

Minutes
Town of Clifton
Town Council Regular Meeting
March 9, 2023
2:00 P.M.

Members Present

Mayor Laura Dorrell
Vice-Mayor Anthony James
Council member Luis Montoya
Council member Ray Lorenzo*
Council member Ray West
Council member Karen Crump-Frye**
Council member Janeene K. Carrillo

*Excused

**Participated via telephone

Quorum Present

The Town's legal counsel, Michelle Stinson, participated via telephone.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Mayor Laura Dorrell followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Call to the Public: Representing the Greenlee County Tourism Council was Steve Ahmann. He expressed his thanks to the Clifton Town Council for their support of the forthcoming event to unveil the San Francisco River Revitalization Plan. He explained that the goal of the event is to obtain input from local citizens on ideas to revitalize the river and valley.

Council Reports: Council member Janeene Carrillo reported that she has met with Greenlee County Economic Development Coordinator, Erica Gonzales to discuss the possibility of encouraging a fast-food franchise to the area.

Council member Montoya reported that he had received information from Congressman Juan Ciscomani, notifying the town that applications for Fiscal Year 2024 Community Project Funding (CPF) requests would be accepted until March 13, 2023. He further explained that CPFs are Congressionally-directed grants that are included in annual appropriations (government funding) legislation.

The Council member also expressed concern on the Highway 191 road condition near the Dollar General and Kempton Chevrolet. He reported that he witnessed someone crossing the highway in this area and nearly caused the individual to trip due to the unevenness of the pavement. He suggests that ADOT might be contacted to make them aware of the issue.

Council member Montoya offered his thanks that efforts were now underway to address abandoned vehicles, specifically noticed the removal of abandoned vehicles at the parking lot site across from Sacred Heart Church.

Mayor Dorrell reported that she has visited some of the town facilities/departments in order to become familiar with the operations and issues of concern. She plans to continue her visits with the remaining service departments as well. Mayor Dorrell acknowledged the recent televised program “Murder on the Horseshoe Curve” which highlighted the excellent work done by the Clifton Police Department to solve this case.

No reports were offered by Council members West, James and Crump-Frye.

Consent Agenda: Motion to approve the following items listed under Consent Agenda was made by Council member Luis Montoya, seconded by Council member Janeene Carrillo:

1. Approval of the February 9, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes;
2. Receive Department Reports;
3. Approval of February 2023 Demands.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council members Montoya, Carrillo, James, West, Crump-Frye and Dorrell. Council member Lorenzo was absent. Motion carried.

Old Business

Discussion and/or action for the Town to sponsor, plan and organize the Clifton Hill Climb: Town Manager, Rudy Perez explained that although consideration of this event will be discussed in the budget process, the item was tabled during the February 9, 2023 Council meeting.

New Business

Discussion and/or action to select a project to submit a request for Congressionally Directed Spending to Senator Kelly’s Office: Town Manager, Rudy Perez offered additional information regarding the Congressionally Directed Spending grants. He reported that Senator Sinema has also released an invitation for entities to apply for funding. He explained that each of the Congressmen have specified various grant submittal deadlines which are fast approaching. All grant requests will be funded by the same allotment of funds. Each Congressman will select which projects will move forward. Project priority will be given to “shovel-ready” projects; sponsorship or supported by local government and funded through a combination of congressionally directed spending and state/local/private funds.

Town Manager, Rudy Perez mentioned that the town could resubmit the Library Building Improvement Project however it would need some updated information. He also stated that the Fire Department was interested in submitting a project to include the purchase of a fire truck.

Motion to submit two grant proposals to Senator Kelly’s Office for the FY24 Federal Appropriations under the Programmatic & Congressionally Directed Spending Requests was made by Council

member Luis Montoya. Projects to submit are the Library Building Improvement Project and the purchase of a new fire truck. Second to the motion was made by Vice-Mayor Anthony James.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council members Montoya, James, West, Carrillo, Crump-Frye and Dorrell. Council member Lorenzo was absent. Motion carried.

Discussion and/or action to approve establishing a board to govern the operations of the consolidation of the Town of Clifton Police Department’s Emergency Communications Center (ECC) and the Greenlee County Sheriff’s Office (ECC): The Town Manager reported that a stake holders meeting had been held on February 16th at Clifton town hall. The result of the meeting was to support the establishment of a board to govern the proposed consolidated operations center.

The composition of the governing board was also recommended by the group to include representatives from each of the emergency response entities affected by the Emergency Communications Center (ECC).

Concerned that the consolidation of the ECC’s has not yet been formally finalized between the Town of Clifton and Greenlee County, Council member Luis Montoya made a motion to approve the concept of consolidating the Town of Clifton’s ECC with Greenlee County Sheriff’s ECC to include establishing a board to govern the operations of the ECC whose composition will be determined at a later date. Second to the motion was made by Council member Carrillo.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council members Montoya, Carrillo, James, West. Crump-Frye and Dorrell. Council member Lorenzo was absent. Motion carried.

Discussion and/or action to approve \$422,029.00 for the construction of Chase Creek Bridge#1: Town Manager, Rudy Perez reviewed the cost breakdown provided by the current ADOT Project Manager, Angie Galietti. The total estimate amount for construction of the Chase Creek Bridge is \$1,192,783.00. He explained that \$770,754.00 was the original cost estimate however the town will need to commit the remaining funds needed before proceeding with the bidding process.

Mr. Perez provided Council with a breakdown of local funds from which could comprise the town’s share. The breakdown included \$168,029 from the HURF Budget; \$150,000 SEAGO Committed Funds and \$104,000 Refund from the 2020 Zorrilla Bridge Rehabilitation Project.

Mr. Perez explained that the remaining funds in the HURF Budget would be utilized to address the local road maintenance plan as discussed by the Roads and Streets Committee. Updated project bids will be provided after Sunland Asphalt GPA does an onsite visit on March 14, 2023.

Under discussion, the Town Clerk/Accounting Clerk expressed concern on potentially overspending the HURF Budget in this fiscal year. She explained that although the town was refunded \$104,000 from the 2020 Zorrilla Bridge Project, that refund was not factored in to this years HURF budget.

Council member Montoya expressed concern that the funds needed to be released to ADOT prior to initiating the bidding process. Primarily, his objection is that ADOT will deposit town money into their accounts and earn interest while small communities like ours struggle to come up with funds to

pay for these projects. Also of concern was the timing or estimated date of when the project would go out to bid. Delays in securing a contractor could affect the cost estimate of the project again.

Consensus of Council was to delay this decision until legal counsel's review the IGA between ADOT and the Town of Clifton for clarity on releasing town funds prior to initiating the bidding process for the Chase Creek Bridge. Also, it would be beneficial to wait for an updated bid proposal from Sunland Asphalt GPA on the maintenance plan for streets identified by the committee.

Motion to table the agenda item was made by Mayor Laura Dorrell. Second to the motion was made by Vice-Mayor James.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council members Dorrell, James, Montoya, Carrillo, West and Crump-Frye. Council member Lorenzo was absent. Motion carried.

Discussion and/or action to approve Resolution No. 2023-01: Designating the Chief Fiscal Officer for the Annual Expenditure Limitation Report for Fiscal Year 2022-2023: Motion to approve Resolution No. 2023-01 was made by Council member Montoya. Second to the motion was made by Vice-Mayor James.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council members Montoya, James, Carrillo, West, Crump-Frye and Dorrell. Council member Lorenzo was absent. Motion carried.

Discussion and/or action regarding outsourcing the accounting/bookkeeping services for the Town of Clifton: Council member Luis Montoya explained that the forthcoming retirement of the Town Clerk/Accounting Clerk brings forth the need to implement a transition plan for the towns accounting management. He explained that the best option at this time is to outsource the service because recruitment of an employee with this type of knowledge and skill would be difficult to find particularly for any rural community. He cited several other communities who are currently recruiting for the same position or have already in part outsourced the accounting/bookkeeping services.

Motion to approve outsourcing the accounting/bookkeeping services for the Town of Clifton was made by Council member Anthony James. Second to the motion was made by Council member Ray West.

Voting in favor of the motion were Council members James, West, Crump-Frye, Carrillo, Montoya and Dorrell. Council member Lorenzo was absent. Motion carried.

Manager's Report: The Town Manager reported on the following activities:

- Reported on the recent issue affecting the Shannon Road Gate access. Explained that the gate access will be locked impeding vehicles from driving through this area. Only Public Works equipment will have access to this road. Neighborhood residents expressed concern due to the safety issues.

- Reported that the lift station construction bid documents are completed and have been sent to ADEQ for their review as required.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:25 p.m.

**Members of the Clifton Town Council may attend either in person or by telephone, video, internet conferencing.*