Evansville Town Council Meeting, Evansville, Wyoming

April 8, 2019

Work Session

A Work Session was held on April 8, 2019, at 5:35 p.m. Present were Mayor Jennifer Sorenson, Council Members Chad Edwards, Sheena Hixson, Joe Knop and Aaron Vigneault. Also present were Town Treasurer Lexi Erickson, Town Clerk Janelle Underwood, Police Chief Mike Thompson, Fire Chief Leo Malsom, Assistant Fire Chief Mark Cornett and Public Works Representative Ron Emond.

Cedar Springs Impact:

Mayor Jennifer Sorenson advised that the Cedar Springs Wind Farm Project is taking place in Converse County. She stated that there is impact funding available for communities that believe they will be impacted because of the influx of workers. She stated that the communications and agreements have broken down with all communities involved and Converse County believes they are entitled to all the Impact Funds which is over ten million dollars. She stated that because no one could come to an agreement on the funding, it is now going before the State of Wyoming Office of Administrative Hearing and Mike Lansing will be representing the Town of Evansville. The hearing is scheduled for May 16 and May 17, 2019.

Aspens Update:

Mayor Jennifer Sorenson advised that Evansville is moving forward with trying to get the Aspen's Mobile Home Park cleaned up. She advised that Chief of Police Mike Thompson and Fire Chief Leo Malsom went through the park and determined what vacant trailers need to be removed due to hazards. She advised that Colony representative and their attorney met with the Town of Evansville and that Colony Capital stated that they have no ownership to the mobile homes therefore have no intentions of removing them. She stated that Evansville will have to file under Wyoming State Statutes to have the courts determine if they are fire hazard or dangerous to public health and have the mobile homes removed and then file a lien on the property. She stated that the Town will go after 10 trailers at a time starting with the worst and could be upwards of more than 50 trailers when all done.

Health Insurance:

Mayor Sorenson introduced representatives from Covenant which is a consulting group for health insurance which sends out request for proposals for the employer to find health, dental, and optical insurance for employers. Covenant charges $9,000 to handle the request for proposals and then charges $6,000 annually to maintain, educate employees and troubleshoot any issues the employer may have. Discussion and questions took place about the Town's current plan and what other options may be available.

Police/Fire Department Joint Ops Building:

Mayor Sorenson stated that there are several countywide projects and not enough funding to support these projects such as a new Casper Police Station. She stated that the intent is to hold a Special Election in 2020 for a 6th cent tax for one-time projects only. She stated that now is the time for Evansville to look at constructing a new police/fire joint op building. She stated that the Police Department location in the basement is not a good location, mold issues, lack of ventilation in the evidence room, and lack of equipment (police cars) stored inside. It was also brought up that for the Fire Department has adequate space and that there are six firefighters that stay overnight at the Fire Station and only two bedrooms. The ability to have drive thru bays for the engines would also be a benefit for the department. It was estimated that the cost would be three to four million dollars.

Council Member Involvement Concerns:

Mayor Sorenson stated that she wondered if Council Member Joe Knop would be able to start attending the Council Meetings. Council Member Joe Knop stated that his work schedule has been running the same Mondays as the Council Meetings but that in May it will be changing to where the Council Meetings are opposite Mondays as his work schedule until August at which time one of the employees that he works

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with has offered to cover his time at his job until he the Council Meetings are over in order for him to participate more on the Evansville Town Council.

Police Wages/Sign on Bonus:

Chief of Police Mike Thompson advised the Governing Body that he would like for the Town to consider an increase in the police officers wages. He stated that there are officers that have stuck it out when they have been short staffed and struggling to fill vacant positions. He stated that by increasing the officer's wages and offering a sign on bonus he feels this would improve the retainment of police officers. He stated that if the wages were increased at $2.00 per hour, this would bring Evansville police officers wages comparable to the Mills Police Department.

Work Session was recessed at 6:56 p.m. in order to hold the Regular Scheduled Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m. The continuation of the Work Session at 7:25 p.m.

Police Chief Mike Thompson continued speaking about the wage increase for the police officers. Town Clerk Janelle Underwood spoke about wages for all employees especially those that have stuck it out in tough times. Fire Chief Leo Malsom and Public Works Director Ron Emond stated the same thing for their departments. Mayor Sorenson stated that she would like to see a pay scale put in place to work from and asked that the department heads check around with other departments to see what their wages are. Wages and the good benefits that Evansville offers were discussed and the reason why employees have stayed.

Fire Arms Training:

Chief of Police Mike Thompson advised the Governing Body that the Police Department needing some place to do their fire arms training. He stated that Evansville can't use the same range the that Natrona County Sheriff's Office uses. He stated that there have been problems with Evansville sharing the same location as the Casper Police Department. Chief Thompson stated that he has looked at some State of Wyoming land on Hat Six that the Town could lease or purchase some acreage out at the BB Brooks. He stated that the Town would need to fence the property, construct a shed to store items and have controlled access to this range. He stated by not having a gun range for the officers to practice and qualify on, it opens the Town up to liability and something needs to be done.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m. No action was taken.

APPROVED:

Jennifer Sorenson, Mayor

ATTESTED: Janelle Underwood

Janelle Underwood, Town Clerk