



**MEETING MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
APRIL 15, 2024**

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, Town Engineer Tom Palmer, Police Chief Glen Orr, Fire Chief Steve Curtis, Deputy Town Clerk Annie Reidhead, Procurement Officer Gary Allred, Building Inspector Alan Bryce, Sergeant JR Maner

Visitors: David Bell, Dr. Sarah Sayles, Kalli Maner

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 Sergeant JR Maner.

AGENDA

1. PUBLIC HEARING:

- A.** Consideration of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, which would allow for accessory dwelling units in any single-family residential zone. The purpose of these proposed changes is to better meet the needs of the residents of the Town, in line with the goals of the Town's General Plan. Along with other miscellaneous ordinance amendments.

No Comments

2. OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC: None

3. PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

A. Substance Abuse Coalition – Youth Advocates

Mr. Brown stated that Kathy Grimes with the Substance Abuse Coalition called this morning and let us know that her youth advocates were not going to attend.

B. Gila Watershed Partnership Presentation

Dr. Sarah Sayles introduced herself as the Executive Director to the Mayor and Council. She thanked the Town of Thatcher for being a municipal supporter each year. She wanted to share how the money is being used for different projects. She presented a PowerPoint presentation that included the projects, River Cleanup, Land Cleanup with FMI Volunteers, Ash Creek Research, SEAYLS (Southeastern Arizona Youth Land Stewardship), Fire Breaks, and Gila Native Plants Nursery Projects. She stated that the Town of Thatcher donates \$5,000 to Gila Watershed Partnership each year and would like to continue this partnership.

4. CONSENT AGENDA: Action Item

- A.** Approve Minutes of the March 18, 2024, Regular Council Meeting and the April 1, 2024, Council Work Session
B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.
C. Police Monthly Report.
D. Approval of Invoices.
E. Financial Reports.

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

5. OLD BUSINESS: None

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

A. Fair Housing Proclamation

Mayor Bryce read the proclamation as follows:

FAIR HOUSING PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, The National Fair Housing Law of 1968, as amended by the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988 prohibits discrimination in housing and declares it a national policy to provide within constitutional limits, for fair housing in the United States; and WHEREAS, the principle of Fair Housing is not only national law and national policy but a fundamental human concept and entitlement for all Americans; and WHEREAS April has traditionally been designated as Fair Housing Month in the United States. NOW, THEREFORE, I Randy Bryce, Mayor of the Town of Thatcher, Arizona, do hereby proclaim April 2024 as Fair Housing Month
In the Town of Thatcher and do hereby urge all citizens of this community to comply with the letter and spirit of the Fair Housing Law.

B. ORDINANCE NO. 195-2024 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF THATCHER, ARIZONA, AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE THATCHER TOWN CODE BY AMENDING PORTIONS OF SECTIONS 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, AND 13.8 THEREOF AND ADOPTING BY REFERENCE PURSUANT TO A.R.S. §9-802, THESE AMENDMENTS WHICH ARE FULLY DESCRIBED IN “EXHIBIT A” ATTACHED HERETO.

Mr. Brown stated that this Ordinance would propose a code into our Zoning Ordinance that would allow accessory structures to be used as dwellings either short term or long term in Single Family Residential Zones. There are requirements that would need to be followed that include parking, lot coverage, building heights, and setbacks. There has been a Public Hearing and Planning and Zoning meeting regarding the Ordinance. The meeting minutes of the two meetings have been included in today’s council packet. Staff suggests approval of the Ordinance. Mr. Brown referred to Mr. Palmer and Mr. Bryce for questions that the Mayor and Council may have. Councilmember McEuen asked if there is a limit on the 2nd dwelling. Mr. Bryce stated that after several discussions with the Planning and Zoning Committee it was determined that the 2nd dwelling could only be 50% of the livable size of the primary residence. Mayor Bryce stated that he appreciated how the Planning and Zoning Committee addressed all the concerns he had. Councilmember Vining asked if the fire building codes are addressed in the Ordinance and Mr. Palmer stated yes. Mayor Bryce agreed with the comment that was included in the Planning and Zoning minutes, “Existing dwellings of this nature would have to be determined if they were up to code and if not plan with the Town to get up to code.”. Mr. Palmer stated that they are gathering a list of these existing dwellings. Mayor Bryce verified with Mr. Palmer if the Ordinance is approved tonight there will be a 30-day appeal period. Vice Mayor Smith asked if the Town is allowing cargo containers to be used as dwelling units. Mr. Palmer stated that they are already allowed if they follow the Zoning Ordinances.

Councilmember Carlton made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 195-2024, Amending the Town of Thatcher Zoning Ordinance and seconded by Councilmember Welker. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Thatcher Electric Rate – Potential Adjustment

Mr. Brown stated that this was suggested by Council to be added to the agenda. He referred to the current financial summary electric fund section included in the council packet.

ELECTRIC FUND FY NET	\$1,210,547
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He reminded the Mayor and Council of the upcoming 2-year Substation Project with the Graham County Cooperative. The Substation Project total costs are 3 million dollars and we have currently spent \$750,000. Mr. Brown stated that the current PPCA (Power Purchase Cost Adjustment) rate is \$.03. In the last 6 months the rate has gone from \$.01 to \$.05 to the current \$.03.

Councilmember McEuen made a motion to table the Electric Rate item and add to the July 2024 agenda for discussion and seconded by Vice Mayor Howard. Motion carried unanimously.

7. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

A. Town Manager’s Report

- PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
ALLRED LANE

Continues to go well, working on curb and sidewalk, looking for completion in early June.

- PRELIMINARY BUDGET – MAY COUNCIL MEETING
Working on the preliminary budget based on the inputs and suggestions from the budget workshop meeting.
- CHIEF SHAFFEN WOODS RETIREMENT PARTY – 18TH AT 12:00 PM
Council members received invitations.
- GOVERNER HOBBS VISIT
Governor Katie Hobbs will be visiting April 25th to meet with municipalities and schools. Mayor Bryce, Vice Mayor Howard, and Chief Orr will be representing the Town of Thatcher.
- 8TH STREET RECONSTRUCTION UPDATE
Mr. Palmer stated that there are no new updates.
- FINANCIAL SUMMARY

GENERAL FUND		SEWER FUND		ELECTRIC FUND	
TOWN TAXES	\$375,721	SEWER REVENUE	\$42,012	ELECTRIC REVENUE	\$329,157
SHARED REVENUE	\$224,644	SEWER EXPENDITURES	\$39,100	ELECTRIC EXPENDITURE	\$118,724
OTHER REVENUES	\$107,412	SEWER NET	\$2,911	ELECTRIC NET	\$210,432
TOTAL REVENUE	\$707,777	SANITATION FUND			
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$604,469	SANITATION REVENUE	\$33,207		
GENERAL FUND NET	\$103,308	SANITATION EXPENDITURE	\$37,767		
		SANITATION NET	-\$4,560		

- POLICE DEPARTMENT
Chief Orr announced the promotion of Officer Maner to Sergeant Maner. Sergeant Maner introduced T-Max, the new K9. T-Max is a 2-year-old Belgian Malinois and is from the same kennel as Apollo. He is certified patrol and narcotics, all four odors (fentanyl, heroin, meth, and cocaine). T-Max was originally going to serve in the French military. Sergeant Maner and T-Max have one more week of training and then he will be on patrol. Chief Orr stated that they will be adding a K9 section to the police monthly report that is presented at the monthly council meetings. Chief Orr stated that this week he had his first department meeting. We are working on streamlining processes to digital to be more efficient and will save manpower. Received a \$28,000 check from the AZ Opioid Settlement. We will be working with the Town Manager on how best to spend the funds.
- FIRE DEPARTMENT
Chief Curtis stated that it has been quiet regarding fires. In the Budget Work Session meeting the Fire Department requested funds for building upgrades but had not received quotes. They received the quotes for LED lighting at \$30,000, painting \$30,000, and flooring \$30,000. They have an upcoming training event where they will be supporting FMI with a burn.

B. Council Reports

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & POTENTIAL QUORUM'S

9. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Bryce adjourned the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

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 April. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Annie Reidhead, Deputy Clerk