

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
November 15, 2021**

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

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

Visitors: Kim Smith (EA Courier), David Bell (EA Courier), County Supervisor John Howard, Rick Bryce, Jennifer Bryce, Mike McEuen, Kamron Carlson, Seth Carlson, Brandon Homer, Davis Kempton, Courtney Kempton, Kalli Maner, JR Maner, Kearsten Caffall, Isaac Morris, Veta Estrada, Susan Hancock, and Anita Smith.

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 Vice Mayor Smith.

PUBLIC HEARING:

To consider the matter of a Preliminary Plat for the "Desert View Estates" Subdivision, a proposed 24-lot single-family residential subdivision located off 12th Street at the end of Sandy Creek Drive in Thatcher.

Seth Carlson, the builder of Desert View Estates, addressed the council on the matter. Residents that currently reside in the area and others that are planning to build in the area addressed the council as well.

OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

County Supervisor John Howard addressed the council about the parking issues that are arising from the pickleball courts at the new soccer complex. The council stated that "No Parking" signs have been ordered.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

None

CONSENT AGENDA: Action Item

- A. Approve Minutes of the October 18, 2021, Regular Council Meeting, and the November 1, 2021, Council Work Session
- B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report
- C. Police Monthly Report
- D. Approval of Invoices
- E. Financial Reports

Councilwoman Howard made a motion to approve the consent agenda and seconded by Vice Mayor Smith. Motion carries unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action

A. Cemetery Resolution and Long-term Planning

Mr. Brown addressed the council regarding the redraft of the cemetery resolution. He stated the redraft is not on the agenda to approve and only to review. Mr. Brown introduced members of the cemetery committee that were present and would like to address the council.

Ms. Estrada stated the original cemetery resolution is from 2002. The cemetery committee has spent 4 months working on the redraft of the resolution. They have updated the resolution to include current Arizona statues and regulations and have consolidated items that were redundant in the resolution. Currently when a cemetery plot is purchased the owner is responsible to maintain the area. The committee suggested the Town increase the cost of the cemetery plots from \$300 to \$750. The committee would like the cost increase to include the Town to take over the responsibility of constructing curbing. This would allow for the curbing in the cemetery to look more uniform. Ms. Estrada stated that they are working on a 3-year plan to bring to the council. The plan includes phases of work, fencing being the priority and second the curbing. The plan also includes a recommendation to hire a part time maintenance person for the cemetery. The committee would revisit the 3 year plan every 3 years to make sure that it stays up to date.

Mrs. Hancock addressed the committee regarding the disrespect that is occurring at the cemetery due to there being no fencing. There is always four wheeler's driving through there and there are people tailgating during baseball games. She said they are working on getting quotes for the fencing and would include them in the 3-year plan that they will be submitting. The committee asked if the Town has any funds from Covid money that could be used to help with the fencing of the cemetery.

B. Preliminary Plat for the Desert View Estates Subdivision

Mayor Bryce stated that the council has received the minutes from the Planning & Zoning meeting regarding the preliminary plat. The decision was unanimous to approve the Desert View Estates Subdivision with there being a modification to add sidewalks to one side of the street. Councilman Rapier asked if the standard is to have two access roads to all subdivisions. Mr. Palmer stated that the Town code does state that there should be two accesses to every subdivision. He also stated that in the past year there has been three subdivisions approved that do not have two accesses.

Mr. Brown stated that when Quail Ridge was originally built it only had one access. This subdivision remained with one access for at least ten years. Councilman Vining asked where the recommendation to add the sidewalk to one side of the street came from for the one acre lots. Mr. Palmer stated that it was recommended by the Planning & Zoning committee due to research that had been done in other areas around Thatcher. Councilman Rapier addressed the builder, Seth Carlson, as to whether he had proposed the subdivision with or without sidewalks. Mr. Carlson answered that he had proposed without sidewalks. Councilwoman Howard asked if in the future the easements and paving would be able to be something that may be addressed. Council members asked Mr. Palmer if he is revising the Town zoning ordinance to address the concerns that are arising on subdivisions. Mr. Palmer stated that he is working on revising this but will take time.

Councilman Vining asked the builder if he had received cost for the sidewalks. Mr. Carlson, the builder, said he had not, and the sidewalk cost may be included in the home buyer's cost. Mayor Bryce addressed Mr. Palmer and Mr. Brown regarding the water and sewer lines out in that area. Mr. Palmer stated that the water line does run out in that area. Mr. Brown stated that 80% of the homes in that area are on the Town sewer system.

Councilman Rapier made a motion to approve the Preliminary Plat for the Desert View Estates Subdivision with a stipulation that sidewalks are not required and seconded by Vice Mayor Smith. Motion carries unanimously.

C. One Arizona Opioid Settlement Agreement

Mr. Brown stated that this is a settlement with the state of Arizona and the opioid manufactures. Every city and town in state is signing on to the agreement. Cities and towns in the state would receive monies that would be used specifically to deal with the opioid crisis. With the signing of the agreement, it would also mean that the cities and towns relinquish their rights to ever sue an opioid manufacture. The deadline to sign the agreement was last week. Councilman Carlton made a motion to approve the Opioid Settlement Agreement and seconded by Vice Mayor Smith. Motion carries unanimously.

D. Graham County IGA for GIS & Mapping Services

Mr. Brown stated that he has communicated with the County on this IGA. This IGA would help the Town with getting maps more accurate without purchasing the software system. Vice Mayor Smith made a motion to approve the Graham County IGA for GIS & Mapping Services and seconded by Councilman Rapier. Motion carries unanimously.

E. Purchase of New 2021 Caterpillar 304-07 Mini Hydraulic Excavator

Mr. Brown stated that the purchase of this excavator had been discussed in the prior work session meeting. This excavator does have an open cab which the streets supervisor recommended. The purchase price is at state contract price. Mr. Brown stated that if the purchase of the excavator was approved the funds would have to be moved from the contingency fund due to the purchase not being included in this year's budget. Councilwoman Howard made a motion to approve the Purchase of the New 2021 Caterpillar 304-07 Mini Hydraulic Excavator moving monies from the contingency to do so and seconded by Councilman Carlton. Motion carries unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

A. Town Manager's Report

- Public Works Projects

Recreation Complex

The walking path is completed

Reay Ln Sewer Main

We have scheduled a closure for Reay Lane the weekend after Thanksgiving to complete the sewer main.

Reay Lane/US 70 Drainage

The task has been completed

- Red Lamp RFP and Tree Trimming

We have accomplished tree trimming in the area. Mr. Clifford is reviewing the RFP and decided whether an outside council will also need to review.

- SPAA/Electric Update

Mr. Brown stated that he attended the meeting last week in Phoenix. There are twenty identities involved and when one of them changes their mind it then changes the distribution. The recommendation from SPAA is from 10 to 12 megawatts.

- Staffing Update

Evvie Turley is on board now as the Administrative Assistant/Receptionist position. Jared Hancock, who has been our Equipment Shop Manager for 22 years, is leaving for another job. We are advertising for an Equipment Repair Technician position.

- Monthly Financial Summary

Revenues down slightly. High spending out of the general fund due to multiple expenditures for the police department hitting all at one time.

- Police Department
Chief Woods stated that the Governor's Office of Highway Safety grant has been awarded.
- Fire Department
Chief Payne reminded everyone of the Safford Light Parade and the employee Christmas potluck.

B. Council Reports

Councilwoman Howard asked if Mr. Brown would keep them updated on Enterprise fleet vehicles coming in.

Councilman Vining asked how much the employee bonuses are and how long they have been at that rate. Councilman Welker suggested that the bonus rates be reviewed for next year's budget.

Ms. Estrada, representing the cemetery committee, spoke as to what else the council would need for the resolution to be approved. Mayor Bryce explained that the resolution which may include the increase cost of plots and the hiring of a part time person are not budgeted at this time. The resolution would have to be brought to a council meeting later to take action.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 by Councilman Rapier and seconded by Vice Mayor Smith. Motion carries unanimously.

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 18th day of October. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Annie Reidhead, Deputy Clerk