

# Town Of Mammoth

## TOWN OF MAMMOTH MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING AND WORK SESSION OF THE MAMMOTH TOWN COUNCIL December 7, 2021

Minutes of a Special Meeting and Work Session of the Mammoth Town Council  
On December 7, 2021 pursuant to the notice required by Law.

Due to the COVID-19 Virus and our efforts to slow the spread, and to keep all members and attendees safe in this time of crisis. We require that all those in attendance are adhering to Social Distancing Measures.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – This meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM Mayor Armenta
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** J. Schempf
3. **ROLL CALL**

### PRESENT MEMBERS

Mayor Armenta  
 Councilman Bustamante  
 Councilwoman Martinez (By Phone)  
 Councilman Martinez  
 Councilman Brewer  
 Councilman Ponce

### PRESENT STAFF

Attorney S Cooper (By Phone)  
 Town Manager J. Schempf  
 Town Clerk A. Sanchez

### ABSENT MEMBERS

Councilman Adams

## 4. SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

### A. Swearing in of New Vice Mayor

The mayor began with the swearing in of the new vice mayor Ernest Bustamante. Councilwoman Martinez asked to go on record stating “never have we done anything like this in the entire time that we have been a town, because this office does not come with any special authority or powers. This an appointed position just like any other position on the council. By swearing in Councilman Bustamante gives the impression he has powers he does not have. It also causes confusion giving the impression that he has an additional term his term expires in August of next year. Councilman Bustamante stated he understood that they are all equal and have no special powers. Steve Cooper, Town Attorney stated that typically you do swear in individuals of the council typically you do swear in persons in a new position. There may be a time when he is needed to sign documents in the absence of the mayor, it is the discretion of the council. The town clerk stated that it is up to the council if they choose not, its fine. It was requested by council member Brewer. Councilman Brewer asked to move forward with the swearing in. It was the consensus of the council to proceed with the swearing in. Councilwoman Martinez asked to go on record that “she does not agree with this it goes against policy and everything we have done in the past. This confuses things and his term still expires in August. Vice Mayor Bustamante was sworn in by the town clerk.

Handicapped individuals with special accessibility needs may contact the ADA Coordinator for the Town of Mammoth at (520) 487-2331 (V/TDD)

**B.I. Approve Local Business Sustainability Grant Awards for Mammoth Businesses and Issue Checks**

Mayor Armenta stated the following businesses will be receiving grants from the Sustainability Program: La Casita, Las Michoacan's, Shear Expressions, Maria's Café, Mammoth Lumber, WC Industries and Mammoth Towing. The town clerk explained the criteria for eligibility was based on a criterion established by CDBG which is expenses from March 2020 to February 2021 for rent mortgage, utilities and wages for employees. The employees must be low income and the business must be able to prove they were negatively affected by COVID for the benefit period. As a result, the benefit amounts vary. There is \$16,000 remaining and we are working to accommodate the remaining businesses. Mayor Armenta presented the check to Teresa Waddell from Shear Expression.

**Motion to approve the Sustainability Grant Awards for the Mammoth Businesses as described.  
Motion by Councilman Martinez Secoded by Councilwoman Martinez  
Motion Passed Vote: 6-0**

**B.II. Discussion and Possible Action to Approve Emergency Declaration No. 2021-01, Mask Requirements for Inside Buildings Open to the Public and 6 Feet Social Distancing for all Outside Areas Open to the Public**

Councilwoman Martinez asked if this item included the community center. The town clerk stated that the community center will be open but subject to the mask requirements. The town clerk stated that the tri-community is now a hot spot for COVID according to the Pinal County Health Department. Councilwoman Martinez expressed her concerns regarding the Item 3 section b regarding the requirement to wear masks in restrooms, playgrounds, pools and skate/bike parks. Vice Mayor Bustamante agreed. The town manager agreed to remove the item, but leave restrooms. Councilman Brewer expressed his support for the item. Councilwoman Martinez suggested to revise this item as follows: close restrooms when parks are rented out.

**Motion to approve the Emergency Declaration No. 2021-01 with a change to remove No. 3 Item b.  
Councilman Martinez Secoded by Vice Mayor Bustamante  
Motion Passed Vote: 6-0**

**B.III. Adjourn Special Meeting**

**Motion to adjourn special meeting at 4:35 PM.  
Motion by Vice Mayor Martinez Secoded by Councilman Martinez  
Motion Passed Vote: 6 -0**

**5. WORKSHOP AGENDA**

**A. Review Current Dispatch Center Staffing and Financial Issues**

Chief Mueller addressed the council explaining that he has an issue with the police department dispatch. The lack of staff has caused it to become an emergency. He addressed the issue of possibly outsourcing for dispatch services. He stated the lack of staff has caused the department to fall short in servicing the residents of the town. He stated he and the town clerk have had to step in to cover dispatch due to lack of staff or an emergency. We have officers covering dispatch while they should be responding to the residents and patrolling. If they have to go out on a call, they have no backup. He stated the dispatchers are burned out due to so many overtime hours. The overtime budget for this year has been expended.

## **B. Discuss Possible Actions to Resolve These Issues**

Chief Mueller gave a presentation and explained that he would like to present two options either go with the Town of Kearny for dispatch or Pinal County Sheriff's office. If the Town of Kearny took over, they could do both the dispatch for police and fire, there are no equipment upgrades needed now but we are going to have to make these upgrades in the near future. He stated that with PCSO there would be a direct dispatch from PCSO to Mammoth PD and Kearny would handle the fire calls. He stated he thinks that the PCSO option is the best because it provides a direct line from PCSO to the officer facilitating faster response times for our officers. He introduced a guest speaker Francisco Alanis, Police Chief from the Town of Superior where they utilize PCSO for their dispatch services.

Chief Alanis explained that the Town of Superior contracts out with PCSO for their police dispatch services. PCSO provides a regional dispatch service. They have had no issues with using PCSO. They use the Town of Florence for their fire dispatch. PCSO does not handle the fire because they are still on an analog system and PCSO uses a digital system. Pinal County has been great helping them get their system up to standard. They have been very responsive if there are any issues, they meet with them and get it resolved. They purchased their own radios with grants. Pinal County has been great partners. The dispatch center is very professional. The only issue was with the transition, because they didn't do a good job educating the public. The Town of Superior has saved a lot of money with using PCSO for our dispatch. He stated they have been with PCSO for seven or eight years ago.

Councilwoman Martinez asked if they were using Spillman as their law enforcement data base? He stated they do use Spillman. She also asked if they are using their license? He stated they were but there were some programs that they had to purchase themselves such as Nibers which was approximately \$14,000 which was required by the FBI. There are modules that you can purchase depending on your needs.

Councilman Ponce asked about the primary source of revenue for the Town of Superior. Mayor Armenta asked how many officers do they have in their police force. He stated that they have 12 officers. The town clerk asked about their office staff. He explained that he has an office manager who has the ability to dispatch. The good thing is that she is able to go into the system and cleans up the data. She helps with scheduling and all administrative duties.

Vice Mayor Bustamante expressed concerns about how to notify the elderly population. The town clerk discussed providing emergency cards, notices on water bills and doing outreach. Chief Alanis explained they used calendars, magnets and pens to educate the public. Vice Mayor Bustamante expressed concerns about the loss of revenue due to the census and that there are less people to support our town government.

Chief Mueller explained the matrix for how each call is handled. First, the current process, in which the 911 call goes to PCSO and is transferred to Mammoth Dispatch who sends it out. The Kearny process would be the same except that Kearny would take the place of Mammoth dispatch. PCSO would process the call and send it directly to the Mammoth Police Officers. Kearny would dispatch for the fire and EMS. This would allow law enforcement to respond faster. Councilman Brewer asked how much quicker would the response be. Chief Mueller stated it would be several minutes quicker.

The town clerk provided an overview of the current budget situation, she stated that dispatch has 6 positions available and two are vacant. They have been running the department with four dispatcher and have exhausted the entire overtime budget for the year by \$2,518.00. The dispatch budget \$177,940.00 the hourly salary is \$14 per hour for dispatchers. She explained that there are issues with overworking the staff and it has created an unsafe environment for our dispatchers.

Vice Mayor Bustamante stated that we can not use HURF funds again and we have to make wise financial decisions. The town manger stated that this issue is continuing to get worse. We must do something to address this situation. Our staff is not well trained and they don't see this as a career. The town clerk explained that the loss of excise tax and two percent food tax revenues will exceed \$200,000. This is just a work session for staff to inform the council of the issue and we need to work together to resolve this issue. Councilman Brewer stated that he is not in favor of this but we have to do what we can to save money to stay afloat. We need to take a hard look at what we can do to save money.

Fire Chief Marty Ponce spoke and explained he is frustrated with the issue of dispatch. He is concerned for "home-a-lone's." He stated in regards to liability he put in a work order on 3/20 for hydrants to be repaired and they still have not been repaired. Also, he stated that there was a palate of fire hydrants that are missing. We have many fire hydrants that are not working so we have to use hydrants down the street because they hydrants are not working. He stated that the fire district is all digital so they could work with the police department. This a public safety issue. We have lost our school, clinic and now our dispatch. He expressed concern that there was an issue and there was no officer on duty it took fifteen minutes for Pinal County to show up. Vice Mayor Bustamante suggested using inmate labor. The town clerk explained that staff is working with Pinal County Probation to get those with community service.

Councilwoman Martinez expressed concerns about police officers dispatching and that she has seen this herself at least twice. This is a public safety issue. She suggested that the town possibly cover the difference for the fire district. Chief Mueller stated that staff has met with the fire district and we want to work through this as a team.

Councilman Ponce stated that he has been through this issue many times in the past and it is very frustrating. He stated that approximately two years ago Councilwoman Martinez stated that we are not going to change dispatch and now we are here again. He stated that he questioned the overtime and there are different solutions and how are we going to approach it. Are we going to go together or are we going to have to do this alone? The fire district has been paying the town because the town was having financial issue. He stated that the fire district is paying Mammoth to protect Mammoth. He stated the fire district has helped the town many times to overcome financial issues. He stated he feels that the town has not been grateful.

Vice Mayor Bustamante stated that we need to make the most fiscally responsible decisions because we can not use HURF funds again. We have a black eye from what has happened in the past.

Councilwoman Martinez stated she took offence to statements that were made and that the town has worked with the fire district and no one wants to get rid of the fire district. The fire district is funded by the tax payers. We need to find a solution that covers everyone.

The town clerk explained the estimated cost of each option:

PCSO cost analysis dispatch \$23,958.80, radios \$41,602.98 less \$20,000 from the grant, II \$2,291, for a total of \$47,852.78. If we keep a clerk, it would cost \$32,240 for a total of \$80,092 for start up cost and \$58,489.80 annually. This would be an annal saving to the budget of \$119,450.20.

Kearny cost analysis dispatch \$\$45,000, radios \$0, II \$1,000 for a total for \$46,000 start up costs. If we keep a clerk, it will be a total startup cost of \$78,240 and an annual total of \$77,240. This would be an annal saving to the budget of \$100,700.

There are two options for the council to consider. Mayor Armenta asked about the possibility of keeping a staff member on in the police department. The town clerk stated that they would like to keep at least a

clerk on during the day to help out and assist the community. Vice Mayor Bustamante stated that we are backed into a corner and we will have to make a decision very soon

**C. Adjourn Work Session**

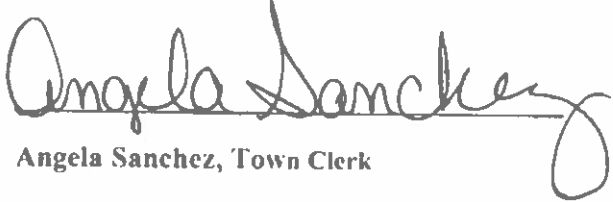
**Motion to adjourn work session at 5:35 PM.**

**Motion by Mayor Armenta**

**Seconded by Councilman Martinez**

**Motion Passed Vote: 6-0**

**I certify that the preceding is a true and correct copy of the Town of Mammoth Council Meeting held December 7, 2021. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held.**



Angela Sanchez, Town Clerk