice Mayor stated that I vote that we accept the bid by CKC in the amount of \$ and was seconded by Councilman Welker. Motion carries unanimously.

5. Federal Employee Bill Deferment

Mr. Brown explained that the Mayor was approached by the Warden of the prison about deferring utility payments for federal employees with no late fees or reconnect fees for giving them 90 days to pay their bills once their paychecks resume. In my opinion is it is a good move and I know that City of Safford is doing this. Mayor Rivera stated that it is impacting quite a few people. Motion was made by Councilman Rapier that we defer the payments for the federal employees during the government shutdown. Motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Allen. Motion carries unanimously.

6. January and February Council Meeting Dates

Mr. Brown brought this up because these dates fall on a holiday. The only item I have on the agenda for January is the bid which we took care of tonight. Vice Mayor Allen stated that his fear is that the public doesn't have the opportunity to come in on the normally appointed day if we don't have a meeting. Mayor Rivera stated that I think we should go ahead and have it. Councilman Bryce stated that I think if it is a Federal holiday that we shouldn't be bringing staff in and people don't expect us to meet. I think we should have the meetings on Tuesday following the holidays. The rest of the council agreed.

6. Work Session to Discuss Town Policies, Direction, and Plans.  
Possible Discussion Topics:

A. Quail Ridge Settlements

Mr. Brown stated that the Risk Pool has settled with the Story's and the Clonts'. I was worried about how that was going to affect us and the Risk Pool said that it wouldn't affect our rates. The main reason that the Town was liable was that they had documented the flooding four different times and we did nothing. We will be going in and putting in the box culvert before monsoon season, and while we are doing this we will go in and dig down the retention area. Mayor Rivera asked about the area upstream and creating a retention pond. Mr. Brown stated that it is a great idea, but we would have to find who owns that property and see what it would take. Mr. Brown stated that I would like your input on the box culvert. We can do precast culverts which would be about a four week build or we can do a cast in place which it would take us ten weeks but save us about \$40,000. Vice Mayor Allen stated that you are now backing up all our other projects and I would rather get going on our other projects.

B. Recreation / Amphitheater

Mr. Brown stated that Mr. Palmer, Tommy Nicholas, and I went down to tour the Mesa Amphitheater. Mr. Palmer present some slides to show how this will fit into our area. Councilman Rapier asked if we don't put in the big stage now, will we be able to do that later. Mr. Brown answered yes. Mr. Brown stated, after we finish at Stadium, I think we need to go to the box culvert at Quail Ridge and then the ones on Church Street. Then we will move to the soccer fields and after that I think we need to take a little bit of a break to do maintenance type things. Vice Mayor Allen stated that I have spoken with Mr. Welker over at the County and he would have no problem moving the 4<sup>th</sup> of July events there. Councilwoman Howard asked about the drainage at the new park and Mr. Palmer explained that at the northeast corner ....

C. Website / Video's

Councilman Rapier stated that as we are starting on the highway beautification project, what people are going to see is what they see as they are driving through town or looking on our website. In my opinion we have to view the website as part of the town beautification. I have gotten a bid to build a new website which would be \$35,000. Maintaining it would be very reasonable.

D. Public Works Schedule / Maintenance

Mr. Brown stated I already covered this under recreation.

#### E. Red Lamp

Mr. Brown explained that there is one trailer left. The woman who was in there is in the hospital in Phoenix and is most likely not coming back. Her son said that he would like to try and move the trailer and so we gave them two weeks to get it moved. Rob and Brent have been spending a little more time over there cleaning things up. Are we ready to pay off the note to the Campbell family? We cannot remove the house, the pool, and the pool house, until we pay that off. The fire department would like to burn the house. Vice Mayor Allen asked if it was the money is budgeted. Mr. Brown stated that it was. Councilwoman Howard stated I would rather get it done and have it looking better aesthetically. Vice Mayor Allen asked how long are we talking, a week? Mr. Brown explained that Tommy said it would take a week. I will try and fit that in after we do the culverts before the soccer fields.

#### F. Sherman Property

Mr. Brown asked if this is something we want to pursue. Vice Mayor Allen, Councilwoman Smith, and Councilman Rapier answered not at this time.

#### G. Distracted Driving Ordinance

The Mayor explained that the League of Cities and Towns is pushing this right now, so I don't know if we want to wait for the state to do something. Councilman Rapier stated if the state is going to do something I say let them do that. Mayor Rivera said the same thing.

#### H. General Plan Update

Mr. Brown stated that we have a kickoff meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup>. They would like to meet some Councilman and P&Z members. Mayor Rivera, Vice Mayor Allen, and Jenny Howard stated that they would be there. Mr. Palmer explained that they would like to ask what we would like to get out of this and meet some of those involved. Heath and I will be meeting with her first to go through some of our scope to see where we are heading. After lunch we will be driving her around to show her some of the areas that may come into play in our plan. Mayor Rivera asked if we will be using our old plan and tweak it. Mr. Palmer said really we will be throwing that out and see where we want to be in the next ten years and then write a plan that matches that.

#### I. Holiday / Town Events

Mr. Brown stated that I want to make sure that we still want to go this route. We did a little more with Safford this year and put something in the light parade. Vice Mayor Allen stated that the rec committee is going to convene in February to start discussing the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Mayor Rivera asked if we were going to do flags all the way down to 20<sup>th</sup> and if we want to take that over from the scouts. Councilwoman Smith and Vice Mayor Allen answered yes we do. Mr. Brown answered that right now we do it down to Denny's. Mr. Palmer explained that we can look at putting holders down the highway as part of the highway beautification plan. The consultant will give us ideas as to what we can do. Councilman Bryce asked if the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Extravaganza is happening this year. Vice

Mayor answered yes, the way I see it, I would like to start at the high school down Church Street to Stadium, and end at the splash park. We are going to discuss food with Chief Woods and Chief Payne.

#### J. School Resource Officer

Chief Woods explained I want to see what your feelings would be or if we would be open to paying for some of a resource officer. Safford has a 50/50 deal, Town of Pima has a 70/30 deal and the County and Ft. Thomas have a 50/50 deal. I think it's a great program. Mayor Rivera asked who would be responsible for regulating the officer, and Chief Woods answered that we would. Councilman Rapier stated that I have questions that would go beyond this meeting. What needs to do we have for an additional officer? What would we get out of this? Vice Mayor Allen stated I would like us to look at this in reverse like using a recently retired officer that is looking for some extra money with summers off instead of a full-time employee, someone that could move freely between schools. Chief Woods stated that with retired guys their big concern is insurance. There are a lot of different options as to what we could do; I just wanted to gauge what your feelings are.

#### K. 1<sup>st</sup> Ave Traffic Signal

Mr. Brown stated that we asked ADOT for a warrant study to look at getting a traffic light at 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. and Highway 70. It has been about six or seven years since we did one. Bill Harmon asked if there was any development or if there was anything going on there that would warrant putting in a light there. There really haven't been very many accidents there. Mr. Palmer stated that unfortunately it will probably take a fatality before something is done.

#### L. Power Lines Underground / US 70 Stadium to College

Mr. Brown stated that I brought this up before; it's an idea that would let us decorate a tree and make it look good, but would cost \$15-20,000. Councilwoman Smith stated that I love the idea, but don't know that it's what we need to do with our money right now.

#### M. Municipal Court Staffing

Mr. Brown stated that Merri has been working some Saturday's and getting comp time because there is so much to do and there are things that are critical aren't getting done, like filing and reporting information. I have talked to Horatio Skeet and Sean Lewis and they aren't very excited about having to hire another person. Mr. Welker stated that maybe we need two part time people.

#### N. Town Hall Kiosk Update

Mr. Brown mentioned that we have someone working on this. They are currently working on the cemetery.

#### O. Other Items

Councilman Rapier stated that if we are looking at a rec center where we are going to

need bonding to see how our town as it is constituted and how it could be constituted and maybe start looking at areas where we need to annex. A few areas that I think we should look at are Shadow Lane, the area to the east of the College, and the area south of Quail Ridge. Mr. Brown stated that we annexed Riverwalk, 12<sup>th</sup> Street, the Golf Course, the area south of Home Depot. We have to have half of the people sign the annexation petition by law, but we can start the process. I would like to see if the council is open to this. Vice Mayor Allen said that my issue with this is that we don't get any property tax, just building houses doesn't give us anything, but now that we own them we have to take in the infrastructure, the streets, and more line. Councilman Rapier stated that we currently don't get anything out of that, but we need to. Mayor Rivera stated that we do get money for every citizen. Mr. Brown stated that we can implement a property tax, but it has to be approved by the voters. So you would have to tell them what we want to do and let them decide if it's something that they want. Councilman Welker stated we could implement both a bond and property tax, a bond to build and the property tax to maintain. Mr. Brown said that about ten years ago we mailed out surveys to Central and Robinson Ranch Rd. u-shaped island and we had about 65% in favor in the Robinson Ranch Road area and 20% in Central.

Councilwoman Howard stated that we need to look at drainage at anywhere we might look at annexing.

Mayor Rivera asked if we do audits once a month or a quarter to check on our property such as this building, the Town yard, and the pump house. Mr. Brown stated that I think once a month is too often but I think it's a great idea to do that a few times a year.

Councilman Bryce stated that I was at the school board meeting Thursday night and they are trying to package their camera systems into some kind of safety proposal to take to the voters for a bond, so we need to think about that when we're looking at the rec center.

Councilwoman Howard stated that she will be at the legislature all week and some of the hot topics will be HURF money, the state has a surplus right now that they want to give to rural areas, and school resource officers. I will bring back a report on what I find out.

7. Adjournment.

Motion was made by Councilman Rapier to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Councilwoman Smith at 9:23.

APPROVED:

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Michelle Mortensen, Deputy Clerk

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Robert Rivera, Mayor

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the work session meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Thatcher held on this 15th day of January 2019. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held

and that a quorum was present.

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Michelle Mortensen, Deputy Clerk