

**New Castle Town Council Meeting
Tuesday, September 19, 2017, 7:00 p.m.**

Call to Order

Mayor A Riddile called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Present	Councilor Metzger Councilor Owens Councilor Hazelton Mayor A Riddile Councilor Russi Councilor Leland Councilor G Riddile
Absent	None

Also present at the meeting were Town Administrator Tom Baker, Town Clerk Melody Harrison and Town Planner Tim Cain.

Meeting Notice

Town Clerk Melody Harrison verified that her office gave notice of the meeting in accordance with Resolution TC-2017-1.

Conflicts of Interest

Councilor Russi told the council that he was a member LoVa Trails, and although he did not have any personal gain in the agenda item, he offered to recuse himself if the council felt it was necessary. The council declined his recusal.

Agenda Changes

Clerk Harrison told the council that Robin Tolan was unable to make it to the council meeting, so she asked that the Youth Zone update be removed from the agenda. The council agreed.

Citizen Comments on Items not on the Agenda

There were no citizen comments.

Consultant Reports

Consultant Attorney – not present
Consultant Engineer – not present

Items for Consideration

Consider Proposed Rate Increase from Mountain Waste & Recycling

Town Planner Tim Cain told the council that Mountain Waste & Recycling had submitted a letter requesting a rate increase for residential service. Planner Cain said that by the contract, the request was actually late, but that the council could always consider the request. Planner Cain told the council that the proposed 3% increase would equal approximately \$.52 per residential account. Mountain Waste wanted the rate increase to be effective October 1, 2017, but Planner Cain said there would be not be adequate time to notify the residents of the change, and suggested that the rate increase be effective December 1, 2017 should the council choose to approve it. Mike Hinkley, District Manager of Mountain Waste & Recycling, told the council that the proposed rate increase was for residential trash and recycling service only and would not affect the town's services for portable restrooms. Mr. Hinkley said that the reason his request was late was that it took longer than anticipated to obtain information from the recycling company on the Front Range about their upcoming increase for recycling. He said that their increase would be approximately 44%, and Mountain Waste had analyzed the data and felt they could absorb much of the cost increase. The council and Mr. Hinkley discussed the expense of the recycling program, and Mr. Hinkley said that in the future it might not be viable to continue curbside recycling service. Instead, he said that in the contract there was an option to discontinue curbside recycling and open a recycling center in town, which would be more cost-effective.

The council thanked Mr. Hinkley.

MOTION: Councilor Leland made a motion to amend the contract with Mountain Waste & Recycling to increase the residential trash & recycling rate by 3%, beginning on December 1, 2017. Councilor G Riddile seconded the motion and it passed with Councilor Russi voting no.

Consider Coal Ridge High School Internship Program

Deb Eichman, College Career Counselor for Coal Ridge High School introduced herself and co-worker, Beth Sass. Ms. Eichman and Ms. Sass described the internship program to the council. They said that the program was meant to provide real-world experience for the students by placing them in internships with local businesses. In addition, the program would be utilized to keep at-risk students in school, and hopefully to encourage dropout students back to complete their general equivalency or to graduate.

Ms. Eichman asked that the town consider utilizing students in the internship program. The council thought the program sounded great, and was definitely a program they felt was valuable. Mayor A Riddile and Clerk Harrison said that the information about the program would be given to the department heads.

The council thanked Ms. Eichman and Ms. Sass.

Update: Youth Zone Removed from the agenda

Consider Lower Valley Trails Group (LoVa) Request for 2018 Funding

Jeanne Golay, Director of the LoVa Trails Group, greeted the council. Ms. Golay gave the council a brief history of the LoVa Trail project. Indicating slides in the power point presentation, she described the areas of the trail that had been completed. She also described the various funding LoVa had received over the years as well as their partnerships. She also described a soft trail project being completed by Roaring Fork Mountain Bike Association that would connect from the South Canyon interchange, up South Canyon Creek beyond the landfill. The project was being funded by a parks and wildlife grant, and would provide access to lands owned by the City of Glenwood Springs.

Ms. Golay talked about the proposed realignment of the LoVa Trail. She also spoke about the Connect Initiative that was part of the Governor's 16 in 16 priority, which dedicated \$30 million over five years for trails projects. The council and Ms. Golay discussed the LoVa Trail as well as other trails projects on the Governor's 16 list. Ms. Golay told the council that there were two grant opportunities coming up that LoVa would apply for, and Glenwood Springs said they would not submit a competing grant application. Ms. Golay will ask the BOCC for match monies, and she was certain they would want a work session to discuss the larger regional effort. That work session would include CDOT and RFTA and others. She said she was grateful to Glenwood and New Castle for working so hard to make the connection through South Canyon. Councilor Russi said they were doing everything they could to be shovel-ready because one never knew where money might come from to help or complete a project.

Ms. Gola and Councilor Russi said they would attend the October 9 BOCC meeting. Ms. Golay said that LoVa had executed a license agreement with CDOT on the trail alignment, and at that time they had gone through the National Environmental Policy Act process for an environmental impact analysis that could easily be renewed and updated when the trail was finally built. Councilor Leland said that one item that assisted the town in obtaining a grant for the pedestrian bridge were photographs of the people who walked the dangerous interchange bridge. He felt that photos of people riding their bikes on Interstate 70 could have an impact as well.

Ms. Golay said that the funding request was for general operation funding for LoVa. Administrator Baker said that it could be budgeted for 2018. Councilor Hazelton asked if Ms. Golay could provide a breakdown of what LoVa's other funding was and Ms. Golay said she would.

The council thanked Ms. Golay and said they would consider budgeting funds for LoVa in the 2018 budget.

Consider Appointing Two Council Members to Development Sub-Committee

Administrator Baker said that as a follow-up to the conversation with Hilltop and Mr. Craven, some dates would be set for meetings regarding the project. If the council wished, they could appoint two representatives to attend those meetings.

Mayor A Riddile nominated Councilor Greg Russi. Councilor Russi accepted the nomination. Councilor Metzger offered to sit on the subcommittee. The council agreed. **MOTION: Councilor Leland made a motion to appoint Councilor Greg Russi and Councilor Mary Metzger to the committee to discuss development opportunities with Steve Craven and Hilltop. Councilor Hazelton seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

Community Solar Rewards Program

Councilor Russi explained that community solar was a program that came out of amendment 37 that was approved by the voters some years ago. The amendment committed the State of Colorado to set goals for clean, alternate and renewal energy and a percentage of its overall mix.

Councilor Russi said there was a federal tax credit that was spread out amongst investors of groups who are third-party solar developers. They develop community solar off-site, which was less expensive than individual residents placing solar on their roofs, because the cost per panel was significantly less. Recently there were six megawatts assigned to Garfield and Mesa counties, and there were two bidders for institutional customers. The program will allow institutional and commercial customers to subscribe to off-site solar gardens, and be paid by Xcel Energy through bill-credits on their utility bills for a portion of the energy production each month.

Councilor Russi said the two bidders were Oak Leaf and Microgrid. He said that if the council agreed to the program, one of the bidders should be selected as the town's provider. The program will reduce carbon pollution and would save the town money. Councilor Russi said that two questionnaires were sent out and two responses were received, although only one in time for the council packet.

Councilor Russi said both responses were solid and essentially the same, although he and Administrator Baker suggested that the council select Microgrid because they were in a better position to serve the town. Councilor Russi said that over twenty years the theoretical savings came in over \$600k. There would be no up-front costs. The key item was that Microgrid has a contract clause that protected the town from losing money. Councilor Russi said that he felt it was better security to be able to answer to their constituents. He said that Microgrid wanted an answer by the middle of October, and that the solar farm would be built in the summer of 2018. The sites were required to be in Garfield and/or Mesa county. DeBeque also selected Microgrid. Councilor Russi told the council that a decision would be timely. Administrator Baker said the contract would come back to the council for their approval.

The council agreed to direct the town staff to initiate contract discussions with Microgrid for the community solar rewards program and to bring that contract back to the town council for approval.

Discussion: RFTA Funding Priorities

Councilor Russi said that he and Mayor A Riddile had attended the RFTA annual retreat the week prior. He believed that RFTA staff was going to ask the RFTA board to refer to the voters a 5-mil levy issue, equaling approximately \$126.00 per year on a home worth \$350k. RFTA then provided a list of funding priorities, and New Castle was not in the list. The issue was that the mil levy increase could not pass in New

Castle, but pass in the district, and the taxes would then increase for New Castle. Councilor Russi told the council that RFTA was in the position to take on operation and maintenance and operation of the LoVa Trail like they do the Rio Grande Trail, however an impediment to that is likely to be the BOCC's refusal to participate in transit and transportation or trails. Councilor Russi felt that some of the up-valley/down-valley separation was because if Garfield County would not contribute, they could not see contributing either. He felt that it would be effective to put together a collaboration between Glenwood Springs, New Castle, Garfield County and RFTA with LoVa as the contractor. The collaboration would pay for, maintain and operate the LoVa Trail.

Councilor Russi asked if the council would instruct Mayor A Riddile and himself to pursue a strategy to get the LoVa Trail on the RFTA Funding Priority List. The council agreed.

Consent Agenda

City Market 3.2% Beer Liquor License Renewal

MOTION: Mayor A Riddile made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilor Owens seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Staff Reports

Town Administrator – Administrator Baker asked the council to consider a November 9 special meeting to consider the budget, which will be after the November 7 election. At that point, they will know if the vehicle use tax issue had passed. November 9 was a Thursday, and the meeting could be from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

MOTION: Mayor A Riddile made a motion to hold a special town council meeting on November 9, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. Councilor Leland seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Administrator Baker said that he has provided a retreat notebook for the Friday retreat. Administrator Baker told the council a success story. He asked Clerk Harrison to explain. Clerk Harrison told the council how one particular account had some on-going issues that had the owners very frustrated. She explained the several problems that were taking place, including water in the radio head that was causing the meter read to be incomplete. After replacing the meter and a lot of research and visits with the homeowner, she felt the issues had been resolved. Councilor Owens said that he did not know of another municipality that would go to the lengths New Castle did to take care of their customers, and he thanked Clerk Harrison and her staff.

Administrator Baker said the Community Revenue Group had a meeting earlier in the day, and they asked if they could use the electronic sign to advertise their October meetings. He clarified that the messaged would be clear that the meeting was called by the group, not the town.

Town Clerk – Clerk Harrison told the council that the November 7 election was the same night as a council meeting, that the town hall served as a voter service center for the purpose of the election. She asked if the council meeting could be moved to the community center and the council agreed. Clerk Harrison said she spoke to Lakota Canyon Ranch about having the town Christmas Party at the Clubhouse. She said that EAT Bistro would be catering the council retreat. Clerk Harrison said that she had sent out a save the date to all the council. Clerk Harrison told the council that Tom Regan was providing Responsible Service of Alcohol training in New Castle during the bridge

closure, so the staff was taking advantage of the convenience. She said if anyone was interested in attending the class to let her know. Clerk Harrison told the council that a while back Councilor Leland had noted that the name of the town disc golf course was incorrect on the Gypsy Disc Golf website. After some research, she discovered that the course had been called Fire Mountain for as long as it had existed, ostensibly named by the person who built the course, and it was listed on national websites as Fire Mountain.

Town Planner – not present

Public Works Director – not present

Commission Reports

Planning & Zoning Commission – nothing to report

Historic Preservation Commission – nothing to report

Climate Action Advisory Committee – nothing to report

Senior Program – nothing to report

RFTA – Mayor A Riddile said that between July of 2016 and July of 2017, the Hogback ridership was up 11%. In the past two weeks of August, since the bridge closure on August 14, the ridership had gone up from 10,000 to 80,000 on four different routes.

AGNC – nothing to report

GCE – nothing to report

BEWG – Councilor Russi said that BEWG had \$40k in grant funding they needed to spend, and Councilor Russi hoped to obtain some of the money to offset planning costs for LoVa.

Council Comments

Councilor Hazelton said he had stopped at the KOA Campground in Silt and there was information about New Castle's businesses at the campground. He felt that there may be more that could be done to bring the campers to New Castle to eat and shop, and he said that might be a chamber of commerce function. Administrator Baker said he would talk to the chamber.

Councilor Owens asked that staff bring more success stories to the council because he felt they made a difference, and he wanted to hear more. The council agreed they wanted to hear more.

Councilor Metzger told the council that she had left each person a Symphony flyer, and hoped everyone would attend.

Councilor Metzger said that a friend of hers commented that the new trails accessing the Colorow Trail were wonderful.

Councilor Metzger thanked the council for changing the agenda to accommodate Mr. Craven.

Councilor Russi said he would like the council to think about the naming of the park item, and he said that if the tennis courts were to be named after anyone, he felt it should be Steve Rippey because he had done so much for the town over the last 25 years.

Councilor Russi said that Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers will have a work day on the Colorow Trail on September 30 starting at 8:30 a.m. for anyone interested.


Councilor G Riddile said that Burning Mountain Festival was wonderful. He offered a big thank you to the town staff, and particularly Special Events Coordinator Debbie Nichols and her family.

Councilor G Riddile asked if the staff got Thanksgiving off. Administrator Baker said the staff had a four-day weekend over Thanksgiving.

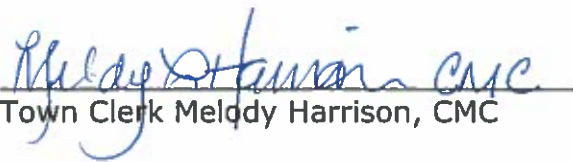
MOTION: Councilor Owens made a motion to adjourn, Councilor Metzger seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mayor Art Riddile



Town Clerk Melody Harrison, CMC

