

Minutes of the Public Safety Committee and Firewise Board Meeting for the Village of Taos Ski Valley, New Mexico held at 10am on Monday, July 7th, 2025, via Zoom.

The meeting was called to order by Henry Caldwell at 10:03am. Notice of the meeting was properly announced. Members present were Henry Caldwell, Kent Kiehl, Bob Thomas, Michael Chandler, Jim Woodard and Ben Pitz.

The agenda for today's Public Safety Committee and Firewise Board Meeting was approved (Motion: Jim, Second: Kent, Unanimous). The minutes for the May 5th, 2025, and June 2nd Public Safety Committee and Firewise Board Meeting were approved (Motion: Kent, Second: Jim, Unanimous).

Public Safety Committee:

Kachina Park/ PARC Grant Status

As part of the match for the Trails+ Grant, the Village committed to do work on Kachina Vista Park to make it safer for users, less prone to vandalism, and to generally improve its aesthetics and use. It is, above all, still a required evacuation route in case of an emergency, so there is a limit on what we can do as nothing can impede its use as a pedestrian and vehicular evacuation route. So, we are going to have to be a bit creative, given its narrowness, steepness, being prone to slides of snow, rock and mud, and the impact whatever we do will have on the properties and houses below it. But Rick and Gabe have been up there and have some ideas. Rick has scheduled an on-site visit with the Parks and Recreation Committee on the 21st of July to review their ideas. They are also examining whether realistically it needs to be categorized as an evacuation route, given that it would probably be impacted before the other exits at least in the winter. Work should be

completed this summer. Rick believes that Public Safety and Parks and Rec Committee both have a role in reviewing the Kachina Park Plan from their respective points of view.

Signage Standards and Parking and Camping Ordinance Status

Both have been somewhat overcome by events. The Forest Service is understaffed and has lost budget. They are turning to the Village for help with Police, Fire, EMS and Search and Rescue using cooperative agreements with the Village. Further, Rick is preparing a long-term plan to deal with Williams Lake Trail overuse issues and is coordinating with TSVI, Forest Service and the New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division. Potential solutions include the Gondola, a gateway, permits, paid parking, and alternate route options. This may also provide some protection from the Hwy 150 corridor and ski area land sale proposal floated by the US House of Representatives.

Miscellaneous Items

Avalanche safety came up in the Kachina Park discussion and there is interest in adding that issue to next month's Public Safety Committee meeting agenda.

Firewise Board:

CWPP/NFL Grants Status

Garrett was not available to provide an update, but property owners who wish to discuss thinning should contact Garrett.

Underground Power

Rick reported that work will start in lower Amizette this summer. There is only ½ the money needed in the Joint Utilities Fund from the franchise fees to complete the entire project. There was an offer by KCEC to front the balance of about \$400,00 from any future franchise

fee payments at an interest rate. That would deplete the funds in the Utilities Franchise fee revenue stream for at least 5 years, and we have an uncertain economic picture facing us with just having had to institute some significant increases in utilities to pay the debt service we already have and it is Rick's recommendation, as well as that of the Village's financial advisors, that we not take on any additional debt at this time till we improve our current and long-term financial standing and have 3/12th reserves in place for each of our primary funds. That is the minimum that is recommended by the state for municipalities dependent predominantly on variable GRT's, and especially those dependent on highly variable seasonal, tourism and construction-related GRT's. Currently, over half of our GRT's are derived from construction, predominantly from TSVI and the TIDD, and we have no significant building projects projected for the next 12 months, so we are assuming a conservative financial approach, seeking 100% financing by cash-on-hand, grants with no match requirement or waivable matches, and forgivable loans. We will spend about \$250,000-\$300,000 per year over the next 3-4 years to complete this project.

Microgrid, Battery Power Status

Rick stated that the project is slated for installation starting fall 2025 through spring of 2026 and it originally was envisioned that ½ of the project would be on TSVI property and ½ on Village property. But USFS would have to approve the portion on the TSVI property, which are USFS lands under a special permit to TSVI, which would likely require a full NEPA. The grant to KCEC doesn't allow for that kind of time or expense and the delay would increase project costs, likely resulting in the capacity of the project being reduced significantly, pre-tariffs. The goal is for there to be off-line residential service and essential services (water, sewer, police and fire, emergency communications, etc.) for a MINIMUM of 8 hrs. during an outage or emergency. This will allow KCEC to de-power their lines into the canyon during times of high fire

risk, wind and ice storms without interrupting power Rick is hoping to push KCEC for more, but that is the minimum we are shooting for and close to the maximum capacity for this technology. So, we are discussing various ways to make the system self-recharging when off-grid, through solar, hydrogen, small scale hydro or other means.

Natural Gas Line Extension of Upper Twining

While there are not as many applications as hoped, Jim and Bob have submitted 11 applications for Natural Gas to New Mexico Gas. Chris Baca has provided preliminary acceptance of the applications. It was noted that at least one insurance company has insisted that trees surrounding above ground propane tanks be removed. Bob said he would communicate such concerns and opportunities property owners above the end of the natural gas line at 76 Twining Rd.

Miscellaneous

Adjournment/Next Meeting

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:10am.

The next meeting will be at 10am on August 4th, 2025, via Zoom.

James B Woodard