

**MINUTES OF THE FLORENCE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2014, AT 6:00 P.M., IN THE CHAMBERS OF TOWN HALL, LOCATED AT 775 NORTH MAIN STREET, FLORENCE, ARIZONA.**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Rankin called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Rankin, Smith, Celaya, Hawkins, Montañó, Walter, Woolridge

**INVOCATION**

Councilmember Wooldridge led the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Rankin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

**Call to the Public for public comment on issues within the jurisdiction of the Town Council. Council rules limit public comment to three minutes. Individual Councilmembers may respond to criticism made by those commenting, may ask staff to review a matter raised or may ask that a matter be put on a future agenda. However, members of the Council shall not discuss or take action on any matter during an open call to the public unless the matters are properly noticed for discussion and legal action.**

Mr. Jerry Ravert, Florence Resident, stated they he and his family have lived in the JB Michea home, which is in the Historic District for approximately 30 years. He is retired and has worked with State Parks for 34 years. Three of the six parks that he managed were historical buildings, and one of them was McFarland State Park.

Mr. Ravert explained his interest in seeing Florence prosper and explained his reasons for wanting to preserve the Historic District and the surrounding environment. He would also like to keep the surrounding desert free of development and explained his reasons as to why it is important to retain the surrounding desert. He said it is important to keep visitors in town.

Mr. Ravert stated that the Florence Copper Project is going to test this new and innovative method of mining, on a limited basis, if there is no fracking and tests show that there are no ill effects on water quality. Florence may serve as a shining example for the future of mining and may attract visitors to tour the site and the Town.

Mr. Ravert said the Town is ready to spend money on useless treatments on Main Street and fight an industry which could benefit the future of Florence. He inquired why the Council would even suggest tearing down the Cuen building because it might cost money to preserve it. He stated there are enough park areas on Main Street. The IDA is willing to pay \$4,000 towards the restoration. He asked Council why they didn't match their donation and use the money to protect the building. He said he doesn't believe enough time was spent in trying to obtain funding from other sources. He said the hotel and Clark House would not be here today if people thought it would cost too much to restore them.

Mr. Ravert said the Town should be working to get businesses on Main Street, and not expanding the troubled business district.

Mr. Ruth Harrison, Resident, read her letter that she submitted to the local newspaper regarding the location of the library on Main Street. She said 7462 people visited the library in December 2013. If the library were to be housed in the Pinal County building on the corner of Main and 6<sup>th</sup> Street, it would generate a lot of foot traffic. It would be easily accessible to many, and they could visit the eatery, get a haircut, pick up their mail and use Padilla Park. She said it would help Main Street.

A San Tan Valley Resident, stated that she is a customer of Johnson Utilities. She said in light of the potential purchase of Johnson Utilities, she inquired the following:

- What type of customer service can they expect to receive from their call center agent?
- Will current Johnson Utilities employees be retained?
- Will they be considered Town of Florence employees and go through the process as identified on the Town's website?
- Will qualified field technicians be required to maintain a certification and work only in the areas where their certifications are applicable?
- What training will customer service representatives also receive?
- Will they be expected to be helpful and courteous in their interactions with customers?
- Will calls regarding billing errors and other questions be handled with upmost professionalism and respect?
- How will the Town of Florence communicate with the residents about infrastructure problems such as utility system pipe breaks, environmental concerns, and water quality?
- Will the residents receive notification within 24 hours of the potential violation or system problem?
- How will the residents be assured of the overall water quality in their service area?
- How will the Town of Florence address smells that currently come from existing sewage plants, and who do they contact for the smells?

- What, if any type of inserts, bulletins, or newsletters are included in the water bill?
- Will any inserts include useful information about water conservation methods or issues involving water replenishment, recycling, or other environmental concerns, or can they expect to see the inserts used to make politically charged statements or controversial assertions about various individuals or groups in their community?
- What resources are available if they are not satisfied with the service provided to them by the Town of Florence?

The San Tan Valley Resident stated that she knows they are to contact ADEQ for water issues; however, she wants to know who to contact if they are dissatisfied with the services that Florence provides. She said the residents want the Council to be aware that they will hold Florence accountable as well. She said the residents are trusting and supporting the Town as long as the Town provides them the assurance that the Town will treat the residents with the upmost respect and provide them the answers when they need them.

## **PUBLIC HEARING AND PRESENTATION**

### **Presentation of a Service Award to Cynthia Clark for 15 years of dedicated service to the Town of Florence.**

Ms. Cynthia Clark was unable to attend the Town Council meeting and the award will be presented to her at the Public Works Department.

### **Presentation by Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce recognizing the Business of the Month.**

Ms. Judy Hughes, Executive Director, Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce, recognized the Florence Reminder and Blade Tribune as the Business of the Month for their service to the Town since 1892. She said the newspaper actively promotes and celebrates Florence's incredible history. The company restored the William Clark House and uses the restored building for their office. The staff is local people and recognized all of those who are employed with Florence Reminder.

Mr. Mark Cowling, Florence Reminder and Blade Tribune Editor, thanked Ms. Hughes and the Chamber for their recognition. He said they enjoy serving the community and its residents.

### **Public Hearing on an application received from Robert E. Barker, Valentino's, located at 3385 N. Hunt Highway, Florence, Arizona, for a new Series 12 restaurant license; and for Council recommendation for approval or disapproval of said license.**

Mayor Rankin opened the public hearing. Mayor Rankin closed the public hearing.

Ms. Lisa Garcia, Deputy Town Manager/Town Clerk, stated that the application was received by the Clerk's Office on January 28, 2014, and was posted for 20 days. The Clerk's Office has not received any complaints. The applicant was advised of the public hearing, and was unable to attend. The business will be located in the former location of Mama's Restaurant in the Anthem Plaza.

On motion of Councilmember Hawkins, seconded by Councilmember Walter and carried to forward a favorable recommendation for approval on an application received from Robert E. Barker, Valentino's, located at 3385 N. Hunt Highway, Florence, Arizona, for a new Series 12 restaurant license

**CONSENT: All items indicated by an (\*) will be handled by a single vote as part of the consent agenda, unless a Councilmember or a member of the public objects at the time the agenda item is called.**

**\*Approval of a Special Event Liquor License for the Pinal County Mounted Posse's Annual Eddie Martinez Benefit, on Saturday, March 29, 2014, from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm.**

**\*Approval of a Special Event Liquor License for Paladin Sports Outreach, Anthem Spring Festival, on Saturday, March 8, 2014, from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm.**

**\*Reappointment of Judy Hughes, Barbara J. Kelly, and Ty Schraufnagel to the Industrial Development Authority with terms to expire December 31, 2019.**

**\*Reappointment of Donald L. Woolridge to the Parks and Recreation Board with a term to expire December 31, 2016.**

**\*Reappointment of Denise Kollert to the Library Advisory Board with a term to expire December 31, 2015.**

**\*Approval of accepting the register of demands ending December 31, 2013, in the amount of \$2,201,094.82.**

On motion of Councilmember Montaña, seconded by Councilmember Walter, and carried to approve the Consent Agenda, as written.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Discussion/Approval/Disapproval of entering into a purchase agreement with Pinal County Federal Credit Union (PCFCU) to purchase property located at 200 W. 20th Street, Florence, Arizona, in an amount not to exceed \$335,000 or \$72.54 per square foot of building.**

Ms. Lisa Garcia, Deputy Town Manager/Town Clerk, stated that the building is approximately 4,618 square feet and has eight executive offices, one conference room, one break room, two restrooms, and the outside has 12 covered parking spaces and 20 open parking spaces. The building is approximately 25 years old. She said staff is recommending that the Town of Florence purchase the building. The PCFCU is currently under contract to go to a new location. The contract allows for PCFCU to make modifications to the building and the Town would take control over the building July 1, to August 30, 2014. The cost for the purchase would be allocated in the next fiscal year's budget.

Mayor Rankin stated the Town will be building a new building by Town Hall, and inquired what will go in the new building.

Mr. Charles Montoya, Town Manager, stated that the library and other recreational facilities and an aquatic center were planned for the building; however, in light of the County Recorder building burning down, the Town is engaged with conversations regarding the purchase of the area, or possibly a land swap.

Councilmember Hawkins inquired if the \$72.54 per square foot the average price for a commercial building.

Mr. Montoya stated that the \$72.54 is the current price offered by PCFCU because there is commercial on residential property. The cost was not measured against other areas because that was the lowest offer they were willing to accept.

On motion of Councilmember Montaño, seconded by Vice-Mayor Smith, and carried to approve of entering into a purchase agreement with Pinal County Federal Credit Union to purchase property located at 200 W. 20th Street, Florence, Arizona, in an amount not to exceed \$335,000 or \$72.54 per square foot of building.

**Discussion/Approval/Disapproval of entering into an Intergovernmental Library Agreement between the Town of Florence ("Town") and the Florence Unified School District ("District").**

Mr. Jasper Halt, Librarian, stated the District elected not to renew the IGA with the Town. The agreement under discussion will be for a shorter term and will allow the library to remain at the current location for up to fifteen months, or up to May 31, 2015. It is projected that the Town will have a new library facility completed and ready for move in by that time. During the interim period, the Town and District would continue to act as a joint use facility serving both the public and the high school. The Town will now lease the facility for \$25,000, payable over the 15 month period in five installments. The Town will also agree to vacate the current location upon completion of the new facility with no penalty for moving out early.

On motion of Councilmember Woolridge, seconded by Councilmember Celaya, and carried to approve of entering into an Intergovernmental Library Agreement between the Town of Florence ("Town") and the Florence Unified School District ("District").

**Resolution No. 1421-14 Discussion/Approval/Disapproval of adopting A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE, PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA, ORDERING AND CALLING, A SPECIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON MAY 20, 2014, IN AND FOR THE TOWN OF FLORENCE, ARIZONA, TO SUBMIT TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE TOWN THE QUESTION OF THE ACQUISITION OF THE WATER AND WASTEWATER UTILITIES OWNED BY JOHNSON UTILITIES, LLC, AND SOUTHWEST ENVIRONMENTAL UTILITIES, LLC.**

Ms. Garcia stated the Town has contact the Pinal County Elections Department, and has determined that the Town can do an election on May 20, 2014, if the Council calls the election. The election will be to place this particular question before the voters, not to determine if the Town of Florence is going to purchase or not purchase, but to place the question to the voters if the voters wish for the Town of Florence to purchase.

Ms. Garcia said the resolution will allow the Town Clerk to take all actions necessary to facilitate the election.

On motion of Councilmember Montaña, seconded by Councilmember Walter, to adopt Resolution No. 1421-14.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Montaña: Yes

Councilmember Walter: Yes

Councilmember Woolridge: Yes

Councilmember Hawkins: Yes

Councilmember Celaya: Yes

Vice-Mayor Smith: Yes

Mayor Rankin: Yes

Motion passed (Yes: 7; No: 0)

**Discussion/Approval/Disapproval of authorization to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement for provisions of services with the Pinal County Recorder for elections and voter registration services.**

Ms. Garcia stated that the Town has spoken with Pinal County Voter Registration, and they are willing to allow the Town to do an election. Typically, cities have to call an election 120 days prior to. She said today is the 91<sup>st</sup> day prior to the election. She said the Town will be doing a ground election that will take place at the Town of Florence. There will be one polling site. Those who have signed up for permanent early ballots will receive their permanent early ballots. The Town has 52% of the Town's voters receive early ballots.

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On motion of Councilmember Montañó, seconded by Councilmember Walter, to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement for provisions of services with the Pinal County Recorder for elections and voter registration services.

Roll Call Vote:

Councilmember Montañó: Yes  
Councilmember Walter: Yes  
Councilmember Woolridge: Yes  
Councilmember Hawkins: Yes  
Councilmember Celaya: Yes  
Vice-Mayor Smith: Yes  
Mayor Rankin: Yes

Motion passed (Yes: 7; No: 0)

### **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Ms. Denise Kollert, Florence Resident, thanked the Council for her re-appointment to the Library Board. She enjoys serving and is looking forward to the new library.

### **CALL TO THE COUNCIL**

Councilmember Walter invited everyone to the fishing event the first weekend in March. The free dump day will be on March 15, 2014.

Councilmember Celaya thanked all of the Board and Commission members for their time and efforts.

Councilmember Montañó acknowledged the Florence High School Basketball Team for going to the playoffs.

Vice-Mayor Smith thanked everyone who assisted with the Home Tour. It was a great and successful event.

Mayor Rankin thanked all those who volunteer in Florence. The Council would like to see more participation. He also thanked the Council for taking the appropriate steps in the evaluation on the acquisition of Johnson Utilities. The resolution prepares the Town Council to ask the general public permission to purchase the utility once the evaluation is completed.

Mayor Rankin thanked the Pinal County Recorder for assisting the Town with the May election.

Councilmember Hawkins stated that there was a letter in the paper that said the Town should have used the money from the Main Street project on the Cuen place instead.

He stated the project has been in the works for quite some time because of issues with ADOT. He said the Cuen Building is such a small building and the cost for restoration is cost prohibitive. The Town did solicit for private funding. The Town is on a time frame due to safety because the walls are separated and it is ready to collapse.

**ADJOURNMENT**

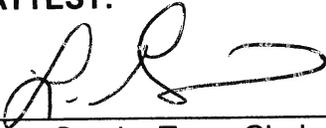
**Council may go into Executive Session at any time during the meeting for the purpose of obtaining legal advice from the Town's Attorney(s) on any of the agenda items pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3).**

On motion of Councilmember Hawkins, seconded by Councilmember Montaña, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 pm.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom J. Rankin, Mayor

**ATTEST:**



\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Garcia, Town Clerk

I certify that the following is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Florence Town Council meeting held on February 18, 2014, and that the meeting was duly called to order and that a quorum was present.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Garcia, Town Clerk