

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON
COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF STAR VALLEY**

**Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 5:15 pm
3675 East Highway 260, Star Valley, AZ
(Star Valley Town Hall)**

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:

- PRAYER was offered by Pastor Dave Barber of Rim View Community Church.
- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- CALL TO ORDER

- **ROLL CALL:**

Vice Mayor McKinney X, Council Member Armington X, Council Member Binney X, Council Member Rappaport X, Council Member McDaniel X, Mayor Davis X.

- **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

During this portion of the meeting, members of the public may address the Town Council on items that are not on the printed agenda. Any remarks shall be addressed to the Council as a whole and not to any individual member. Speakers are limited to three (3) minutes per person unless additional time is granted by the Mayor. The Council may not discuss or act upon matters raised during public comments.

The Mayor opened up this portion of the meeting for public comment.

District 3 Supervisor Woody Cline wished Mayor Davis all the best in his new position.

There were no further comments and the Mayor closed the public comment portion.

- **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

All items listed under the Consent Agenda will be voted on with one motion. If discussion is desired regarding any Consent Agenda item, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and voted on separately.

A. Approval of the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on February 15, 2022.

B. Approval of Claims Payable from February 16, 2022 through February 28, 2022 for the General Fund and for the Water Department.

A motion to approve consent agenda items A and B was made by Council Member Binney and was seconded by Council Member Armington.

A roll call vote was taken:

Vice Mayor McKinney X, Council Member Armington X, Council Member Binney X, Council Member Rappaport X, Council Member McDaniel X, Mayor Davis X.
The motion was voted on and passed 6 - 0.

- **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

1. **The Honorable Dorothy Little, Star Valley Magistrate Court, will administer the Oath of Office to Mayor Bobby Davis.**

The Honorable Dorothy Little administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Bobby Davis.

2. **Fire District update from Chief Morris with the Hellsgate Fire Department.**

Chief Morris with the Hellgate Fire Department stated this is the first opportunity he has had to address the Star Valley Town Council. On several occasions, he has spoken with Town Manager Grier about issues that have been going on. Chief Morris explained that, as a fire district, they are not beholden to any organization other than the state of Arizona. They do work with the county a lot because of the way that the finances are set up. Chief Morris reported that he has been the fire chief for just about two years and is a part-time employee. Currently they have a full-time staff of five firefighters and they run out of the station in Star Valley. They have three fire station locations – Star Valley, Tonto Village and Meads Collins Ranch. Those stations are not staffed, pointed out Chief Morris. The only staffing they have is in Star Valley. They are part of the automatic aid consortium with the Town of Payson, explained Chief Morris, which means that Payson Fire and Police dispatch them along with several other entities (Water Wheel, Pine/Strawberry and Christopher/Kohl's). They go where they are needed.

Chief Morris stated he would like to provide a few updates. From February 28th to March 2nd, reported Chief Morris, Tonto National Forest will be burning debris fields in piles. The areas of concern are Diamond Point Shadows, Lion Springs, Star Valley, Diamond Point Summer Homes, Tonto Village, State Highway 260 and Forest Road 65. There will probably be some smoke that may be coming into town. The Knolls Property Owners Association will be holding a Safety Fair on Saturday, March 19th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at 600 E. Highway 260, Ste. 12. They are trying to get people more in tune with Firewise, defensive spaces and being able to protect their properties in case of a wild fire. Hellsgate Fire District, reported Chief Morris, just signed a contract with DW Towers – they are a cell tower builder for Verizon, AT & T and T-Mobile. A cell tower will be located at Fire Station #22 in Tonto Village and has been needed for a long time because citizens in Tonto Village are underserved with poor, unreliable cell phone service. They will also be looking at other areas in need of cell towers to possibly put a third tower in the area as well.

Last year, reported Chief Morris, Hellsgate Fire Department was a recipient of a FEMA grant. They were awarded \$283,000 to purchase a new water tender. The brand new 2,000 gallon water tender was placed into service in January and increases their ability to respond to calls in the area without having to burden the taxpayers. They were also able to purchase new battery operated extrication tools with a grant they received from a private foundation. The Hellsgate Fire Department, disclosed Chief Morris, has been hit hard with COVID-19. All of his personnel have contracted COVID. Because his personnel have been hit, it has been difficult for them to be able to hire back personnel to be able to meet their requirements. They have a system in place right now where they are able to ask other departments to assist them so they can continue to maintain their staffing and be able to respond on calls. Chief Morris reported that all of Gila County has created and legally formed what they call the Gila County Fire Chiefs Association. This allows the fire chiefs from all the fire districts and fire departments to address certain

issues, as a group, and be able to find solutions. They are trying to establish a 501(c)(3) in order to get grant money for the association to pay for training for organizations that may not be able to afford it.

Chief Morris reported that on Highway 260 and Walters Lane there is a cattleguard that poses a safety issue for his fire engine and ladder truck. Queried Chief Morris – Has there been thought on council to remove the cattleguard? Chief Morris suggested, if possible, that the Town get that cattleguard removed. Chief Morris reported he has discussed with the town manager that there are several identified fire hydrants in the area that need maintenance – either replacement or repair. He has reassigned his staff to specific divisions and now has a water resource officer who is in charge of water, hoses, nozzles, and so forth. One of the things the water resource officer is responsible for is taking care of hydrants. Queried Chief Morris – Is there a current agreement between the Town of Star Valley and Hellgate Fire to do annual checks? “No,” answered Town Manager Grier. The agreement is that Hellsgate does the checks and the maintenance. Chief Morris questioned whether or not the fire department is responsible to replace a hydrant if they turn a hydrant on and the stem breaks. Mr. Grier responded that will have to be a discussion item for council. Star Valley’s position is that the fire department is responsible for the fire hydrants. Council can consider that at another meeting. Queried Chief Morris – Does the Town have a hydrant map with corresponding GPS coordinates? Mr. Grier responded he doesn’t know about that and he thinks Hellgate has that. Queried Mr. Grier – When was the last time Hellsgate did anything with the hydrants? Chief Morris answered a few hydrants were checked in 2021. Mr. Grier stated that would be a good discussion item for a later time. The Town and Hellsgate need to meet regarding the fire departments strategy for fighting fires, the responsibility of fire hydrants and fire protection.

Queried Council Member McDaniel – Are there any grants where the fire department can help individuals with their property? There is, answered Chief Morris, but not for them because they were a recipient of a Firewise grant previously. You are only allowed one time in your history, reported Chief Morris. They just recently completed the wildland agreement for the whole county and they will be going to the Board of Supervisors to ask for funding to take care of the twelve high priority areas. Chief Morris stated he understands the Town has no ordinances on keeping properties clean. The fire department cannot enforce Town ordinances because they have no enforcement jurisdiction. The only enforcement jurisdiction would be the police department, explained Chief Morris, they can cite people if they haven’t cleaned up their properties adequately enough to be able to prevent a wildland fire from coming in.

Chief Morris reported that Proposition 117 affected fire districts statewide – it limited the amount of money that could be generated from property taxes. Hellsgate Fire District has two funding sources – one is the levy on property tax and the other is a fire district assistance tax. Their budget is 1.6 million dollars. Eighty percent of their budget goes towards employees and employee-related benefits. Twenty percent of their budget goes toward operating the fire stations. They supplement it by going on wildland calls. A proposition called the Arizona Fire District Safety Act is coming up this year. You may see a lot of firemen asking for signatures to have this placed on the November ballot. This is a sales tax request for 1/10th of one percent – that means one penny out of ten dollars spent. It is proposed to raise one hundred fifty million dollars per year and will be distributed out to all one hundred and forty four fire districts that are registered. If that happens, then their possibility of getting funding is there. What they propose to do with their funding is to increase staffing, purchase emergency medical equipment, purchase equipment to fight wildland fires, replace worn out and aging equipment, hire additional paramedics and emergency personnel and staff Station #22 in Tonto Village. This will allow them to become more self-proficient in being able to take care of their own calls, concluded Chief Morris.

3. The first of two public hearings on alternative expenditure limitation (Home Rule).

Town Clerk Chapin stated the extension of Home Rule is scheduled to be on the 2022 Primary Election ballot. In 2008, explained Ms. Chapin, the voters of the Town of Star Valley adopted Home Rule and renewed this option in 2012, 2014 and 2018. A public notice of hearings has been published for this first public hearing tonight along with the second public hearing scheduled for Tuesday, March 15th. As this is a public hearing, reminded Ms. Chapin, the mayor will be opening the meeting up for public comment.

After the second public hearing, explained Town Clerk Chapin, council will vote on whether or not to renew the extension of Home Rule. If Home Rule is renewed, council will adopt a resolution authorizing placing the extension of Home Rule on the 2022 election ballot. After passage of the resolution, the record of votes will be published along with the amount of expenditures exceeding the state-imposed limitation and purposes for the excess. Ms. Chapin reported the state-imposed expenditure limit for fiscal year 2023-2024 is \$2,782,697. The Town of Star Valley's expenditure estimate for that same fiscal year is \$12,644,175. A significant difference, pointed out Ms. Chapin, which totals \$9,861,478.

Home Rule, stated Town Clerk Chapin, is a provision that essentially allows the Town to spend the money it collects from taxes and other sources. It lets the town council, rather than an over forty year old state spending formula, decide what local services the community needs. Home Rule puts the budgeting power in the home community, concluded Ms. Chapin. Mayor Davis opened the meeting up for public comment. There were no comments and the mayor closed the public comment portion.

4. Discussion and possible action regarding selection of an engineer for FY2021 CDBG project.

Town Manager Grier stated this project is at the juncture of selection of the engineer. Mr. Grier disclosed there was only one interested engineer, Rick Engineering. Mr. Grier reported that Mayor Davis, himself, Finance Administrator Nutt and Water Operator Dean Shaffer graded the one engineer. The recommendation from the group is to select Rick Engineering. Council can go forward with the recommendation or request to resolicit other engineers. Mayor Davis asked for confirmation that this is for Milky Way. "Yes," responded Mr. Grier. This project connects eight inch pipe from the Milky Way well to eight inch pipe that we have running all the way to PW1 and PW2. The ultimate goal is to upsize all the pipe to eight inch and replace the aging pipe, concluded Mr. Grier.

A motion to select Rick Engineering as the engineering firm to enter into negotiations with the Town Manager and authorize the Town Manager to negotiate and possibly enter into a contract with Rick Engineering for engineering services for the FY2021 CDBG project was made by Council Member McDaniel and was seconded by Council Member Rappaport.

A roll call vote was taken:

Vice Mayor McKinney Yes, Council Member Armington Yes, Council Member Binney Yes, Council Member Rappaport Yes, Council Member McDaniel Yes, Council Member Davis Yes.

The motion was voted on and passed 6 - 0.

5. Discussion and possible action to adopt Resolution No. R 22-01 – A Resolution amending the designation of those individuals authorized to sign checks for the Town.

Town Manager Grier explained this is a resolution authorizing the bank to remove former Mayor Gary Coon from the list of authorized signers. Mayor Davis, Vice Mayor McKinney, Town Manager Grier and Finance Administrator Nutt will be retained as authorized signers for the Town. Council Member Binney pointed out that Finance Administrator Nutt is listed as an authorized signer. Mr. Grier

responded that will be changed at some point. Council Member Binney recommended to add Town Clerk Chapin as a signer. Mr. Grier answered the Town needs to have somebody else in order to have a segregation of duties. Mr. Grier recommended approval of Resolution No. R 22-01 as is so there are signers available to the Town.

A motion to approve Resolution No. R 22-01 – A Resolution of the Mayor and Common Council of the Town of Star Valley, Arizona, amending the designation of those individuals authorized to sign checks for the Town and superseding all previous resolutions was made by Council Member Armington and was seconded by Council Member McDaniel.

A roll call vote was taken:

**Vice Mayor McKinney Yes, Council Member Armington Yes, Council Member Binney Yes, Council Member Rappaport Yes, Council Member McDaniel Yes, Council Member Davis Yes.
The motion was voted on and passed 6 - 0.**

• ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Council Member Armington and was seconded by Council Member Binney.

The motion was voted on and passed 6 – 0.

APPROVED:

Bobby Davis, Mayor

Date: _____

ATTEST:

Eddie Chapin, Town Clerk

CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Star Valley held on the 1st day of March 2022. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 7th day of March 2022.

Eddie Chapin, Town Clerk