

## **Town of Meeker Meeting Minutes January 7, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Meeker Town Board was held Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at Town Hall.

Members Present	Mayor Pro Tem Mayor Trustees	Lockwood Day (by phone) Browning Day (by phone) Jehorek Nielsen Sizemore
Town Staff Present	Administrator Town Clerk	Etheridge Cook

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pro Tem Lockwood called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **ROLL CALL**

All Board members were present except for Mayor Day and Trustee Day, both attended by phone.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mayor Pro Tem Lockwood asked for changes to the agenda. Trustee Nielsen made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Trustee Jehorek. All ayes. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Trustee Sizemore requested “Trustee” be added to her name on page 3 paragraph 3. A motion was made by Trustee Sizemore to approve the minutes of December 12, 2024, as corrected. Second by Trustee Jehorek. Aye: Trustees Browning, Day, Nielsen, and Sizemore. Trustee Jehorek abstained due to her absence. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF MONTHLY DISBURSEMENTS**

Mayor Pro Tem Lockwood asked why we are paying \$11,000 to USGS. Administrator Etheridge explained the water monitoring program and that the Town of Rangely, Rio Blanco County, and Meeker Sanitation District are all a part of it. Mayor Day also explained the benefits of being a participant in the program. A motion was made by Trustee Jehorek to approve the disbursements dated December 31, 2024. Second by Trustee Nielsen. All ayes. Motion carried. A motion was made by Trustee Browning to approve the disbursements dated January 7, 2025. Second by Trustee Nielsen. Aye: Trustees Browning, Jehorek, Nielsen and Sizemore. Trustee Day abstained due to not having the updated voucher list. Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

***Annual Report from the Eastern RBC 911 Emergency Telephone Service Board.*** Rhawnie McGruder presented the final budget for 2024 and the proposed budget for 2025 stating the bottom line did not change very much from last year, the Board will be increasing the surcharge again this year as the PUC sets the rates, currently the maximum they can charge is \$2.12 on every cell phone line which will be effective Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>. McGruder said the Board did invest more money into CDs to plan for a large radio upgrade in 2027.

***Update from the Chamber of Commerce.*** Josh Harrison from the Chamber of Commerce addressed the Board stating Stephanie Hanson has resigned as director and they have filled that position with Sarah Stevenson who will begin next week. Sarah will be transitioning into the new position with the help of Ms. Hanson and will address the Board formally in March once she has become acclimated.

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**NEW BUSINESS**

***Bid award for Motor Grader.*** Administrator Etheridge said the Invitation to Bid was published as of December 5<sup>th</sup> on BidNet, in the Herald Times, and on our website with a closing date of last Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> at 3pm. Included in your packet are the reports from BidNet so you can see what that looked like and which vendors actually requested information on the bid. Lisa, Tobey, and I were all present for the bid opening on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, it was recorded and filed that we received one complete bid, and two incomplete bids. The complete bid is from Wagner Equipment in the amount of \$284,400 for the motor grader with an offer of \$18,000 trade-in value for our current piece of equipment for a total bid price of \$266,400. The incomplete bids received were from 4Rivers Equipment who were not able to make the delivery deadline, and Power Motor Corp., who were not able to meet the bid specs. Staff's recommendation is to accept the complete bid from Wagner Equipment.

Mayor Pro Tem Lockwood asked if the bid price included the trade in; Administrator Etheridge replied that it did. There was discussion regarding putting the grader out for bid. Mayor Day felt the trade-in offered by Wagner was a good price. Etheridge said the other benefit is that Wagner will take the old one away and we will not have to house it. Trustee Sizemore asked how the BidNet process was. Administrator Etheridge said it worked very well, we can see how many bids have been received but can't open them until after the deadline, then you can open the link and the bid is right there, you can also see how many vendors looked at the bid.

Mayor Pro Tem Lockwood called for a motion to accept the bid from Wagner Equipment in the amount of \$266,400 which includes the trade in value of \$18,000. Moved by Trustee Jehorek. Second by Trustee Sizemore. All ayes. Motion carried.

***Consideration of Ute Park Permit Agreement for David Smith Ranches.*** Administrator Etheridge said this is the same permit language as last year, with new dates for 2025. Trustee Jehorek stated she was concerned about the lack of snow this year and the possibility of drought conditions this spring; if the grass comes out of dormancy early the cattle will choose the green and growing grass over feed and we won't be able to bring up the soil profile even with the sprinklers; Jehorek stated she has been trying to come up with a solution like possibly pulling them off early as this could be the kind of year we can do a lot of damage. Davey Smith replied the cows will also eat the old feed that is there, all of the range permits will have this same problem, the cows are fed everyday with hay, and there won't be much growth before the May deadline of pulling them off because there won't be enough warmth to grow grass and even with the good sprinkling system the soil is sandy, so even on a good year it doesn't hold a lot of moisture so even if we take the cows off there will still be a problem.

Trustee Jehorek stated she wanted the Board to come up with a solution. Mayor Day stated he felt the current permit would allow for the Town to request that the Park be reevaluated in March by a third party if needed. Smith said they try to get out by the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, but depending on conditions sometimes there is nowhere to go with them. Trustee Jehorek said our job as the Town Board is to protect the grass and liked Mayor Day's suggestion to reevaluate in March with a third party such as CSU if needed. Administrator Etheridge said the closest thing she can find in the permit that will allow the Town some leeway if we need to reevaluate is Item 4 on page one.

Mr. Smith said if the Town decides I need to be off within 30 days prior to the expiration of the permit, I would be better off not to sign the agreement because I will have nowhere to take them. Mayor Day said he

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felt it would have to be extreme circumstances to ask Smith to move them off early. Trustee Jehorek said she would like to add language to the permit that when we are at a D2 or D3 drought stage the conditions be evaluated by a third party. Trustee Nielsen asked how long, if the grass is damaged, will it take it to recover. Trustee Jehorek said some recover quickly and some never recover. Mayor Pro Tem Lockwood asked the Board to keep perspective of the last 20 years at the park and of the gains we have made with the irrigation and in my mind garner a little favor toward the Smiths who allow use of the water. Trustee Browning suggested monitoring and evaluation after this year for future year's usage.

Trustee Jehorek said another question she had is the permit allows for moving cattle to the upper BLM allotment, what if there is an event that goes on during that time. Mr. Smith replied that since BLM has built the trails they have hardly used it, only enough to keep the permit alive, we probably will not run cows there after the other cows are out and I don't think it should cause a problem. Trustee Jehorek made a motion to leave the permit as it is now, approve it as it is written, and ask the Town Manager to investigate a monitoring plan for the park. Second by Trustee Sizemore. All ayes. Motion carried.

***Consideration of Ute Park Permit Agreement for Meeker Classic.*** Administrator Etheridge said the permit has the same language as previous years, with new dates for 2025 and has been approved and signed by Trial Director Maym Cunningham, who is with us via phone, and by Classic Board President Regas Halandras. Maym thanked the Board for their support last year and previous years, and asked permission to have an electrician evaluate one of the big power poles on site as it has been having issues for a few years where they are continually blowing breakers and then the sound system won't work. They suspect the outlets and the breakers are old and/or not sized sufficiently. The Classic would like to budget the cost to evaluate the situation and would propose finding out what needs to be done and then presenting the Town with a plan. The Classic would also like to offer the Town (or another entity such as the Chamber) the opportunity to run a one minute commercial video during the live trial broadcast, they had 10,000 unique views worldwide in 2024.

Mayor Pro Tem Lockwood asked if the Classic was proposing any new locations for power, Maym said no new locations they only want to repair what is currently in place. The Board concurred moving forward with the evaluation by a licensed electrician and Mr. Harrison with the Chamber stated they would be interested in taking advantage of the one-minute video ad slot.

Trustee Sizemore made a motion to approve the Ute Park Permit Agreement for the Meeker Classic. Second by Trustee Jehorek. Ayes: Day, Jehorek, Nielsen and Sizemore. Trustee Browning abstained as she is a Board member of the Classic.

**MANAGER'S REPORT**

Administrator Etheridge reported the following:

Circle Park Project: Since our December meeting, the contract was fully executed and a Notice to Proceed was issued on January 2<sup>nd</sup> pursuant to receiving the full Schedule of Values to support the contract price of \$1,609,267.81 – this is included in your packet. Yesterday ERBM Director Josh Emery and I met with the X Field Services team and Mike Jones with the Cemetery District on site to plan for mobilizing materials and equipment to support the work on the Circle Park location. Jake Haskins with X Field let us know today that SGM plans to stake the project later this week for X Field to begin working, and X Field will begin repairs to the Cemetery access trail early next week to accommodate rock and equipment deliveries. The plan is to kick off construction the week of the 20<sup>th</sup>. The park will be closed to the public as of next week, with notices in this week's paper, websites, and postings.

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Mayor Day asked what SGM would be using for plans to stake the handicap ramp as they currently are not final, and requested they should wait until we have the stamped plans. Administrator Etheridge said she would reach out to Jake and let him know not to stake the ramp until the Town has received the stamped plans and that she expects the final approval by the end of this week. The Board concurred.

As for the change order, Michael Scurlock with GEI has completed the new design of the ADA Ramp and is awaiting Landscape Architecture stamp of approval of accessibility compliance. Once we have that approval, we will look at the updated quantities with Michael and X Field Services and determine what a change order would look like financially to go before the Board. It will likely be at our meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> as that is when the Rec. Board meets as well – with the possibility of a joint meeting for change order approval at that time and suggested a 6:00 joint meeting with the Rec. Board. The Board concurred regarding the meeting.

Highway Banner: Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup> late at night an Ace Hardware semi-truck took the Chamber’s over highway banner for a ride to Craig. Due to weather conditions, the banner was determined to be sagging from ice buildup and wind. The Chamber will have to figure out a better system to keep the banner at regulation height. Mayor Pro Tem Lockwood asked what our exposure as the Town is and suggested talking to Attorney Massih to find out. There was discussion on monitoring the guidewires and soil on a regular basis, and it was suggested that UpLift Meeker, the Chamber or the Town take on the responsibility.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan: Carly attended a CWPP meeting this afternoon and Vanessa Trout is working on an application to the Community Wildfire Defense Grant through the State Forest Service. Funding for this grant comes from the Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and is administered through the State. The application will be a comprehensive program that includes fuel breaks, defensible space projects, a new Firewise Director position and Firewise projects, basically anything NOT on federal land. Ms. Trout is currently evaluating criteria for eligibility and would like to know if the Town Board would consider support for adding into the scope of the application the installation of Robert Street as an additional point of egress/wildfire evacuation route for the Sage Hills subdivision. At this time Vanessa just needs to know if it would be of interest to the Board so she can determine whether to invest time in researching the project and if so, I would like to add a deeper discussion to the agenda at our next meeting. The deadline for the grant application is February 28<sup>th</sup>.

Trustee Browning asked if this this is in conjunction with what started a few years ago with the China Wall break. Administrator Etheridge said that it is, and it spans a huge portion of eastern Rio Blanco County. The Board concurred they would like more information, to explore the grant further and to place it on the next agenda.

**MAYOR’S REMARKS**

None.

**OTHER BOARD BUSINESS**

None.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Pro Tem Lockwood adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

/s/Chris Lockwood, Mayor Pro Tem

Attest:

/s/Lisa Cook, Town Clerk