



Village of Taos Ski Valley
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**VILLAGE COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES
EDELWEISS LODGE CLUB ROOM
106 SUTTON PLACE
TAOS SKI VALLEY, NEW MEXICO
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2018 9:30 A.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER & NOTICE OF MEETING

The special meeting of the Village of Taos Ski Valley Council was called to order by Mayor Brownell at 9:30 a.m. The notice of the special meeting was properly posted.

2. ROLL CALL

Ann Wooldridge, Village Clerk, called the role and a quorum was present.

Governing Body Present

Mayor Christof Brownell
Councilor Jeff Kern
Councilor Roger Pattison
Councilor Chris Stagg
Councilor Tom Wittman, Mayor Pro Tem

Village Staff Present

Administrator Mark Fratrack
Clerk Ann Wooldridge
Finance Director Nancy Grabowski
Police Chief Sam Trujillo
Administrative Assistant Renee Romero

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda

Motion: Councilor Wittman Second: Councilor Stagg Passed: 4-0

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration to Approve the Appointment of Mr. John Avila as Village Administrator

The current Village Administrator, Mark G. Fratrack, gave his official notice of retirement to the Mayor and Village Council on July 27, 2018 at a closed session of a Special Council meeting. Administrator Fratrack will officially retire on December 28, 2018. Once the announcement was made, an eight-member committee was organized to search for a replacement, consisting of the Mayor, a Council member, and several staff and residents-at-large. The position was advertised in a variety of newspapers and web sites, with approximately 25 applications being submitted. The committee evaluated the applications and determined the most qualified applicants to interview. After several days of interviews and reference checks, the committee determined the applicant that was the best choice, Mr. John Avila. Mr. Avila served as City Manager/Village Administrator for the Village of Corrales for nine years, and prior to that was the City Manager/Village Administrator for the City of Las Vegas for three years. He has many years of experience in municipal administration and will be an asset to the Village of Taos Ski Valley. Mr. Avila has accepted the position and would officially begin serving the Village on December 1, 2018.

MOTION: To Approve the Appointment of Mr. John Avila as Village Administrator

Motion: Councilor Kern Second: Councilor Wittman

Discussion took place on the selection process.

The Mayor called for a vote.

Passed: 4-0

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Water and Sewer Utility Rates

At the August 2018 Village of Taos Ski Valley Council meeting, the Council did not adopt the proposed increase in Water/Sewer rates that Staff presented as part of the final FY2019 Final Budget. Since the new rates were not adopted, the FY2018 rates remained in effect. However, Council indicated that they wanted Staff to come back with alternative rates and possibly have a work/study session to discuss the rates and possible alternative rate structures.

Previous Mayor Neal King, who has been very involved in developing various rate calculation tables and rate structure methods, presented a set of goals in setting water /sewer rates. These goals included that rates should cover the cost of operating the plant with a modest amount for reserves, that rates should not favor any subset of the community, that rates should reward people who seek to conserve, and increase if they add rooms or change rental usage, that the fixed rate should be kept as stable as possible, and that the fixed rate should account for variable snow years.

Councilor Stagg recommended that the fixed rate be stable and not go up and down with good or bad snow seasons. He noted that the challenge is to decide what is to be done right now, as well as to decide what should be done at budget time about looking at various rate structures in-depth and making a plan going forward. Councilor Stagg suggested having a rates workshop near budget time, but not at the budget workshop. Mayor King had presented six different alternatives for possible rate methods, and Councilor Stagg thought that all six alternatives had been tried by the Village in the past.

The current method uses the previous fiscal year's usage, by property, averages the usage out over the year, and makes a designation of number of EQRs based on 1,500 gallons per EQR. In the last fiscal year, July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, there was a drop in water usage so the overall number of EQRs decreased, which would have impacted the revenue to run the Village water and sewer services for the community. A small percentage increase was suggested, but a larger increase would have most likely have been needed to maintain sufficient revenues. The Village's General Fund, however, has not subsidized the Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds for at least the last three years, Finance Director Grabowski reported. Director Grabowski also said that adequate sewer revenues will be needed in order to service the current bonds and then the USDA loan, all of which are for the new treatment plant. She also reported that the \$350,000 Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan of \$350,000 requires payments from the Sewer Enterprise Fund. If there were to be an ending balance in the Water or Sewer Enterprise Funds funds at fiscal year-end, the balance would be carried forward to the next fiscal year.

It was recommended that a system for annual rate setting should reward plumbing changes which conserve water, but not fluctuate simply for low usage in an unusual year. If an addition were added to a building, the EQRs should be modified. Also, a system which would result in EQRs increasing rapidly, based on increases of usage or size of a building, but decrease slowly for less disruption to the Village revenue stream, would be desirable.

Other comments included concern about the Village's water sources, which are being studied. As the ski valley grows, there should be more usage year-round. A rates workshop will be held in early spring, before the budget workshop.

6. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Mayor Brownell announced that Christy Sports had purchased Cottam Ski Shops.

B. Homeowner Mike Fitzpatrick suggested that the Village use a system of fixed charges for water and sewer rates which would cover the fixed costs of running the plant, similar to what Kit Carson Electric does. Even when there is no usage, or a building is completely solar-powered, there is a fixed charge.

C. Councilor Pattison asked about the timeline for extending a sewer line to Amizette and whether a cost-benefit analysis has been conducted on costs versus revenues from potential customers. The Village's new Town Hall property in Amizette has been granted a variance by the NMED for holding tanks. The variance is allows another eight years, at which time the sewer line would most likely be extended. Discussion followed concerning a septic systems in Amizette.

7. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL

The next regular meeting of the Village Council is scheduled for Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. at the Edelweiss Lodge Club Room.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To Adjourn

Motion: Councilor Stagg

Second: Councilor Wittman

Passed: 4-0

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Christof Brownell, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Ann M. Wooldridge, Village Clerk