



TOWN OF EAGAR

PUBLIC HEARING

MARCH 5, 2024, at 5:30 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBER, 22 WEST 2ND STREET

MINUTES

Mayor Steve Erhart called the public hearing to order and welcomed those present. Mayor Erhart requested that the record show all Councilmembers are present except for councilman Bryce Burnham.

Councilman Bryce Burnham present at 5:43 pm

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. **PUBLIC HEARING-** DISCUSSION REGARDING THE INCREASE OF WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES AND PARK AND CEMETERY FEES PROPOSAL RECOMMENDED BY THE UTILITIES BOARD

Brannon Eagar, Town Manager stated that the Utility Board had met and after discussion wants to seek a 3% increase annually over the next 5 years with a \$1.00 increase to Parks and Cemetery. The average water user this year will see an increase of 5.78% increase.

Mayor Steve Erhart stated that if the Town did the full increase today it would not subsidize the town's yearly costs.

Brannon Eagar stated that the Town will still supplement the costs. With the economy and downturn, we are trying to make it tolerable. We have a new well that will be added to the system this summer. We are looking into grants and other funding so that we are not hitting citizens so hard.

Chris Scholl asked if the hookup fees were changing? Britney Reynolds, Community Development Director replied that they were staying the same rate at \$1200.

Mayor Steve Erhart stated that we don't want to cause a big influx and discourage people from coming here.

Mr. Saline asked if there is a tourism tax and what the tax revenue is from it? Mayor Steve Erhart stated that Eagar does not have a bed tax like Springerville does, we get 3.1% of the 9.1% sales tax.

Brannon Eagar stated that Legislation has been hitting hard on Air Bed and Breakfasts and were looking into how to tax those and we get tax off the one hotel in Eagar.

Mr. Saline asked about the wind and solar if that would be helpful and is the Town getting any of the tax from it? Mayor Steve Erhart replied that we asked them to hire locally and to showcase the community and presentation on typed of services.

Chris Compton asked if the water supply is well off and is there any indication of the water table dropping? Brannon Eagar replied that last summer there was no shortage of water and that we will be adding a new well to the system, and that we are continuing to search for grants and other funding to do upgrades to the wastewater system.

Joseph Jarvis thanked the council for their service and diligence on retired debt. I heard comments that the reason for the increase of rates is because of the cost and cost of living and I support that. Excited that you have received two grant awards to make improvements through WIFA and hope that you can get grants for major improvements. A few questions I have is if I am a temporary resident that you will come shut off my water and I won't have to pay for water when its off.

Mayor Erhart stated that if the water is shut off and the valve is closed there is no minimum charge, if you go month to month and don't have it connected even if you have zero usage you will have a minimum charge.

Britney Reynolds stated just to clarify that when people have their water shut off they are gone and have come in and filled out the paperwork for shut off and it's not available until they come back and pay the service fees to have it turned back on.

Joeseeph Jarvis asked if I come back from vacation and get water turned back on does the town recoup the costs of the convenience of the water being at my house while its off or are there no fees collected.

Britney Reynolds stated that there is a service fee for the person who turns it back on. There is a connect and disconnect fee.

Joseph Jarvis stated that the town should explore a variety of other ways to recoup the costs of the system to have the convenience of water at my house even if I'm not using water service.

Mayor Erhart stated that we have done that with a minimum fee, there are a lot of people that leave a small heater or something on in their house and they may come up in the winter and don't have the water disconnected because they are content with paying the minimum.

Joseph Jarvis stated that the parks and cemetery fee I would ask council to consider removing that fee completely. I find that if you are a sewer and water customer, you're going to pay that fee but if you are not a water & sewer customer you are not paying that fee. There's a lot of people that don't pay for water and sewer that use our parks and or cemetery. We have

beautiful parks like the pond is beautifully done and hope that it will be maintained as well as it is now. Our other parks staff is working hard to maintain those parks but the resources that are being allocated are maybe insufficient because there are some rough looking areas. As always I am available to offer support and assistance to Eagar as this is where I live and I think I can add value.

Chris Compton asked what is the water source for the Cowpuncher pond? Mayor Erhart replied that it is filled with the overflow from the Splash Pad and the well supplements when needed in the winter.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Debra Seeley made a motion to adjourn at [at 5:54 p.m.]. Vice-mayor Marsha Tucker seconded; all were in favor, motion carried unanimously. 6-0

Vote:	Ayes:	Steve Erhart
		Marsha Tucker
		Debra Seeley
		Bryce Burnham
		Ray Hamblin
		Brandon Slade

Attest: _____

Mayor: _____

Vice-Mayor: _____

Council: _____

CERTIFICATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Public Hearing of the Town of Eagar, Arizona held on March 5, 2024. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Jessica Vaughan, Town Clerk