



**MEETING MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 20, 2023**

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

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

Visitors: David Bell (EA Courier), County Supervisor John Howard, Fred Woods, Dale Shumway, Rachel Allen, Vaughn & Ruth Grant, Jenna Ferrin, Alona Spacemen, Sean Wenham, Kelly Larson, Dina Larson, Sherri Layton

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 Councilwoman Smith.

AGENDA

1. PUBLIC HEARING:

- A.** Abandonment of Final Plat and Condominium Plat for Casa Blanca Condos and Approve Final Plat for Stadium Place Apartments
Fred Woods introduced himself as the applicant for the project and stated that he was available for any questions.
- B.** Element Crossings Multi-Family Development Preliminary Plat

2. OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Rachel Allen addressed the council regarding Thatcher School District widening their walk zone. This has caused more kids to walk to school, ride their scooters to school, and caused more traffic at the school for pick up. Ms. Allen is concerned about the safety of the kids. She has heard that the Town is working on fixing sidewalks and would like the Town to focus on sidewalks close to the school particularly High School Avenue between Church Street and the highway, 3rd Avenue between Church Street and the highway, north side of 1st Avenue. She also would like the Town to put a crosswalk on the corner of 1st Street and 4th Avenue.

3. PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

- A.** Country Financial First Responder Donation
Vaughn Grant and Jenna Ferrin representing Country Financial addressed the council and explained to the council the "Operation Hero Donation" that is done annually. This year Country Financial is donating a total of \$3,000, \$1,500 to the Thatcher Police Department, and \$1,500 to the Thatcher Fire Department. Mr. Grant and Ms. Ferrin presented the check to Chief Woods and Chief Curtis.
- B.** Graham County Community Investment Fund Grant Presentation
Sean Wenham representing Freeport McMoran addressed the council and congratulated the Town on receiving the Graham County Community Investment Fund Grant in the amount of \$100,000. He stated that the grant funds are being awarded for the "Bringing Light to the Thatcher Recreation Complex Soccer Fields" project. Mr. Wenham presented the check to Mayor Bryce, Mr. Brown, and Ms. Reidhead and thanked them for their hard work in applying for the grant.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA:** Action Item

- A. Approve Minutes of the October 16, 2023, Regular Council Meeting and the October 30, 2023, Council Work Session.
- 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. Abandonment of Final Plat and Condominium Plat for Casa Blanca Condos and Approve Final Plat for Stadium Place Apartments.

Mr. Brown referred to Alan Bryce, the Town Building Inspector. Mr. Bryce stated the Planning & Zoning committee was unanimously in favor of the plat.

Vice Mayor Howard made a motion to approve the Abandonment of Final Plat for Casa Blanca Condos and Approve Final Plat for Stadium Apartments and seconded by Councilmember Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

- B. Element Crossings Multi-Family Development Preliminary Plat

Mr. Brown referred to Alan Bryce, the Town Building Inspector. Mr. Bryce stated that this has been rezoned from multi-use to residential. He stated the Planning & Zoning committee was unanimously in favor of the plat.

Vice Mayor Howard made a motion to approve the Element Crossings Multi-Family Development Preliminary Plat and seconded by Councilmember Carlton. Motion carried unanimously.

- C. Electric "Power Purchase Cost Adjustor" (PPCA) Rate Change

Mr. Brown stated that the PPCA rate changed from \$0.02 to \$0.045 in February. This equated to a 23.6% increase and the total increase from the initial PPCA to current is 36.5%. Mr. Brown proposed that the Town drops the PPCA rate due to natural gas prices dropping. The council discussed what percentage to decrease the rate and that the PPCA rate be watched each month for adjustments. The discussion included keeping the rates as low as possible and taking a step wise approach.

Vice Mayor Howard made a motion to decrease the PPCA rate from \$0.045 to \$0.03 starting immediately and seconded by Councilmember Welker. Motion carried unanimously.

- D. Garbage Truck Purchase – State Contract Price

Mr. Brown discussed not being able to purchase the truck that was ordered a year ago due to it not being available. He introduced a new garbage truck, Dennis-Eagle Proview built in England, and referred to the quote and picture included in the council packet. The council asked if the parts for the garbage truck would be available in the United States. Mr. Brown stated that this is a concern and Todd Thatcher, Shop Manager, has researched parts and they are available in the United States.

Councilman Carlton made a motion to approve the purchase of the 2022 Dennis-Eagle Proview with the Curbtender PowerPak in the amount of \$418,034.00 through state contracting price from RWC and seconded by Vice Mayor Howard. Motion carried unanimously.

- E. **RESOLUTION NO. 712-2023** A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, ARIZONA APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT (IGA) BETWEEN THE TOWN OF THATCHER AND THE STATE OF ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION, COLLECTION, AUDIT, AND LICENSING OF TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAXES, USE TAXES, SEVERANCE TAXES, JET FUEL EXCISE AND USE TAXES AND RENTAL OCCUPANCY TAXES IMPOSED BY THE STATE, CITIES OR TOWNS.

Mr. Brown stated that this Resolution is a formality with the State of Arizona Department of Revenue to administer taxes to the Town.

Councilmember Smith made a motion to approve Resolution No. 712-2023 as submitted and seconded by Vice Mayor. Motion carried unanimously.

7. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

A. Town Manager's Report

- PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
ALLRED LANE
This project is ongoing, just tedious with various items being removed and built. The curb and sidewalk to the corner will be completed by the end of this week.
- RECREATION COMPLEX
The path lighting is being installed.
- DALEY ESTATES PARK IMPROVEMENTS
The park improvements will be a winter project. Grass and trees will be planted.
- ADOT MEETING / STATUS REPORT
Mr. Brown and Mr. Palmer met with the local ADOT crew to discuss the landscaping at La Casita and the license plate readers. It was thought that these two projects would be covered under the Town's blanket maintenance permit and are not. ADOT will allow things to stay in place and issue the permits for these two projects. The large boulders at La Casita will have to be lowered. Also discussed was the paving that has been completed and that within the next two years milling and repaving will be completed from Reay Lane to the east side of Safford.
- MEDICAL INSURANCE MUNICIPAL COMPARISON
A small packet was provided with a summary sheet and rate sheets to the council on the medical insurance contribution rates that other Cities and Towns in Arizona pay for their employees. Also included on the summary sheet were some local private owned companies' medical insurance rate contributions. Council will review the packet and compare the Town's medical insurance rate contributions for the Town's employees. This item will be added and discussed at the next work session which will be used to prepare for the upcoming budget year.
- OTHER ITEMS
The empty land located near the Golf Course and Reay Lane near the dam, that is two 80-acre parcels is owned by the City of Safford. The interest in the land was discussed with John Casella, City Manager of the City of Safford. Mr. Casella stated that the item will be added as an executive session item at their next council meeting.
An electrical engineering firm has been brought in to start working on the 8th Street lighting.
- FINANCIAL SUMMARY

GENERAL FUND	
TOWN TAXES	520528
SHARED REVENUE	205942
OTHER REVENUES	125588
TOTAL REVENUE	852058
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	540275
GENERAL FUND NET	311783
SEWER FUND	
SEWER REVENUE	36781
SEWER EXPENTITURES	22204
SEWER NET	14576
SANITATION FUND	
SANITATION REVENUE	32925
SANITATION EXPENDITURES	40822
SANITATION NET	-7896
ELECTRIC FUND	
ELECTRIC REVENUE	533820
ELECTRIC EXPENDITURES	343261
ELECTRIC NET	190560

- POLICE DEPARTMENT
Chief Woods stated that Detective Becky Thatcher applied for the United Way grant for a medical based incinerator and the Thatcher Police Department has been officially awarded the grant. The incinerator will be used to destroy drugs, drug paraphernalia and documents. The Town will also

allow other surrounding agencies access to the incinerator. The project will begin after the 1st of the year.

Chief Woods announced that Apollo, the Town's K9, is going to be traded out for another dog. Apollo has developed an issue with noise sensitivity. The company that Apollo was purchased from recommended the trade out. Apollo will be going to DOC next week to be used there. The K9 replacement will not be available until February. The company will allow Officer Maner to do brief training.

- FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Curtis stated the Fire Department yearly open house held last month was a success and thanked the Councilmembers and staff that attended.

Chief Curtis discussed a mock explosion drill that took place last week at the college. There were 25 students in attendance.

Chief Curtis stated that calls have been slow this last month.

B. Council Reports

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & POTENTIAL QUORUM'S

The council asked that the issue discussed in "Open Call to Public" be added to a future council meeting for discussion.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION – THATCHER COMMERCIAL PLAZA DISCUSSION

At 7:45 p.m. Councilmember Carlton made a motion to go into Executive Session and seconded by Councilmember Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

At 7:54 p.m. Councilmember Smith made a motion to exit the Executive Session and go back into Regular Session and seconded by Vice Mayor Howard. Motion carried unanimously.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Carlton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. and seconded by Councilmember Welker. Motion carried 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 20th day of November. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Annie Reidhead, Deputy Clerk