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TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

Minutes

January 10, 2023 at 6:00 pm

**Springerville Town Council Chambers - 418 E. Main St.
Springerville, AZ 85938**

Pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the Springerville Town Council and to the general public that the Council will hold a meeting open to the public at the Springerville Town Hall, 418 East Main Street, Springerville, Arizona. The Town Council reserves the right to adjourn into Executive Session in accordance with Arizona Revised Statutes Section 38-431.03 (A)(1)(3)(4) and (7) for legal consultation on any of the following agenda items.

TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING: 6:00 P.M.

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Mayor Reidhead called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Dennis Gilliam led the pledge of allegiance.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

Members of the Town Council or Legal Counsel that are unable to be present in person at a scheduled Council meeting, may participate in the meeting by telephone or video conference.

Present: Shelly Reidhead, Mayor; Richard Davis, Councilor; Douglas Henderson - Telephonically, Councilor; Florencio Lozoya, Councilor; Donald Scott, Councilor.

Staff Present: Town Manager Chris Collopy; Town Clerk Kelsi Miller; Town Attorney Tosca Henry- Telephonically; Chief of Police Dayson Merrill; Community Development Director Megan McRae; Finance Director Heidi Wink; Public Works Dennis Gilliam & Robert Pena;

NEW BUSINESS

3. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: TOWN MANAGER**

Discussion and possible action to enter into Executive Session regarding Town Manager Collopy's employment pursuant to A.R.S. § 38 431.03 (A) (1).

DISCUSSION:

Mayor Reidhead explained we will not be going into executive session this evening.

Councilor Davis asked to read a couple of emails into the record. The first email was sent from Mayor Reidhead to Manager Collopy it stated " Chris, You know we are in the middle of a merger with the Town of Eagar for the Police/Fire. You have consistently kept me and the council in the dark with your decisions to try and stop the merger. You either reverse making Officer Holmes a Sergeant immediately or turn in your resignation and be gone by the end of the day today.". Richard next read the response from Manager Collopy to Shelly into the record. The email stated "Shelly, It was quite a surprise to get your email this morning and I do not agree with what you said in your email about keeping you and Council in the dark about issues I have had with the merger, In fact , I copied you on all manager's reports even when you were no longer on the Council. My concerns for the community and the merger are valid concerns on how the merger would be structured, staffed, and how it should be funded. I was never in any way wanting to stop the merger, we even sat the other day in my office with Councilman Henderson and discussed the issues I had with the IGA drafted by Eagar and you took those issues to Eagar to change the IGA to reflect those issues. As far as making Officer Homes a Sergeant, that was an administrative decision, after I received notification that our current Sergeant had turned in his resignation. We needed a Sergeant to meet the staffing plan decided within the staffing plan agreed upon with Eagar. So, if Council wants my resignation, I would suggest that you call for a special meeting and

put it to a vote."

FIRST MOTION:

Councilor Richard Davis, Councilor Florencio Lozoya motioned to cancel the contract with Chris Collopy, Springerville Town Manager effective immediately and appoint Heidi Wink as interim Town Manager.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

Heidi Wink the finance director explained to Council she does not wish to be the interim Town Manager. Council responded that is okay, we can discuss an interim later.

Councilor Lozoya explained he is new here and is not sure exactly what communication they are talking about.

Councilor Henderson wanted to ask Manager Collopy some questions. Councilor Henderson first stated that the email from January 3rd that Bryan was promoted to Sergeant seems to be the problem cause. He asked what the number of sergeants was agreed upon in the draft IGA? Manager Collopy responded 3, Mayor Reidhead responded 2. They discussed this back and forth regarding the number of sergeants and disagreed. Councilor Henderson asked if the number of sergeants is actually addressed in the IGA. Ms. Reidhead responded no not a particular number.

Manager Collopy further added when they discussed staffing levels they talked about 2 sergeants and 1 administrative sergeant. He explained we have been told Sergeant McCue is leaving at the end of the month, until this gets going we needed a sergeant on staff here. Chief of Police Dayson came to Manager Collopy with the request to promote Bryan to sergeant. Manager Collopy asked that he go through the testing procedure for the position, he scored very high. He then addressed the request to demote Sergeant Holmes back to an Office, Police Officers have certain rights, more so than other employees, we can not demote him without cause.

Mayor Reidhead said that they did not discuss having an administrative sergeant at all. She said she was present at every meeting. Manager Collopy responded these discussions were with Bryce and himself. Mayor Reidhead said she feels he is making decisions with no communication and a contentious relationship. Manager Collopy said his only goal was to get an IGA that was good for Springerville and the community. He said that he and Ms. Reidhead talked and agreed that Bryce Hamblin can have no dealings with the Police Department. Ms. Reidhead responded that she did not say that, she said he is now the Town Manager, so he wouldn't. She further said that throughout Manager Collopy's weekly reports he put things in there that this IGA is a violation of the Council Manager form of government. She said Mr. Sims is not only the attorney for Snowflake - Taylor but also the AZ League of Cities and Towns and he would not steer them in an illegal manner. Manager Collopy said his intentions were not to derail the merger. He has been saying all along that it is silly for these two towns to have separate fire and police departments. He wants this to happen, he just wanted to negotiate an IGA that he felt was fair to Springerville.

Councilor Scott added that he was made aware of a lot that has been brought up regarding the IGA even though he was not present at these meetings. He feels Chris has been presenting both the good and bad of this IGA. Councilor Davis said several people have told him that Manager Collopy said he would put a stop to this whatever it takes. Mayor Reidhead agreed she heard that too. Manager Collopy said that is untrue. Councilor Davis said one of the police officers told him that. Councilor Henderson asked if Manager Collopy said he would stop this to the officers then what was Officer McCue's reason for resigning? Chief of Police Dayson Merrill responded he hasn't officially resigned. McCue informed Dayson that he put in an application with the County. He verbally let him know that he did not want to leave him short-handed, and he would work through the end of the month. Dayson informed the Council when Quintin called him to verbally resign it was due to the merger, he did not want to work with Springerville Police Department if he had to work in Eagar. Mayor Reidhead said that is not what Officer McCue told her. Chief Merrill said at one point in time Officer McCue was for this merger, but has changed his mind. The County is offering the guys great deals to move over. Chief Merrill said he will be down to two officers. He is working weekends, holidays, and 20 hour shifts. He did not sign up for that, but he is doing his best to make this work.

Manager Collopy said in the draft IGA it did give the Chief the ability to run the day to day operations. Chief Merrill's request to make Officer Holmes a sergeant is that. Mayor Reidhead said this does not meet the staffing plan of the IGA because Sergeant McCue has not officially resigned. She added that is not her only issues. She feels Manager Collopy knew we were in the middle of a merger and hired an admin for the Police Department. Manager Collopy responded the admin was hired before this. Mayor Reidhead said we had Dennis. Manager Collopy said Dennis went to Public Works. She said he did not have to leave that day. Dennis asked Mayor Reidhead if he could address the Council, and she said no. Mayor Reidhead said the other issues has cost the Town over \$100,000. Manager Collopy said the admin position was talked about in the merger talks, we would have two admins because the admin for Eagar is leaving. Mayor Reidhead said not for a year. Manager Collopy said we needed to get Dennis out of the police department, he did not want to work there, and we had an opening in the public works department. He further explained these are decisions that a Town Manager is supposed to make. Dennis is a good employee, and we did not want to lose him. Mayor Reidhead said these were the wrong choices to make in middle of a merger.

Councilor Henderson asked Manager Collopy when did Bryan take the sergeants test? Chief Merrill said a couple of

weeks ago. He next asked has the Springerville Common Council given you any direction on how this is supposed to be handled or any specifics and what the goals were, and who originally started the conversation to direct you to start this merger? Manager Collopy responded he has not received direction on how to handle this. Direction has never been given, this talk started when he and Bryce were both judges at the Rib Burn event. He let Council know on the weekly report that these conversations were going on as far as a possibility as an economical way of saving money for both towns. Councilor Henderson said he has seen 3 separate proposals since the conversations started. He asked if a final proposal has been written to propose to Council. Manager Collopy said not that he is aware. Mayor Reidhead said a final proposal is not ready, but they are getting closer, by the 18th they will have a more final version. Manager Collopy said when he, the Mayor, and Mr. Henderson met in his office last week that is the last he has heard on the IGA. Councilor Henderson asked the Mayor if those changes were made? She said that is correct. Councilor Henderson said he just wanted to hear the facts, not hear say to make an informed decision on this.

Councilor Lozoya asked if there is a report somewhere with the IGA to review. He does not know the details of this. Councilor Davis said he has not been receiving emails from Chris or weekly updates. Manager Collopy said he sends them every week and Councilor Davis is on the list. Councilor Davis asked how many IGA's is the Town trying to have for this. Mayor Reidhead said one IGA for fire and police. Manager Collopy said he was sent the IGA from Bryce, then redlined it and sent it back. The original proposal was to have the joint services committee supply input on the financials and grants instead of having to deal with the day-to-day operations. That was rejected right away. Bryce told him that this would be like Eagar contracting Springerville to provide police service, and they are not interested in that. In the different revision Manager Collopy asked that they change the committee from six to four and not have members of the public included due to the fact that they will be discussing human resource issues. Human resource issues should not be open to public. They agreed to that change. We have also agreed to add an auditor to review sales taxes that are being paid to each town, Manager Collopy asked this happens prior to the actual merger of the IGA and Eagar only wanted to have this language say from time to time.

Mayor Reidhead said that she gave Chris a copy of the IGA from when Snowflake - Taylor did this. She asked was Bill Sims signature on that document? Manager Collopy said yes it was. Mayor Reidhead said the template we have is almost word for word what Snowflake - Taylor have. She said that he needs to stop telling them that it is illegal. She asked if it is okay for them why is it not okay for us? Chris said it is just his opinion he feels it could violate the Council Manager form of government.

Town Attorney Tosca Henry joined the meeting telephonically at 6:29 p.m.

Manager Collopy told Tosca that in a report to Council he had mentioned that he felt there was a violation of the Manager Council form of Government if the shared services' committee is involved in disciplinary actions and human resource issues for the departments. He asked her if this sounds like a violation? She said the authority could be designated to a committee in place of being handled by a manager. She asked how this is being discussed within the agendized item. Manager Collopy said it is not on the agenda, it is being used as evidence. She added depending on the exact scope of the validation of authority to the committee there could be some shifting of that delegation that is currently outlined in town code. Mayor Reidhead said that we could make that shift. She said we are not here because of the IGA. Manager Collopy said that is correct, but it was brought up with claims that he was trying to derail the merger. Mayor Reidhead said that there are other issues including she doesn't feel he wants to cooperate, comply, or communicate. He disagreed he feels he does do those things.

Councilor Lozoya asked for clarification. He wanted to know if this session came about to decide if he did or did not do something trying to ruin the merger? Mayor Reidhead said no. He then asked if it is insubordination? Mayor Reidhead said that is a good word for it. He then asked Chris if he feels like he is helping the cause? Manager Collopy said he felt he was doing what was best for Springerville to make the merger happen. He then asked Manager Collopy if promoting the officer to sergeant was to help or hurt the cause? Manager Collopy said if we were not going to have a sergeant here they needed a sergeant he then asked Chief Merrill further explain the need for a sergeant. Chief Merrill explained in our police department structure we have a chief, two sergeants, then patrol. The patrolman need a sergeant they can reach out to anytime. Those sergeants can be called out anytime for any reason. Right now we ran into the current problem that our current sergeant is only willing to be available on his four days on. He further added he was making decisions for the current police department with the current policies. Springerville has been without the second sergeant for a long time, it's frustrating for him and the other officers. They had just found out that the current sergeant is leaving, and a lot has to be done prior to him leaving as far as computer programs, AZ Post, and training. He did not understand everything that was going on, and so he made the recommendation. Mayor Reidhead said we are so close to being done with this merger, we could have had this merger completed by the end of this month. Manager Collopy said that a lot of things would need to happen, the IGA could be done by the end of the month but to actually do the merger, we still need to work with PSPRS and AZ Post and explain, although we have had the initial talks. We are also wanting to be rebranded as the Round Valley Police and Fire Departments. Ms. Reidhead said that is already being worked on. Manager Collopy agrees that it is getting very close, but there is still a lot of work to do.

AMMENDED MOTION:

Councilor Richard Davis amended his motion to not ask Heidi Wink to serve as interim Town Manager.

- AYE: Mayor Shelly Reidhead
Councilor Richard Davis
Councilor Florencio Lozoya
- NAY: Councilor Douglas Henderson
Councilor Donald Scott

Following the discussion and vote Mayor Reidhead asked Manager Collopy to turn in his stuff tonight.

2. POSSIBLE ACTION AS A RESULT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION:

4. ADJOURNMENT:

Councilor Richard Davis, Councilor Florencio Lozoya motioned to adjourn the meeting.

- AYE: Mayor Shelly Reidhead
Councilor Richard Davis
Councilor Douglas Henderson
Councilor Florencio Lozoya
Councilor Donald Scott

Shelly Reidhead, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kelsi Miller, Town Clerk

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the minutes of the Springerville Town Council in a Special Meeting on January 10, 2023. I further certify that the meeting was duly called, and a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 20__.

Kelsi Miller, Town Clerk

Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.): The Town of Springerville intends to comply with A.D.A. If you are physically challenged or disabled and need special accommodations to participate in this town meeting, please contact the Town Clerk at (928) 333-2656 ext. 224 forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting to arrange necessary accommodations.

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