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Village Administrator
Village of Taos Ski Valley Council
Monthly Briefing
May 24, 2022



*** Ongoing & Past Projects ***

COVID -19 - Pandemic Emergency:

In Taos County:

Cases continue to rise across the nation, but more slowly in Taos County than most places in New Mexico. Cases in Taos County have been consistently around 25 cases per week over the last month, twenty times lower than the Omicron peak at the end of January.

As cases continue to rise in New Mexico, hospitalizations have begun to creep up. Current hospitalizations in New Mexico are above 50 for the first time since April 22. This is still some way below the peak of 682 at the end of January.

Due to the low level of hospitalizations and relatively low case count, the CDC considers Taos County to have a low level of Covid-19 in the community.

Something to be aware of on our doorstep, Rio Arriba County and the state of Colorado saw very sharp increases in cases recently. Case rates for comparison purposes (cases per 100k population last week):

- USA = 181
- NM = 119
- Taos County = 76
- Rio Arriba County = 360 (152% increase week on week)
- Colorado = 323 (142% increase week on week)

Summary:

- Nationally, cases were up 19% in the last week, 42% in New Mexico, and 9% in Taos County.
- The 7-day average daily case count in New Mexico increased to 360 cases per day from 255 last week, and 147 last month. The 7-day average peaked on Friday, January 21 at a record 5,571 cases per day.
- Current hospitalizations in NM began to creep up from their historic low level. The 7-day average is now 56, having been below 50 since April 22. Current hospitalizations peaked at 682 on Jan 28, 2022.
- Average deaths per day in NM remain stable at 8 per day, up from 7 per day. Down from 23 at the end of January.
- There were 25 new cases in Taos County last week, up from 23 the prior week, bringing the total to 5,435.
- There were no additional deaths reported among Taos County residents last week. The total has remained at 90 since April 14.
- Testing in Taos County remained stable at a 7-day average of 68 tests per day, up from 63 the prior week.
- Taos County is considered by the CDC to have a Low Level of Covid-19.
- Taos County's adult fully vaccinated rate is 89%. 60% of adults in New Mexico have received a booster shot (note this value has fluctuated over the past three weeks from 48% to 68% and now back down to 60%).

Symptomatic employees should be directed to Rapid Testing, but it is not appropriate for asymptomatic people - it is best to get a Rapid test after 24 hours and up to 5 days of symptoms.
Consortium says: Have Covid Symptoms? Stay HOME, get tested at the [Sagebrush Inn \(M-F\)](#), [Holy Cross Hospital](#) or the [Youth & Family Center](#)

Village requirements are to be evaluated with each DOH amendment. Village restrictions will be reevaluated for any changes on a monthly basis. Although NMDOH dropped mask requirements again, this happened last year and cases surged. The Village still requires masks in common areas, to allow some percentage of protection until against impact of Variants and to protect individuals with compromised health.

Village Offices are following the NM Department of Health Order and are still OPEN for visitors and operations 9AM -4PM M-F under mask and hygiene restrictions. Staff with a work accountability can still request remote Work at Home.

WWTP

To meet the needs for system expansion the Waste Water Treatment Plant is designed to process additional peak to protect the water conditions of the area. In order to increase the capacity needed within limited space and funding, a mechanical system was selected by Village for the Waste Water System RFP. This system standard has many times the productivity capacity and requires more technical care.

The design engineer must review and approve correction of outstanding issues with Ovivo before final plant completion can be accepted. The Village has not accepted the plant as complete considering the continued required corrections to the system by the manufacturer, Ovivo.

The ongoing work for the Waste Water Treatment Plant included corrections for optimized efficiency of the Ovivo System. The Integrated Water Systems engineers and technicians are in contact to address system operations issues including monitoring programs, ceramic plate performance, improving the ultraviolet treatment and injector corrections. A letter addressing issues including monitoring programs, ceramic performance, improving the ultraviolet treatment and plumbing corrections was delivered to Ovivo to address bond requirements.

We met with them, they said they would cooperate and conduct the tests required by their contract then did not. Testing had to proceed during the Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year periods and did require further testing through April and into May. The IWS temporary plant was being used for testing solutions without interfering with regular production in the plant. The lack of cooperation and performance required that we notify the Bonding company; that we will be enforcing the bond for correction of the issues. Further response and reply will continue as the bonding company investigates additional information provided. A temporary plant supported the system during the Ski Season and will be used to test performance and correction solutions.

Kachina Water Tank

Ensuring that the water delivery is optimum, Public Works has reviewed the onsite status of operating systems for the Kachina Tank including water delivery. The project will not be accepted as final until conditions to correct segregation valves are met. Because of COVID product lead times and work demands, the correction is unlikely before end of summer 2022.

Until the permanent Water Booster Station is built, the temporary pump station upgrades allow for remote automatic operation between the pumps and tank equipment. Funding documents were received signed from the Secretary to start with NOA and NTP. The temporary pump station is operational and can receive remote commands through the fiber installation. The temporary pump station has a limited useful life but will suffice until the permanent Kachina Water Booster Station is constructed for service of the Kachina Water Tank. Construction of the pump system should begin in FY 2023 when funding for this project is encumbered.

Additional Water Distribution lines below Kachina Tank will also need to be constructed along with replacement of lines. House Bill 2 has \$5M for Taos County Projects from Apportionment Contingency Fund Appropriation of which \$750,000 grant funding has been identified for Village Water line repair. The funding must be utilized by June 2025 and Department of Finance Authority may channel funds

through Taos County as the fiscal agent. These are Federal Funds that will have different reporting standards to State Capital outlay.

Village Complex

There is increased interest among employees for housing at the Village Complex, but the operation is an enterprise fund and must produce enough revenue to cover expenses or be part of compensation. 75% occupancy of units is possible this summer including employee housing.

The damage from the snow gale to units 9 and 10 are being assessed, with the insurance adjuster and the engineer visiting the site so far. Because of the structural damage, it is more likely that repair would be more expensive than compensating for removal of the Duplex building. Request for appraisal services to establish a base line market value of the Village Complex at 1346 NM150 was published for bids and The Building Inspector, Public Safety Housing EMS/Fire, Police and Fire Administration Offices are currently housed in Village Apartment units. The use of the units as office space and EMS bunking rather than as housing, has reduced the average cost per unit of sewage pumping and utilities budget to \$10,000 annually. The office assignment of the Police Department replaced the previous 20year assignment to a construction trailer. The trailer was surplus and removed. The Village Offices at the "Taos Mountain Lodge" location are housed in separate units. The Ambulance shed package is being stored there temporarily.

Application for a grant for an Administration Office is approved by the Office of the State Fire Marshal and awarded starting Fiscal Year 2022. The state office agrees that the advantages of having an Office for Fire/EMS Administration located on site are value for the firefighting effort. The Village is required to Staff the Administration office with at least two part time paid staff. Although having other duties that staff must gain certification as a Fire Investigator and a Fire Inspector. We now have two certified personnel to meet the requirement. Housing the Fire Administrative Office on site also allows the Main Fire Station to have overnight bunking near the equipment for other emergency staff.

Beyond being able to inspect buildings for compliance and investigate fire emergencies the increased staff are available to respond to fires and other emergency calls. The Agreement with OSFM almost doubles the Fire Funding. The Village has entered into an agreement with TSVI to seek options for purchasing a Fire Station building and the Fire Fund grant is a possible source of funding.

Additional claims for damage by two more wind events sending surrounding trees into the buildings, are filed with the NM Self Insured Fund. A police vehicle was also damaged and a claim was filed. A request is out to all region agencies for assistance

Facility Undergrounding

Kit Carson Electric Cooperative is again awaiting an answer from the USFS after receiving no permission from NMDOT for access on the south side of the highway. We recommend getting private access along the frontage of NM150 if we don't have a report of progress with NMDOT/KCEC after many attempts this month. The Village excavation contractor is waiting approval to start work on NM 150.

Village mapping is requested to show those properties that are within reach of connection to underground but have not yet made the connection. With USFS cooperation our mapping is improving, showing some slivers of land that will be conveyed to adjacent land owners in Amizette by USFS.

Additional underground installation is being accomplished with the TIDD Entryway projects in the parking lot, near Thunderbird Road and Firehouse Lane. These are predicted to allow removal of some

overhead poles on Twinning Road. An underground connection for the Vehicle Maintenance Facility along with the Waste Water Treatment plant will allow removal of more overhead lines on NM150. Two other KCEC priority underground projects are underground for Upper Twinning and the joint trench installation of underground electricity with gas line expansion from Coyote – Phoenix. Delayed last year by shortages in qualified operators and material shortages. Initial coordination of the VTSV, KCEC and NM Gas allowed a plan for a joint trench installation for both electricity and gas lines on Coyote, Chipmunk and 500 ft. of Phoenix. This project will eventually allow for several sections of overhead electrical line to be installed to underground as well as bring the NM gas facilities near properties along the route.

Reminder: Once the underground service is available near a property, the steps to connecting underground are:

The Owner to engage a contract electrician for work on their property,

Then together contact Kit Carson Electrical Cooperative with the meter number and request an *upgrade to an underground service*, **KCEC** and the electrician will contact the Village for underground permitting and start credit request for public Right of Way work,

Proceed with underground work and connect to the underground service,

Make the credit application for the portion of work done in the public ROW. If the property is undeveloped, the request is for a new service.

TIDD –

The Tax Increment Development District is the mechanism that certain economic development investments by the designated developer (TSVI) are to be funded by tax revenues from the Village, County and the State. The tax is charged in most areas of the Village for project funding and correction for the misdirected payments is now addressed immediately. TIDD is a separate political subdivision of the State and the Board has fiduciary responsibility for oversight of those taxpayer dollars that pay the Tax Increment Funds Bond. Construction is completed and landscaping along the project for Thunderbird/Ernie Blake Roads with designated snow storage. Public Safety signage is installed for this TIDD project.

Pending TIDD project; Entry Road development by Taos Ski Valley Inc. has been presented to the Village at the Council Work Shop. Questions and comments are provided to TSVI for their application to US Forest Service permit. The Village gave support to the US Forest Service Master Development Plan submission resolution.

Entry Road:

Staff review of design drawings generated some questions for a TIDD project Q&A. Page 3 of the plans shows which part of the project is TIDD eligible. It should be noted that the plans should be considered as 90% Construction Documents as minor adjustments are still being made. Staff working with TSVI will have complete Q&A and a recommendation for accepting the Entry Road project design.

Three of four facility projects were accepted for dedication by the Village and the record is forwarded to the TIDD Board for review and approval for reimbursement of the TSVI developer.

Items

Small Contracts

Appraiser Service: The RFB was awarded to sole responsible bidder Brooks Pearsall and Zantow LLC to appraise the former Taos Mountain Lodge.

Grant Writer Service: The RFB was awarded to sole responsible bidder Metrics Together to write and submit Fire Grant Application.

Professional Review SWAT: Sole Source was awarded to Jake Caldwell for professional service.

Construction of Ambulance Shed: Emergency Source was awarded to Vigil's Asphalt and Gravel to remove building package for reuse.

Upcoming Contract:

Hewitt-Zollar Price Agreement through CES to create 100% Twinning Road Plan from 30% Plan: Scope Attached

USPS

Here is **your monthly USPS update from the Chamber:** Chamber has not signed a contract with TSVI yet but hopes to after Lodgers Tax Board meeting TSVI has signed with USPS.

We are still waiting on USPS to train the Chamber, but Chamber is hopeful this can wait until later.

The USPS appears to prefer a going commercial concern apply for "Approved Shipper" service, if one in the Ski Valley considers the service.

Many Thanks to Courtney Tucker for everything she did for the Ski Valley.

- The contract with USPS and TSVI is done - progress!
- Supplies have been ordered-done!
- Parcel boxes to be ordered from USPS -coming soon
- Chamber to be trained by USPS -coming soon
- New signage-coming after the season ends.
- All mail pick up is happening M-F-business as usual.
- Chamber staff currently working from home or the Powderhorn office for efficiency on big projects with big deadlines.
- Chamber plans to staff the VC PO this Spring once we are trained and USPS has time to get us set up.
- Fingers crossed: We are hopeful Kathy Bennett, Suzannah Walker, Nicole Zinn, Kerrie Pattison will help us staff the VC PO this Spring M-F 10am-2pm

Safety

Hermit's Peak-Calf Canyon Fire; after using Bull Dozers to build a shaded fuel break containment line along the Taos/Curry County border, fire crews from the East and West Zone will work together to build containment line along the northern edge of the fire. Contingency prep work continues in and around several communities north and east of the fire perimeter. The ECCOG met last week to address the emergency issue and determined with evacuees and firefighters competing for bed space in Taos that it was best to cancel Memorial Day Weekend activities. Because of the nature of the Red River Motorcycle Rally, those visitors would likely still come but were predicted to may a day trip and not need overnight accommodations. The group also promised to see what could be mustered to help the Village with a police unit. There was some interest in the Ambulance building package.

Medical director review of SOP oversight of medical supplies inventory and to prepare for budget planning. SOP meeting set for mid June. EMS Basic classes are planned for June to best fit Volunteer schedule, as well to cross train Police Department Staff. The class is expected to run 3 days/week for 4months

Not able to report success with the Ready Set Go Chipper grant. However, those Residents that are unable to bring trimmings to the Brush Pile on Ocean Blvd. may contact the Village 575-776-8220 to request help taking trimmings to the plant. If you hire a contractor to do the work, make sure they are properly disposing of the green waste. Registered contractors should be able to provide a receipt from the Land Fill if they deliver them to that location.

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Plan of Finance

The Village Financial Advisor, Stiffel created a Plan of Finance model. The rescheduled Work Study for review of the POF was held January 10, 2022 and the final report will include Q&A from the public. At the project meeting with Stiffel in August, TSVI was invited to review the information to date and share data. Stiffel and TSVI met and TSVI information about capital expenditure, property tax, GRT allotment and expected growth trends. The model should allow for different assumptions to be input for testing by allowing changes in financial information and project plans. In order to plan our financing of needed projects we should be confident in resources for the public facilities and infrastructure to provide the expected level of service. Some questions are still unanswered regarding possible sources of funds and unexamined costs.

The Impact/Development Fee process is statutorily created to help fund expansion of systems and facilities and the burden is not transferred solely to the tax/rate payer. Knowing the level of development fee support will assist in the creation of the POF.

The Development impact fees currently in the POF are from recommendations of the CIAC process, however it is the Development Ordinance that will determine the share of costs supported by DIF. Other fees for the Utility Enterprise System that can be charged under the Connection Fee are the Physical cost to connect and the System Asset cost to connect, so that those costs are not paid by the Rate Payer.

TSVI is in the process of seeking building permits for the Firehouse, Mogul Medical and Warehouse buildings. The proposed development is located adjacent to current Village offices designed for the public purpose of housing the Village's Fire Department. A second building for Mogul Medical will provide emergency and routine medical services to the general public. In this case, the assessment of development fees occurs at the time of issuance of a building permit. Due to the nature of the development, TSVI seeks credits towards normal development impact fees that are being discussed with Staff before presenting to Council.

Search for Finance Director continues without many applicants, there are interested contract accounting firms for a part time effort. Nancy Grabowski has committed to entering the Village Budget to the State LGBMS before the June 1 deadline.

Thanks for the hard work.