

## **UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

### **NOTICE OF MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING OF THE THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL May 17, 2021**

Councilmembers present: Mayor Bryce, Vice Mayor Smith, Councilman Rapier, Councilwoman Howard, Councilman Carlton, Councilman Vining

Councilmembers absent: Councilman Welker

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

Visitors: Brandon Homer, John Howard, Crandell Aaron, Eileen Aaron, David Bell, Kim Smith, Chuck Haden, Hector Ruedas, Becky Johnson, Marcia Martin, Elizabeth Henley, Janel Westerfield

### **AGENDA**

Welcome and Call Meeting to Order by Mayor Bryce at 6:30. He welcomed everyone to a meeting of the Town of Thatcher Council and explained that it is also a public hearing. He stated that we do have a quorum and are missing Councilman Welker.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Vining.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Public Hearing to consider the matter of a Final Plat for the 20 Lot Quail Ridge Phase II-C Subdivision.

Hector Ruedas stood and stated that he was at the P&Z meeting last week and my biggest issue was the discussion of a park. The area that is being proposed for a park is a very busy and small area. I am representing some of our neighbors and we oppose a park in that area. The road that runs between Bobwhite and Golf Course is currently closed and we are asking if it can be opened on the weekends while no construction is being done. The last issue I have is light poles. When we bought our homes, the lighting was provided on the houses. I drove around and found four homes on Saturday night that did not have carriage lights on after driving down every street.

Elizabeth Henley stood and said that she is a Quail Ridge resident. The way I see it is that Quail Ridge is a densely populated neighborhood without a public space. My thought is a small playground with a green space such as what is at Eagle

Meadow and Cota. There are only a few places where an immediate public space could be put in place. The only two locations are the water tower and a house on Dove Lane which has a small area behind it that could be created for public use. I also think we do not need any streetlights. I value the night sky. There are valid concerns, but I think we as a community can work together to have a place for our kids to play. It is our hope that some kind of compromise can be made so that our kids now can be kids.

Chuck Hayden stood and stated that I live at the top of the hill. What I see with a park like this is that the trash will be in my yard. I do not want to have to pick up after kids. There are other places where you can have a park.

**OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

None

**PUBLIC APPEARANCES:**

None

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

- A. Approve Minutes of the April 19, 2021 Regular Council Meeting and the May 3, 2021 Council Workshop.
- B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.
- C. Police Monthly Report.
- D. Approval of Invoices.
- E. Financial Reports.

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

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. Extension of the 18 Lot Quail Ridge Phase II-B Subdivision Final Plat Approval. Previously Approved March 18, 2008.

Mr. Brown clarified that we have two plats we are discussing on the agenda. This one has been previously approved and is the next southern road in Quail Ridge. The plat was approved for one year back in 2008, so we need to consider extending the plat approval. Mayor Bryce asked if Planning and Zoning made any comments regarding this. Mr. Palmer mentioned that an extension is required because it was originally approved back in 2008. Mayor Bryce asked about the legalities of Council making any changes to this final

plat. Mr. Brown stated that because you approved it before there is no obligation to approve it like it was. Mr. Palmer mentioned that the builders are picking up what has already been approved. I think that Phase II-C is a whole different ball game. Mayor Bryce said that the reason I ask is because there is a lot of talk about streetlights. At some point it becomes a safety issue. I also did what Hector did and found the exact same thing. There were only a few houses without the carriage lights on. There are some street intersections that are concerns. What is the legal ramification of us approving it as is or changing it? Councilman Rapier asked Chief Woods about the safety issue with no streetlights in that neighborhood. Chief Woods stated that for the most part it is not a big deal, but it is dark on the main street. At Halloween we bring in light towers because it is so dark.

Councilman Vining asked about the infrastructure. Mr. Palmer mentioned that a lot all the infrastructure has been approved. Mr. Brown stated that we as staff think that the intersections need lights, and we would encourage it. Mr. Palmer stated I think we could add light without making it too bright. We have some flexibility. Councilwoman Howard asked what the advantage would be to start now aesthetically speaking. Councilman Carlton stated that the response to that is that we did not do it right the first time and we really need them in the intersection. I wonder if in twenty years we will be asking why we didn't put them in. Councilman Rapier stated that we have had much discussion about lights. It was approved according to code in 2008 and the code is different now. Mayor Bryce stated, I do not know that we can require Mr. Aaron do lighting, but maybe we can facilitate it and go from there. Mr. Palmer stated that I think we should put in the conduit now to save us money down the road. Motion was made by Councilman Rapier to approve the extension of the Phase II-B with the understanding that we would like to work with them on the lighting. Vice Mayor Smith seconded the motion. Mayor Bryce, Vice Mayor Smith, and Councilwoman Howard voted yay while Councilman Carlton, Councilman Vining, and Councilwoman Howard opposed the motion. Mayor Bryce stated that we need another motion. Councilman Carlton made the motion to extend the plat with the contractors providing the lighting and motion was seconded by Councilwoman Howard. Mayor Bryce, Vice Mayor Smith, Councilman Rapier, Councilwoman Howard, and Councilman Carlton voted yay, and Councilman Vining opposes. Motion carries 5-1.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### A. Proposed Final Plat of the Quail Ridge Phase II-C Subdivision

Mr. Brown mentioned that this is the next street. Councilman Rapier stated that as I understand it is that we approve this as is or approving it to have a

park. Mr. Brown answered yes. This plan does not include a park, but Mr. Aaron and I have discussed a park in the area around the water tower. Vice Mayor Smith mentioned that if he does not want to give up any land and the people do not want a park at the water tower then Quail Ridge does not get a park. We cannot approve it without knowing if we will be requiring the builder to put in a park. Councilman Rapier stated I do not think it is fair to ask a builder to give up a lot to put in a park. I think it sets a bad precedent. Councilwoman Howard stated that Daley Estates has 155 acres and has a 1.5-acre park. Quail Ridge is 106 acres. It is landlocked and there are no sidewalks or safe access for the kids. There is a basketball hoop on every street in Quail Ridge. I think as a Town we need to do our due diligence with a subdivision this size and partner with the builder to put in a park. I think the land by the water tank is not a safe place. It is the safety issue that bothers me. I think it is unfair and we owe it to the people who live there to give them a safe place to play.

Councilman Vining mentioned that I am not against a park going in, but I think it would be a good idea to put in an improvement district if the people who live there want a park. Otherwise, I think we are setting a precedent for any community that is wanting one. We cannot fix all the past mistakes. Mayor Bryce stated that is my line of thinking as well I do not think we can go back and fix things in the past, but we have a few opportunities where we can make a strategic move moving forward. Particularly in this II-C phase, I do not feel like we can make a big change. We just put in two small subdivisions and we did not make them put a park in there. This town is spending an inordinate amount of money on recreation. I would rather pull our money and put in good facilities than put in these parks that no one wants to go to. Councilman Rapier made the motion to approve the Final Plat of the Quail Ridge Phase II-C subdivision with the addendum that they include a streetlight at the intersection, and it was seconded by Councilman Carlton. Motion carries unanimously.

**B. 2021-22 Preliminary Budget**

Mr. Brown stated that this looks very similar to what was in the discussion in our work session. I added bullet proofing for the glass in the lobby, included \$150,000 for the restroom at the park, the right of way acquisitions on 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Porter Lane, and then I increased the amount of the PSPRS liability to \$500,000. When you look at the general fund preliminary budget right, we are about \$600,000 in the red which is the amount we got from the last stimulus check. Councilman Rapier asked about the lease program. Mr. Brown stated that we already had money budgeted for new vehicles. Mr. Clifford reviewed the contract for the lease and stated that it looks good. Mayor Bryce asked if staff is ok with the recommendations and Mr. Brown answered yes. Councilman Rapier made the motion to approve the preliminary budget and it was seconded by Councilwoman Howard. Motion carries unanimously.

**C. RESOLUTION NO. 691-2021: A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, ARIZONA MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL,**

DESIGNATING THE CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER FOR OFFICIALLY  
SUBMITTING THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 EXPENDITURE LIMITATION  
REPORT TO THE ARIZONA AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Brown stated that the auditor general requires this now. It allows me to submit our expenditure limitation report to the auditor general. Motion was made by Councilman Carlton to approve Resolution 691-2021 and was seconded by Vice Mayor Smith. Motion carries unanimously.

- D. **RESOLUTION NO. 692-2021:** A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, ARIZONA MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL, DESIGNATING THE CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER FOR OFFICIALLY SUBMITTING THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 EXPENDITURE LIMITATION REPORT TO THE ARIZONA AUDITOR GENERAL

Motion was made by Councilmember Carlton to approve Resolution 692-2021 and was seconded by Vice Mayor Smith. Motion carries unanimously.

- E. 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration

Mr. Brown mentioned that we need to decide who is going to be in charge and what events we are going to have. Vice Mayor Smith stated that I will do this and would love to have a committee to help me with this. Councilwoman Howard stated that I can help with the preliminary things and can get the supplies.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431.03 (A)(1)(3)(7) the Town Council may go into Executive Session to Discuss or consult with designated representatives of the public body in order to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations for the purchase, sale, or lease of real property.

No discussion needed.

12. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

- A. Town Manager's Report

- Public Works Projects – Recreation Complex  
Mr. Brown stated that we have over 200 trees planted, and it has already changed it a lot. We are shifting things a little bit. They are going to need parking for baseball, so they are getting that east parking lot ready to handle the traffic. They have almost all the underground utilities in. One example is there will be a control in place to turn off all the lights at one time from someone's phone once we get this done.
- Stimulus Funding Update

I do not have crystal clear answers yet, but because we have less than 50,000 people, the money will go to the state before it comes to us. This means we will be governed by the state on how we spend the money. The things that we cannot spend money on is debt, pensions, or loweing taxes. We can spend it on sewer improvements, infrastructure, water, broadband, economic development, and revenue shortfalls. For us recreation and transportation are our two big things. We will get two lump sums, but we will have to report how we spend the money.

- Vietnam Moving Wall  
We have a lot of success getting donations and CMI is giving us half price on the printing.
- Platt Property  
We came to an agreement of \$210,000 to purchase the Platt Property.
- Cemetery Committee  
Councilman Vining stated that we have some ideas and next meeting will be out at the cemetery.
- Financial Summary  
April was another great month and the revenue from the taxes was good. Electric had a good bump, and we are back in the black. There are no surprises.

B. Fire Department Report

- Calendar / Events
- Calls / Activity

Chief Payne was excused because he had a fire call.

C. Police Department Report

- Department Updates

Chief Woods stated that Mr. Brown and I have been discussing the speed limits around the new park and we will be doing some studies on this. Last month we partnered with Graham County Coalition for Dump the Drugs. With it being graduation week, we will be helping with security. Our officers have been doing some good work. Some of the cases that they have been working we have seized a lot of drugs.

D. Council Reports

None

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

None

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Smith and seconded by Councilman Carlton at 7:42 to adjourn council meeting. Motion carries unanimously.