



Town of Mammoth MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAMMOTH TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON JULY 21, 2016

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Mammoth Town Council held July 21, 2016 pursuant to the notice required by law.

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Councilmembers Present

Vice-Mayor Wickham
Councilman Gallego
Councilwoman Medina
Councilman Sloan (tardy 6:19 p.m.)
Councilman Brewer
Councilman Bustamante
Mayor Jones

Staff Present

Erica Garcia, Interim Town Clerk
Stephen Cooper, Attorney

Staff Absent

4. Public Hearings

- A. Public Hearing Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Proposed Budget for Town of Mammoth in the amount of \$2,635,586.

Mr. Steven Cooper stated that the laws have recently changed in the state legislature that will require for the first time that increases in budgets will have to be done on roll call vote and a $\frac{2}{3}$ by council. The currently budget has been set to \$2,635,586. Mr. Cooper stated that this past year the council

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and staff has stopped the deficits, balanced the budget and even managed to bring more income than spent. Mr. Cooper stated that this amount would also include grants we may receive. This amount doesn't mean the town is going to spend that amount, it's giving the town the chance to get that in grants and other funds. Mr. Cooper stated that the new budget has also included the ability to hire a new town manager and accountant.

B. Public Hearing 2016-2017 Property Tax Hearing and Truth in Taxation.

Mr. Steven Cooper stated that council will have the choice to vote on the tax increase which will be a \$22,000.00 tax increase. He stated that if the council decided to approve the tax levy, it would raise the number to 3.6483. Mr. Cooper stated that it wouldn't increase the taxes of exempt people, but other properties and businesses would feel that. Mr. Cooper stated that we currently have water, sewer, road and Hurf issues here in the town that the increase of the tax levy would bring in more revenue and the Town could function better. He stated that nobody likes to raise taxes, but the reality is in order to survive we have to basically try to find ways to have revenue and cut cost. The council last year and its budget managed to operate the town in the black for the first time in approximately 5 years in \$112,000.00 and hope to stay on that road in these coming year budgets that come before the council.

Councilman Gallego asked how much does each house hold pay for property tax? Mr. Cooper stated that tax bills are also tied to the property tax bill.

Annie Martinez stated that for someone that a \$100,000.00 assessed value on their house will have a huge increase on the property taxes. Mr. Cooper stated that if your home is assessed at \$100,000.00 you would have an increase of \$108.00.

Mr. Cooper stated that if the tax levy doesn't pass, the budget amount would be a lower amount.

Councilman Bustamante stated the council still has the discretion to lower those levy rates. Mr. Cooper stated that tonight the tax levy isn't a done deal. He stated that it will require a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote meaning 6 out of the 7 council members.

Diana Sterling stated that she is very familiar with the financial problems the Town has, but she feels that raising that property taxes is something the town doesn't need. Ms. Sterling stated that people can't afford to pay more in their taxes. She stated that many are struggling financially. She asked if the council would come up with another solution.

Annie Martinez stated that she was against the home rule the first time around because she said she hadn't seen auditor reports in years, council members were pointing fingers at each other, she said there has been no accountability on your part as council and you are the ones handling the money. She stated that she went over the budget and she seen that she knows the town has problems, but she feels the Police Department shouldn't be out sourced. Annie stated that she feels we need to

keep it here. She then went on to say that this time around she decided to vote for the Home Rule hoping to keep our Police Department here. She said that now the council wants to raise property tax. She said that she knows several families that don't shop here anymore and would rather go to San Manuel in order to not be taxed. She says we are thinking of ways to bring money in and we are pushing people away with the tax increases. She stated that she believes there are many other ways to bring in money rather than raising taxes. She told Mayor Wickham that she needs to get a committee together to come up with ways to raise money. She said that there is going to be a point in time when no one is going to want to purchase homes here.

Mr. Joe Brewer stated that he motioned to go for the higher tax levy to have the people get together and express their comments and concerns. He stated as far as people not shopping around here is not true because he has asked the DG manager and she has told him it hasn't affected them.

Luis from the meat market said that he has seen a change in his store since the tax increase. He stated that he has lost a 10-15% in sales. He said that he is trying to do business in "the middle of nowhere" and it's hard to get the services and he has to pay for more in order to have a business here. He said it does build a strain on the business people and if they want to keep the people here they need to consider the increase because it is going to run the people out.

Councilman Gallego stated that he can see Luis' point.

Vice Mayor Wickham stated that about a year ago she remembers making the comment that the first year was going to be the hardest year because we were going to be getting out of debt as much as we could. She stated that now thankfully after the hard work of Pat Walker and her team, Erica and Don. We are at the point now and her hope that this coming year we as a council need to reevaluate the tax and make some changes according to the public's opinions and comments, but she also feels this is a time that we need to work as a community and get activities together. Vice Mayor stated we have several projects going to hopefully help our community.

Councilman Sloan stated that as of now the city is in the black. He stated it took some tax increase, excellent management and a lot of free work from some people. He stated that it's projected that we will have 4 police officers in August. Councilman Sloan stated that some towns don't tax the Senior Citizens at all.

Rene Romo stated that if the tax levy doesn't go through what will happen next? Mayor Jones stated that if we don't have the money then how will we operate? He stated that if it was him running the business he would then have to raise other services.

Councilman Brewer stated that the accountant stated if we do not pass the tax increase to take it right off the budget because the town would be missing out on the \$22,997.00.

Mayor Jones closed the budget meeting.

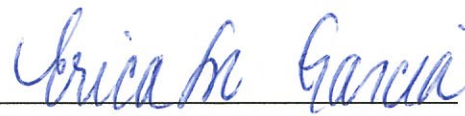
Mayor Jones adjourned letter B.

5. Adjourn

Vice Mayor Wickham motioned for adjournment with a 5 minute recess. A second was made by Councilwoman Medina. Motion passed

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

I certify that the preceding is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Mammoth Town Council's Regular Meeting held on July 21, 2016. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held.



Erica M. Garcia, Interim Town Clerk