

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

The Regular Meeting of the Meeker Town Board was held Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at Town Hall.

Members Present

Mayor
Trustees

Borchard
Day
Gutierrez
Jehorek
Kindall
Nielsen
Lockwood

Town Staff Present

Administrator
Town Clerk
Comm. Dev./Planner

Etheridge
Cook
Thomson

Citizens Present: Turner, Niki; Kobald, Stephanie.

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

All Board members were present, Trustee Kindall joined the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

A motion was made by Trustee Gutierrez to approve the minutes of March 21, 2023, as submitted. Second by Trustee Nielsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MONTHLY DISBURSEMENTS

A motion was made by Trustee Lockwood to approve the disbursements dated April 4, 2023. Second by Trustee Jehorek. All ayes. Motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Update from Chamber of Commerce. Director Kobald informed the Board she will be leaving the Chamber after being with them for 10 years; she thanked the Board for their support and funding. Kobald stated she will be staying with the Chamber approximately eight hours per week through the transition of hiring a new director. Other updates included the Main Street program has applied for the next level of Graduate, which is the top level with only eight of the 23 Main Street communities achieving the designation; a branding consultant met with the group, they decided Project 45 needed a name change and is now Uplift Meeker, the group also completed a new strategic plan for the next five years. Kobald stated moving up a level with Main Street also gives us more money from \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year for three years, and if we have a large project we can ask for all three years of funding; the group's current projects include the highway banner, purchasing accessories for the downtown parklets, nine more bike racks and working with all the event planners to coordinate events and possibly offer a survey to gather data from the participants. Kobald said they are very excited about the Business Center extension as more people are using

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the present conference room and it works great for virtual meetings; five new members have joined the Chamber this year; they are working in conjunction with the US Forest Service to create a tourist recreation guide about recreating responsibly and have applied for a grant for a new kiosk outside the Chamber cabin.

NEW BUSINESS

Bid award for Housing Assessment and Action Plan. Planner Thomson stated she and Administrator Etheridge tabulated the evaluation of the proposals and both came up with the same recommendation of Ayres Associates in the amount of \$59,930 as they demonstrated relevant experience working with rural communities, their proposal was in compliance with the requirements of the RFP, and staff found the firm's approach to performing the scope of work, public outreach and deliverables to align with the needs of the community; additionally, they have included optional add-on activities that might be worth considering later if we decide to add; they are proposing a six month process which would wrap up approximately in October; staff has contacted references and received good comments; Ayres Associates also worked with Uplift Meeker on the new branding so they are familiar with our community. Mayor Borchard called for a motion to award the bid for the Housing Assessment and Action Plan to Ayres Associates in the amount of \$59,930. Moved by Trustee Nielsen. Second by Trustee Gutierrez. All ayes. Motion carried.

Consideration of letter of support for RBC Fire District's BLM Wildland Fire Community Assistance Program grant request for the Meeker Fuel Break project. Administrator Etheridge stated the grant is being applied for by the RBC Fire Protection District and Chief Pelloni has been working closely with Rio Blanco County and the BLM on the Fire Break project for some time now; the project has not gained a lot of traction to date mostly due to funding and he is hoping the grant will get the project back on track. Mayor Borchard called for a motion to approve the letter of support for the Meeker Fuel Break project. Moved by Trustee Lockwood. Second by Trustee Nielsen. All ayes. Motion carried.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Administrator Etheridge reported the upstairs renovation is moving along quite nicely, the state electrical inspection passed, the HVAC relocation is finished, ceiling tiles and new tracks arrived Friday, the carpet is scheduled to be installed once Public Works staff finishes painting, once this project is complete the grant will be expended, and staff will look for additional grant funding for connectivity and audio-visual equipment.

Engineering plans are complete for the re-surfacing of 11th and 12th Streets, the invitation to bid is in this week's paper with a full set of plans available online or at Town Hall; a mandatory walk-through will be April 19th with bids due on May 2nd.

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Administrator Etheridge asked the Board's consideration of holding the Ute Park workshop on April 25th. Mayor Borchard stated he is not available on that day but urged the Board to continue without him. The Board concurred on that date.

Administrator Etheridge referenced a recent message from CML that informs elected officials and municipal staff about a new legislative measure that they are lobbying hard to oppose: SB-213, called the "More Housing Now" plan from the Polis Administration, which is being sold as a fast-track, sweeping move to streamline regulation and create statewide standards around housing options and land use, focused on large and resort municipalities; although this will not affect Meeker as we are too small we need to be aware this type of legislation is being proposed, CML has recruited a lot of feedback from the communities it will affect as it will create:

- Oversight by DOLA and a State Committee from other agencies which equals more bureaucracy,
- State mandated and regulated housing assessment every five years,
- Makes ADUs and Multifamily housing (aka middle housing) a use by right in residential zones,
- Takes away minimum square footage requirements, maximum occupancy requirements, and restrictions on manufactured housing – all in the spirit of removing barriers to affordability.

If individually, Board members would like to oppose the legislation, they are encouraged to go to the CML website, click the link on the letter provided and add their name as a public official.

Etheridge said with the voter-approved Prop123 going into effect, there will be funding allocated starting in 2024 for affordable homeownership programs, middle income housing, homelessness programs and capacity building – but funding will only be available if municipalities follow state guidelines for a 3% annual increase in affordable housing inventory. Priorities under the CHFA programs include high density, middle income, and sustainability and it sits in contradiction to what this Senate Bill will set out to do.

Trustee Lockwood commented that with the housing assessment complete in October we need to be cognizant when it comes to budgeting for a potential infrastructure project next year.

Planner Thomson updated the Board on the Land Use Code stating she had received final comments from Attorney Massih, will make those changes and begin publishing tomorrow until April 18th when we will have the first public hearing, comments will be open after the 18th until the second public hearing on May 16th. Thomson said she will forward the Land Use Code and any comments she may receive to the Board.

MAYOR'S REMARKS

Mayor Borchard remarked he thought it was interesting that after the Town sent the letter to the Rio Blanco Water Conservancy District regarding the White River Storage Project the call on the river was pulled. He also found it unacceptable they need three weeks to respond to our questions. Trustee Lockwood suggested he would like to see a bio on all of the District's employees and Board members to share with the RBC Commissioners who have been supportive of the project in

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light of the amount of money they have lost. Trustee Jehorek questioned how they can base the amount of recreation the county will receive considering it will all be in the mud. Mayor Borchard asked if the Board wanted to invite the Commissioners to our next meeting for the presentation by the RBC Water Conservancy District. The Board concurred with Trustee Lockwood recommending staff send them a letter of invitation.

OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

Trustee Gutierrez informed the Board there is currently a movement afoot to start a Meeker Restaurant Association, partnering with the Chamber and Lodging Tax Board to come up with dining guides, etc. to get the word out there are a number of businesses here and we can all work together, not against.

There was discussion regarding the Division of Wildlife's reduction in hunting tags and increase in the cost of them for this year's hunting season.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Borchard adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.



Kent A. Borchard, Mayor

Attest:



Lisa Cook, Town Clerk