

## **Town of Meeker Meeting Minutes – February 4, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Meeker Town Board was held Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at Town Hall.

Members Present	Mayor Trustee	Day Browning Day Jehorek Lockwood Nielsen Sizemore
Town Staff Present	Administrator Town Clerk Admin Asst Comm. Dev./Planner Attorney Police Chief	Etheridge Cook Pakuer Thomson Massih Thompson

### **CALL TO ORDER**

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

### **ROLL CALL**

All Board members were present.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mayor Day asked for changes to the agenda. A motion was made by Trustee Jehorek to accept the agenda as submitted. Second by Trustee Day. All ayes. Motion carried.

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

Trustee Nielsen pointed out a correction in the minutes be made to change *Tiffany* to *Trustee Jehorek*. Motion was made by Trustee Sizemore to approve the minutes of January 21, 2025 with changes. Second by Trustee Nielsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF MONTHLY DISBURSEMENTS**

A motion was made by Trustee Browning to approve the disbursements dated January 31, 2025. Second by Trustee Jehorek. All ayes. Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

***Conservation District presentation of Community Wildfire Defense Grant application.*** Vanessa Trout introduced herself as the Forestry Program Coordinator for the White River and Douglass Creek Conservation Districts in Meeker, a grant funded position focusing on forests and watershed. The Colorado State Forest and the Rio Blanco Wildfire Protection Plan have identified priority areas up the White River that are at sever risk of impact from wildfire including Ute, Papoose, Campbell Creek, Buford, Crooks Park and Lost Park. Since these areas have been identified, it is Trout’s job to plan projects and find funding to implement the projects. In November the opportunity for a Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) came up; this is funded by the inflation reduction act and goes through the United States Forest Service with Colorado State Forest Service as the financial administrator. The CWDG grant focuses on funding implementation, creation, or revision of projects within the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). The CWPP core planning group got together and selected projects, one of which is the extension of Robert Street for evacuation and emergency egress. Trout met with Administrator Etheridge and Comm. Dev./Planner Thomson to discuss implementation.

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Trustee Browning asked if the firebreak that was done on China Wall was completed or just partially done. Trout stated that project involved the BLM and Fire Protection District, and the Conservation District was not involved, however in the CWPP Sage Hills was listed as high risk, and that additional routing is good for evacuation and fire fighter access.

Trustee Lockwood asked for clarification if the state has these funds in hand. Trout replied they are on round three of the grant process, the state informed Trout the grants were already allocated and gave her permission to move forward and apply.

Trustee Jehorek asked if there would be a Town match for this grant. Trout stated the Town is eligible for a match waiver according to CWDG, however she would like to discuss this further with Etheridge and Thomson. Jehorek expressed concern regarding the five-year timeline and whether the 3.9 million dollars takes into consideration inflation. Trout said she would investigate that.

Trout informed the Board that she had all she needed to move forward, unless there are some revisions, and that it has to be completed and submitted by February 25<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Day asked for any other public participation. Mr. Bob Amick informed the Board that the Meeker High School Astronomy Club along with WR Alliance have taken over the Dark Sky Project. The students will give a presentation at the next WR Alliance meeting. The Board requested the Astronomy Club do a presentation at a Town meeting also.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

***Consideration of Tavern License transfer from Chippers Downtown to Riggs Downtown LLC.*** Mayor Day opened the public hearing at 7:18 pm. Town Clerk Cook stated Trenton and Janae Shelton filed a completed application to transfer the Tavern Liquor License from Chippers Downtown LLC to Riggs Downtown LLC on December 23, 2024. A temporary license was issued to Riggs Downtown on December 27<sup>th</sup>. Notice of the public hearing was posted at the property and published on January 16<sup>th</sup>. There has not been a denial of an application at the location of 285 6<sup>th</sup> Street for the reasonable requirements of the adult inhabitants were satisfied by other existing outlets. Riggs Downtown LLC has legal possession of property by way of a lease dated December 17, 2024. The license will not be in violation of any zoning or other applicable Town ordinances or laws of the State of Colorado. The building is not within 500' of any public or parochial school or the principal campus of any college, university or seminary.

Within the designated neighborhood there are the following existing outlets:

- 4 Tavern licenses
- 3 Hotel and Restaurant licenses
- 3 Retail Fermented Malt Beverage off premise licenses
- 2 Retail Liquor Store licenses
- 1 Brew Pub

No petitions or letters in favor of, or in opposition of the license transfer were received. Background investigation and fingerprint results are complete, all fees have been paid, and staff recommends approval.

Hearing no further questions or concerns Mayor Day closed the public hearing at 7:20 pm and called for a motion to accept Tavern License transfer from Chippers Downtown to Riggs Downtown LLC. Moved by Trustee Lockwood. Second by Trustee Jehorek. Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.

***Consideration of Conditional Use request for ADU at 925 7<sup>th</sup> Street.*** Mayor Day opened the public hearing at 7:21 pm. Comm. Dev./Planner Thomson stated Daniel and Sabrina Ferguson, owners of property located at 925 7<sup>th</sup> Street are requesting to convert a cabin on their property into an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). The property is in the Single-Family Residential zoning district. At the time of the application the applicant did not know the intended use of the ADU however it will be a 2 bedroom, 1 bath unit. The property meets

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the requirements for all off-street parking including those for the proposed ADU. The subject property is 30,900 square feet and the ADU is approximately 528 square feet which calculates to 1.7% of the lot size and is less than 1,000 square feet, meeting the requirements for maximum size. The ADU will remain under the same ownership as the principal lot. The applicant currently has two water taps associated with property.

Accessory Dwelling Unit is listed as a Conditional Review Use under the single-family residential zoning code, updated in May of 2023. The applicant has submitted the required application and fee within the required time frame. The request has been advertised as mandated by the Meeker Land Use Development Code including notification of the Public Hearing to property owners within 300 feet, at the subject property and in the Herald Times. During the referral review period the application received the following comments from referral agencies:

- Meeker Sanitation District: The applicant will be required to pay an initial Plant Investment Fee of \$3,250. As well the property will be charged monthly for each residential unit.

The applicant has been made aware of this requirement from Meeker Sanitation District. Since receiving the application, staff has received 0 Negative/Against comments and 0 Positive/In-Favor comments. The Planning Commission reviewed the application and recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit to construct an Accessory Dwelling Unit at the property at 925 7th Street for the following reasons:

- The Conditional Use request meets the conditions of Meeker Land Use Development Code section 18.1.16 and 18.1.18.
- The Conditional Use request meets the goals of the Comprehensive Master Plan

Staff does agree with this recommendation.

Hearing no further comments or questions, Mayor Day closed the public hearing at 7:25 pm and called for a motion to approve Conditional Use request for ADU at 925 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Moved by Trustee Nielsen. Second by Trustee Jehorek. Roll call. All ayes. Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Consideration of building permit fee waiver for PMC.** Administrator Etheridge stated Liz Sellers was present representing Pioneers Medical Center (PMC). Etheridge stated that PMC pulled a building permit for the remodel of the Xray room and has a required permit fee cost of \$1,889.75. PMC submitted a letter requesting a waiver of the building permit fee. Sellers stated the Xray machine is twenty- five years old and also informed the Board that in two months PMC will be expanding the pharmacy and plans to return asking for another permit waiver at that time as well.

Trustee Nielsen stated it costs the town money each time our inspector goes out to do an inspection. Nielson suggested possibly offering a discount on the permit fee. Trustee Lockwood concurred with Nielsen that the staff needs to be paid for their services provided, and the Board needs to be respectful of the tax payers' money, adding that he would propose not waving any of the permit fee. Trustee Jehorek inquired if there are any discounts or waived fees from PMC to the Town, and Administrator Etheridge stated not that she could think of , and when there are CDL physical's performed for the Town of Meeker employees the Town pays those fees for that service. Jehorek also agreed with Trustee Lockwood not to waive any permit fees. Hearing no further discussion or questions, Mayor Day called for a motion not to waive the building permit fee for PMC. Moved by Trustee Jehorek. Second by Trustee Day. Roll call. Ayes: Trustees Day, Jehorek, Browning, Lockwood, Sizemore. Nay: Trustee Nielsen. Motion passes.

**Bid award for Police Department vehicle.** Administrator Etheridge confirmed there were four bids submitted:

- Daniels Long Chevrolet in Colorado Springs; 2024 Silverado 1500 in the amount of \$53,787.00
- Ken Garff Ford in Greeley; 2024 Ford F150 XL in the amount of \$51,922.00

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- Legacy Brothers in Douglas GA; 2025 Ford F150 XL in the amount of \$67,218.00
- Victory Motors in Craig; 2025 Dodge Ram 1500 in the amount of \$45,600.00

All bids were properly received and opened at a public meeting on Thursday, January 30, 2025 at 3:00 pm. Upon review all bids did meet requirements and specifications. Staff recommendation is to accept the low bid of \$45,600 from Victory Motors in Craig for a 2025 Dodge Ram 1500.

Mayor Day expressed concern for the presentation of the bid from Victory Motors as there was conflicting pricing information and handwritten notes on the bid sheet. Administrator Etheridge confirmed that the bid from Victory Motors was a manual bid that arrived in a sealed envelope and at the public meeting for the bid opening those present included Chief Thompson, Lieutenant Dietrich, Officer Hetzel, Evidence Technician Ridgeway, and Town Clerk Cook, all of whom could confirm that the bid sheet was received as marked from the sealed envelope. Etheridge also stated that the bid tabulation prices were for vehicles only and that additional costs would be incurred with the up-fitting of the vehicle and determined by comparative pricing. When asked about timeframe, Chief Thompson stated Victory Motors said the vehicle would be received sixty to one hundred-twenty days after order was placed.

Hearing no further questions or concerns, Mayor Day called for a motion to accept the bid from Victory Motors in Craig for the 2025 Dodge Ram 1500 costing \$45,600.00. Moved by Trustee Sizemore. Second by Trustee Nielsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Discussion regarding updates to Meeker Municipal Code Title 18: Zoning and Subdivisions.** Community Development/Planner Thomson presented several updates to the Land Use Code, starting off with dimensional requirements in sections 18.1.5-18.1.12 for minimum building widths for primary buildings. Thomson explained that in the previous Land Use Code minimum building widths were included and that this would add these requirements back in. The following recommendations were made:

- Rural Residential (18.1.5) – 24 feet
- Single Family Residential (18.1.6) – 24 feet
- Mixed Residential (18.1.7) – 10 feet
- Mobile Home Park(18.1.8) – 8 feet
- Town Core (18.1.9) – 10 feet
- Highway Corridor (18.1.10) – 10 feet
- Industrial (18.1.11) – 10 feet
- Community Facilities (18.1.12) – 10 feet

Thomson also presented accessory building requirements in the Town Core zoning district were not included and that ground floor maximum area of 1,000 sq. feet and overall height of 25 feet requirements be updated to be consistent with other zone districts. Trustee Day asked that overall height should include “maximum” designation.

Thomson then addressed the Board regarding the renewable energy updates to the land use code, first thanking the Rio Blanco County Planning Commission and Leif Joy for their well written and thought-out regulations. Thomson called out the following definitions, highlighting the distinctions between them: energy production facility, renewable energy facility and renewable energy system. Thomson continued to explain that renewable energy facilities would be listed as conditional uses in the following zone districts: rural residential, single family residential, highway corridor, and industrial.

Thomson continued with the discussion regarding renewable energy systems, explaining that these regulations would be for accessory use and permitted in every zone district. Regulations include requirements for visual impacts and accessory geothermal, solar and wind systems.

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Thomson then presented the regulations regarding renewable energy facilities, stating that a new section would be created due to the magnitude of process and application requirements. Thomson explained that the regulations were taken directly from Rio Blanco County with the following additions:

- Town Road Use Agreement
- Appropriate signage for solar and wind facilities placed on electrical equipment, entrance and along perimeter fencing
- Minimum lot size of twenty-five acres for renewable energy facilities

The Board engaged in discussion regarding fencing for renewable energy facilities and directed Thomson to include fence height as part of the “visual impact statement.” Thomson concluded the discussion with a request to add a dimensional requirements chart for “mixed use” buildings in the Highway Corridor zone, explaining that the use is already permitted but the chart was left out.

**Discussion regarding Meeker Housing Partnership.** Comm. Dev./Planner Thomson began the discussion reminding the Board that the town was successful in acquiring a Local Planning Capacity Grant with the intent of creating a housing partnership. The Board reviewed the draft mission statement, vision statement, core values, and goals. The Board asked who the partners on the project were, and Thomson explained there has been involvement from Meeker School District, Rio Blanco County, Pioneers Medical Center, and the US Forest Service. Further discussion revolved about ideas for future planning with the Board giving directive to move forward drafting bylaws for the organization.

## **MANAGERS REPORT**

Administrator Etheridge updated the BOT on the following:

Bid update: The town is still in the open bid window for the Garfield Street Water Line project with a mandatory pre-bid meeting for February 5th at 10:30am; the closing date is in three weeks on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February; staff has distributed plan sets and specs to eight construction companies across the Western Slope; Administrator Etheridge issued the invitation to bid for this year’s street maintenance for crack filling which will close on the 27<sup>th</sup> of this month; bid awards for both projects are anticipated for the Board meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March.

We received notification over the weekend from CDPHE that our newest wells nos. 7 & 8 have been classified for groundwater influence testing (referred to as GWUDI) in 2025. This will require a more robust testing schedule than anticipated for this year and runs from April to October so the Board will be getting updates on that as it begins. We are asking our CDPHE water quality division representative to come assist with some training for the department in March in preparation for the GWUDI requirement.

Yesterday Etheridge received a formal request for the Board to reconsider one of the Town Appointments to the Library Board. It will be on the next meeting agenda. Etheridge stated she has asked Attorney Massih to look into process for that request.

### Meeting reminders

- Cricket public meeting Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at the Fire House
- Matt Solomon with AGNC will be back for the 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop meeting with the Board to talk about the NW Colorado Energy Initiative on Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm
- EDCC meeting in Craig on Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>
- CML is beginning to advertise their annual conference in Breckenridge the end of June if anyone is interested in going...

## **MAYORS REMARKS**

- Mayor Day expressed a thank you to the Board on their professionalism during the consideration of Library Board appointment. There were quite a few compliments.

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- The AGNC will have their yearly updates on February 19<sup>th</sup>. Lisa Piering from Rangely sits on this board, perhaps the Town of Meeker should consider finding a representative to replace that position.
- Mayor Day inquired about Rio Blanco County’s stance on the current Energy Initiative which includes potential nuclear storage. Administrator Etheridge shared that Matt Solomon with AGNC is working with both municipalities and the County to get through 3 workshops to explore the Initiative and at the next workshop he will recap the responses across the county so far.

**OTHER BOARD BUSINESS**

Trustee Lockwood asked about an update on Circle Park and inspection from GEI. Administrator Etheridge shared information from the project foreman that they started excavation by the cattleguard on the pond ditch; the boulder hauling has been ongoing; and they started excavating along the river today. Etheridge has received complaints of mud being tracked onto Cemetery Road and County Road and X Field will be adding track mats and cleaning up as needed. Lockwood also asked about protocol for access if Board members want to look at project and Etheridge stated there is protocol in place with the construction contract agreement that outlines access and requirements for protective gear.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(f)(1) for discussion of personnel matters involving the 2024 evaluation of the Town Administrator.* Trustee Lockwood made a motion to move into executive session pursuant to the Colorado Revised Statute cited above. Second by Trustee Jehorek. All ayes. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Day reconvened the regular session and stated that no other business was discussed other than stated above, and no decisions were made.

Trustee Jehorek asked for more clarification on the public request regarding the Library Board appointment and Attorney Massih stated that there is still a lot to determine regarding the process; Massih received Board directive to reach out to CML Attorney Sam Light for an opinion on the process, as well as to get in touch with the Meeker Regional Library District Attorney.

Mayor Day adjourned the meeting at 9:30 pm.

/s/ Travis Day, Mayor

Attest:

/s/Lisa Pakuer, Admin. Asst.