

The Regular Meeting of the Meeker Town Board was held Tuesday, March 2, 2010 at Town Hall.

Members Present	Mayor	Etheridge
Trustees		Omer
		Cook
		Strate
		Mills
		Gerloff
Members Absent		Halandras
Town Staff Present	Town Administrator	Day
	Town Planner	Smith
	Town Attorney	Viscardi
	Liquor Clerk	Sizemore
	Admin. Assist.	Niemi
Citizens Present	Nikki Turner	RB Herald Times
	John Brooks	RBC Health Serv. Dist.
	Diane Dunham	RBC Health Serv. Dist. Board
	Vickie Cross	Meeker Hotel/Café
	Wendy Gutierrez	Mr. & Mrs. Larry Beck
	Brian Conrado	Pat Hughes

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Etheridge called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

All Trustees present except Trustee Halandras. (He joined the meeting later via phone)

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Etheridge asked if there were any changes to the agenda with Administrator Day requesting the addition of an Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S 24-6-402(4)(b), regarding a conference with an attorney for legal purposes.

A motion was made by Trustee Omer to approve the agenda with the addition of an Executive Session at the end of the regular meeting, seconded by Trustee Mills. All ayes, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Mayor Etheridge asked for changes or revisions to the minutes of February 16, 2010, with none noted.

A motion was made by Trustee Cook to approve the February 16, 2010 minutes, seconded by Trustee Mills. All ayes, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

Mayor Etheridge asked for questions or comments regarding the revised vouchers dated March 2, 2010 with none noted.

A motion was made by Trustee Mills to approve the revised vouchers dated March 2, 2010, seconded by Trustee Omer. All ayes, motion carried.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

Planning Department: Planner Smith stated the Planning Commission would be meeting March 8, 2010 regarding a Special Review request from the Cemetery District and would come to the Board on March 16, 2010. She added the work on the updates to the Town's map was still underway and several inquiries had been made into home occupation. Planner Smith also stated work was still being done on the draft version of the subdivision

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codes.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

NEW BUSINESS

Request from Meeker Hotel & Café LLC, 580 Main Street, Meeker, CO to renew hotel and restaurant liquor license.

Liquor Clerk Sizemore stated this was the annual liquor license renewal for the Meeker Hotel & Café LLC. She stated Philip Cross is the manager and his wife Vicki was present. She added there were 10 calls for service to the address; none related to alcohol, fees had been paid; paperwork completed and Staff recommended approval. Mayor Etheridge asked for questions or comments with none noted.

A motion was made by Trustee Cook to approve the request from Meeker Hotel & Café LLC for renewal of the hotel and restaurant liquor license, seconded by Trustee Strate. All ayes, motion carried.

Request from Eastern Rio Blanco County Health Service District for acquisition and transfer of the Walbridge Memorial Convalescent Wing and Meeker Hospital Fund to the Health Service District.

John Brooks, representing the Eastern Rio Blanco County Health Service District, presented a memo to the Board requesting the acquisition and transfer of the Walbridge Wing and the Meeker Hospital Fund to the Health Service District. He stated the hospital had gone from a County hospital to a district hospital and were required to submit a service plan as part of the process; adding part of the service plan the hospital district had agreed on was to provide for a nursing home and for ongoing provisions. Mr. Brooks stated the County was approached in November 2006 or 2007; transferring over the real property at that time, and the Health Service District was now approaching the Town regarding the Walbridge Wing as they were the owners of the property and the facility. Mr. Brooks reiterated to the Board the purpose of the request would be the establishment of the procedure. Attorney Viscardi asked the Board if they had any questions regarding the process and what was expected of them, stating Staff needed some direction or authorization to move forward in the development of a plan in pursuing the request from the Hospital District. Mayor Etheridge stated she knew it was a complicated process with Mr. Brooks stating both Attorney Viscardi and himself felt they would need to go back to the court asking for oversight of the original decree and final order and it would be appropriate; adding it had been recommended to Attorney Viscardi and the Health Service District to do so. The Board concurred to move forward in the development of a plan with the request from the Eastern Rio Blanco County Health Service District.

Bid Awards.

A. Street Signs Replacement Project: Day relayed two bids were received; Newman Traffic Signs with a bid of \$7,416.07 and Lyle Signs, Inc with a bid of \$5,723.05, and Staff recommended accepting the low bid of \$5,723.05 from Lyle Signs. Day stated the Town had not used the company in the past, but the County had and they are a reputable company. She added the bid was under the budgeted amount. Trustee Gerloff asked where the company was located and if there were any sign companies in Colorado? Day stated both companies were located in Jamestown North Dakota and there were no sign companies in Colorado that had bid. Trustee Omer clarified with Day that the County had used Lyle Signs, Inc. in the past with Day stating yes.

A motion was made by Trustee Omer to accept the low bid from Lyle Signs, Inc, in the amount of \$5,723.05 for the new street signs, seconded by Trustee Strate. All ayes, motion carried.

B. New Disc Mower: Day relayed seven bids had been received for both a five or six disc mower with the lowest bid from Western Implement Co. Inc in the amount of \$7,338.00 for a five disc mower and Staff recommended accepting the bid. She added only one bid was received for a five disc mower, the rest were for a six disc mower and more expensive. She went on to say Mr. Overton's preference was for a five disc mower since a six disc was wider and could present problems in the parks. Mayor Etheridge asked for questions or comments with none

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noted.

A motion was made by Trustee Strate to accept the low bid from Western Implement Co. for a five disc mower in the amount of \$7,338.00, seconded by Trustee Mills. All ayes, motion carried.

Approval of 2010 Meeker Hospital Fund quarterly payments to the Eastern Rio Blanco County Health Service District to defray expenses of the Walbridge Wing.

Day stated this was the annual approval required from the Board for the quarterly payment to the Eastern Rio Blanco County Health Service District to help defray expenses of the Walbridge Wing and required a motion to authorize Staff to pay the quarterly payment once the amount is known but not to exceed \$52,500.00 annually. Mayor Etheridge asked for questions or comments with none noted.

A motion was made by Trustee Mills to authorize the 2010 Meeker Hospital Fund quarterly payment to Eastern Rio Blanco County Health Service District to defray expenses of the Walbridge Wing, not to exceed \$52,500.00 (annually), seconded by Trustee Strate. All ayes, motion carried.

Request from Duane Stewart on behalf of Berislav K. and Djurdjica A. Sepic to release the Sepic bond due to the public infra-structure completed and accepted for lots 1,2,3,4 and a portion of lot 5 in the Sanderson Hills Subdivision. .

Day relayed the Sanderson Hills Subdivision project and infrastructure was complete; all roads, water lines and other infrastructure is built, the one year warranty was up and a motion was required to release the bond. Mayor Etheridge asked for questions or comments, with Trustee Omer inquiring if it included any work that was required for developments that might take place on the lots. Day explained the bond was for the public infrastructure now belonging to the Town, i.e. water lines, streets, paving and doesn't cover work done on a private lot.

A motion was made by Trustee Mills to approve the request from Duane Stewart on behalf of Berislav K. and Djurdjica A. Sepic to release the Sepic bond due to the public infrastructure being completed and accepted for lots 1,2,3,4 and a portion of lot 5 in the Sanderson Hills Subdivision, seconded by Trustee Cook. All ayes, motion carried

Board Members' discussion concerning next steps in Main Street Elementary School process.

Trustee Halandras joined the meeting via phone. Mayor Etheridge began the discussion by encouraging the Board and public to bring forth their ideas regarding the process. She went on to say as a Board they needed to discuss goals for the property and her specific goals were: 1) Do they keep all or part of the building since the assessment had come back positive enough for it to be a goal for the Town and 2) Maintaining the downtown character, but not having a good description of what the downtown character was: i.e. is it retail, housing or open space? 3) Economics of the situation: the Board needed to remember to make good fiscal decisions and ask themselves if the property will be self-sustaining or Town/taxpayer supported with no revenue coming in. Mayor Etheridge opened the discussion by asking for comments regarding goals for the property. Trustee Halandras began by stating it was hard to imagine downtown without the school, but the Town didn't need more open space (i.e. a park). He stated the Town needed to preserve the ability to provide additional retail spaces for the future and the opportunity for downtown to grow. He added Colorado Northwestern Community College (CNCC) may be looking for space in the future and the Town should consider them later, but not at this time. Trustee Halandras relayed the conversations he had with Kai Turner (RBC Commissioner) and Pat Hooker (County Administrator) after the workshop regarding the County's plans for the proposed justice center, adding regardless of what the County does, they will need parking and their decision hinges on what the Town decides to do with the elementary school. Trustee Halandras then outlined some thoughts he had for use of the building. He stated the building would be a great place for the Meeker Chamber of Commerce but needed to think about parking issues; and possible loss of grass. He stated another option would be for the White River Museum to relocate to the building as they need the space and there was plenty of room. He went on to say the Town didn't need the whole property and could possibly remove the east side and turn it into assisted living or studio apartments accessed from 4th

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street. Trustee Halandras stated during the conversation with Mr. Turner, they discussed the recent Use Tax lawsuit and possibly speaking to the energy companies about reinvesting in the community. Trustee Mills stated he had the same thoughts as Trustee Halandras and relayed he had spoken with several people to get their opinions about needs and wishes for the building and the only need that came out was the County's and one of the wishes was for a dance/theater/craft classroom. Trustee Mills stated he would be fine with closing 5th Street, with Trustee Halandras replying 5th Street was vital to activities in the community. Trustee Mills stated the courthouse lawn could be from 6th Street to 4th street, encompassing the area between the two. Discussion focused on not needing more open space downtown, and the effects of closing 5th Street.

Trustee Halandras stated the County would not be building a stand alone facility; they planned to add on to the courthouse and remodel the upstairs for additional space. Mayor Etheridge stated it comes down to being a cooperating agency. Day stated Rich Sales (Colorado University at Denver) had spoken with Pat Hooker (RBC Administrator) and he and his students were working with the County on their needs and creating some conceptual drawings, which should be done in a few weeks; generating some talking points. Mayor Etheridge stated Mr. Sales could be the link between discussions with the Town and the County and probably be more helpful. Trustee Omer inquired if the options of closing of 5th Street or leaving it open had been conveyed to Mr. Sales? He also inquired as to how much on-street parking could be accommodated once the school was closed. He went on to suggest the Town use the area as a plaza without closing 5th Street and liked the idea of maintaining the lawn on the south side of the building as it gave a nice open feeling to downtown. Mayor Etheridge reminded the Board it wasn't going to be cheap regardless of what was decided for the building, adding the budget process in the fall could be complicated. Trustee Halandras stated another idea (regardless of money as an issue) would be removing the north wing, sell the east end of the block from Main to Park Avenue, or partner with a developer to make something that would provide income for the Town. Wendy Gutierrez (Wendell's) stated the downtown was in good shape regarding parking right now unless in the 6th Street or 7th Street area. Ms. Gutierrez stated the County currently allowed parking on the street and she was concerned about the net affect if 5th Street was lost, and the Board needed to keep that in mind for the future.

Trustee Gerloff stated it all comes down to economics; demolition of the building would be expensive and parking needed to be addressed. He added he didn't care what the County was going to do because it's a separate entity, the school was the Town's issue and if parking is a problem, it needed to be addressed and could be done with part of the school property. He also suggested the Town sell the property with conditions, adding he doesn't want to see the Town take on a project that could stress the budget. He added he had two points: 1) economics needed to be the priority and 2) there needed to be some separation between the entities (Town and County). Mayor Etheridge stated she felt working together would benefit both the County and the Town as both projects affect each other. Discussion focused on past communication issues, Town issues with the property, the County having the funding for their project and other things the Town could address on their own. Trustee Mills stated the Board needed to make the best decision and to keep the communication open as it was better now than in the past, adding the Board needed to be open minded and cooperative with everyone and come up with a good decision that will benefit the most people. Brian Conrado ó 449 Park Avenue stated it sounded as if the Board was overwhelmed and forgetting some of the possibilities with the building. He stated the Board talked about green space and tearing away portions of the building and seemed to be in panic mode. He suggested the Town temporarily mothball/preserve the building, add surveillance cameras and apply for grants until the economy rebounds or if a better option presented itself. He also offered to mow the lawn for \$1.00 for one year for the Town. He added if the County did need parking, take care of the high curb issue and lease it to the County. Mayor Etheridge stated that is why it is important to keep communications with the County open. Larry Beck ó 385 Park Avenue ó Mr. Beck concurred with Mr. Conrado's statements regarding parking and outlined some landscaping options for the area if it was turned into parking. He went on to say the Town needed to keep communications with the County open, and also suggested the Town put in for grants for the property as soon as possible. Mayor Etheridge asked for additional comments with none noted. She reminded everyone to not let the ideas get too big for the budget, adding the discussions have been productive but shouldn't push a decision they

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aren't ready to make. Trustee Omer stated they need to sort out the short-term and long-term decision points and some things will take some time. He added he supported the idea of communications with the County and the downtown workgroup.

MAYOR'S REPORTS

Mayor Etheridge reminded everyone to check out the flyer for the Energy Expo from the Meeker Chamber of Commerce. Day stated the Energy Expo would be held March 10, 2010 at 3:00 p.m at Mountain Valley Bank.

MANAGER'S REPORTS

Ute Road: Day reported the project was moving forward and a couple of small problems had been encountered, and would let the Board know more as it developed. She went on to say the plans should be completed and the project out to bid by the last week of March, with the construction schedule still the same.

Housing Needs Study: Day reported the Housing Needs report was almost completed and if the Board saw any changes to let her know.

ATTORNEY'S REPORTS

None

OTHER TOWN BOARD BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Attorney Viscardi asked the Board to move to an Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S 24-6-402(4)(b) which provides for conferences with an attorney for legal advice dealing with pending litigation involving the Town of Meeker.

A motion was made by Trustee Gerloff to adjourn the regular meeting and move into and Executive Session seconded by Trustee Cook. All ayes, motion carried. Mayor Etheridge adjourned the regular meeting at 8:21 p.m.

At 8:48 p.m. Attorney Viscardi stated the Executive Session was concluded and if any Board member believed anything was discussed outside the perimeters of the requested session to speak now. No comments were noted.

Mayor Etheridge adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

Mandi Etheridge, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa Cook, Town Clerk