



**MEETING MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE THATCHER TOWN COUNCIL
MAY 20, 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, Assistant Fire Chief Josh Curtis, Town Clerk Annie Reidhead, Building Inspector Alan Bryce

Visitors: County Supervisor John Howard, David Bell, Kathy Grimes, Natalie Walters, Kaydence Perry, Ric Bryce, Crandall Aaron, Ryan Conrad, Brandon Homer, Erin Roden, Justice French

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 Councilman Vining.

AGENDA

1. PUBLIC HEARING:

A. SUBDIVISION PLAT – Re-approval of previous Preliminary Plat and new Final Plat for Quail Ridge Phase II-D Residential Subdivision. To consider the matter of a proposed 44-lot single-family residential subdivision. This subdivision is south of the existing Quail Ridge Subdivision, off Quail Ridge Drive, (Graham County Parcel #104-35-550).

County Supervisor John Howard, who is a resident of Quail Ridge, communicated his full support for the Quail Ridge Phase II. He stated that the first phase went well, it brought homes to the community, and cleaned up the community.

B. REZONE REQUEST – To consider the matter of a proposed re-zone of parcel 104-33-262 from C-2 (Highway Commercial Zone) to R1-8 (Single Residential Zone). The total parcel is approximately 1.59 acres and is located at the northeast corner of North Allred Lane and West Allred Lane.

No Comments

C. REZONE REQUEST – To consider the matter of a proposed re-zone of parcel 104-01-205 from C-2 (Highway Commercial Zone) to R1-43 (Single Residential Zone). The total parcel is approximately 2.025 acres and is located west of Reay Lane and north of Ridgeview Way.

No Comments

2. OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

Ryan Conrad, Principal of Thatcher High School, thanked the Thatcher Fire Department on behalf of the Thatcher School District for their quick response to a smolder fire that occurred at the Thatcher High School Wood Shop on the early morning of May 7th. Mr. Conrad stated that he was alerted by dispatch and when he arrived the Thatcher Fire Department was already on scene extinguishing the fire before it spread. The fire department was able to make the building safe and secure before the students arrived that morning. He gifted them with stickers and sweat towels and thanked them for their expertise.

3. PUBLIC APPEARANCES:

A. Substance Abuse Coalition – Youth Advocates

Youth advocates, Natalie Walters and Kaydence Perry with the Substance Abuse Coalition delivered a presentation on vaping to the Council. They stated that vaping is a pressing issue amongst youth and are discouraging it through these presentations and other avenues. They showed a kit that they are providing to middle schools and high schools. The kits include gum, cinnamon candy, bracelets, and metal straws that help with muscle memory reactions that develop from vaping. They also thanked the Town for partnering with the Substance Abuse Coalition on the yearly Summer Bash Event. This year the event is taking place Friday, June 7th.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA:** Action Item
- A. Approve Minutes of the April 15, 2024, Regular Council Meeting
 - B. Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.
 - C. Police Monthly Report.
 - D. Approval of Invoices.
 - E. Financial Reports.

Councilmember Smith 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. Re-approval of previous Preliminary Plat and new Final Plat for Quail Ridge Phase II-D Residential Subdivision.

Mr. Brown discussed that the previous Preliminary Plat was approved in the 1990's and nothing has changed. The last re-approval was a year ago and is the reason why it needs re-approval. The Final Plat for Phase II-D includes the next two roads, Bluejay Lane and Mearns Lane, in the subdivision. After this plat there will be one last road left in the subdivision. Mr. Brown stated that everything has gone well during the construction and the homes are selling quickly. Mayor Bryce stated that he read the P&Z meeting minutes, and the P&Z Commission approved the Final Plat without reservation.

Councilmember Smith made a motion to approve the Re-approval of previous Preliminary Plat and new Final Plat for Quail Ridge Phase II-D Residential Subdivision and seconded by Vice Mayor Howard. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Proposed re-zone of parcel 104-33-262 from C-2 (Highway Commercial Zone) to R1-8 (Single Residential Zone).

Mr. Brown explained that this is the inside corner of Allred Lane. It has been split from Aaron Motes larger lots with intent to build homes. Mr. Brown said that it is compatible with the area. The lots are 8,000 square feet with a restriction of 80 feet frontage. Before making a motion Vice Mayor Howard requested improved maps be included with these re-zonings that show the surrounding areas.

Vice Mayor Howard made a motion to approve the Re-zone of parcel 104-33-262 from C-2 (Highway Commercial Zone) to R1-8 (Single Residential Zone) and seconded by Councilmember Carlton. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Proposed re-zone of parcel 104-01-205 from C-2 (Highway Commercial Zone) to R1-43 (Single Residential Zone).

Mr. Brown explained that the re-zoning is being requested to build a home. Mayor Bryce verified with Mr. Brown that R1-43 zone is for 1-acre minimums. Mayor Bryce stated that in reading the P&Z minutes the P&Z Commission is in favor of the re-zoning. Building Inspector Alan Bryce stated that there are currently single-family lots to the west of this property which would make this re-zoning suitable for the area.

Councilmember Carlton made a motion to approve the Re-zone of parcel 104-01-205 from C-2 (Highway Commercial Zone) to R1-43 (Single Residential Zone) and seconded by Councilmember McEuen. Motion carried unanimously.

D. INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE STATE OF ARIZONA AND THE TOWN OF THATCHER. Project: 1st Avenue Widening – Quail Ridge Drive to Eagle Drive.

Mr. Brown reported that this is the grant that the Town was awarded for design only on this project. It is like the IGA and project that we are currently involved in for the Union Canal Path. There is an obligation of 5.7% match to the total funds of the project. The total funds are \$630,000 which makes the match \$35,910. Mr. Brown stated that the State will invoice us for the match at the start of the project and then will reconcile the funds at the end of the project. Town Attorney Matt Clifford has reviewed the IGA. Mr. Brown stated that the staff has a strong interest in the development of the road improvements.

Councilmember Carlton made a motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement between the State of Arizona and the Town of Thatcher for 1st Avenue Widening from Quail Ridge Drive to Eagle Drive, design only and seconded by Councilmember Smith. Motion carried unanimously.

E. 2024/2025 Town of Thatcher Preliminary Budget

Mr. Brown presented the proposed Preliminary Budget and budget notes to the Mayor and Council. The budget note page contains letters that correspond with the Preliminary Budget and highlights the items that have a significant change.

A	Town Sales Tax Revenue - 22/23 Income (\$5.384M) & 23/24 Projected Income (\$5.446M)
B	State Shared Revenue - Due to Flat Tax Legislative Change
C	Total Intergovernmental Revenue - Projections by State
D	Mayor & Council Employee Education Reimbursement - Anticipated College Courses
E	Mayor & Council Auditor Fees - Total Baker Tilly & Colby Powell Fees
F	Mayor & Council Gift Certificates - Retirement, Birthdays & Anniversary Gifts
G	Mayor & Council Gila Valley Boys & Girls Club - Additional Funding Request. Thatcher kids are 23% of Participants
H	Mayor & Council Gila Valley Samaritan Home - 42.5% of Utility Costs
I	Mayor & Council Donations – Eastern Arizona Hispanic Heritage Corp, Choir, THS
J	Administration Salaries/Wages - Proposed 7% Merit and COL Raise Originally the proposed amount was \$150,000. The original proposed amount was miscalculated and the requested amount should have been \$220,000. This will affect each department for this budget line item.
K	Administration Employee Phone Allowance - Separated out Phone Allowances to be its own budget line item
L	Administration Professional Technical Service - Moving Colby Powell Accounting Services here, Town Code hosting to be searchable online
M	Administration Computer Software Support – Moving to Cloud Based Caselle Server. Will be split amongst Administration, Sewer, and Electric.
N	Administration Bldg Materials/Supplies - Town Hall Improvements, Council Room A/C
O	Administration Computer Supplies - File Server needs to be updated. Will be split amongst Administration, Sewer, and Electric.
P	Administration Computer Software - Increased costs for Software Subscriptions (Adobe, Microsoft, etc.)
Q	Magistrate Professional Technical Service - Court Audit Fee completed by the State every 5 years
R	Parks & Recreation Overtime - Friday OT Projects
S	Parks & Recreation Bldg Materials/Supplies - Scoreboards at Ballpark
T	Parks & Recreation Machinery/Equipment – Gator purchase, decreases this budget line item
U	Police Salaries/Wages - \$125,000 Two Recruit Overlap Cost + \$15,000 for Lieutenant Position
V	Police Overtime - Shift Coverage, etc.
W	Police Training/Meeting/Travel - New Recruit(s) Academy Costs
X	Police Ammunition/Gun Supplies - Ammunition Cost Increase
Y	Police Computer Support - Geo Tab (GPS Tracking)
Z	Fire Salaries/Wages - Pay for Calls, Meetings & Chief Wages
AA	Fire Training/Meeting/Travel - Accounting for \$2,500 Bonus pay for Completion of Fire School
BB	Fire Machinery/Equipment - 3rd Set TO's, Wildland TO's, Wildland Truck, Thermal Camera, Multi-Gas Detector, Christmas
CC	Fire Contingency - Apply for extra District funding and grants to offset this cost
DD	Shop Clothing Allowance - Split the Clothing into all relevant departments, decreases this budget line item. Will be split amongst Shop, Parks & Recreation, Streets, Sanitation, Sewer, and Electric
EE	Shop Machinery/Equipment - Compressor
FF	Streets Overtime - Friday OT Projects
GG	Streets Maintenance - \$660,000 for Street Preservation which includes \$340,000 for 1st Avenue for potential new business, 8 th Street realignment
HH	Streets Machinery/Equipment - New Water Truck
II	Miscellaneous Expenses Purchase of Land – Right of Way Purchases
JJ	Miscellaneous Expenses Contingency - Additional Amount for Fire Department
KK	Miscellaneous Expenses Golf Course – Two Bottle Filling Stations and Utilities
LL	Miscellaneous Expenses Val's Building Maintenance - New A/C Units
MM	Miscellaneous Expenses Debt Service – GADA Loan that includes Val's' Building and Electric Area. Complete payoff in August 2028
NN	Miscellaneous Expenses PSPRS Unfunded Liability - PSPRS is at 90%+ Funded
OO	Sanitation Equipment Maintenance - Shift from Vehicles budget line item to Equipment Maintenance budget line item
PP	Sewer Professional/Technical Service - Sewer Cleaning & CCTV
QQ	Electric Enterprise Revenue - Adjusted for Electric Rate Decrease
RR	Electric Salaries/Wages - Shift from part-time to full-time Electric Assistant
SS	Electric Purchase of Power - Power Purchase Prediction
TT	Electric New Construction Electric System - Undergrounding of Power
UU	Electric Meters - Change to Automated Meters

Councilmember Welker made a motion to approve the 2024/2025 Town of Thatcher Preliminary Budget and seconded by Councilmember Vining. Motion carried unanimously.

7. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

A. Town Manager's Report

- **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
ALLRED LANE**

Curbing and sidewalk are almost complete. After completion crews will move to prepping the road for pavement. Sparklight will be converting their lines to underground next week.

DALEY ESTATES PARK

Sprinklers are completed. The water lines will be tied into the main line and then sod can be rolled out.

- **4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION**

Phil McBride has started working on the parade and program line up. He has Gila Valley Freedom Band scheduled for the parade. The program has Gila Valley Chorale scheduled for the National Anthem, Gila Valley Freedom Band for patriotic songs, and Captain Aaron Westerfield as guest speaker.

- **TOWN CLERK CERTIFICATION/PROMOTION**

Annie Reidhead has received her CMC (Certified Municipal Clerk) Certification from Arizona League of Cities and Towns. Achieving the certification within 2 and half years. She has received a promotion and merit raise to the position of Town Clerk.

- **8TH STREET RECONSTRUCTION UPDATE**

Mr. Palmer reported that the City of Safford has started the water lines.

- **POLICE DEPARTMENT AND STREETS DEPARTMENT VACANCIES**

We have received 10 applications for the Streets Maintenance Worker I but have not scheduled interviews. This is to fill Drake Hughes position.

Moving forward with the hiring of 2 Police recruits.

- **FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

GENERAL FUND		SEWER FUND		ELECTRIC FUND	
TOWN TAXES	\$573,298	SEWER REVENUE	\$44,434	ELECTRIC REVENUE	\$391,013
SHARED REVENUE	\$208,641	SEWER EXPENDITURES	\$20,336	ELECTRIC EXPENDITURE	\$233,808
OTHER REVENUES	\$125,819	SEWER NET	\$24,098	ELECTRIC NET	\$157,205
TOTAL REVENUE	\$907,758	SANITATION FUND			
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$603,272	SANITATION REVENUE	\$33,373		
GENERAL FUND NET	\$304,485	SANITATION EXPENDITURE	\$28,151		
		SANITATION NET	\$5,222		

- **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Chief Orr reported that the background process has been started for one recruit. Hoping for this recruit to start the Academy in July. There is a second recruit that may possibly start in January of 2025. Chief Orr stated that morale is up in the department.

- **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Chief Curtis reported that the Valley is having a rash of fires due to residents burning weeds.

This has kept them and all the other surrounding agencies busy. The fire at the river kept them busy for 5 nights and it has been turned over to BLM. Councilmember McEuen suggested running some radio advertisements on fire safety.

B. Council Reports

Mayor Bryce reported on the visit with Governor Hobbs that took place last Thursday. He attended along with Vice Mayor Howard and Police Chief Orr. He stated that the visit went well and was positive. Governor Hobbs one focus point of the meeting was the Excise Tax generated from the mine and how they are distributed.

Mayor Bryce reported that he also attended the SEAGO meeting last Friday. ADOT reported on the current projects.

Vice Mayor Howard reported that ADOT has their 2024 – 2029 Projects Comment Form link posted on their website. She will be sending the link to staff for them to email out to others.

Mayor Bryce reminded the councilmembers that he emailed out the 2024 Town Manager evaluation and would like them back no later than the end of the day on June 7th.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & POTENTIAL QUORUM'S:

None

9. ADJOURNMENT

There was no objective to adjourning the meeting at 8:10 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 20th day of May. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Annie Reidhead, Deputy Clerk