



**MEETING MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
MAY 15, 2023**

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

Councilmembers absent: Councilman Vining

Staff present: Town Manager Heath Brown, Town Attorney Matt Clifford, Police Chief Shaffen Woods, Interim Fire Chief Steve Curtis, Town Engineer Tom Palmer, Town Clerk Annie Reidhead, Building Inspector Alan Bryce, Procurement Officer Gary Allred, Finance Intern Brooklyn Angle

Visitors: County Supervisor John Howard, David Bell (EA Courier), Angel Sandoval, Leslie Cunning, Kat Stricklin

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

Pledge of Allegiance led by Town Engineer Tom Palmer.

AGENDA

1. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. **REZONING REQUEST** – A request to re-zone parcel 104-09-119A from C-1 (General Commercial) to MU (Mixed Use). The total parcel is approximately 0.23 acres and is located on 3rd Avenue just North of US 70 in Thatcher. The applicant is Angel Sandoval, the owner of the property.

2. OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC: None

3. PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

- A. Wreaths Across America – American Legion Auxiliary Unit 32

Kat Stricklin with the American Legion Auxiliary addressed the council representing Wreaths Across America. She stated this organization is a 501(c)(3) and is nationwide. It was started in 1992 by a tree farmer in Maine that made wreaths. He placed his abundance of wreaths at the Arlington cemetery for veterans. She stated the gentlemen enlisted the help of the American Legion and VFW and continued to do this for years.

Leslie Cunning with the American Legion Auxiliary addressed the council also representing Wreath Across America. She presented the council with a letter of introduction and other informational items.

They both stated they would like the Town to participate and help to get the information on their organization out.

4. CONSENT AGENDA: Action Item

- A. Approve Minutes of the April 17, 2023, Regular Council Meeting
B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.
C. Police Monthly Report.
D. Approval of Invoices.
E. Financial Reports.

Councilmember Carlton made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and seconded by Vice Mayor Howard. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **OLD BUSINESS:** None

6. **NEW BUSINESS:** Discussion, consideration, and possible action

A. Proposed rezone of parcel 104-09-119A from C-1 to MU. The property is at 1134 N. 3rd Avenue.

Mr. Brown stated that Mr. Sandoval, the owner of the property, initially requested to replace the existing manufactured home with a new manufactured home but the property is not zoned for that. It was explained to Mr. Sandoval that it could be rezoned for a site-built home, and he agreed. The Planning & Zoning commission has met regarding the rezoning and has recommended approving the rezone.

Vice Mayor Howard made a motion to approve the rezoning of parcel 104-09-119A from C-1 to MU at 1134 N. 3rd Avenue and seconded by Councilmember Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

B. 2023/24 Town of Thatcher Preliminary Budget

Mr. Brown stated that this is the same budget presented during the work session. He stated there is one minor change, and it is the amount of the body camera and taser contract for the Police Department. The contract increased by \$7,500 for the addition of additional data and tasers. Mr. Brown stated that he left the 50/50 split regarding the COLA and merit raises as discussed. The 7% increase, 3.5% COLA raise, and 3.5% merit raise is what is included in the preliminary budget.

Mr. Brown stated that he met with Dennis Delaney of K.R. Saline regarding the COOP substation. The substation is at the end of its life. He presented a chart with the different costs that would be involved in the building of the substation. Mr. Brown discussed that this is not included in the preliminary budget and that the recommendation from K.R. Saline is to include some of these costs in this year's budget. He stated that we will be working with Colby & Powell to figure out where we are at with our expenditure limitation. Mr. Brown stated that ideally it would be beneficial to use some of this year's budget money and next year's budget to spread the rest over multiple years.

Councilmember Carlton made a motion to approve the 2023/24 Preliminary Budget with an addition of \$500,000 into the Electric Department budget for the building of the substation and seconded by Vice Mayor Howard. Motion carried unanimously.

C. PSPRS Extra Payment

Mr. Brown stated that to pay the PSPRS liability to 90% it would cost \$1.2 million. He stated that it is not included in this year's budget. The 2023/24 preliminary budget for the PSPRS payment was changed to \$200,000.

Councilmember Welker made a motion to approve the PSPRS Extra Payment with the remaining \$500,000 budgeted for this year plus \$700,000 from the General Fund contingency for a total of \$1.2 million and seconded by Vice Mayor Howard. Motion carried unanimously.

7. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

A. Town Manager's Report

- Public Works Department
Recreation Complex – The crews have spent the month at the soccer complex working on various projects.
- 8th Street Widening Grant Update
The Town's project has been pushed through to the next round with SEAGO and Senator Sinema has included the project in her budget.
- Town Manager Evaluation
Will take place in an Executive Session in the June Council Meeting.

- Local Municipal Health Insurance Information
The City of Safford provides 90/10 funding for their employees and dependents and their goal is to be at 100% in the next couple of years. Town of Pima provides 100% funding for their employees and dependents. Graham County deducts \$125 for family coverage and \$25 for employee coverage only.
- Health Insurance for Fireman & Council
It has been verified with Vector Employer Solutions that our councilmembers and volunteer firefighters can participate in our medical, vision, and dental insurance plans and receive our rates. The Town would collect the premium from the individual and then pay the providers.
- Financial Summary
- Police Department
Chief Woods stated that it has been a busy month. He discussed the recent robbery incident that involved a high-speed chase. He also discussed the multiple pursuits that our K9 has been involved with. He mentioned the upcoming school parades and graduations that the department will take part in.
- Fire Department
Interim Chief Steve Curtis stated that we have had three firefighters attending the Firefighters classes 1 & 2 since January. They completed the state test on Saturday and will not receive the results until June.

B. Council Reports

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

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion made to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. by Mayor Bryce.

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 15th day of May. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Annie Reidhead, Deputy Clerk