



TOWN OF  
**FLORENCE**  
COUNCIL COURIER



## Highlights from the Florence Town Council Meetings held on January 3, 2023

- To begin the meeting, Police Chief Bruce Walls introduced **four of the town's new police officers!** The new officers include Officer Michael Martinez and Officer Marcos Ornelas who both graduated from the Academy on December 8, 2022. Ms. Lisa Celaya and Mr. McKenzie Brown will also be joining Florence PD on January 3, 2023. Finally, Chief Walls shared that Officer Emma Grajeda recently became K9 certified and will be working with K9 Officer Kelso going forward. Congratulations Emma!
- Bill Foster, with the Historic Florence Foundation, shared the **results of the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Junior Parada**. According to Foster and Arizona Junior Rodeo Association, it was one of the best junior rodeos in years. The 90<sup>th</sup> Junior Parada hosted 129 contestants, 1,200-1,500 spectators, a High-Flying Motocross Stunt Team, and a Country Artist Tribute Show. Foster and his team, who planned and managed last year's rodeo as well, are already working on next year's event. Great work Historic Florence Foundation – we can't wait for next year's Junior Parada!
- Finance Director, Becki Jimenez, and Ben Hur, with Fester and Chapman, PLLC shared **the results of the Town's annual audit and Comprehensive Financial Report for fiscal year 2021-2022**. Overall, the town's financial position is very healthy, and we are working within our current expenditure limitation. Many thanks to Jennifer Evans, Ally Allen, Carl Dudding, finance department staff, and department directors for their consistent and exceptional efforts!
- Councilmember Neal led a presentation regarding a **request to rename the Florence Library the "Viney Jones Memorial Library"** per the town's new facility naming policy adopted on November 7, 2022. Since the adoption of that policy, the Jones family and many former and current residents have submitted multiple letters in support of the name change. During the presentation, Viney's son, Glenn Jones Jr., gave an emotional and heartfelt tribute to his mother, who sadly passed away in 2001. Viney Jones worked for the town from 1978-1997 and began serving as Florence's Head Librarian in 1980. The Florence Town Council unanimously approved the renaming of the library, and the town will share the details of the renaming ceremony as soon as possible.
- Finance Director, Becki Jimenez, shared a **notice of intent to increase sanitation rates and fees** following notification from the town's solid waste provider that collection costs for residential and commercial customers will be increasing by 5% beginning on February 1, 2023. To cover this increase, staff is requesting Council approve a rate increase of \$.92 per month or \$11.04 per year, as well as a 5% increase to commercial accounts, which would bring residential costs to \$20 per month. Additionally, staff is requesting an increase in the new customer deposit amount from \$51 to \$60, to help recover uncollected revenues. The new rates and fees would become effective on May 3, 2023 and a public hearing on the rate increase will be held on April 3, 2023.
- Following up on the public hearing held on December 7, 2022, Finance Director, Becki Jimenez, recommended the **adoption of the town's revised utility rate study and associated water and wastewater fees and charges**. In order to cover all costs related to the town's water and wastewater systems over the next five years, the town's rate consultant recommended a series of annual rate increases ranging from 1-4%, which is lower than Council's currently adopted utility rate schedules. This item was unanimously approved by Council and the town's new utility rate and fee schedule will become effective on March 1, 2023.
- Councilmember Neal presented a **proposal to help sponsor the Florence High School Cheerleaders** who will be competing in the National High School Cheerleading Championship in Orlando, Florida. The Council unanimously agreed to contribute \$3,000 to the squad. Good luck in the competition – we'll be rooting for you!
- Town Council reviewed and considered responses to **the Request for Proposal (RFP) for leasing Suite 102 of the Silver King Marketplace**. Proposals submitted included the Main Street Fabric Company, the current occupant of Suite 201, and Lex and Laine Studio proposed to open a full-service hair salon within the Silver King Marketplace. After discussing the process for selecting the prospective tenant and the two proposals, the majority of the Town Council authorized the Interim Town Manager to negotiate a lease agreement with Anita Jamlis to relocate her fabric store from Suite 201 to Suite 102.
- Town Council reviewed and considered responses to the **Request for Proposal (RFP) for leasing Suite 202 of the Silver King Marketplace**. Proposals submitted included Lex and Laine Studio who proposed to open a full-service hair salon within the Silver King Marketplace, and Alta Arizona, a professional engineering company who wishes to open an office in Florence to provide a wide range of civil engineering services. After discussing the process for selecting the prospective tenant and the two proposals, the majority of the Town Council authorized the Interim Town Manager to negotiate a lease agreement with Alta Arizona who will be opening an office in Florence to serve clients in Pinal County.
- Public Work Director, Chris Salas, presented a **proposal to amend the town's current Capital Improvement Plan to expedite the Heritage Park Lighting Project**, which will increase the lighting, visibility, and safety throughout the park. This item, which reallocates \$597,000 to the Heritage Park project and allows staff to order various long lead-time materials needed to complete this project, was unanimously approved by Council.