

RIDGWAY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING

MARCH 17, 2010

The Council convened for a workshop meeting at 5:30 pm in the Community Center, at 201 N. Railroad Street, Ridgway, Colorado. Members in attendance were Councillors Hebert, Hunter, Johnson, Weaver and Mayor Pro Tem Clark. Councilmember Hynes and Mayor Willits were absent.

Town Clerk's Notice of Adjourned Workshop Meeting dated 3-11-10.

Discussion regarding noxious weed removal along river corridor

Ouray County Weed Manager, Ron Maybry, addressed the Council pertaining to the Town's weed control program noting "my biggest concern is spotted knapweed along the river" which is considered to be a noxious weed by the state. He presented slides taken last summer of the property along the river and in the Athletic Park. He stated the invasive plant "crowds out native species and it's getting worse". At the park he noted, the area had been mowed, which spread the seeds, and is now growing more prolific. He stated a program to hand pull the weeds along the river, and the Town's use of non-toxic herbicides, have not worked on the plants. He noted the Town is in violation of state law which requires weed treatment must be used to control the spread of noxious weeds. He would like to create a program to treat the weeds along the river before they spread and move down river. He asked that the Council consider making an exception to the Town policy to use only non-toxic herbicides. He offered to prepare a grant for state funding to pay for chemical treatment and the hiring of two people to pull weeds along the river for the summer. He stated he has spoken with the state and they feel the area is small enough for weed eradication to be effective and have given a "verbal agreement" that if a grant is submitted, it will be awarded. Both the Department of Wildlife and Bureau of Land Management own property down river from the site, and have agreed to prepare letters of support for the grant. He proposed the use of Milestone herbicide to control the noxious weed, because it can be applied up the water's edge. The product would also be applied on the affected area in the Athletic Park. He stated he has used the product in the county and it has not affected persons who are state registered as chemically sensitive. Additionally he proposed to establish a test plot for a biologic product, an endomycorrhizal fungi, and would monitor the area to determine if it can control the growth naturally.

Alex Fremgen spoke in support of the products use. She explained she has "spot used" the product on her property, and "it is really effective".

There was discussion between Council, staff and Mr. Maybry. Mr. Maybry explained he would be the only person applying the product, as he is a licensed applicator.

The Council was in support of preparing the grant application. Staff was directed to prepare a resolution stating the policy regarding non-toxic chemicals will remain in effect, but a one time exemption for use of the herbicide to control the outbreak of spotted knapweed will be allowed. It was agreed that more public education was necessary before the resolution is presented to Council at the meeting in April.

Discussion pertaining to medical marijuana regulations

Town Manager Clifton presented a matrix of regulations pertaining to the dispensing of medical marijuana from surrounding communities and a few front range municipalities. He explained the document was a sampling of how communities are addressing zoning,

licensing, permitting, signage and background checks. He noted some communities are not enacting any regulations. The Town is six months into a one year moratorium, and he suggested the Council consider developing a policy. He explained the moratorium was originally adopted to allow time for the state to enact legislation. Currently a house bill is being considered which would become effective July of 2011, and as currently written, would require existing businesses to be licensed under the new state regulations.

There was discussion between Council and staff.

Bob Boyd explained he is Town resident, and also a patient who needs, and uses, the medicine. He explained it is a natural alternative to the use of pharmaceutical products to control his symptoms.

There were comments from the audience.

The Council directed staff to begin drafting regulations based upon what similar neighboring communities are enacting, and some of the proposed state regulations. It was also agreed that a letter should be sent to state legislators urging them to continue to move forward with preparing legislation.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pam Kraft, MMC
Town Clerk