



TOWN OF JEROME

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MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE JEROME TOWN COUNCIL HELD VIA WEB CONFERENCE on ZOOM WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2020 AT 5:00 PM

ITEM #1: (00:11)	CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL Mayor/Chairperson to call meeting to order. <i>Mayor Barber called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.</i> Town Clerk to call and record the roll. <i>Town Manager/Clerk Candace Gallagher called the roll. Present via Zoom were Mayor Barber, Vice Mayor Sage Harvey, and Councilmembers Jane Moore, Mandy Worth, and Dr. Jack Dillenberg. Zoning Administrator John Knight and Deputy Clerk Rosa Cays were also present.</i>
ITEM #2: 5:07 (00:58)	COMMUNITY GARDEN Council will review options for funding the planned community garden and discuss the next steps moving forward. <i>Mayor Barber expressed her excitement for the project.</i> <i>Ms. Gallagher suggested using grant monies previously received from the Yavapai-Apache Nation (i.e., Prop 202 funding) to fund this project. She has contacted the Tribe and they are fine with using the funds for this purpose.</i> <i>Vice Mayor Harvey asserted that the project could essentially begin if the funding is in place and suggested that while the garden foundation is being built, coordination of participants and garden map planning could also begin.</i> <i>Dr. Dillenberg asked how much of the grant funding could be used.</i> <i>Ms. Gallagher said that approximately \$36,000 was available between two grants.</i> <i>Councilmember Worth reported that she and Zoning Administrator John Knight met to brainstorm and suggested a small "plot" fee be established so participants have a vested interest in the project. She also said regular maintenance should not be costly, so grant monies could be used for this as well.</i> <i>Ms. Gallagher said that she did not specify a dollar amount when she spoke with the Tribe.</i> <i>Ms. Worth also suggested a possible "adopt a tree" program, perhaps as a memorial tribute, for those who want to be involved without doing the actual gardening.</i> <i>Dr. Dillenberg said charging a nominal fee for pride of ownership is fine, but he does not want to create any barriers from the start. He suggested waiving fees for the first year or six months, then evaluate how the program is going.</i> <i>Ms. Worth said the project will be popular and expects a lottery will likely need to be set up, and rules and regulations will be needed. She said Cottonwood charges an annual plot fee and waives it on a case-by-case basis.</i> <i>Mayor Barber asked if anyone had reached out to the community to gauge the level of interest. Ms. Gallagher said nothing had been posted on Facebook yet.</i> <i>Vice Mayor Harvey agreed with Jack and said that she sees this project as a way for people to get involved and have food. She said she cannot see charging for this project in the middle of a pandemic. She said she will not support that, but she would be fine if people wanted to make donations.</i> <i>Councilmember Moore said she would like to talk with the people in Cottonwood, including Sam Hightower, to see how they started their community garden and learn from them on how to best organize the project. She said she does not want to see it fall on the</i>

Town crew and suggested putting the idea out to the public to make sure they support it. She believes they will be enthusiastic but is uncertain if they will be willing to do the work. She said she also has comments/concerns regarding purchasing materials for the project when the time comes.

In support of Ms. Moore's comments, Mayor Barber said she had thought of coming up with a contingency plan in case people lose interest in the project and how the town could keep it going.

Vice Mayor Harvey said that now that funding has been decided, construction of the foundation of the garden could begin as information is gathered about who wants to participate in the project, how the garden will be plotted, a schedule to accommodate social distancing, and who wants to take on required work. She said that for her, this meeting was about determining where the funds would come from, so perhaps another public meeting could be scheduled to work out these details.

Mayor Barber said she agreed with Vice Mayor Harvey and acknowledged that Ms. Moore had valid points. She said the funding is set; now it is time to work out the logistics.

Ms. Worth also agreed with the Vice Mayor and Ms. Moore and said it would be wise to talk to Cottonwood to find out what worked and what did not for their community garden. She also mentioned the survey on social media. She pointed out that the budget submitted was a maximum estimate based on all costs to be covered by the town, not taking into consideration probable donations.

Dr. Dillenberg said he liked the direction of the discussion. He suggested the project could perhaps be a future opportunity for students at Mingus High School (MHS) to learn about gardening, which would also be another way to make Jerome special and add community value.

Ms. Worth said she has reached out to agricultural and earth science teachers at MHS who are intrigued by the idea of involving students and think it is a fantastic idea.

Vice Mayor Harvey said that Jerome resident Phil Tovrea has offered to donate soil to the project.

Ms. Moore said she has gotten dump truck soil in the past that was contaminated, so she would like to have donated soil tested before it is used, if possible. She would also like to be careful with corporate donations and keep the entire project organic: no GMOs, no chemical sprays. Mayor Barber agreed with Ms. Moore, as did other councilmembers.

Ms. Worth said she had wood in good shape for construction that she was willing to donate to the project. She is also in touch with a nonprofit group that specializes in organic/non-GMO urban gardening and is waiting for information on in-kind donations and funding.

Zoning Administrator John Knight thanked Ms. Worth for meeting with him. He said the town should make it clear from the start that all aspects of the community garden will be organic. As for costs, they could be reduced considerably once donation of materials start coming in. Mr. Knight said a couple of businesses have already shown interest in "sponsoring" a tree for the garden and suggested getting a "wish list" of trees together that community members could donate toward, then perhaps Verde Valley Growers would be willing to give the town a discount if several trees were purchased at once. Mr. Knight said he plans to meet with the City Clerk of Cottonwood again to talk more about the challenges they have had with their garden. He will also be writing something about the project for the newsletter and suggested having a liability release form for volunteers to sign as soon as possible. He added that we need to get a list of volunteers as soon as possible. He also mentioned that Cottonwood charged a \$30 fee for larger plots and thinks it is important that people are vested. Perhaps the town could not charge the first year or offer a waiver or grant for those who cannot pay. Mr. Knight said a gate and lock will be needed and that most jurisdictions charge a key deposit, mentioning again the importance of being vested. He also said the garden needs to look good, but as Ms.

Worth said to him, it needs to look like Jerome. Mr. Knight suggests using see-through, affordable fencing. He said he is pleased to see the Council's interest.

Ms. Gallagher suggested no fee be set for the first year, but that donations would be accepted.

Mayor Barber said perhaps local businesses would be interested in donating but without soliciting them. She would also like the survey to go out.

Mr. Knight said putting a link to a survey on the town website and the Facebook page would be a good way to reach people rather than by email. He and Ms. Worth have started a list of questions. He also pointed out members of the community were on the meeting.

Jerome residents Mimi and Chuck Romberger said they were mostly listening but love the community garden idea.

Mr. Knight suggested the town retain one of the raised beds for educational purposes.

Ms. Worth said the town's bed would also be a great way to highlight the community, for example, during home tour. She said she would continue working on the survey.

Motion to Approve Use of Prop. 202 Funding for the Jerome Community Garden, send out a survey to gauge community interest, and publish a donation wish list of items needed for the project

COUNCILMEMBER	MOVED	SECONDED	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
BARBER			X			
DILLENBERG			X			
HARVEY	X		X			
MOORE			X			
WORTH		X	X			

ITEM #3:

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn at 5:45 p.m.

COUNCILMEMBER	MOVED	SECONDED	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
BARBER			X			
DILLENBERG	X		X			
HARVEY		X	X			
MOORE			X			
WORTH			X			

APPROVE:

ATTEST:

Christina "Alex" Barber, Mayor

Candace B. Gallagher, CMC, Town Manager/Clerk

Date: _____