

The Regular Meeting of the Meeker Town Board was held Monday, April 12, 2010 at Town Hall.

Members Present	Mayor	Etheridge
Trustees		Halandras
		Cook
		Strate
		Gerloff
		Conrado
		Omer
Members Absent		Mills
Town Staff Present	Town Administrator	Day
	Town Planner	Smith
	Town Clerk	Cook
	Public Works Super.	Overton
	Town Attorney	Viscardi
Citizens Present	Wendy Gutierrez	Chad & Jeanette Shepherd
	Pat Hughes	Shondah Otwell, Chamber Dir.
	Mary K. Kruger	Ellen Conrado, Michelle Morgan
	Brian Conrado	David & Ellene Meece
	Jerry Belland	Terry Goedert
	Janice Oldland	Joe & Kelly Conrado
	Scott Parish	Pat Hooker, RBC Administrator
	Sparky Pappas	Doug Pfau, Meeker Superintendent
	Sandra Besseghini	Rich Sales, University of Colorado
	Margie Joy	Nicole Taylor Nutting, Univ. of CO
	Katie Conrado	Mary Ann Wilbur
	Dr. David Steinman	Nikki Turner, RB Herald Times

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

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

#### **ROLL CALL**

All Trustees present except Trustee Mills.

#### **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. 24-64-402(4)(E) to discuss negotiations on acquisition of property.

A motion was made by Trustee Gerloff to approve the agenda with the addition of an Executive Session, seconded by Trustee Cook. All ayes, motion carried.

#### **APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS**

Mayor Etheridge asked for questions or comments regarding the revised set of vouchers March 31, 2010 with Day adding White River Electrical required a deposit of \$77,714.52 for work they would be doing concerning the Ute Road Project (relocating the overhead line underground and moving power boxes and other items) and needed to order the materials as soon as possible. She went on to say the amount was an estimate and WREA would provide a breakout when the work is completed. She added WREA was donating the new LED lighting along Ute Road.

A motion was made by Trustee Omer to approve the revised set of vouchers dated March 31, 2010, seconded by Trustee Strate. All ayes, motion carried.

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**APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

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

A motion was made by Trustee Halandras to approve the March 16, 2010 minutes seconded by Trustee Strate. All ayes, motion carried.

Mayor Etheridge asked for changes or revisions to the Special Meeting minutes of March 19, 2010 with none noted.

A motion was made by Trustee Strate to approve the Special Meeting minutes of March 19, 2010 seconded by Trustee Cook. Ayes ó Trustees Strate, Cook, Omer and Gerloff. Trustee Halandras abstained (due to being absent at that meeting). Motion carried.

**SWEARING IN OF MAYOR AND BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEMBERS RECENTLY DECLARED ELECTED**

Town Clerk Lisa Cook swore in Mayor Etheridge and Board members Regas Halandras, Rod Gerloff and Danny Conrado. Mayor Etheridge thanked Town Clerk Cook and welcomed new Board of Trustee member Danny Conrado.

**APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR PRO-TEM**

Mayor Etheridge stated Trustee Halandras had done a great job as Mayor Pro-Tem during the past two years; and she would be happy to have him re-appointed as Mayor Pro-Tem if he so wished (and the Board concurred). She also inquired if anyone on the Board would like to volunteer to serve as Mayor Pro-Tem.

A motion was made by Trustee Strate to re-appoint Trustee Halandras as Mayor Pro-Tem, seconded by Trustee Gerloff. All ayes, motion carried.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Presentation of conceptual plans for the present elementary school property and Rio Blanco County Square, by Nicole Taylor Nutting, AIAS and Rich Sales, Colorado Center for Community Development, University of Colorado Denver .*

Mayor Etheridge introduced Mr. Rich Sales and Nicole Taylor Nutting (Intern assisting with conceptual plans) from the Colorado Center for Community Development, University of Colorado Denver, stating Mr. Sales had been instrumental in assisting the Town in finding viable options for the Meeker Elementary site. Mr. Sales thanked Mayor Etheridge for the introduction and outlined what his department and interns do for small communities. He added he had another of his students on conference call through his cell phone; Jessica Hewitt from Georgia, who assisted with the landscape designs in the presentation, and then turned the presentation over to Nicole.

Nicole stated she had developed a Power Point presentation which potentially identified the community's needs including the school site and showed some potential options/opportunities for the site. Mr. Sales explained how an architect viewed a community and a site, and the presentation expressed those views/opinions and was a means to stimulate discussions. Mr. Sales added as architects; they look at edges and spaces; something people don't think of, but if they close their eyes and imagine being downtown, they remember what it feels like to be in that space. He stated that was what they would discuss tonight; that feeling and how it could be created and maintained by the fabric of edges and spaces. Nicole added before anything was proposed for the building, they needed to ensure it was structurally sound, adding in February 2010 it had been determined the building does have

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issues, but was structurally sound and capable of renovation. Nicole stated there was approximately 27,000 square feet of usable space in the elementary building, and she and Mr. Sales had developed some ideas (based on community input during the public meetings and talking to Rio Blanco County) of what the building could potentially be used for, i.e. independent living/congregate housing; bringing more living space to downtown; Chamber of Commerce offices, rental offices and retail space bringing more businesses to downtown. Nicole stated they explored what would happen if the original building was kept; removing the newer addition, and if it presented opportunities, adding it would maintain the historical façade and leave approximately 15,000 square feet of useable space. Nicole stated the chain link fence around the school could be removed instantly integrating the site into downtown, and potentially providing more space for annual festivals as well as new events (i.e. arts/crafts festival). She added the site is perfectly functional for indoor/outdoor space and the possibilities were unlimited and from an architectural view point, saving the elementary building made sense and helped maintain the historic and cultural value that is very important to downtown and is also energy efficient; explaining renovating is more efficient than building new. Nicole then presented nine different options from minimal to maximum alterations of the site, outlining a variety of possibilities for the site including: parking lot expansion, an interactive fountain, an information kiosk, an outdoor café, an outdoor amphitheater which is very low maintenance and provides many opportunities for outdoor events. Nicole stated Jessica Hewitt contributed the landscaping options; showing the community some options as to what is possible and depicts some fun features. Nicole ended her presentation by stating she had fun learning about Meeker and working on the presentation. Mr. Sales stated he hoped the presentation would stimulate some discussion among community members and they remain to help with any renditions the Town would like to see or drawings that might aid in the process.

Mayor Etheridge thanked Mr. Sales and Nicole for the presentation and for focusing on the character of downtown and on the image the Town would like present to outsiders. She stated she liked the different possibilities and thought a keyword was "potential" adding it was nice to see someone come in from the outside and broaden the community's perspective on what potential the area has, and opened the discussion by asking for comments on the presentation. Ellene Meece asked what an interactive fountain was; if it was a fountain a person can jump into. Nicole replied yes. Dr. David Steinman asked with this space, was the Town looking for an anchor occupant? Someone who could add value by saying look what we can do if we had access to the building, and if some private business or corporation was interested it might be a possibility. Mayor Etheridge stated it would have to be considered if the Town opened the building for additional office space. Sandra Besseghini asked if anyone had done a study of how traffic patterns would change if 5<sup>th</sup> Street were closed? Mayor Etheridge stated no, the presentation was as far as it had gone in the context of closing 5<sup>th</sup> Street and had been passed to Mr. Sales to see what it would look like or if it was possible, adding it had been mentioned previously about how closing 5<sup>th</sup> Street would affect emergency services. Ms. Meece stated one thing she noticed and hadn't before, was how much space there was. Mr. Sales stated it was a great deal of space and was a prime challenge. He stated the community knows it as a school, but when it is thought of as 27,000 square feet, it is quite a bit of "built environment." He added the space around the building and the removal of the fence immediately provides a different sense of interaction in the community. Chad Shepherd said that during the summer or anytime there are kids playing basketball or using the playground, and inquired if it would be the responsibility of the Town to meet those needs for the kids if the area was eliminated? Mayor Etheridge stated it was possible and the reason it wasn't in the presentation was it hadn't been presented to Mr. Sales and his students as a community need. Mary K. Krueger asked if there would be a public restroom and hoped one would be included. Mayor Etheridge stated depending on what the building was utilized for; a public restroom could possibly be incorporated. Sparky Pappas asked where the information came from that said the community had a need for more office space and/or parking and/or housing? Mr. Sales stated it was the reflection of public meetings that there was a potential need for affordable housing and the other uses. Wendy Gutierrez stated she liked all of the concepts presented which brings back the sense of community and keeps all the needs downtown. She stated the housing assessment study showed Meeker needed affordable housing (senior housing) and the need for low cost or affordable housing for entry level workers (i.e. starter homes).

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Mr. Sales offered to provide the presentation to Administrator Day so it would be available to other citizens through meetings; and to make copies as needed. Mayor Etheridge thanked Mr. Sales for his offer, adding it would be nice for other community members to see the presentation. She went on to say there had been many months of discussions about possibilities and once the fence comes down, it will create a new concept of what the space is for the community, and the drawings may bring some of that to life for people; providing a solid idea of which direction to go. Discussion focused on Mr. Sales working with the County on their needs, just how much space the County needed, showing the community the 30,000 square foot options and the 50,000 square foot options, and the site being large enough for both sets of community needs to be met. Mayor Etheridge thanked Pat Hooker (County Administrator) for meeting and collaborating with Mr. Sales, stating from this point forward there would be more collaboration needed to see what needs could be met in a way to make a plan work. The Board concurred to continue the discussion at their May 4, 2010. She thanked Mr. Sales, Nicole and Jessica for their presentation.

***Request from Janette Shepherd to lease pasture from Town for horses (area of Ute Park located between Highway 13 and Main Street).***

Administrator Day stated the Town had rented an area of Ute park to Becky Dunham for several years with the past two years rent being \$100.00 per month for no more than three horses (Mrs. Dunham no longer needs the space and the Shepards are interested in renting it for their horses). She added the Town requires liability insurance in the amount of one million dollars; with the Town named as an additional insurer. Mayor Etheridge asked Mr. Shepherd how many horses they wished to keep at the site, with Mr. Shepherd replying three. Mayor Etheridge outlined what the Town had done in the past and inquired of Mr. Shepherd if it was acceptable? Mr. Shepherd stated he didn't know about the insurance requirement but would look into it. Discussion focused on the cost of insurance, how to obtain it and why it is needed. Ms. Shepherd stated the Dunhams were paying possessory taxes on the land and inquired why. Day explained that the question should be directed to the Assessor's office, that it wasn't a Town function. Ms. Shepherd stated the Town may want to check into it, stating the Dunhams shouldn't have to pay that unless they made a profit off the livestock. Mayor Etheridge inquired if the Shepherds had any questions with Mr. Shepherd stating just the insurance. Mayor Etheridge reiterated the Town didn't want to do anything without the insurance as it protected the renter and the Town. Day added she wasn't sure the Town's insurance company would allow them to not require a renter to not have insurance. Trustee Omer stated he understood the rent for the past couple of years was a certain amount with Day replying yes. Trustee Omer asked if there were negotiations/discussions on a different amount, with Day stating it was up to the Board. Mayor Etheridge stated it had been the agreement for the past couple of years and didn't see any reason to change it. Trustee Omer inquired about the amount, and if it was for as many months as needed, with Day stating it was \$100.00 per month. Mayor Etheridge inquired of the Shepherds if they would be renting for the entire year, with Mr. Shepherd stating they were looking at seasonal. Mayor Etheridge stated they could look at the option of a six month rental period. She also recommended they speak with Administrator Day about negotiating their specific needs (monthly, seasonal) at the current rate. Mr. Shepherd inquired of there was any facilities, such as water, with Day stating no, water would need to be hauled.

***Reappointment of Housing Authority Board Members.***

Administrator Day stated the Town had received letters from Melinda Parker and Judy Brown, both currently serving on the Housing Authority Board, stating they were willing to serve another term and Staff recommended their reappointment. Mayor Etheridge asked for questions or comments with none noted.

A motion was made by Trustee Omer to approve the reappointment of Judy Brown and Melinda Parker as board members to the Meeker Housing Authority Board, seconded by Trustee Strate. All ayes, motion carried.

***Request from adjacent homeowners located along Sulphur Creek Road to construct parking area.***

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Administrator Day explained the homeowners had requested the Town create a parking area approximately 300 feet long and 20 feet wide from where the roundabout would be located on Mr. Reck's property down to Frary's driveway. She went on to say the Town had looked into it; ran some rough cost estimates the potential cost is about \$75,000.00 and was concerned about being able to fit that into the budget. Public Works Superintendent Russell Overton stated he is concerned about safety for pedestrians if vehicles are parked along the sidewalk blocking views for those backing from the driveways. He states the area needed to be kept open to provide a safe corridor for the children. Trustee Halandras inquired if it was Town property, with Day stating it is in the Town's right-of-way and showed the Board the location on the map. Mayor Etheridge stated Day's concern was the budget, Mr. Overton's concern was safety; and her concern was the Town using governmental funds for this type of project and was not sure if the Town wanted to set that precedent. She went on to say the intersection and sidewalks were an incredible project the Town put forward for the benefit of the community and for the safety of pedestrians, but was concerned about spending a potential thousands of dollars to benefit a private individual's property didn't seem ethical. Discussion focused on designing the sidewalks and shifting the street slightly to the east to avoid the slopes and the concern about dealing with slopes if this request was granted. Trustee Omer asked what the width of the planned sidewalks were with Day stating they would be 8-foot wide. Mr. Overton added that in addition curbing and gutter with one-foot colored space would be constructed in addition to the 8-foot sidewalk. Trustee Halandras inquired if there would be an apron off the sidewalks onto a driveway, with Day replying yes; extending up the driveway a short distance. Trustee Omer inquired of the Town had a formal or written request from the specific residents, with Day stating they had a drawing with a note attached, that she had provided to each Board member. Trustee Omer inquired if the Board had to take action on the request with Day stating she just needed direction from the Board. Trustee Halandras stated he was going to say no, with Trustee Strate agreeing. Trustee Omer stated the Town should proceed with the plan as established and not add any modifications. The Board concurred. Day added the project was out to bid and bids were due on Monday, April 19, 2010 (date had been extended through an addendum) and the bid would be awarded at the April 20, 2010 meeting.

***Bid Awards:***

***1. New or used John Deere Tractor***

Mr. Overton stated the Town had requested bids for a new or used tractor and only bids for new tractors were received. He stated the low bid from Berthod Motors was within budget; for the amount of \$27,960.35, and Staff recommended accepting the low bid. Day stated for the record, bids ranged from \$35,849.00 to the lowest at \$27,960.35, adding the Town received one that didn't meet specs, but wasn't the lowest bid. Mayor Etheridge asked for questions or comments with none noted.

A motion was made by Trustee Halandras to accept the low bid of \$27,960.35 from Berthod Motors for a John Deere Tractor, seconded by Trustee Conrado. All ayes, motion carried.

***2. 20,000 pounds of hot-pour, street crack sealant***

Mr. Overton stated bids were requested for 20,000 pounds of crack fill sealant. He stated SealCo. had the lowest bid at \$1.39 per pound for a total of \$27,800.00 and recommended accepting the low bid. He added they had done the job a couple of times previously and did good work. He went on to say he thought it was about five cents a pound cheaper this year than last year. Day added the high bid was \$45,000.00. Trustee Halandras inquired when the work would take place with Mr. Overton stating it depended on the company's schedule. Mayor Etheridge inquired where the work would be done with Mr. Overton outlining the areas. Mayor Etheridge asked for questions or comments with none noted.

A motion was made by Trustee Omer to accept the low bid from SealCo. for \$27,800.00 for crack fill sealant, seconded Trustee Cook. All ayes, motion carried.

**MAYOR'S REPORTS**

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None

**MANAGER’S REPORTS**

**Informational Meeting:** Administrator Day stated she had received (today) a call from Horst Rick who stated Yellow Jacket had received a grant to do a feasibility study concerning construction of reservoirs, and an informational meeting would be held at Mountain Valley Bank on Saturday, April 17, 2010 at 2 p.m. and the Board invited to attend the meeting.

**Ennovate:** Day stated she had received a call from Ennovate (today) asking if they could attend the May 18, 2010 Board meeting to discuss how they would measure the results of the Town’s energy project. She added the Town would receive the draft report by the end of April and have a chance to review it prior to the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Board concurred. Trustee Halandras explained that he had recently found a large difference in lighting costs. Discussion focused on price differences and that Ennovate will request bids for the Town on any energy projects the Town decided to do, and involving the Town during the bidding process.

**County Master Plan Meeting:** Day stated the firm compiling the County’s Master Plan would like to meet with the Board and suggested April 26<sup>th</sup> or April 28<sup>th</sup> as they would be in Rangely on April 27, 2010 and would like to meet with both Boards in one trip to Rio Blanco County. The Board concurred to meet on Wednesday April 28, 2010 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

**WREA:** Day stated White River Electric (at their own expense) was replacing the street lighting downtown around the courthouse square. She stated they had called and wanted to know what to do with the old fixtures and WREA had offered take them if the Town didn’t mind and said she was asking for direction from the Board. Discussion focused on where WREA would be taking the fixtures, if they planned to recycle them, or sell them. Trustee Omer inquired if the Town had any secondary use for the fixtures with Day stating she wasn’t aware of any use, and Mr. Overton added he didn’t believe the Town had any use for them. Board consensus was to let WREA keep the light fixtures and to let WREA know they were grateful they were taking care of the fixtures.

**ATTORNEY’S REPORTS**

None

**OTHER TOWN BOARD BUSINESS**

Trustee Gerloff stated he and his family had walked through the park near their home recently and found trash and broken glass all over (which his family cleaned up) and was wondering if it was possible to check with the jail to see if any prisoners could help the Town (through the work release program) to help clean the parks during the interim (before summer help was hired). He stated there was also a complaint about broken glass and trash at the new playground on Pinyon and 12th Street. Day stated the Town was about one week out from hiring summer help, with applications due April 15, 2010, and would try to get personnel working the following week. Trustee Cook asked how many would be hired, and if they would be full-time. Day stated the Town would hire four, with Bob Wren working about five hours a day and the rest would be full-time. She explained the Town would be hiring one extra person this year, due to all the summer projects, and the new person to be hired in the Public Works department. She explained there was funding in the 2010 budget to cover the cost. She added Dave Henderson (recently retired) would be assisting in the parks and with painting this summer.

**Rec. District Retreat:** Day stated the Rec. District would be holding a board retreat concerning long range recreation plans, within the next two weeks and had inquired if the Town Board would be willing to explore with the Rec. District the possibility of them doing park maintenance for the Town. The Board concurred they would be interested to do so. She said the Recreation District will be conveying the land the Town needed for the Ute Road project in the near future. Attorney Viscardi relayed he had spoken with Scott Pierson (Executive Director of the Rec. District) who had stated he didn’t believe they would do anymore than look at the paperwork at their

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Tuesday evening meeting and send it to their attorney. Attorney Viscardi stated he inquired of Mr. Pierson if he would have authority with his president to sign the paperwork, Mr. Pierson had relayed they probably would have a special meeting. Attorney Viscardi stated he had relayed to Mr. Pierson it had to be done soon.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Attorney Viscardi asked for a motion to be made for the Board to move to an Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. 24-64-402(4) (E) with respect to developing strategies and negotiations concerning the acquisition of property to facilitate the roundabout construction.

A motion was made by Trustee Halandras to adjourn the regular meeting and move into an Executive Session at 8:20 p.m., seconded by Trustee Cook. All ayes, motion carried.

Mayor Etheridge called the regular meeting back to order at 9:50 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.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Etheridge adjourned the meeting at 9:51 p.m.

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Mandi Etheridge, Mayor

Attest:

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Lisa Cook, Town Clerk