



IGNACIO TOWN BOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, November 15, 2021 – 6:30 PM

Abel F. Atencio Community Room, 570 Goddard Avenue
and via Remote Public Meeting

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER: Mayor Cox called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM. She opened the meeting by leading in the pledge of allegiance.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Stella Cox, Mayor Pro Tem Alison deKay, Trustee Tom Atencio (arrived 6:42 PM), Trustee Edward Box III, Trustee Sharon Craig, Trustee Sandra Maez

Absent: Trustee Dixie Melton

Guests:

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Regular Town Board Meeting Minutes from October 11, 2021
- B. Special Town Board Meeting Minutes from November 1, 2021
- C. Financial Records – October Check Register and October Accounting Reports
- D. Side Kick Lounge Liquor License Renewal Application

Mayor Cox noted that there are a couple of amendments to the agenda and requested that Ms. Dunton state what those amendments are.

Ms. Dunton stated that Item D under new business, the Dixie Melton Proclamation, will be moved to the December 13 meeting due to the fact that Trustee Melton will not be at the meeting this evening. Mayor Cox had requested that an item be added regarding staff bonuses. Ms. Dunton suggested that this be part of the work session and whatever direction is given to staff will be ratified at the December 13 meeting; Mayor Cox agreed.

Trustee Craig moved to approve the Consent Agenda; Trustee Maez seconded the motion. Mayor Cox called for a roll call vote; the motion passed unanimously.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Funding Request Presentations

Mr. Garcia stated that this evening is an opportunity for each service provider to give an update to the Board of their successes over the past year and present a request for funding for the upcoming year. He stated that all of the funding requests are reflected in

the current budget; he requested that each organization keep their presentation to five minutes or less. Mayor Cox called on each organization for a report.

1. Axis Health Systems

Serrada Leavenworth expressed appreciation for the opportunity to present the request to the Board; Axis is asking for support for their acute treatment program. In 2020 they provided 133 crisis assessments for Ignacio residents; 6 went into ATU for care and 20 nights of stay was provided. So far this year Axis has provided 155 crisis assessments through August, indicating the increased issues that the pandemic has caused. Mayor Cox asked about service to veterans; this is provided through Axis. Trustee Craig asked if the number of calls had increased in other communities as well; they have. Ms. Leavenworth expressed appreciation again.

2. Community Connections

Char Keene, CEO of Community Connections, stated that they have been serving SW Colorado since 1985, providing for inclusion needs for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The early intervention program is for children under 3 who need an early boost when they are not reaching the milestones that other children their age are reaching; every dollar expended in this age bracket can save us to \$17 in later years. There are also adult programs to help individuals with disabilities live as independently as they and their families would want them to; this program helps with budgeting, money management, shopping, meal preparation, etc. New program since 2020 expands to older adults with physical disabilities and/or brain injuries. Government pays 70% of costs to run these programs; Ms. Keene is requesting assistance with the other 30%. Mayor Cox asked regarding the level of funding; Ms. Keene said they are requesting \$2,500. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to speak to the Board.

3. HomesFund

Lisa Bloomquist, Director of HomesFund, expressed appreciation to the Board for considering the request for funding. HomesFund provides HomeBuyer education classes, financing for mobile homes and manufactured homes, and down payment assistance funds. She provided statistics regarding the increased cost of homes and the lack of increase in cost of living raises for most people. She stated that Mr. Garcia gave her a tour of Rock Creek and other areas where affordable housing can be built; she stated that HomesFund would like to work with the Town to help with these potential projects. HomesFund also provides mortgage assistance loans and individual financial counseling. 17 Ignacio area families have purchased homes through HomesFund; they were provided with a combined amount of \$823,000.00 in mortgage assistance funds. HomesFund is requesting a renewal of the Professional Services Agreement that is currently in place with the Town, with no increase in the amount of the request. She again expressed appreciation to the Board.

4. Ignacio Creative District

Stephani Burditt, Treasurer, stated that she is requesting \$5,000 for 2022. Because of the prior support that the Town has given, the Ignacio Creative District has become a federally recognized 501(c)3 organization. ICD has hosted multiple

outreach meetings in the community and have identified multiple art projects and many volunteers who are willing to assist with those projects. ICD has also been awarded two Technical Assistance Program through the collaboration of Colorado Creative Industries and the Office of Economic Development and International Trade, and has been invited to apply for state certification as a Creative District (ICD will apply in the next round of applications in February), which will open up multiple grant funding sources. ICD will use the funds that the Town provides to employ a grant writer who will find further funding for the Creative District so that it can become self-sustaining. ICD hopes to hire a Program Director with the grant funds that are acquired to oversee the projects that were identified in the community outreach meetings. ICD has received support from the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, local businesses, members of the Board, as well as other organizations that align with the District's efforts to unify the community through artistic expression for mutual prosperity and economic growth. Stephani expressed the appreciation of the ICD Board for the Town's commitment and support in the past.

5. La Plata Youth Services

Katy Pepinski, Director, came with Erin Barnes and Esther Belen to give the presentation. Erin is a Youth Advocate and Esther is the Restorative Justice and Diversion Program Coordinator. Katy stated that all three of them work in the Ignacio community, and they are requesting continued support for their work of advocacy for youth that are facing challenges at school, at home, and with court involvement. They are working closely with the schools to bring mental health resources. They also work with IPD and other law enforcement agencies in Ignacio, as well as with the court, to help the youth that are struggling with behavioral issues. They provide a diversion program so that the youth do not have a record, provided they complete the program successfully. On February 17, 2022, LPYS will host the Unchain My HeART art show at the ELHI Community Center as a fundraiser for LPYS. There will be a silent auction and the youth will be able to exhibit their art in a professional setting. All youth can participate, whether they are involved in the diversion program or not.

6. Sexual Assault Services Organization

Laura Latimer, Executive Director of SASO, expressed appreciation to the Board for the opportunity to present SASO. They have opened an office at ELHI in February of 2020, and then the pandemic hit. In spite of the pandemic, they provided 210 unduplicated clients with services, had 1,101 victim services calls, and gave 472 referrals to community resources. Of all these calls, there were 3 hotline calls from Ignacio and 20 conversations with residents of Ignacio. 2021 numbers are down about 8%, but up 514% from 20 years ago. There are 2 cultural outreach coordinators; Kelsey Lansing works out of the office at ELHI. This evening she is at Fort Lewis College hosting the 4th Annual Symposium for violence against Native relatives; there will be a movie tomorrow evening, called "Say Her Name," at Fort Lewis College for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Relatives. SASO also offers a Sexual Assault Response Team that works with law enforcement, DA, and probation to look at best practices around sexual assault and to provide support

for the victims. SASO has been operating since 1977 and they currently provide a 24/7 hotline for those who need the support of someone when they are telling their story of the victimization they have experienced. Trustee Craig asked if the isolation of the pandemic has caused the reduction in numbers. Laura stated that domestic violence numbers have increased significantly due to people being stuck at home with their perpetrators; however, the sexual assault numbers have gone down because of a lack of access by the perpetrators to the victims. Laura expressed appreciation to the Board; Mr. Garcia stated that the presentation is in the packet if the Board wants to review any of the statistics that Laura gave.

7. Southern Colorado Community Action Agency

Jay Rhodes, business director for Road Runner, expressed appreciation for the Town's support over the many years that SoCoCAA has been in existence. He introduced Gary _____, the assistant director of the transit. SoCoCAA has eight divisions, one of which is Road Runner Transit. Jay stated that Road Runner provides three different services. The Demand Response Service provides transportation to many people, 627 in the past month. The Fixed Route Service (Ignacio, Bayfield, Durango) provided 362 rides last month, 191 of which were seniors from Ignacio. Bustang Ride provided 261 rides. These numbers are down from previous years because of the pandemic and the fact that some people won't wear a mask. The fuel bill is over \$6,000 per month. 80% of Road Runner funding comes through the federal government; the rest comes through local support. The buses they have now used to cost \$86,000 to build; they now cost \$150,000 for the same bus. He stated that Road Runner cannot operate without the support of the Town, and he expressed appreciation for the past support and requested that the Town provide the same support for upcoming year.

Mayor Cox expressed appreciation to each person who gave a presentation this evening, stating that their services are very valuable to the Ignacio community and surrounding areas. Mr. Garcia stated that the funding requests are reflected in the draft budget that will be reviewed in the work session at the end of the meeting and he anticipates that the Board will fund each of the organizations at their requested amounts. The presenters and the Board Members expressed appreciation to one another.

B. Auditor Proposal Update

Ms. Dunton stated that she had posted the RFP for the 2021-2023 audit years in the local newspaper and on BidNet. There were about a dozen downloads of the RFP off BidNet, but the only proposal that was received was from Hinton Burdick. She stated that the proposal is in the packet. She stated that she has drafted an acceptance letter if the Board would like to proceed; she also stated that she is willing to do something else if the Board would like. Mr. Garcia stated that the selection of the auditor is one of the important tasks of the Board; the auditor reviews the financials and oversees the staff to ensure they are competent in what they are doing. He stated that Hinton Burdick has done well.

Mayor Cox stated that she is pleased with the work that Hinton Burdick has done well. Mr. Garcia stated that Hinton Burdick has been helpful to both Tuggy and Dee as they are learning a job without any training from the previous treasurer. Perhaps they do not respond in the timeline that staff would desire, but they have provided great support.

Mayor Cox asked about a fee increase; Ms. Dunton stated that the fee for 2021 would be \$17,000; 2022 will be \$17,700; and 2023 will be \$18,400.

Mr. Garcia stated that in the past we have been backed up against statutory deadlines due to the lateness of the auditor's reports; he felt the Board should make the request that they draft and final audits be submitted in a more timely fashion. By consensus, the Board expressed their desire that the timeline be more specific and directed staff to draft a letter of acceptance with a more detailed timeline to provide opportunity for the Board to review the draft and final audit documents. The Board, by consensus, gave Mayor Cox the authority to review and sign the acceptance letter.

Action: Trustee Craig moved to accept the audit proposal from Hinton Burdick; Trustee Maez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Professional Services Agreement with SEH

Mr. Garcia stated that the two-page contract is an extension of the current agreement that expired in October; they have been responsive to our needs and this extension would add two years to the current agreement with an updated fee schedule. Mr. Garcia recommended approving this agreement. There is currently a storm drain project on the docket with SEH that has already been entered into; approving the PSA would allow that work to move forward.

Action: Trustee Atencio moved to accept the Professional Services Agreement with SEH; Trustee Craig seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

D. COVID-19 Update

All CVRF funds have been expended and the final reimbursement request has been approved. \$85,000 has been disbursed into our community and we did not have to return any of the monies to the State. Mayor Cox stated that the residents and businesses have expressed appreciation for the support from the Town during the pandemic. Mr. Garcia stated that the Town now has rapid tests if any staff or Board Members need it; it is also available to family members of staff and Board. Chief stated that it is intended for staff, Board Members and family members who have been exposed and want to know if they test positive; it is not intended to test a person who is feeling sick because staff is not set up with all the protective equipment needed for that kind of testing. SJBPH is again recommending face masks, and has requested that the governor issue a face covering mandate; Chief stated the difficulty of that is the same as last year, and that is the enforcement issue.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Police Department

Light Up the Town Parade will happen on December 3 at 5:30; Santa Claus will make an appearance via helicopter and ride in the fire truck during the Parade. There will be the Taste of Christmas at ELHI immediately following the parade, and the library will host events as well. ELHI hopes for an even bigger and better event than last year.

Mathews Homicide Trial has been postponed until next year; there are plea bargains on the table, but it will most likely go to trial in April.

B. Public Works Department

Current projects with SEH are the storm drain that Mr. Garcia mentioned earlier and the preliminary designs on the County Road 320A gas and water line installations as well as the Browning Avenue storm drain and French Drain improvements.

Hydroexcavation in town is contracted with BonFire in preparation for boring operations which will most likely begin in December.

Fall Clean Up went off without a hitch.

Garry is working with Altitude Backflow on our cross-control program to make sure everything is up to date. Six businesses are scheduled to installations.

Trustee Atencio asked about the sewer leak at 7-2-11. Mr. Mickey stated he is working with them on clean-up. There was a water leak previously, and that has been addressed.

C. Clerk/Treasurer

Ms. Dunton stated that she has received an email from the La Plata Board of County Commissioners regarding the proposed Joint Work Session dates for 2022: March 10 at Willows Café at 6:00 PM; July 14 in Durango, location still to be determined, at 6:00 PM; November 3 at Willows Café at 6:00 PM. The Board Members stated those dates should work for them.

D. Town Manager

Rock Creek Housing has some interest from various organizations; Mr. Garcia has met with a couple of them. The RHA is working to provide housing; HomesFund has expressed a willingness to work with the Town on this project as well. Hoping for grant funding for this project. The plan will be completed by the end of this year and a final presentation will be given in December; this grant and the Broadband Planning Grant will both be closed out by the end of this year. FastTrack was denied; however, the denial will be appealed. BonFire has been working in Town and they will work with us as they are able.

No word yet from the UC Technical Assistance Program, but updates will be given in the future.

BonFire will know the week after Thanksgiving if their grant through NTIA was approved or not.

Looking forward to budget work session.

Trustee Atencio stated that he would like us to make sure that the Town receives funding from the Infrastructure Bill; Mr. Garcia stated that DOLA is working hard with all the different funding sources that have come about since the beginning of the pandemic.

E. Town Attorney

No report due to elk hunting.

VIII. TRUSTEE REPORTS

Trustee Box stated that he has been working with Tuggy on the Christmas Dinner on December 4. With the increased cases of covid, he wanted to ensure that everyone still feels comfortable attending the event. Chief stated that most of his staff will not attend due to the increased exposure risk; the rest of the staff and Board stated they would attend.

Trustee Box stated he will move forward with the plans; the Casino will require a mask and temperature check to enter.

Mayor Pro Tem deKay stated that she had spoken with Trustee Melton. Her brother just recently passed away and her sister-in-law is not doing well with her battle against cancer; please keep Dixie and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS

None.

X. BUDGET WORK SESSION

Mr. Garcia gave a review of the revenue numbers for 2022; the estimates tend to be conservative so that we can exceed the budget in revenues. Currently revenues are solid and one of the discussions that need to happen is with regard to raises in salaries. The second half of the ARPA funding will be coming in 2022. Mr. Garcia noted that the enterprise and general allocations were shown in the revenues in 2019; the auditor stated that should not be in the revenue section. Even after removing the allocations from revenues, the revenues for 2020 and 2021 are still strong. Based on projected revenues and current expenses, we anticipate ending the year with a gain of about \$500,000, with an anticipated ending balance for the general fund at 1.8 million in 2021. We currently carry no debt, so we are in a solid position financially.

Mr. Garcia stated that he would like input from the Board regarding salary increases; Ms. Dunton provided a spreadsheet showing the impact of 3%, 4% and 5% increases for staff. There are two servers that need to be replaced in 2022. There was an unbudgeted expense in 2021 for the Williams subdivision/South Ignacio purchase. There will be \$20,000 budgeted for planning in 2022; the Manager's salary is budgeted at \$83,200 for both 2021 and 2022, but this may need to be increased. The audit expense is in the 2022 budget as well.

Mr. Garcia stated there are no major changes in public safety. Chief stated there is a federal grant of \$33,000 to purchase handheld portable radios and another grant of \$16,000 to replace the body worn cameras. When the JAG grant opens in 2022, the IPD will apply for a grant to replace the mobile radios.

No major changes in the Public Works budget; added some tree care and grounds maintenance, as well as trail improvements. Salary increases will impact that budget.

Mr. Garcia requested input on the revenue side of things; he also stated that he would like the Board to direct staff regarding salary increases. The consensus of the Board was they are good with the projected revenues.

Ms. Dunton stated that at the October meeting the Board had requested that she poll the staff regarding preferences for a wellness program; in the Admin and Public Works departments, the preferences were wellness and retirement contributions and in the Police Department the preference was an increase in health insurance coverage. The Board discussed percentages of increases; the consensus was that salary be increased by 4% and an additional 1% would go toward health insurance, retirement or wellness (depending on the individual preference of the staff member). Mayor Pro Tem deKay asked about education; Ms. Dunton stated that it was presented as an option to staff, but no one selected that option since the Town already provides professional development

opportunities. Mr. Garcia asked if the 1% can be split by the employee if they desire; the consensus of the Board was that, if it is one of the three approved items (retirement, health, wellness), the employee can choose how they want it distributed.

Mr. Garcia stated that he is working with RPI for water and sewer analysis; he anticipates having numbers for the December meeting and suggested advertising a public hearing for rate increases and changes. He suggested returning to an ERT model based on water usage from the previous winter months. Trustee Craig asked if the Town had received rate increases from the Tribe for 2022; Mr. Garcia stated we have not. Mr. Mickey said that the State is raising the standard for potable water and waste water, so there will be expense to the Tribe that they will pass on to the consumers. He also said that the Town needs to work with its citizens because there are still clay sewer pipes in the ground that need to be replaced.

Mr. Garcia reviewed each of the other enterprise funds; the consensus of the Board was that the projected numbers for 2022 were acceptable. Mr. Atencio requested that Mr. Garcia approach La Plata Archuleta Water District about providing potable water; it has been over a year since they turned us down before. Mr. Garcia stated he would follow through with that request.

Mr. Garcia stated that the sewer enterprise fund will end this year at about \$87,000 in the red; he suggested making this fund whole with a general fund transfer and then set the rate structure from that point (rather than trying to include the arears in the new rate structure). After some discussion, the Board concurred that they would like to proceed with Mr. Garcia's recommendation.

Mr. Garcia stated that the gas enterprise fund is in good shape; the rate is 10% above the rate that the Tribe charges the Town. Rates are going up. This fund is slowly growing.

The irrigation fund is struggling and may require a slight increase; expenses this year were about \$2,000 more than income this year. We don't want to get into the same situation we are currently in with the sewer fund.

Conservation Trust Fund is lottery income. There is a project for the Ben Nighthorse Campbell Park that was not completed in 2021; this will roll into 2022 if the Board desires. Consensus was given to proceed. This is a restricted fund.

The Economic Development Fund has \$10,000 budget for 2022 for the UC Technical assistance program. There are no additional funds going into this fund; there are about \$51,000 available to expend; he suggested using these funds for downtown façade improvements or a Creative District Project; that decision can be made at any time.

The Capital Improvement Fund is funded through the 1% sales tax; only other revenue is in the interest income. There are consultant fees budgeted; the \$50,000 transfer out is for the water and sewer studies at \$25,000 each. These were budgeted in 2021, but not expended. The Becker/Goddard intersection should be at the \$750,000 that was budgeted for 2021 and should be completed by the end of this year. For the Rock Creek project, SEH estimated about 3.4 million for infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, utility extension, etc.); if we could get a grant for half of that (1.7 million), we could have a turn-key project that would pay us back the 1.7 we put into it. We may need to get a loan for the half that the Town puts in, but it would be a good deal in the long run. This is something we may consider for 2022.

The Board expressed appreciation to staff for the work they have done to present a good budget.

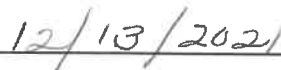
Mr. Garcia stated that the Planning Commission and the Board will hold Public Hearings in December for the land use and development code update and hope to be done with the update by the end of this year.

XI. ADJOURNMENT


Being no further business before the Board, Mayor Cox adjourned the meeting at 9:46 PM. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Monday, December 13, 2021, at 6:30 PM at the Abel F. Atencio Community Room and via Remote Public Meeting.



Stella Cox, Mayor



Date



Attest: Tuggy Dunton, Town Clerk