

**NOTICE OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
May 18, 2020**

AGENDA

Councilmembers present: Mayor Rivera, Councilman Rapier, Councilman Bryce, Councilwoman Smith, Councilwoman Howard

Councilmembers absent: Vice Mayor Allen, Councilman Welker

Staff present: Town Manager Heath Brown, Town Engineer Tom Palmer, Town Attorney Matt Clifford, Police Chief Shaffen Woods, Fire Chief Mike Payne, Deputy Clerk Michelle Mortensen, Engineer Tech Gary Allred

Visitors: Scott Martinez, Michael Patrick, David Sowders, Don McGann

Welcome and Call Meeting to Order by Mayor Rivera at 6:35. He stated that we do have a quorum. On behalf of the Town of Thatcher Town Council, please bless our men and women in the armed forces, our first responders, and the Town of Thatcher.

OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

None

PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

None

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Approve minutes of the April 20, 2020 Regular Council Meeting and the May 4, 2020 Budget Work Session.
- B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.
- C. Police Monthly Report.
- D. Approval of Invoices.
- E. Financial Reports.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Smith to approve the consent agenda and was seconded by Councilwoman Howard. Motion carries unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: Discussion, consideration and possible action

None

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion, consideration and possible action

A. Preliminary 2020/2021 Budget

Mr. Brown mentioned that the preliminary budget is very similar with the changes that we discussed. Health insurance is a 1% increase instead of 5%. He increased the amount of sales tax that we anticipate in collecting but it is still down \$584,000 because of the economic downturn. He included the grant for the substance abuse coalition for \$30,000, and \$20,000 for the Highway 70 grant project. We would have some details to work out on this. Mayor Rivera asked if the people who apply for this grant will they have to have some skin in the game. Mr. Brown stated yes. He also included a few needs at Town Hall and the Court.

He stated that he moved our work study to administration for salary and our part time from electric to the parks department. The new employee's salary that we will be hiring will be in the parks department as well. I have put in an enterprise fund transfer from sewer to the general fund as well as from the electric department to the general fund to cover those salaries we are moving. I have also included \$250,000 to go to PSPRS that we can determine at the end of the year.

Motion was made by Councilman Rapier to approve the 2020-2021 preliminary budget in the amount of \$14,542,875.00 and was seconded by Councilwoman Smith. Motion carries unanimously.

B. Linear Park Master Plan Presentation

Michael Patrick stated he, Scott Martinez, and Don McGann are here to present the master plan. The idea is to create a linear park with trails along the Gila River. The community has wanted to see this happen for many years. The collaborators would be the Town, City of Safford, Graham County, landowners, and the Gila Watershed. Don McGann mentioned that there would be a paved pathway along the river and a soft surface trail adjacent to that. The benefits this would bring are recreation, walking, biking, fitness, increased awareness and appreciation for the river. It will increase property values as well and be a destination for tourists. There would also be some pathways that lead down to the river. This would start along Graveyard Wash and then follow the agricultural fields and continue to 8th Ave. and under that bridge. At this point there would be a paved path going to the City of Safford owned land. The trails would continue down to Reay Lane. This would be able to join the current walking path down Reay Lane.

The path would meet ADA standards. We are suggesting utilizing the existing farm roads for this accessible pathway. Public access is a key component of the project including ramadas, restrooms, and parking. These areas would need to be protected from flood damage. Mr. Patrick mentioned that we had a public workshop the beginning of March with 30-40 people and we got some good input from the community that has been

incorporated in this plan. Project implementation would be all the entities agreeing to this. A preliminary estimate of cost for the Town would be \$1.74 million for 3.24 miles. Mr. Brown asked if there is any where for us to look for funding. Mr. Patrick mentioned that I think that there is a tangible way for us to bring in some outside money.

C. 4th of July Festivities

Mr. Brown brought this up for discussion to see what council wants to do for the 4th. I talked to Town of Pima today and they are planning on holding their breakfast. I am leaning towards trying to do it if things look ok. Councilwoman Howard stated I think we should wait and see what is going to happen. Mayor Rivera stated that we can bring this up again at next month's meeting. Councilman Bryce asked how this will line up with the Governor's plan. Mr. Clifford mentioned that as the attorney for the council, I have trepidation on doing the breakfast because it could come back to the Town as far as liability goes. Mr. Brown stated that we can see where things are at next council meeting.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

A. Town Manager's Report

- Public Works Projects – Recreation Complex, Church Street, Paving Project, Chip Seal Project

Mr. Brown explained that the soccer fields are going well. We have our topsoil down and the laser leveling is done. We need to get the electricity done. We have decided that we are going to do hydroseeding. The only thing we have left to do on Church Street is get some bike symbols. Our paving project should be ready to go on June 1. Mr. Palmer stated that milling will start at the end of this week.

- COVID-19 Status/Update

Mr. Brown mentioned that we have cancelled baseball.

- Census Status

Councilwoman Smith stated that the census workers are going to start going door to door this week. Those who have a P.O. Box will get a paper census on their door handle. Mayor Rivera asked what percentage of completion we were at and Councilwoman Smith responded that we are at 51% right now.

- Dan Hinton Parking Lot Help

Mr. Brown explained that Mr. Thygerson asked if we would be willing to crack seal the parking lot at Dan Hinton School. They would pay

for the costs. I would be inclined to help them if council will allow this. Mayor Rivera asked if we can foot the bill for that. Mr. Brown answered if you would like to donate that, then yes, we can move forward with that. Councilwoman Howard and Smith agreed. Councilman Bryce stated that it is a little convoluted. Councilman Rapier stated I am in the same boat as Randy. Where do we draw the line, especially if they have the budget? General concensus was that we would be willing to help by doing the work and them footing the bill.

- Ball Field Lights

We have set a timer on our ball fields so that people will be able to use the lights on our fields.

B. Fire Department Report

None

C. Police Department Report

- Corona Virus Update

Chief Woods stated that we had four staff members miss time but got everyone back this week.

- Stone Garden and DUI Task Forces

We suspended Stone Garden and the DUI Task Force which we will be opening back up this week.

- Interview Room

We are in the process of remodeling our interview room right now.

- Thatcher School Graduations

We will be participating in the graduation parade this week. Mayor Rivera stated please thank our officers. Chief Woods stated thank you and mentioned that we did have the 100 Club and Axon donate hand sanitizer to us which was great.

D. Council Reports

None

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & POTENTIAL QUORUM'S

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilman Rapier to adjourn council meeting and was seconded by Councilwoman Smith at 7:43. Motion carries unanimously.

APPROVED:

Michelle Mortensen, Deputy Clerk

Bob Rivera, Mayor

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Thatcher held on this 18th day of May. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Michelle Mortensen, Deputy Clerk