

# TOWN OF PITKIN WORK SESSION

## Newcomb Community Center

January 9<sup>th</sup> 2025 at 6:30pm

Remote participation was available via ZOOM

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### WORK SESSION MINUTES

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**1. Call to Order:** Mayor pro tem Tom Gibb called the work session to order at 6:30pm. Trustees Ed Pianalto, Jerra Garetson, and Ramon Reed were present. Minutes taken by Clerk Sara Gibb.

**2. For Council Discussion:**

- Town of Pitkin Commissioner positions
  - Expectations for communication to the Town Board
  - Confirmation from the Town Board of planned projects/work
  - Expectations for hiring/spending - The Board will hold a work session to review the spending policy drafted by Pete Olson

Mayor pro tem Tom Gibb listed several examples of when commissioners demonstrated good communication with the Town Board. He listed: purchase of culverts at a very good price suggested by the Street Commissioner, plan/vision provided by the Town Hall Commissioner to the Town Board.

He suggested waiting to discuss spending until a spending policy is presented and adopted.

Trustee Jerra Garetson stated that she couldn't imagine how to put a price tag on all the things that volunteers have done for the Town. She wants to continue along the vein of being positive and thankful [for volunteers]. She doesn't know if hiring people would help fill positions. It's difficult to find volunteers. The Town needs to work with volunteers when they make requests for something that would lighten their load.

With regard to the EHA position, she wondered if the position of the Town Sanitarian (mentioned in the EHA description) is a legal requirement.

Trustee Ramon Reed stated that it's been several years since the Town had a Sanitarian. He has observed that the EHA has taken over both jobs and believed this happened when the duties of the EHA were expanded in 2018.

Trustee Jerra Garetson stated that she thought Rand Makowski was still the Sanitarian. This is incorrect, Rand resigned that position several years ago.

Trustee Ramon Reed stated that the primary reason that Pitkin still exists as an incorporated town is due to volunteers.

Trustee Ed Pianalto stated that he is grateful for the Town's current volunteers. He wondered if the Town might reach the point that it needs to throw a carrot out to encourage people into open positions. These wouldn't be paid, full-time positions.

Trustee Ed Pianalto agreed to wait to discuss spending until a policy is in place. He believes that communication is clearly defined in the ordinance. He wasn't sure exactly what "confirmation of planned projects" meant.

Mayor pro tem Tom Gibb suggested a moratorium on spending until a policy is in place.

Mayor pro tem Tom Gibb moved on to discuss concerns he has with regard to previous actions by the former Street Commissioner. He pointed out a couple of examples where communication was not clear, including: culverts placed in 7<sup>th</sup> and State, piles of gravel on 7<sup>th</sup> and a bill from January 2023 for work done on the gazebo site. This bill came to the Board while Eddy Balch was mayor and was shot down because that wasn't part of the agreement, planning or presentation. There were no bids. What it looks like is that the Town received a bill from Jesse for work he did up there that the Kandy Nasso Memorial Board did not hire him to do, and the Town did not hire him to do. As he recalls, the memorial committee would be meeting in the spring and that bill would be presented to the Board and if they weren't agreeable to the bill, Trustee Jerra Garetson might talk Jesse into donating. Then, the Friday before the meeting, the bill was resubmitted to Mayor pro tem Tom Gibb. It's too late and out of date. He doesn't know what to do with things like this. Typically bills come in for work that you're hired for. The bill has been around and now it's coming around again. This bill raised another question in his mind.

After Jesse resigned, he has on occasion gone out and taken care of a problem here or there, and then submitted a bill. He [Mayor pro tem Gibb] doesn't know what to do with those. The problem is that sometimes Jesse gets ahead of the game and outside of the box as far as communication and clarification of expectations. This is one thing that needed to be addressed. The new ordinance lays it out.

Mayor Tom Gibb wanted Jesse here for this discussion rather than on Zoom due to frequent technical difficulties. These are his concerns. He is not opposed to Jesse jumping into the roles but he has periodically been outside of the parameters. This is an effort to hold all commissioners to a standard of staying within the budget.

Trustee Ed Pianalto stated that he's had many conversations with Jesse about the issues brought up tonight. He stated that according to the ordinance, the commissioners answer to the Board of Trustees. Confirmation from the Board, affirming that the Town wants to move in a certain direction, is part of the process.

Trustee Ed Pianalto would like to vote on Jesse as Street Commissioner and Ditch Commissioner at the next meeting.

Trustee Ramon Reed is in agreement now that the position has been posted.

The evening of February 16<sup>th</sup> was discussed for a work session with Pete Olson in attendance to discuss a spending policy. 6:30 on February 16<sup>th</sup> was determined for the date/time of the work session.

Trustee Ramon Reed has heard a lot of things tonight that have not come before the Board before. A lot of it should have been brought up to the Board before it was done. Sometimes there's a criticism that the Board is not doing things in public. The Board has to hold meetings in public, for example, because they are conducting public business. There are things that have to happen between meetings but the aspect of planning, not emergencies, such as when things are ongoing and there's no communication to the Board but it's done anyhow, that's where problems arise. A couple of years ago, Trustee Reed asked repeatedly for plans for the park. Never once were any plans for the park discussed in a public meeting in front of the Board. At one point, Chris Nasso told the Board that he had a committee working on it as a memorial for Kandy but the Board was not expected to do or pay anything other than to designate it as a park. That's the only public discussion that this Board has ever had on it.

Another example is the culvert in 7<sup>th</sup> Street. It was never ever discussed at a public meeting. Clerk Sara Gibb confirmed that she informed the Morrisises via email shortly after the Town received Jesse's suggestion to install the culvert that the development of 7<sup>th</sup> Street needed to go before the Board, only to learn that the culvert had already been installed without Board approval.

Public comments: Linda Cole, Jesse Garetson, Ed Herman

**3. Adjourn: Work Session adjourned at 7:45 pm.**