

RIDGWAY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 13, 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.

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 5:30 p.m. with the Town Attorney, Town Engineer, Town Clerk and Town Manager.

The Council convened from closed session at 5:45 p.m. and took a recess.

The meeting reconvened at 6:00 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 9, 2023.
2. Minutes of the Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee from August 28, 2023.
3. Register of Demands for September 2023.
4. Renewal of restaurant liquor license for Land and Ocean Restaurant.
5. Renewal of liquor store license for High Spirits Liquor.

ACTION:

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kuno Vollenweider told the Council he is concerned about the condition of the ditch at County Road 5 and Amelia Street. He stated "it is imperative to repair" the culvert as "road damage

is extensive” after “big storms”, also the ditch is filled with debris and is “cutting the bank edge”.

He also stated the Town policy of “enforcing ordinances being complaint driven” means a citizen “can’t just call” and he has experiences delays in the process. He stated addressing complaints should be “more timely”.

PUBLIC REQUESTS AND PRESENTATIONS

6. Proclamation declaring September 2023 as National Suicide Prevention Awareness and Recovery Month

Jamie Hurst, Suicide Prevention Coordinator with Tri-County Health Network, presented a proclamation declaring September as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, and noted the month was created to reduce the stigma that comes with the topic, and provide an opportunity to speak about suicides, as this is the first line in prevention

She stated 90% of people who die by suicide experience diagnoseable and treatable mental health conditions, and in 2021 Colorado experienced the sixth highest suicide rate in the US.

There were comments and questions from the Council.

ACTION:

Councilor Kroger moved to adopt the Proclamation declaring September 2023 as Suicide Prevention Awareness Montin in the Town of Ridgway. Councilor Thomas seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Presentation from Dirty Sturdy’s Mountain Compost

Mark Sturdevant with Dirty Sturdy’s Mountain Compost reported he provided composting services during the annual concert series and “1000 gallons of refuse was composted” from “cups and food scrapes”. He noted “having a person there” helps to and “get most of the materials” while they are “pretty contamination free”.

8. Annual presentation from EcoAction Partners regarding programs, projects and initiatives

Emma Gevona, Executive Director with EcoAction Partners explained the program spans across four regions. The mission statement is to track regional greenhouse gas emissions and coordinate programs that reduce energy and waste.

The Sneffels Energy Board, which was created in 2009, and is composed of eight governmental entities which oversee regional programs and leveraging of grants. The Climate Action Plan focuses on eight key sectors, and identifies 21 objectives and 74 actions. She presented the 2023 update highlighting the plan; events; sustainability; energy incentives; grants; student programs; composting; tracking green house gas inventory; climate policies to reach reduction goals; composting programs; green business program; weatherization program; energy incentives; residential energy programs.

9. Presentation from San Miguel Power Association regarding programs, projects and initiatives

Alex Shelley, with San Miguel Power Association, presented an update of projects the “member owned” non-profit cooperative administered this year. These included writing microgrid community resiliency grants; a policy change regarding seasonal and idle service

accounts which are inactive for 90 days or more; setting objectives to locate new energy sources; discussing implementation of a “potential billing” based on “cost plus four times” for electrical usage during peak times, which would be between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.; and looking into partnering on affordable housing incentives by providing rebates.

There were questions and comments from the Council throughout the presentation.

10. Annual presentation from Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership regarding programs, projects and initiatives

Tanya Ishikawa, Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership Executive Director, presented the non-profit organizations 2023 accomplishments which included strategic planning and stakeholder engagement; update to the 2012-13 Uncompahgre Watershed Plan; strategic planning including field trips; review of draft plan for next ten years. She explained the organization “exists” to help protect and improve the natural, scenic and economic values of the Upper Uncompahgre River Watershed.

There were questions from the Council.

POLICY MATTERS

11. Introduction of Ordinance Granting a Franchise to San Miguel Power Association, Inc

The Town Attorney presented a proposed franchise agreement with San Miguel Power Association. He explained in order to operate within Town limits the issuance of a license to use the public rights of ways is required. The proposal is for a fifteen year franchise, which includes “pass through” franchise fees.

There were questions from the Council.

ACTION:

Moved by Councilor Lakin, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Meyer to introduce Ordinance No. 06-2023 Granting a Franchise to San Miguel Power Association, Inc., to Operate an Electric Power Utility within the Town of Ridgway and Fixing the Terms and Conditions Thereof. On a call for the vote, the motion carried unanimously.

12. Agreement to Purchase Water Rights

The Town Attorney reported the Town was approached by Nugget Telluride LLC with an offer to sell water rights located within the northwest portion of Town. Staff held a series of discussion with the proposed sellers, conferred with Council in executive session, and in June engaged LRE Water to undertake an analysis of the water rights and determine the benefit to the Town.

The proposed arrangement for setting the selling price of \$80,00 is \$50,000 cash to the seller, and acknowledgement of a \$30,000 charitable gift or donation which the seller can use as a tax benefit.

ACTION:

Councilor Lakin moved to accept the proposed agreement with payment of \$50,000 and recognition of \$30,000 charitable gift from the seller. Councilmember Kroger seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

13. End of season report on weed management activities

The Council received a written report from Julie Kolb, Ouray County Vegetation Management, outlining the areas treated in Town during the year. These included the south end of the Athletic Park; Happy Hollow Ditch in-take; the Water Treatment Plant; Cottonwood Park; Public Works Facility Yard; Uncompahgre Riverway Trail; sidewalks throughout Town; Rollans Park; and various irrigation ditches.

There were comments and discussion by the Council.

14. Town Manager's Report

Manager Neill presented an overview and highlighted some items contained in the monthly Managers Report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Town Attorney asked the Council to enter into a closed session pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 24-6-402(4)(f) for discussion of a personnel matter concerning the Town Manager's annual performance evaluation.

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 8:15 p.m. with the Town Manager.

The Council reconvened from closed session at 9:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pam Kraft, MMC
Town Clerk