

Minutes of the Altamont Town Council Meeting
January 13, 2022

Present:

Clyde Watkins
Glen Jessen
Ole Olsen
Shilo Monney
Amanda (Mandy) Gardner, Town Clerk
Craig Kettle, Town Employee
Josh Phillips, Altamont Fire Chief

Public Present:

Vicky Jessen
Annisia Maxfield
Melba Markham
Cameron Olsen
Jack Wood

Sommer Arnold was excused.

Clyde Watkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes Approved (7:01 p.m.)

A Motion was made by Shilo Monney to approve the minutes of November 17, 2021 as written. Motion seconded by Glen Jessen. Motion carried unanimously.

Oath of Office (7:02 p.m.)

The Oath of Office was given to returning council member Ole Olsen and Mayor Clyde Watkins by Mandy Gardner.

Melba Markham – Retirement Appreciation (7:07 p.m.)

Mayor Watkins expressed sincere appreciation to Melba Markham for her years of service to the Town of Altamont. Melba worked for the Town of Altamont for 45 years.

Upper Community Recreation District (7:15 p.m.)

Vicky Jessen proposed working out a partnership with the Recreation District and the Town of Altamont so that the two entities could share expenses for the park. With a partnership, the Town could retain ownership of the park and the Town Council would still have say with what happens at the park, activities, etc. at the park. She feels that the Recreation District needs some time to get organized, set priorities and finalize all budgets. The Recreation District has a budget set aside for 2022 but after upkeep and maintenance there is not a lot left for improvements. A partnership could allow the Recreation District to provide capital improvements and the Town could provide upkeep and maintenance.

Mrs. Jessen proposed that the Town could keep ownership of the park, provide insurance and liabilities, labor for supper upkeep and repairs to the secondary water system as well as the calendar allowing for park rentals. The Recreation District could then use their budget to pay utilities, the secondary water assessment, maintenance repairs and supplies, leaving approximately \$7,000 for capital improvements.

Shilo Monney asked for clarification on the paperwork, particularly if the Recreation District were to take over everything, does their budget include insurance on the park. Annissa

Maxfield clarified that all insurance is budgeted under an operating expense for the District so that would not come out of the park's budget.

Mrs. Jessen stated that the Recreation District has a list of priorities for upgrades at the park including restoring the baseball diamonds, painting, siding, replacing the west side of the south pavilion where there is water damage, adding security and surveillance and replacing the roof on the south pavilion.

Mrs. Jessen had emailed Greg Miles to get his feedback on a possible partnership. Mr. Miles passed on a few concerns. One of his concerns is that it was presented to the voters in a way that the voters understood the Recreation District would be taking over the park. Mayor Watkins added that it was also the Town's understanding that the Recreation District would take over the park and a main selling point on the District was that the park would benefit from the added funds from the District. One concern of the Town was if there would still be enough work to keep their full time employee without the park but the council had discussed this issue and does not believe it would be a problem. Annissa added that the Recreation District had discussed with the Town that the park would be taken over. Inasmuch as it being formally presented to voters, she is not sure it was implied that the recreation district would obtain complete ownership of the parks. It did imply that the Recreation District would be involved in caring for the parks. They did propose budgets on both parks.

Shilo Monney shared a concern about double taxing voters. Mayor Watkins agreed that this would be a main concern and he knows this is a main concern for residents of the Town. Mayor Watkins had passed on to residents that the Town would not be taxing residents for the park once the Recreation District took over ownership. He further added that discussions had also included that if the Recreation District did not maintain proper upkeep, the park would revert back to the Town.

Vicky Jessen is concerned that the Recreation District's priority is the rodeo grounds.

Annissa stated that there was a public hearing in October to make the Recreation District's budget transparent. For the next operating year, the budget is broken down with the Altamont Park, Bluebell Park and Rodeo Grounds each having \$15,000, Longhorn Days having \$20,000, Youth Programs at \$10,000 and \$15,000 earmarked for capital improvement projects which is a down payment on rodeo grounds. They also have \$10,000 to run the District. To date, the Recreation District has collected \$90,000. The budget will be re-considered each year. She added that the overall plan is for the Recreation District to take over the Altamont Park, but they wanted to discuss options with the Town for the first year or so which could give the Recreation District some time to figure out budgets, costs, maintenance and develop a more concrete plan moving forward.

Glen Jessen stated that the council will be unable to make a decision on this item tonight as it was not an agenda item. This item will be included on next month's agenda and then a final decision can be made. That will give the council a month to check with legal counsel as well.

Ole Olsen asked if the Town would be provided with the Recreation District's yearly budget. Annissa stated that a new budget will be prepared each October and budgets will be available for all taxpayers to review. The Recreation District is required to have a transparent budget, so she is required to provide budget information upon request.

Fire Department (7:56 p.m.)

Chief Phillips reported that for training the department has a wildland refresher coming up March 3. A bill will be coming to the Town for that training. They will also be starting firefighter 1 and 2 training so he is obtaining prices on books to start those courses. The department will be offering a CPR and first aid class for anyone who would like to come and get certified.

Chief Phillips reported that all repairs on truck 152 are done and it will be ISO certified again. He plans to take truck 153 in for repairs and then everything will be ISO certified which should help lower the score.

The Myton fire department is back up and running so the Altamont Fire Department boundaries will not change.

Financial Audit (8:01 p.m.)

Cameron Olsen provided council members with copies of the audit. Mr. Olsen reported that everything looked good and there were no findings. The Town is in compliance with all requirements. Internal Control is working well.

Mr. Olsen reported that the Town had an increase in charges for services due to all of the fires. Everything else was very similar. Property taxes had a small increase and sales taxes remained very steady. Earnings on investments also remained steady. With regards to expenses, the public safety expenses had an increase due to the fires. Highways and streets also showed an increase. The Town had \$536,000 in debt owing with a scheduled payment of \$27,000. They ended the year with \$509,000 in debt owing and the debt payment will remain the same for the next 15 years. There was a change in capital assets due to the purchase of the backhoe. All other items remained steady.

Mayor Watkins asked if the Town's accounting programs are sufficient. Cameron stated that Quickbooks is adequate for the Town. He further stated that Melba and Mandy have worked well together to make it a smooth transition and all entries look routine. Melba Markham and Cameron Olsen left the meeting.

Utilities (8:15 p.m.)

Ron Pierce contacted the Town with regards to the sewer lagoons. There is currently money available to put headworks in a building. Those funds will be available for a five-year period and they implied that after that time the funding assistance will not be available, and they could still require entities to put the headworks in a building.

Annisia Maxfield left the meeting.

Mayor Watkins stated that we need to ask more questions to see if this is something the Town should pursue. The new process would eliminate the grinder. Instead of waste material doing what it does now, there would be a building housing a spreader and a grate would pull solids out which would be hauled to the dump. Craig stated that it becomes hazardous material so it would have to be taken to the hazardous landfill. He is concerned if the change becomes required and the Town is not prepared, but he is concerned about this becoming a requirement in general. If they don't end up requiring it, it would be a large unnecessary

expense for the Town. Craig was provided with a number to call and ask for information. He will obtain all of the information he can so this item can be discussed further.

Public Entity Resolution (8:27 p.m.)

Mayor Watkins stated that inasmuch as there has been a change in the Town clerk, the council needs to be aware of who was authorized to change funds in accounts, including PTIF and state accounts. The council has the discretion to determine who has access to those accounts. The council agreed to pass Resolution 2022-1 to give Clyde Watkins and Amanda Gardner as Mayor and Clerk access to financial accounts, including the PTIF and State funds. *A Motion was made by Glen Jessen to accept Resolution 2022-1, giving Clyde Watkins and Amanda Gardner access to financial accounts, including the PTIF and State funds. Motion seconded by Ole Olsen. Motion carried unanimously.*

Fraud Risk Assessment (8:31 p.m.)

Mayor Watkins stated the purpose of the fraud risk assessment is to educate council members of what the State would like to see on boards and councils. He stated that it is not necessary to pass all points on this assessment, but to see areas where the Town could improve. Mandy Gardner reviewed the assessment with the council members. All necessary documents were signed for the Fraud Risk Assessment. Totals will be uploaded to the public notice website. The council will discuss a Procurement Policy at next month's council meeting.

The next council meeting will be held on February 10 at 7:00 p.m.

A Motion was made by Ole Olsen to end the meeting at 9:05 p.m. Motion seconded by Shilo Monney. Motion carried unanimously.

Read and approved this 10 day of February, 2022.

e-mailed to
altamonttown@gmail.com
February 6, 2022