

RIDGWAY TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
MAY 10, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was held both in person and via virtual meeting portal Zoom Meeting, pursuant to the Town's Electronic Participation Policy.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The Council was present in its entirety with Councilors Grambley, Kroger, Lakin, Schuyler, Thomas, Mayor Pro Tem Meyer and Mayor Clark in attendance.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 12, 2023.
2. Register of Demands for May 2023.
3. Renewal of Brew Pub Liquor License for Colorado Boy Brewing Company.
4. Renewal of Tavern Liquor License for Steps.
5. Renewal of Tavern Liquor License for The Patio at Steps Tavern

ACTION:

It was moved by Mayor Pro Tem Meyer, seconded by Councilor Schuyler and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda.

POLICY MATTERS

6. Design concept for Ridgway Visitor Center building

Staff Report dated 5-10-23 from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs Main Street Division presenting information on design and construction documents for the Ridgway Visitor Center Project.

Town Manager Preston Neill explained staff has been working with Colorado Main Street to receive assistance on a design concept for the Heritage Park and Visitor Center Master Plan.

Main Street Architect and Certified Passive Housing Consultant Larry Lucas, addressed the Council and explained the Master Plan includes the use of shipping containers as buildings. He noted the use may invoke a sense of sustainability, as they are composed primarily of recyclable materials. However, he noted, they also create limitations on floor dimensions, do not meet ADA compliance, wall and insulation requirements and lack location for windows and doors. Additionally insulating for cold climates is challenging, he stated. It requires a specialized knowledge to understand the structural modifications, and will require a structural engineer to work with the Town in the permitting process. He offered "more flexible and greener design ideas" with passive design principles using structurally insulated panels (SIPS) or the use of modular prefabricated buildings.

There was discussion by the Council and discussion with staff. It was noted the Master Planning Committee suggested looking at the structures due to sustainability and affordability, and it now appears the option of using SIPS or traditional construction is probably the correct course of action. The Town Manager noted the Council is being asked to look at a potential change to the document to allow for the creation of a request for proposals for the design process of the project.

**SPEAKING FROM THE AUDIENCE:**

Sue Husch supported the use of either “SIP or stick built” construction.

There was discussion by the Council and the consensus was to pursue a combination of construction types with the use of SIP building materials and conventional construction methods.

The Town Manager reported requests for proposals will be sought and the public will be allowed input during the on-going process.

**7. Request to close a portion of Clinton Street for Space to Create Grand Opening Celebration**

Community Initiatives Facilitator Tera Wick reported the grand opening celebration of the Space to Create Building is scheduled for June 22nd. The organizing committee is requesting closure of Clinton Street, between N. Cora and N. Laura Streets, for placement of an outdoor stage.

**ACTION:**

Councilor Schuyler moved to approve the special event permit for closure of Clinton Street for the Space to Create Grand Opening Celebration on June 22nd, Councilor Kroger seconded the motion. On a call for the vote the motion carried unanimously.

**8. Space to Create recognition plaque and Community Room dedication plaque**

The Community Initiatives Facilitator reported two plaques are planned to be installed in the Space to Create facility. A plaque honoring Peter and Dee Dee Decker will be placed in the Community Room which will be paid for by the Town, and a Dedication Plaque that ArtSpace will be providing for the lobby area. She requested the Council approve the naming of the Decker Community Room.

**ACTION:**

Moved by Councilmember Kroger, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Meyer and unanimously carried to approve the naming of the Decker Community Room.

**PUBLIC REQUESTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**9. Presentation on expansion of Voyager Youth Program and Communities That Care Coalition strategies**

Alex Durham with Voyager Youth Program presented changes to the program, and the Communities That Care Coalition. The after school program is now also being held in Ouray, and accepting children starting at age three and up; participation has increased from 40 children to 55. Events include hosting “pop up teen events”, and early childhood programs.

She reported on the Communities That Care Coalition, the youth development and mentorship programs, and encouraging civic engagement.

10. Proclamation declaring May 2023 as Mental Health Awareness Month

Mayor Clark addressed Mental Health Awareness Month and spoke to efforts being made by Tri-County Network to “lift the stigma on mental health issues”, and “tell people they are not alone”.

ACTION:

Councilmember Kroger moved to approve proclaiming May 2023 as Mental Health Month, Mayor Pro Tem Meyer seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

11. Application for Restaurant Liquor License from Ridgway Natural Foods, LLC; Members: Jessie Vaughn and Hyan Gyung Im; DBA: Lotus Root; Location: 618 Clinton Street

Staff Report dated 4-4-23 from the Town Clerk presenting an application for a Restaurant Liquor License for Lotus Root.

The Town Clerk explained an application for a Restaurant Liquor License has been received from Ridgway Natural Foods, LLC, members Jessie Vaughn and Hyun Gyung Im, for the premises at 618 Clinton Street. The trade name of the business is Lotus Root. State law requires a public hearing before the local jurisdiction for application of a new liquor license. A notice of hearing before the Town Council has been posted and published, and the premises posted, all in accordance with state statutes, she noted.

She reported the applicant leases the premises, which would be licensed to include both in the building, and the patio areas on the north and south sides. State liquor law allows applicants to file for a concurrent review with State Liquor Enforcement while the application is being processed at the local level. This type of application allows the local jurisdiction to issue a temporary permit allowing the applicant to conduct business and sell alcohol, until approval is issued by the state licensing authority. The applicant is seeking issuance of a temporary operating permit from the Town, and has remitted the appropriate fee.

ACTION:

Mayor Pro Tem Meyer moved, and Councilor Thomas seconded, to approve the application for a Restaurant Liquor License from Ridgway Natural Foods LLC, members Jessie Vaughn and Hyun Gyung Im, dba Lotus Root. The motion carried unanimously.

12. Application for Tavern Liquor License from Irwin Acker, LLC; Members: Jeffrey Kaplan and Neal Elinoff; DBA: Adobe Inn; Location: 251 Liddell

Staff Report from the Town Clerk dated 4-3-23 presenting an application for a Tavern Liquor License for the Adobe Inn.

The Town Clerk reported an application for a Tavern Liquor License has been received from Irwin Acker, LLC; members Jeffrey Kaplan and Neal Elinoff, for the premises at 251 Liddell Street. The trade name of the new establishment will be Adobe Inn. A notice of hearing was posted and published, and the premises posted in accordance with state statutes.

The applicant owns the premises, she stated, which will be licensed encompassing from the south property line, to the east side of the building, to allow serving on the existing patio areas.

The applicant Jeffrey Kaplan, addressed the Council and explained the plans for the new business.

**ACTION:**

Councilor Lakin moved to approve the application for a Tavern Liquor License from Irwin Acker, LLC, sole members Jeffrey Kaplan and Neal Elinoff, dba Adobe Inn. Councilor Grambley seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

**POLICY MATTERS (Continued)**

13. Introduction of Ordinance No. 03-2023 Amending Chapter 6 - Building Regulations; Amending Chapter 7 - Planning and Zoning; and Amending Chapter 8 - Licensing of the Ridgway Municipal Code; and Amending the Official Zoning Map

Staff Report from Katie Kent and TJ Dlubac with Community Planning Strategies presenting a proposed ordinance with changes to building and land use regulations.

Planner Kent reported in September of 2022 the Planning Commission began discussions, and held public hearings, to develop changes to the land use regulations, which will affect the Land Use Map. Both the Council and Commission discussed the proposed changes at their April meetings, and on April 25th the Planning Commission approved the draft ordinance and recommended approval by the Council.

**SPEAKING FROM THE AUDIENCE:**

Val Swartz noted the outdoor lighting section in Chapter 7 need to be changed to reflect changes being made in Chapter 6.

**ACTION:**

It was moved by Councilor Schuyler, with a second from Mayor Pro Tem Meyer to introduce the Ordinance No. 03-2023 Amending Chapter 6 - Building Regulations; Amending Chapter 7 - Planning and Zoning; and Amending Chapter 8 - Licensing of the Ridgway Municipal Code; and Amending the Official Zoning Map. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

14. Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee Bylaws

In follow up to the special meeting held in April, Town Attorney Nerlin presented Bylaws for the Town of Ridgway Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee, which addressed management of the lottery system for the Wetterhorn affordable housing and procedural matters of the committee.

On a question from the audience the Mayor explained the committee was formed to administer the lottery selection for affordable housing units in the Wetterhorn Project.

ACTION:

Mayor Pro Tem Meyer moved to approve the Bylaws of the Town of Ridgway Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee, Councilor Schuyler seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

15. Dedicated revenue source to address housing challenges and affordable housing

Staff Report dated 5-2-23 from the Town Manager presenting information on ways to provide a dedicated revenue source to address affordable housing.

The Town Manager explained at the last meeting Council gave staff direction to focus efforts on the Lodging Tax rate and earmarking percentages; research existing lodging taxes rates in neighboring communities; further explore an Inclusionary Zoning Fee in Lieu and an Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee. He noted all information compiled by staff is contained in the Staff Report.

There were questions to staff, and discussion by the Council. There was comments by the Council, and discussion ensued.

The Council reviewed an increase to the Lodging Tax.

SPEAKING FROM THE AUDIENCE:

Short term rental lodging owner Bob Kelly stated he would support a 1½ percent increase if it was applied to all lodging facilities, not just short term.

Chamber of Commerce Director Ashley Perkins questioned the 2020 revenues, and stated projected numbers should be “based on a potential recession”.

Chamber Board member Tanya Ishikawa stated the Chamber of Commerce “operates with everything it receives” and stated “we can not lower our budget at all”.

Pam Foyster inquired into establishing a real estate transfer tax.

Business owner, Tim Patterson, stated “the majority of our businesses struggle” with “heavy visitation in the summer” only. He noted with the increase in cost of goods there are more challenges for businesses. He supported retaining the current lodging tax funds used to “mitigate the impacts of tourism” and noted funding to the Chamber should increase, as the funding “generates tourism”.

Richard Weber stated “the Chamber is a very valuable group” noting “without tourism some business can not survive”. He supported raising the lodging tax, but stated “don’t take money from the Chamber” as they “help with events which draw visitors”.

There was discussion between Council and the audience. The Council noted the lodging tax funds are not allocated for the Chamber of Commerce, but for marketing the community, and the Chamber has been given the annual contract to provide the services.

Chamber Board member Adam Dubroff stated “the Chamber is trying to drive business in the off season”. He stated the Town should look at short term rentals as they “are the root cause

of a housing shortage”, and “they don’t have to build to commercial standards like lodging does”.

There was discussion by Council regarding increases to percentages in lodging tax, and a split of percentages for marketing and affordable housing costs. It was agreed to place a question on the November ballot and staff was directed to notify the County Clerk of the intent; to research an increase in lodging tax to 6% with a 50/50 or 60/40 split between marketing and affordable housing; pursue a developers affordable housing fee and inclusionary fee in-lieu of.

16. Update on annual scholarship to a local high school senior

Mayor Clark announced the Council received four applications for the \$1000 student scholarship, which will be awarded tomorrow.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

Manager Neill highlighted some items contained in the monthly Managers Report.

Councilor Thomas presented an update from the Sustainability Committee; Mayor Pro Tem Meyer on the Water Users Association.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Town Attorney recommended the Council enter into a closed session pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 24-6-402(4)(b) for consultation with the Town Attorney and 24-6-402(4)(e) for matters subject to negotiation regarding the Town’s possible purchase of water rights.

ACTION:

Councilor Kroger moved to enter into Closed Session, Mayor Pro Tem Meyer seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

The Council entered into closed session at 8:55 p.m. with the Town Attorney, Town Engineer, Town Manager and Town Clerk.

The Council reconvened from closed session at 9:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pam Kraft, MMC  
Town Clerk

