



DATE: November 20, 2020
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Ryan Mahoney, Town Manager
RE: Weekly Update
CC: Department Heads

Police

The Police Department assisted elementary and high school staff with full scale fire / evacuation drills this week. The staff and students did an excellent job following our emergency operations plan.

We are in the process of conducting background investigations for our two police applicants. The background investigations are going well for both and we expect to swear them in as police officers on December 10th.

We held a promotional ceremony for our newly appointed Corporal, Thomas Wright. Corporal Wright will continue performing School Resource Officer duties through the end of this year. After the first of the year he will transition to a full time supervisory position. Congratulations Thomas!

Police and Town administration have been busy this week coordinating with Eagle and Pitkin County Public Health Departments. The State of Colorado has revised the COVID-19 Dial by adding a new "Purple Extreme Risk Level". With this revision, capacity restrictions at businesses and for gatherings have also been revised. For detailed information please visit <https://covid19.colorado.gov/covid-19-dial>.

Public Works

Public works has been working on getting holiday garland and lights up. We are working to repair the electricity to get the lights at the Willits Town Center Pocket Park repaired, otherwise it is ready. The stages are being decorated today, the large spruce is being wrapped again at Triangle Park, and the Basalt roundabout is all done. As soon as the new winter Willits banners come in (hopefully next week) we will begin to wrap those poles in garland and hang the banners at the same time. Rob has been assembling little toy boxes that Jenny ordered to put crafts for the kids into. We are also waiting on some large decorations that will light up and will be installed by our crew on the Lions Park and Triangle Park stages. The installation of electrical outlets on the East Valley Road and roundabout poles is scheduled to start the first week in December. That will give the Town the option of lighting them up in 2021 in addition to the garland and wreaths.

The water department has been working on year-end reporting to the Colorado Division of Water Resources and getting customers into compliance for year end backflow reporting. We installed a new more efficient and automated pump on chlorine system at the Pinon Drive facility and have been winterizing equipment as needed. Distribution has been swapping out old MXU's that are no longer compatible on water meters and inspecting and pressure testing new water lines in the Southside Neighborhood and Basalt Vista.

Public Works has been working with Pitkin County on a right of way permit so they can access the river from Willits Lane and Hwy 82 for the new headgate project they are working with the ditch

company on. That project is scheduled to start December 1st with wrap in the water by March 15th. There will be flaggers present off and on near that area throughout the construction as they haul out and drop off material. The streets crew has been collecting brush and leaves and bringing them to the slash bin to haul off. We were busy piling leaves and swept all of East and West Basalt this week.

Planning

Green Team –

CC4CA (11/13) - A virtual meeting was held entitled Pandemic Lesson Sharing & Carbon Solutions Brainstorming: Outdoor Heaters & Shelters. The group broke out into subcommittees to discuss and share issues and ideas. No great solutions have been found yet for outdoor heating that is not carbon-intensive (propane, natural gas). Staff's subcommittee discussion included supporting restaurants through compostable take out containers, installing curtains and windbreaks, and finding a retailer for electric outdoor heaters.

Eagle County Climate Action Collaborative – the group engaged in a discussion regarding updating the Climate Action Plan (CAP) to align with the State's goal of 50% by 2030. Currently the CAP's reduction goal is 25% by 2025 & a minimum of 80% by 2050. The Collaborative held a vote and the majority agreed with this update. This information will be shared with all members to bring to their boards for adoption. The meeting also divided participants into sector subcommittees, who were tasked with listing out sub-tasks or sub-strategies to achieve targets and assign timeline to each sub-task (1-3 years, 4-7 years, 8-10 years). The information will be compiled into one final document and distributed to members as soon as it is finalized.

Colorado Winter Outdoor Grants Application - CORE shared a link to that state's Colorado Winter Outdoor Grants Application which provides funding for restaurants that may need heating, infrastructure improvements, etc. to help their business survive during the winter season. The first round of grant applications has passed, but a second round is set to open from 11/30 – 12/11. For more information see <https://cooutdoorining.org/colorado-winter-outdoor-grants-application/>.

BACH – The Commission reviewed one new application for the short-term emergency rental assistance program. There have been three total applications to date, with three more expected at this time. BACH has recommended all applications thus far for receipt of rental assistance. BACH also further discussed the 2021 rental assistance framework, and potential state funding updates.

POST – POST met on Wednesday to discuss the scope of the Arbaney Park pool project. POST agreed to a reduced scope of \$2.66 million and will present their concept to Town Council on 11/24.

Basalt River Park – The Town closed on the purchase of the Basalt River Park on Thursday. Town Staff is working on a strategy to construct the first phase of the River Park in the spring/summer of 2021. Here is a picture of Mayor Kane cutting the fence on Friday. The plan is to have Public Works work on removing the fence next week.



Development Review/Applications – The Lot J, Basalt Commercial Park Development Application for 12 residential units has been scheduled for review by the P&Z on December 15th. Staff has also been working with Stott’s Mill to finalize the documents needed before commencing construction. The Roaring Fork Fire Rescue Authority, Building Department and Planning Staff are working through permits for temporary structures for restaurants to provide protective cover for pick-up or restaurant seating. Staff spent considerable time working on items associated with our other construction projects throughout Town.

Covid-19 Testing – A Basalt clinic has helped organize a free mass testing center at the Eagle County Community Center parking lot. Appointments are required but no referrals are needed. For more information: www.rfvcovidtest.com.

Recreation

Staff have been fielding questions regarding recreation sports and play. After meeting with the school district last week, it was decided that organized recreational sports would not be permitted in the school facilities at least until the New Year. At that point community safety would be reevaluated and a strategy created for returning to safe play.

Staff have been researching ideas and concepts for alternative safe recreation activities. Concrete work will be started at the beginning of next week to expand the skate park. A connection from the main skate features to the mini ramp will be reestablished as well as the addition of a small wedge on the western edge of the main park.

Finance

2021 Budget - The Town is in the home stretch of the budget process for 2021. The budget report has a lot of great information in it that will be useful in decision-making throughout the year, and it has been well-vetted by Council, the community, the Finance Advisory Board, and staff. We’re excited to bring the 2021 budget process to a successful completion during the next few weeks!

2020 Supplemental Budget Request, to be presented November 24 Council meeting - During the Fiscal Year 2020, there have been various items approved by Council that have impacted the budget. I keep track of those items and true up the budget at year-end. Approved items that are included in the

supplemental budget include the CARES Act funding passthrough for \$283,500, the TABOR Refund savings used to prepay COPs totaling \$67,000, and the Ted Guy lawsuit settlement for \$115,000.

Additionally, there have been other items discussed during the year that need to be trued up so that our revised budget more accurately reflects actual results, and so that all expenses are appropriated by Council. This supplemental budget request will assure that all department expenses are within the budgeted amounts approved by Council.

The total increase in fund balance related to this supplemental budget is \$807,026. Given the original 2020 budgeted change in fund balance of (\$177,445), the 2020 revised budget change in fund balance is \$629,581. In the 2021 Draft Budget, the projected change in fund balance from all items, excluding the Public Works Facility, totals \$989,773 (on the middle of page 13 of the draft budget). The difference between the projection and the 2020 revised budget fund balance includes a culmination of many smaller dollar items that would be cumbersome to include in a supplemental budget request.

The Public Works Facility supplemental budget is excluded from this request and is a part of a separate supplemental budget.

Council Discretionary Grants - The Discretionary Funds Committee met on 11/12 to determine grants that would be funded for 2021. They approved a total of \$32,000 in grants for 2021, with \$3,000 still available for other grants that may be requested during 2021. Due to the additional need shown by the increased requests compared to last year, the Council subcommittee approved an additional \$15,000 from 2020 Council Discretionary Funding. The total currently funded for this grant cycle is \$47,000.

The grant requests for 2021 totaled \$156,850, with 44 applicants. The grant requests in 2020 totaled \$86,650 with 37 applications. The increased requests between years totals \$70,200, including \$35,000 from one large request.

Recommendation of a new Employee Retirement Plan Financial Advisor - Over a year ago, we started discussions with employees to ask about whether we should pursue a new employee retirement plan financial advisor. What we discovered was that the employees wanted a financial advisor that visited with employees a few times a year and helped them to create a more visible retirement plan that allowed them to better plan for their future.

The Town's current retirement plan consists of a 401(a) with a 5% Town match, plus a 457 plan. The Town currently uses John Hancock as the recordkeeper, who holds the investments and managing the funds, Hunter Benefits Consulting as the Third Party Administrator, who helps with assuring plan compliance and administration, and Thrivent, who is the financial advisor. Thrivent, unfortunately, has not assisted the Town with this plan for a while due to turnover of the prior financial advisor.

The Town went to bid in the spring for a new financial advisor. However, due to COVID, the decision was delayed until the fall, when the Town put out a second RFP. Three companies responded to the RFP, which were Lockton, Stifel, and Equitable.

We then created an Employee Retirement Plan ad hoc committee that consists of seven Town employees. I educated those employees on retirement plans, and then those employees reviewed the three proposals. Other Town employees were able to provide their input multiple times through this process regarding what they want in a retirement plan.

The Employee Retirement Plan Committee then reviewed the three applicants and decided unanimously on Equitable. We then brought the recommendation of Equitable to the Finance Advisory Board, who also unanimously supported that decision. Equitable is the lowest cost of all the fee structures, because it is an all-in-one approach to retirement plans. Equitable will be the Town's Financial Advisor and recordkeeper, and they partner with another organization to provide the third party administration. We were then able to negotiate with Equitable so that the fee charged will be as follows: 30 basis points, plus between 2 basis points and 5 basis points for administering the plan, plus an additional cost that could range from 8 basis points to 122 basis points for the net expense ratios depending on the retirement plan chosen. An added benefit is that Equitable has enough flexibility in their structure to allow the Town to choose climate-friendly options for inclusion in the plan design. As a point of comparison, Stifel and Lockton proposed a 50 basis point fee as financial advisors, and that structure would have required a TPA and recordkeeper on top of the financial advisor fee.

The next steps will be for the Employee Retirement Committee to work with Equitable to determine the best plan design and offerings for the plan. I have heard nothing but excitement from our employees regarding this plan shift.