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# TOWN OF JEROME, ARIZONA

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## MINUTES

### SPECIAL MEETING OF THE JEROME TOWN COUNCIL JEROME CIVIC CENTER - 600 CLARK STREET - COUNCIL CHAMBERS THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2016 AT 3:00 P.M.

<p><b>ITEM #1:</b></p>	<p><b>CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL</b></p> <p>Mayor/Chairperson to call meeting to order. Town Clerk to call and record the roll.</p> <p><i>Mayor Currier called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Gallagher called roll. Present were Mayor Currier, Vice Mayor Freund, Councilmember Barber and Councilmember Vander Horst. Councilmember Stewart was absent.</i></p> <p><i>Also present was Joni Savage, Deputy Town Clerk. Deputy Public Works Director Edward Ave, Police Chief Allen Muma and Fire Chief Rusty Blair arrived shortly after roll call.</i></p>
<p><b>ITEM #2:</b> <b>3:02</b></p>	<p><b>APPOINTMENTS TO PLANNING &amp; ZONING COMMISSION AND BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT</b></p> <p>Terms of the following appointees will expire as of February 28, 2016: Planning and Zoning Commission – Lance Schall; Board of Adjustment – Gary Shapiro. Council may take action to reappoint these members, or appoint other individuals, to the succeeding three-year terms. In addition, there is a vacant seat on the Planning and Zoning Commission for the term ending February 28, 2017. Council may appoint someone to fill the remainder of that term. A portion of this discussion may be held in executive session pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03 (A)(1).</p> <p><i>Ms. Gallagher noted that the only action required here is to reappoint the two members whose terms are expiring, both of whom have indicated that they are willing to continue serving. We are still accepting applications for the vacancies, she said, and explained that there are currently vacancies on both Planning and Zoning and Design Review.</i></p> <p><i>Vice Mayor Freund asked if there were any other applications in at this time. Ms. Gallagher responded that there have been two applications received for the Design Review Board.</i></p> <p><i>After brief discussion, Mayor Currier asked the Council for a motion.</i></p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Councilmember Vander Horst made a motion <b>to reappoint Lance Schall to the Planning and Zoning Commission.</b> It was seconded by Councilmember Barber. <b>The motion passed with 4 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.</b></p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Councilmember Barber made a motion <b>to reappoint Gary Shapiro to the Board of Adjustments.</b> It was seconded by Vice Mayor Freund. <b>The motion passed with 4 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions.</b></p>
<p><b>ITEM #3:</b> <b>3:04</b></p>	<p><b>AMENDMENT TO ARIZONA PUBLIC EMPLOYERS HEALTH POOL (APEHP) MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT</b></p> <p>Council may approve an amendment required by APEHP to their Membership Participation Agreement.</p> <p><i>Ms. Gallagher explained that this came from the Arizona Public Employers Health Pool and has been reviewed by the Town Attorney. There was a member of the pool that had either not registered or not terminated coverage for an employee in a timely fashion, and it created a liability for the pool. This amendment says that it is our responsibility to remove or add someone, and if we do not, we would have to pay the costs involved in a claim. Mayor Currier asked if this covers the police department. Ms. Gallagher clarified that it covers health benefits for our full-time employees.</i></p> <p><i>Mayor Currier said that his understanding is that this came about due to a divorce. If we don't let the Health Pool know in a timely manner that somebody is off the list, then we have to pay if they make a claim. Whomever is responsible for coordinating with the APEHP, he said, should evaluate things on a monthly basis. Ms. Gallagher agreed that it should be reviewed</i></p>

	<p>periodically, and said that Ms. Cretti is the person that coordinates benefits with the APEHP. She recommended approval of the amendment.</p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Vice Mayor Freund made a motion <b>to approve the amendment</b>. It was seconded by Councilmember Vander Horst. The <b>motion passed with 4 ayes, 0 nays and 0 abstentions</b>.</p>
<p><b>ITEM #4:</b> <b>3:07</b></p>	<p><b>2016-17 BUDGET</b></p> <p>Council will begin their discussion of the 2016-17 budget with a general discussion of priorities for the coming year. Police Chief Muma, Fire Chief Blair and Deputy Public Works Director Mr. Avé will be present to discuss their respective departments.</p> <p><b><u>Police Chief Allen Muma</u></b></p> <p>Mayor Currier noted that Chief Muma was recuperating from back surgery, and he would like to hear from him first so that he wouldn't have to stand any longer than necessary. He said that he would like to know about the police department and if the Chief needed anything now or in the future, or would like to make any changes in the department.</p> <p>Chief Muma's comments are set forth below, not necessarily in chronological order.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He said that he has been here for 17 years and has never exceeded his budget. In 2002, they were budgeted for five full-time people. At that time, they lost a full-time employee, and that is when he began utilizing part-time employees in an effort to save costs. The department is healthy and is the lowest paid in the area, he said. He has managed to get by and hopes he will continue to do that.</li> <li>• The Chief noted that some of his officers are young. Matt Kline had committed to two years, he said, and will probably shift to Clarkdale in the near future, because the benefits provided by Jerome are not as good as in the surrounding areas.</li> <li>• He, himself, will not be the Chief for too much longer – perhaps two to five years. He doesn't plan on leaving Jerome, however, so he might volunteer. "I believe that the Council should keep that in mind," he said. He added that he will always have turnover in his officers and that it is "hard to get people that Jerome accepts."</li> <li>• He said that they have purchased only two cars over the last 17 years using Town funds. The others were purchased through grants or with RICO funding.</li> <li>• The Jerome Police Department did 60% of the call volume last year that Clarkdale did, but we are only one tenth of its size. Clarkdale handles a few more felonies and barking dogs. We have a million plus tourists coming through each year, he noted, and he doesn't believe that the police department is a burden to our citizens. "We typically only see two guys on over the weekend," he said, "we're lucky that we can cover vacations, and I don't see anything on the event horizon, even in five years." He added, "Good luck replacing me, I'm the lowest paid police chief in the State of Arizona."</li> <li>• Regarding comparative police costs, Chief Muma said that, in 2013 (the most recent figures he has), Dewey-Humboldt paid the sheriff's department \$357,111 for three contract deputies, including administrative support, which came to about \$57.23 per man hour of coverage. That same year, he said, our budget was \$352,284 for four full-time officers and equipment, approximately 1,040 part time hours, and four vehicles, and we took care of our own administrative costs. Our cost was \$37.64 per patrol hour, he said. "You couldn't contract with the county and get the same coverage," he added, "and you couldn't contract with Clarkdale, they pay more than we do and their retirement is more than ours." He noted that, with PSPRS, when officers are retired before their time just to get rid of them, it becomes very costly. "There is no question in my mind," he said, "that we've been doing this cheaper than anybody has been able to." He commented that one of our part-time officers is a doctor with a chiropractic practice in San Diego, who went through the Police Academy at age 52 and has worked for us every weekend for the last six years. "He doesn't have to do this," he said. "He just likes Jerome."</li> <li>• Most of the technology has been taken care of through grants, and our equipment is in good shape. "When the last vehicle needs to go, we'll need a new one," he said, and mentioned that the last vehicle he purchased cost around \$25,000, but if he had gotten it through the State, it would have been closer to \$50,000.</li> <li>• Councilmember Vander Horst commented that, although our population is only 450, it is actually about ten times that given the large number of tourists who come through. "Clarkdale may be larger," he said, "but they don't get the amount of</li> </ul>

tourism that we have." He asked Chief Muma, "What would be the ideal makeup of your force? Is it four full-time and four part-time?" Chief Muma replied, "Part-time is hard because it depends on what they can do. Some guys only want a day a week. I have another gentlemen that can work two to three days. I try to distribute the hours with the part-time evenly--it's an elusive number." He clarified that he currently has four full time officers – himself, the Sergeant and two officers (and the part-timers add one full-time equivalent), and he does not see a need for any more.

- He said that they pay no call out hours. Because of cellphones, he eliminated that when he came on here, and saved around \$22,000 for the department.
- Mayor Currier asked about comp time, and recalled that we ran into a situation, years ago, where, when one of the officers left "we owed him a fortune in comp time." He asked if we are facing this type of problem again. "No," Chief Muma replied. "We use comp time because it allows flexibility." He said that they make sure that officers are not building up their comp time, and it must be approved by a supervisor. "Normally what happens," he said, "is we use flex time."
- Councilmember Vander Horst asked, "In regards to salary inequities, retention, and recruitment, how big of an issue is that for you on a scale of 1 to 10?" "It's hard to tell," Chief Muma replied. "I didn't move here to get paid. If I didn't like it, I'd go somewhere else." He added that the retention time here now is 8.4 years, but when he got here, it was less than two years. "In 2000, I couldn't get anyone up here to work," he said. "One officer earned more overtime than his salary at that time." He said again that he could not give a definitive answer to that question.

**Fire Chief Rusty Blair:**

- Chief Blair said that he, too, has come in under budget for the past eight years. He tries to be as frugal as possible, he said, but he does ask for expenditures. He always looks for grant money and they have an application in now to replace the oldest (1961) truck. This year, he said, they were able to apply for a grant for new SCBA's (self-contained breathing apparatus), which are a crucial component of firefighting.
- With respect to fuel abatement on town properties, \$3,800 has been spent so far out of the \$25,000 Firewise grant.
- Regarding wildland revenues, sending our truck out is contingent on where we are in the rotation. He will not send the truck out if fire is heavy in our area, as his primary focus is to protect the community.
- He would like to make the Duty Officer a full-time, salaried position. Currently, it is 27 hours per week. He has a great deal of leave time accumulated, and having the Duty Officer has helped a bit, but it would be more helpful if he was moved to a full time salaried position. Chief Blair said that he does inspections for business licenses, fire hydrants, hose testing, and various other things, "but it is not a one man job. I try not to stress my guys out too much. I require a work session once a month and I get one guy to show up. They are not rushing in to help. The word 'mandatory' doesn't sit right with the volunteers. This has been a paid position for a long time but I'm doing so much more than what I did before, and it is harder for me to keep up without additional help." He added that he may be able finance some of the increased cost through grant moneys.
- Currently, there are three paid positions in the fire department: Chief, Assistant Chief and Duty Officer. The Assistant Chief puts in about 13 hours a week, and is good at writing grants and reports.
- He hopes to maintain a volunteer agency as much as possible. Last year, the call volume was 50% of Clarkdale's. Clarkdale's Fire Department has a million dollar budget with 12 full-time employees. Jerome could not afford that.
- The Fire Department's equipment is "fairly good." They are seeking a grant to replace the oldest fire engine. He is good about equipment maintenance, and tries to be frugal and realistic.
- Councilmember Vander Horst noted that Chief Blair is always on call, no matter what time of day or day of the week it is, and that concerns him. Clarkdale runs twice as many calls as we do, yet our budget is a fifth of theirs. "I want to invest in the Fire Department," he said.

- Councilmember Barber asked for and received clarification that there are currently one full-time and two part-time employees in the Fire Department, and that Clarkdale's fire budget is \$1 million per year. She thanked Chief Blair for all of his hard work.
- He has utilized the probation department and APS to provide free labor for the Firewise program.
- He is requesting that the Town's contribution to the Fire Department pension fund be increased from \$8,000 to \$12,000. He said that, in 2008, it was at \$12,000, but it was reduced when the economic crash happened.
- Councilmember Vander Horst said that he wanted to note for the record all of the things around town that Chief Blair is involved in, including his work on the sidewalk leading from the 300 Level parking lot. Chief Blair responded that he does those things on his off duty time. Mayor Currier agreed, and noted that Chief Blair also helps a lot with the Town crew. Mr. Avé said, "Yes, Chief Blair is a big help."
- He noted that, in the current budget, he is over on wages by \$28,681.00 due to sending his guys out on wildland missions. That came out of his budget, as did other monies he spent in that regard. He would like the revenues shifted from the contingency budget to the fire budget. \$71,000 in revenue was earned, and the Town has received all but \$25,000 if it, which should be received in March. Ms. Gallagher said that she would bring detailed information and a written motion to the next budget meeting in order that Council can take action to move those monies. Chief Blair said that he would also like to help facilitate the Firewise program with additional monies for chains, foam, fuels and flares.

**Deputy Public Works Director Edward Avé:**

- Mr. Avé said that he would like to add money to the budget for uniforms in order to make things safer for the crew, funds to rent heavy equipment if it is needed, sewer and water pipe, and to stockpile materials such as asphalt and AB.
- He spoke of the School Street regulator project. Earth Resources vacuumed it out last week, he said, and it is ready to be inspected by our engineer. He believes that we have the parts to do the job, although some may need to be exchanged as they need to be smaller than what had been ordered for the original plans. Ms. Gallagher commented that our new engineer is taking a fresh look at this, and he is a water and sewer expert. Mr. Avé said that they plan to install higher-rated regulators than what are in there now.
- He said that there is a new employee beginning work on Monday (replacing Marty Boland, who had recently resigned). He has his CDL, he's an equipment operator, and he knows a lot. He just needs to be trained on the trash truck.
- Mayor Currier said that he thinks that Mr. Avé has a lot more on his plate than the other departments. He asked if we are expecting too much from our crew. "It's an endless job," the Mayor said, and added that he would like to see "a second team" out there, but doesn't know how that could be financed.
- The Mayor mentioned the leaning wall, and Mr. Avé said that it would be done by the end of March. He is waiting for price quotes for the Jersey barriers.
- Mr. Avé said that he is having a problem with the garbage route right now, and needs someone to drive the garbage truck. They are trying to find time in between that to do other projects. Having the additional man will free up time to start on those, he said. He added that he feels that a lot of work has been put on him, and it is frustrating, because he likes to get things done but just can't right now, being short-staffed. He is hopeful that, once he has a full crew, things will improve.
- Mayor Currier asked if we had any lead lines anywhere. "No," Mr. Avé said, and explained that the clay lines have been replaced with PVC. The water lines are steel and ductile iron. He added that the catch basins and neglected sewer lines need to be addressed.
- He has been to the springs, he said, and that is another area that needs to be addressed.
- There is a cottonwood tree growing in the flume, which has busted it.
- He has looked into the price of a new garbage truck. He received a quote of \$164,000 for a brand new truck from McNeils, and there is a company in Florida who

has a refurbished truck, with warranty, for sale for \$54,000. He is waiting to hear from them regarding the added cost to install a rear hydraulic lift. He does not feel we need a brand new truck. Mayor Currier agreed and said that, traditionally, the Town has bought used vehicles.

- Vice Mayor Freund asked if the Town has an accurate map of its utilities that shows what has been worked on and when. Mr. Avé said that he has a map but he is not sure if it shows what has been replaced or updated. Mr. Freund said that he feels we should systematically be replacing lines throughout the neighborhoods.
- Mr. Avé noted the damage that can result from a pressure surge, and Vice Mayor Freund asked how long a regulator in a house would last. Mr. Avé said that it would depend on the amount of calcium in the water. "We don't have as much calcium up here as I thought we would," he said. Vice Mayor Freund noted that, when he first moved here, he replaced a lot of water lines under his house, and some of them had greatly diminished in diameter because of buildup in the lines.
- Mayor Currier had commented earlier that he views the crew as similar to a military operation, with varying levels of command. Ms. Gallagher clarified that, in our crew, there are different skill levels, but there are not different ranks. Everyone answers to Mr. Avé. Mr. Avé agreed and said that he does not believe that they need a crew chief. He added that he gets complaints about wages. There is a morale issue, he said, and perhaps a wage increase would help.

**Town Manager/Clerk Candace Gallagher:**

- Ms. Gallagher spoke about the budget process, and said that she feels that, last year, we "got bogged down in the details." She would like for Council to focus this year on the major items, and set the direction that they would like to see – what they do and do not want to pay for, salaries, and the like – and leave the smaller line items to her and the department heads.
- She noted that Council will need to decide what they want to do regarding sales taxes. This is one of the first things we should discuss, she said, as in order for any change to be effective as of November 1, a decision should be made by June. She noted that the sales tax increases put into effect last year will not automatically "sunset" as of November 1. That would require action by Council.
- She has not yet received revenue figures from the League of Cities and Towns, but expects them at any time.
- Mayor Currier asked her to prepare a trial budget, and would like to begin with discussion of the utility budgets, followed by properties.
- She noted that utility revenues will be budgeted at a lower figure for 2016-17, because they were inadvertently overbudgeted in 2015-16. Regarding utility expenses, the budget will depend on how much Council wants to dedicate to infrastructure repair and maintenance.
- She said that re-opening the steps from Town Hall to School Street, and repair of the wall there, is not going to happen during the coming year, as the engineer has determined that it will be much costlier than we had anticipated. We did receive a \$20,000 grant from Freeport-McMoRan for that project, and she may need to request from Freeport that those funds be allowed to be used for other purposes. Mayor Currier said that he does not think the wall repair will be doable, as it looks like it will cost over \$100,000, but he would like to be able to repair and re-open the steps leading up to the Civic Center. Ms. Gallagher stated that her understanding is that the condition of the wall is the reason that the steps were closed off to begin with.
- Ms. Gallagher said that one personnel item that should be considered is adding a new position – Assistant Finance Director. It should be someone that can step right in and assist Ms. Cretti, she said – someone with a financial background. Ms. Cretti was present, and said that she didn't believe that would be necessary "if the Council would stop micromanaging the finance department." A brief and somewhat heated dialogue ensued between Ms. Cretti and members of the Council. Mayor Currier stated, "I think this is getting into dangerous territory and I think she should leave." Ms. Cretti left the meeting at that time.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Gallagher said that we will have to include litigation costs in the budget. While she is hopeful that the litigation will be over before we have to adopt the budget, she noted that our coverage limit is \$18,750, and we must pay a portion of the costs up to that point as well.</li> <li>• She suggested that Council consider investing a few thousand dollars into a sound system for Council chambers. She has had complaints that some people can't hear well.</li> <li>• Sales taxes are up so far this year above what was budgeted, but there was a drop in January.</li> <li>• She said that she is still in discussion regarding the possible long-term lease of our cemetery property in Clarkdale, and things are looking more positive. They are doing soil tests right now, and she put them in touch with people at NAU to x-ray the ground there in order to locate the burials. Once they determine that they would like to move forward, she said, the lease would have to be offered publicly. She is not sure how soon that would happen, but it could possibly take place by the end of the coming fiscal year. Vice Mayor Freund noted that our new engineers have an on-site archeologist.</li> <li>• There was discussion regarding rental properties. Vice Mayor Freund recalled that Council had promised the Blue Bee Boutique that rental prices would be reviewed during budget discussions. Ms. Gallagher noted that Town Hall was recently fully rented, and she does not see a reason to revisit those. However, the lease at the Artists Co-op has expired, and should be reviewed and renewed.</li> </ul> <p>Mayor Currier recapped this discussion. Council will look first at utilities, he said, then properties. Regarding the fire department, he said that Chief Blair makes a good point that he needs backup, and he feels that would be a good thing to do. Ms. Gallagher noted that this would not be adding a new person, just bringing a part-time position to full-time.</p> <p>She added, regarding adding new public works crew members, that she feels it would be helpful at some times, but unnecessary at others. The problems right now, she said, are a function of the way that things have been for the last two years, and the backlog of projects. She believes that things will get better and that Mr. Avé has a good handle on things. Mr. Avé commented that, if any crew members are added, they should be knowledgeable and able to operate heavy equipment. Mayor Currier agreed. Ms. Gallagher commented that we could look into temporary help or contracting out when necessary. Either, she said, would be less expensive than bringing in another full-time person.</p> <p>There was discussion regarding the next budget meeting, and Ms. Gallagher said that she would like to aim for early April.</p>
<p><b>ITEM #5:</b></p>	<p><b>ADJOURNMENT</b></p> <p>Upon <b>motion</b> by Councilmember Vander Horst, seconded by Vice Mayor Freund and unanimously approved, the <b>meeting was adjourned at 5:04 p.m.</b></p>

*Edited by Town Manager/Clerk Candace Gallagher from minutes taken and transcribed by Deputy Town Clerk Joni Savage.*

APPROVE:

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lew Currier, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candace B. Gallagher, CMC, Town Manager/Clerk

Date: \_\_\_\_\_