

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
September 20th, 2021**

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

Councilmembers absent: Councilwoman Howard

Staff present: Town Manger Heath Brown, Town Attorney Matt Clifford, Fire Chief Mike Payne, Engineer Tech Gary Allred, and Deputy Clerk Annie Reidhead

Staff absent/excused: Town Engineer Tom Palmer, Police Chief Shaffen Woods

Visitors: Kim Smith (EA Courier), David Bell (EA Courier), David Adams (RSL AZ Soccer League), Virendra Vyds (RSL AZ Soccer League)

AGENDA

Welcome and Call Meeting to Order at 6:30 by Mayor Bryce and he stated that this a public meeting of the Thatcher Town Council. He stated that we do have a quorum.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Bryce.

PUBLIC HEARING:

None

OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

David Adams with the RSL AZ Soccer League spoke to the reservation of the soccer fields. He felt he had taken the necessary steps to reserve the soccer fields for a practice location, requesting Tuesday and Thursday from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. and Saturday for a couple of hours. Currently there are approximately 60 kids participating in this league which makes up about five teams. He stated that he does appreciate Thatcher for all they have done for the community. He has reached out to other organizations and asked them their procedure for finding practice locations and was told that some of them pay fees to use facilities. He wanted council to know that there are twice as many people using the local practice fields and since 1990 the community has grown from zero to three soccer fields.

He was recently contacted by the Town to let him know that the Town will not be using the reservation model for the soccer fields. These fields will be used on a 1st come; 1st serve basis. This happened one month after he thought he had reservations and was already using the fields as such.

Thatcher's softball and baseball fields can be reserved by local organizations so why wouldn't the soccer fields be as well. He is asking the town to please put something in

place for multiple organizations to reserve these fields. That way he doesn't have to tell 60 kids plus, their parents, their pull rides that they cannot have practice. That way he does not have to have his retired mother putting out cones 2 hours before practice for the 1st come 1st serve practice.

Vice Mayor Smith asked Adams what he had in place that made him feel he had the reservations through the town. He commented that Warren Williams had reached out to the town mayor regarding the days and times wanting to be reserved. He explained that he had come into town hall and spoke with someone in the office regarding the same. The person at the desk had a small note with this information so he felt the reservations were set.

Mayor Bryce stated to Adams that he had not been approached by Warren Williams or anyone else.

Vice Mayor Smith asked for the practice days and times. Adams again answered Tuesday and Thursday from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. and Saturday mornings for a couple of hours.

Councilman Rapier asked the time frame for the year. Adams answered they would want to practice from August to May during the year.

Town Manager Brown stated that Warren Williams did approach him 2 years ago addressing the soccer practices. What he was told by Williams that practice times would be 2 days a week for 2 hours, one team, one field. He discussed how this information from 2 years ago is very different from the current situation.

Mayor Bryce stated that council would discuss putting this issue on an upcoming council agenda. He addressed Town Manager Brown and asked if staff needed help coming up with the best practice to address this issue. Town Manager Brown addressed the council and asked if staff could continue with the 1st come 1st serve approach.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

None

CONSENT AGENDA: Action Item

- A. Approve minutes of the August 16, 2021, Regular Council Meeting
- B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.
- C. Police Monthly Report.
- D. Approval of Invoices.
- E. Financial Reports.

Councilman Carlton made motion to approve the consent agenda and was seconded by Vice Mayor Smith. Motion carries unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

10. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

A. Town Manager's Report

- Public Works Projects

Recreation Complex (Restrooms & Mechanical Room)
Roofs and doors are set on the mechanical room

Reay Ln Sewer Main

Crews are at a halfway point on the project and the project is going well. The project is creating a lot of dust from the dirt.

Sidewalk Repairs

Crews are working on replacing sidewalks along the highway that have buckled up over the years. They have replaced around 4 to 5 of these sidewalks as of right now.

Our crews are currently being pulled in all directions to accomplish the planned projects and to address the emergency projects. We have the fiber optics project being done by Valley Telecom that is creating a lot of bluestaking for our crews. We are bluestaking all we can, but Valley Telecom is damaging some of our resident's sewer lines during their boring process. Our crews are then having to fix the damage done to the sewer lines. Some of our crews are having to work on these damages after hours as well. Our crews also assisted Graham County Coop during the installing of the main tap for the gas line at Wayne Layton's subdivision. Assisted in cutting the road, trenching, and patching back the road. The Town will be billing the Coop for time and material on this project.

- Thatcher High School Ball Field Assistance

Will take half of our crew one full week to assist the high school with the baseball fields. The high school has hired a new coach and wanting to get the fields in good condition. The town uses all their 4 fields for our little league and softball recreation leagues.

- **Storm/Power Outage**
 We had our crews working on down trees causing power outages a couple of weeks ago during the big rainstorms. Some of the crews were working past midnight to get this accomplished.
- **Street Light Replacements**
 Reo has compiled a list of streetlights that the bulbs need replacing on. He has started and is starting early in the morning due to some of these being on the highway therefore requiring us to use traffic control.
- **Winter Grass Overseeding**
 Rob will start within the next week or two on our all our parks to get the grass overseeded.
- **Town Hall Generator**
 We budgeted for a natural gas generator. Starting this week or next, Advanced Air will be working on installing the generator.
 Mayor Bryce asked if the generator would work for both the fire station and town hall. Engineer Tech Allred answered that the generator will only be for town hall.
 The generator will not work as a full back up but more so to cover the computers and some lights. The power outage that occurred a couple of weeks ago caused our meter reading system to shut down. We had to purchase all new battery backups for it.
- **Recreation Complex Open House**
 The open house is a week from today. Have communicated with the architect as far as how many people will be attending. We are anticipating anywhere from 150 to 200 people. The architect firm will be bringing 5 to 6 people for the open house. The firm will also have a website available for the public that can't attend the meeting.
 Councilman Rapier has been working on a lot of advertising for the open house through radio, newspaper, social media, and reaching out to individuals.
- **Garbage Trucks**
 Initially was looking at a bid of \$125,00 to purchase a 10-year-old truck. Now thinking it would be best to budget for next year to purchase a \$300,000 new truck. Maybe plan to order the new truck in July considering that currently there is a 1-to-2-year lead time.
 Been working close with our mechanics to make sure that parts on our current trucks are being replaced and maintained, even anticipating the parts that commonly break. Councilman Vining stated it would be best to order the new truck now because of the lead time. The new truck is not in the current budget.

- Monthly Financial Summary
Sales tax revenue and state share revenue look good. Our revenues exceed our expenditures by \$100,000 for the month of August. Sewer fund looks good. Sanitation fund was a loss due to the purchase of new garbage cans.

Councilman Carlton asked how often we replace the garbage cans and what is the process for swapping them out. We don't have a schedule for replacing the cans. Our residents call Town Hall and let us know that they have a damaged can. We replace the parts, (i.e., lids, wheels) trying our best to have them refurbished. We have a lot of new builds that are requiring new cans. These new builds are taking up a lot of the inventory of the cans.

We are also having the county work on restriping our roads. This project is moving smoothly. We have an older machine that didn't work out for the project. We may want to look at hiring the county every year to get the restriping done.

B. Fire Department Report

Chief Payne stated that we had 17 firefighters attend fire school a couple of weeks ago. They attended basic courses up to leadership courses. All came back with positive attitudes and are excited to use the training they received.

The Fire Department open house scheduled for the night October 5th. Flyers will be distributed to the schools and other organizations in our community. The VFW organization has invited the Fire Department to a dinner on October 16th. They have asked us to choose a firefighter of the year for this dinner. If anyone has any suggestions on nominations for firefighter of the year pass them along.

We will be assisting with the high school bonfire that is scheduled for next Wednesday night.

C. Police Department Report – Chief Woods Excused

D. Council Reports

Mayor Bryce discussed scheduling an upcoming work session. Work sessions are usually scheduled after attending the AZ Leagues of Cities and Towns to discuss and share what was learned at the conference. It was agreed that Monday, November 1st at 6:30 p.m. a work session council meeting would be scheduled.

Town Manager Brown let the council know that he would be taking vacation days on Thursday, September 30th and Monday, October 4th.

Discussion of the open call to public item regarding the soccer field reservation would be added to an upcoming council meeting agenda.

Councilman Carlton stated that he would like the garbage can discussion he addressed earlier to be on an upcoming council meeting agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn by Vice Mayor Smith. Mayor Bryce asked if anyone is opposed to adjourning the meeting. All in favor of adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm

APPROVED:

Heath Brown, Town Manager

Randy Bryce, 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 20th day of September. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Annie Reidhead, Deputy Clerk