

## **UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

### **NOTICE OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL June 15, 2020**

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

Staff present: Town Manger Heath Brown, Police Chief Shaffen Woods, Fire Chief Mike Payne, Deputy Clerk Michelle Mortensen, Tommy Nicholas, Gary Allred

Staff absent: Town Attorney Matt Clifford, Town Engineer Tom Palmer

Visitors: Melanie & Jason Phillips, Johnny Howard, David Sowders, Vance Bryce, Scott & Jana Adams

### **AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Call Meeting to Order by Mayor Rivera at 6:30. He stated that we do have a quorum. He stated on behalf of this council, God bless our men and women in the armed forces, our first responders, our border patrol, ICE, and the Town of Thatcher.

2. Pledge of Allegiance led by Chief Woods.

3. **PUBLIC HEARING:**

None

4. **OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

Scott Adams stood and stated that he lives on Robinson Ranch Road and the reason he is here is to express interest in being annexed into the Town of Thatcher. There are 31 homes in our subdivision which is just north of Golf Course on the west side, and we would love to be in the Town of Thatcher. We would like to start the process of making this happen. Mayor Rivera advised Mr. Adams to get with Mr. Brown to find out what he needs to do.

5. **PUBLIC APPEARANCES:**

A. Local First Arizona Presentation

Liza Nolan stated I represent Local First Arizona. Local First Arizona is comprised of 3200 Arizona based businesses of all sizes. When COVID 19 broke out, we reached out to some of our large supporters and raised a small business relief fund. What the fund ended up doing is funding around 485 businesses with three employees or less and less than \$250,000 annual income. One way that we ask you to look at small business recovery is through a three-step process. Currently we are moving from

triage into recovery, and then trying to build future resiliency. Triage would be stepping back into the building and trying to figure out what happened and what damage has been done. A lot of businesses will have to pivot to figure out how to function in the new normal. As they are moving from triage into recovery, they must figure out how to do that safely, efficiently, and meaningfully. Refiguring marketing is a challenge as well as re-hiring. In thinking about resiliency, as community leaders, you really want to be thinking about a comprehensive approach for business services. Not all businesses have the same services or the same access to funding. In building resiliency, your community had some resources that really come through. The Graham-Greenlee micro loan program helped as well. The Gila Valley came together in ways that other communities did not. Some examples at how the Town could support is a micro loan program, a façade grant, and using Cares Act funding to give money to small businesses. The biggest power you have is to purchase local.

**6. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

- A. Town Manager Evaluation.

Motion was made at 8:00 by Councilman Rapier and seconded by Vice Mayor Allen to go into executive session. Motion carries unanimously.

Motion was made at 8:40 to go back into regular session by Councilman Rapier and was seconded by Councilwoman Smith.

**7. CONSENT AGENDA:**

- A. Approve minutes of the May 18, 2020 Regular Council Meeting  
B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.  
C. Police Monthly Report.  
D. Approval of Invoices.  
E. Financial Reports.

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

**8. OLD BUSINESS:**

None

**9. NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Final 2020/2021 Budget

Mr. Brown explained that there has been no change from the preliminary

budget to the final. Councilwoman Howard stated that I noticed that we do not pay our firefighters per call and I would like us to explore that option. I think this is something we should look at. Vice Mayor Allen stated that the fireman approached the Town back many years ago and they decided back then that they were good with fringe benefits so to speak. Vice Mayor Allen asked if we had put the grant program in our budget. Mr. Brown answered yes, we are putting together the specs on that. We are still working out the details. Once this is in place, we will put together a committee to review those and then award that money. Councilwoman Smith asked about the money we will be getting from the COVID grant. Mr. Brown explained that we get funded for our public safety positions. We get that money and can use it to pay our police officers from March through December. My initial thought is that we don't know what our revenues are going to look like so my suggestion is to hold it as we may need that to fulfill the budget as is or we can decide later to use that money for whatever we might need. Motion was made by Councilman Rapier to approve the final 2020 budget and was seconded by Councilwoman Smith. Motion carries unanimously.

B. Daley Stop Liquor License Transfer

Mr. Brown explained that there is a new owner and so this application is to transfer the license to the new owner. Motion was made by Vice Mayor Allen to approve the Daley Stop liquor license from the old owner to the new owner. Councilman Welker seconded the motion. Motion carries unanimously.

C. **RESOLUTION 688-2020:** A RESOLUTION APPROVING A CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN FOR A GILA RIVER LINEAR PARK AND TRAIL

Mr. Brown mentioned that this is the follow up for us to approve and adopt the master plan. It does not commit us to anything or spending any money. It shows our support for this plan and the other entities are passing the same resolution. Councilman Bryce asked how we would spend money on it if it is not ours. Mr. Brown explained that we would have to explore partnerships with the County. Councilwoman Howard made the motion to approve Resolution 688-2020 and seconded by Councilman Rapier. Motion carries unanimously.

D. Town Clean-Up Campaign

Mr. Brown explained that the Mayor and I were discussing this a few weeks ago and came up with the idea of doing a Town wide cleanup campaign. The way we would do this is to try to generate excitement in the community and let the community know what we want to do and why. We would start with door hangers if there was a violation. Then as you progress, we would follow up with a formal letter along with a timeline, and then possibly citations. If we are going to do this campaign, we need the Council's support. We could offer free dump days, offer the dump trucks without a fee, and promote that more, or take roll off containers for people to use. We

are always trying to pick off those with the worst violations, but this would be much more intensive. Mayor Rivera stated that we are trying to beautify the entrance to Thatcher, so why not work on our whole Town. Councilman Rapier mentioned that I am all for improving the look of Thatcher, but with the latest crisis, a lot of people are complaining about having to wear a mask and losing their civil liberties right now, and I am concerned that we could get a lot of push back on this. I am not opposed to this, but I would like to see us tackle the egregious properties first. Councilwoman Howard asked if our code addresses the phasing of penalties in addressing the problems. Mr. Brown mentioned that the code is very gray and gives us a lot of leeway. Vice Mayor Allen stated I think we need a predictable use of our service. Maybe every second Wednesday we do a bulk pickup or bagged yard waste. Councilwoman Smith stated that I do not think people know about the trucks. Mayor Rivera stated that I think we need to go ask people if they need help getting rid of old vehicles. Vice Mayor Allen stated I think we just need to provide a way.

E. 4<sup>th</sup> of July Activities

Mr. Brown explained that we mentioned that we would re-address this. Is it appropriate for us to host this and is it feasible? Councilman Rapier stated that there is no way to police this and social distance. Councilwoman Smith stated that City of Safford is not doing anything except for the fireworks. The consensus was to cancel this year.

## 10. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

A. Town Manager's Report

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

We are getting close to having sprinklers and dirt work done. We want them to run for a good week or two to make sure that everything is running well. The hydra seeding will be done the first week in July. Our paving project has been completed. The striping should happen next week for the roads that were paved. Tommy's crew will stay at the complex until the hydro seeding comes in and then we will send them to the roundabout.

- Church St. / 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Roundabout Landscaping
- Pickle Ball Courts – Daley Park, THS

We striped two additional pickle ball courts without nets, and they are bringing in portable nets and then we have another one that is striped and has a net up. We priced re-striping and putting up four nets at the outdoor high school basketball courts which would cost about \$9500. Councilwoman Smith stated that we would not have

access to those all the time would we. Mr. Brown stated that we would have to have an IGA with the school stating that they would be open to the public all the time. We also have some pickleball courts that will be at our new complex. It is something to think about.

- COVID-19 Status/Update

There are no new updates.

- Census Status

Councilwoman Smith mentioned that we are at 62.2%. I just found out that the Census has not sent anything to rural routes. So, I am working on getting a mailing out to those people. The census has been extended until October 31.

- AZ Cares Funds

We have already talked about this. Councilwoman Howard asked if they gave you a calculation for this or just an allotment. Mr. Brown answered they just gave us a spreadsheet letting us know how much we are getting.

- Bylas Street Closures

Mr. Brown explained that he would let Chief Woods talk about this.

#### B. Fire Department Report

- Radios & Pagers

Chief Payne mentioned that we got 4 radios and 6 pagers out of our budget this year. We will be able to put a radio in each of our trucks.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. Brush Fire

We had a fire that could have been bad on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. Safford came and helped us.

- Frye Mesa Rope Rescue

Three kids had to be rescued up at Frye Mesa, so we went and helped with a rope rescue to get the kids out of the potholes. We worked with Search and Rescue on this.

Councilman Rapier asked what the typical number of firemen is that respond to a call. Chief Payne stated that for a structure fire we shoot for 17 and we usually get that many. Mayor Rivera stated we appreciate our firemen, please thank them for us.

C. Police Department Report

- Staff Meeting

Chief Woods stated that we discussed how you represent the Town and need to be a good ambassador. It is difficult to have good morale with what is going on. I challenged our guys to get caught doing something good. We are going to try to be more visible and do more positive things.

- Off-Duty San Carlos PD Request

The tribal council is checking id's and have staffed checkpoints throughout the reservation due to COVID 19. They are wanting to hire off duty police officers to help them do this. Do we want our officers down there, we would like Council feedback? Vice Mayor Allen asked what about Town of Thatcher liability. Chief Woods answered we would be on the hook for that. Vice Mayor Allen stated that we need to maintain our priorities.

- Interview Room

We did a remodel of our interview room and the guy was here today to put in the sound system.

- Hand Sanitizer Donation

We were able to distribute a lot of hand sanitizer to local businesses and schools because of a donation from Titos' Vodka Manufacturing. They were looking for places to help and contribute.

- Sgt. Cauthen Entered DROPS

Councilman Rapier asked if we are making sure that our officers have their body cams on. Chief Woods stated that it is hugely important, and we talked about that at our staff meeting. It might be their only defense. Councilman Rapier stated thanks for all you are doing. Vice Mayor Allen asked if you are talking about kneeling on necks and all those things. Chief Woods stated yes but mostly in training. Mayor Rivera stated please thank our officers.

D. Council Reports

**11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & POTENTIAL QUORUM'S**

None

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made at 8:41 to adjourn the meeting by Councilman Rapier and was seconded by Councilwoman Smith. Motion carries unanimously.