



**MINUTES OF THE SPRINGDALE TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING HELD
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2020**

This Council meeting did not have an anchor location and was conducted entirely via electronic means. Council members connected remotely. The meeting was available to the public for live viewing/listening.

The Special meeting convened at 9:00 am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Pro Tempore Adrian Player, Council members Lisa Zumpft, Randy Aton, Suzanne Elger, and Mayor Stanley J. Smith

ALSO PRESENT: Town Manager Rick Wixom, Director of Community Development Tom Dansie, Town Clerk Darci Carlson, and Deputy Town Clerk Katy Brown recording. See attached sheet for attendees signed into the meeting.

Motion made by Randy Aton to approve the Special Meeting agenda. Seconded by Suzanne Elger.

Player: Aye

Zumpft: Aye

Elger: Aye

Aton: Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

A. Discussion and Information

1. General announcements: No announcements were made.

Mayor Stan Smith joined the meeting at 9:03 am.

B. Administrative Action Items

1. Resolution 2020-08, a Resolution calling a Special Bond Election to be held on November 3, 2020 for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the Town of Springdale, Utah, a proposition regarding the issuance of not to exceed \$3,000,000 general obligation bonds to finance all or a portion of the costs to preserve open space and related improvements; providing for the publication of a notice of public hearing; approving the form of and directing the publication of a notice of election and the ballot proposition; and related matters: In consideration of pursuing a General Obligation Bond to be added to the upcoming November ballot, the Town had engaged third-party polling company FM3 Research to check public interest levels for open space funding options. Miranda Everitt of FM3 presented the survey results.

They had received responses from close to 50% of all Springdale registered voters. The survey first presented sample ballot language introducing the concept without further context. Respondents answered 49% in support of the measure, 37% in opposition, and 14% undecided. The survey then offered further information regarding the type of projects that could be funded and the potential tax impacts for each household. Providing context increased support for the measure by 11%. It was clear that an education campaign would be critical for the measure's success if the Council chose to refer it to the ballot.

The survey also gauged interest in specific types of initiatives the bond could fund by asking respondents to prioritize a list of goals. A significant amount of interest emerged in favor of protecting views of the surrounding National Park, mitigating wildfire risk, and culinary water quality, all rating well above other

sample initiatives such as preserving the Town's agricultural character and building recreational infrastructure.

By the end of the survey, support of the measure increased to only 53% after respondents were given the full context including bond amount options and resulting taxation. The results showed that accountability was a key factor in the public's support and investment in the measure. Another finding of note showed that opponents of the measure were overwhelmingly persuaded by a statement in the survey that if passed, the bond would triple their tax rates. Highlighting the scale in regard to taxation exposed a vulnerability in the success of the measure.

Ms. Everitt concluded her presentation of the survey results by summarizing that the open space bond measure faced a challenging path to approval that would require a strong, organized campaign of support and very limited opposition.

Ms. Zumpft asked if the Town would have assistance in crafting an educational campaign that would help the public understand their options.

- Conner Hall from the Trust for Public Land (TPL) said that in addition to having full access to all of FM3's polling data, TPL would be willing to help craft public information and outreach materials. He felt that referring the measure to the ballot was a roll of the dice and if voted on today, it would narrowly fail at 49%. Ballot measures involving tax increases commonly saw a slight erosion of support in the time between the initial poll question and when voters made it to the ballot. Furthermore, the undecided voters typically either skewed against the measure or abstained from answering. If the Council proceeded with the measure, he strongly recommended strengthening the language and adding specifics on what the bond would be used for. Accountability and transparency rated very highly among respondents.

Mr. Wixom asked Mr. Hall to touch on possible opposition efforts, from grassroots campaigns to property rights coalitions.

- Mr. Conner felt that oppositional voices could easily be persuasive in a small community like Springdale. The margins were already tight enough that it wouldn't take a robust oppositional campaign to sway voters against the measure.

Ms. Elger felt the survey highlighted that the voters in Springdale valued views of the canyon and protection of water quality. She was unsure that preserving open space was the exact mechanism that would meet the needs actually expressed through the survey.

Mayor Smith wasn't willing to roll the dice. It could be damaging to the Council to move forward with referring the measure when the voters showed a tepid response.

Ms. Elger felt that the concept needed more clarification before the Council could move forward.

- Mr. Hall agreed and felt there was wisdom in saving the efforts for a different time when the measure had a better chance. He noted the effects of the pandemic and resulting economic downturn. The Council could choose to wait for a cycle and attempt to capitalize on better economic conditions in the future.

Ms. Zumpft was concerned about the statement regarding the tripling of property taxes. It obviously served as a persuasive statement for the opposition but it lacked context and specifics. She felt there were respondents who may not have understand the mechanics of the measure. Regardless, she felt the Council needed to define what they meant by 'open space.'

Mr. Player felt it was premature to move forward. He agreed with the suggestion to craft a more definite approach and poll the voters again in the future.

Mr. Aton felt that much of the opposition could potentially come from business owners and non-residents. The response from the voters would need to be much more positive before moving forward.

Ms. Zumpft expressed her appreciation to Ms. Everitt and FM3 for the thoughtful questions and felt the results would be useful in the current General Plan update process.

Motion made by Mayor Stan Smith to postpone any referral of a bond hearing into the future.

Seconded by Suzanne Elger.

Elger: Aye

Player: Aye

Zumpft: Aye

Smith: Aye

Aton: Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Appointment of Tom Kenaston as Planning Commission Second Alternate for term expiring

August 2023: Mayor Smith had spoken with Mr. Kenaston who had been attending many of the public meetings. He showed a level of enthusiasm and willingness to learn, and would be a great addition to the Commission.

Motion made by Lisa Zumpft to approve the appointment of Tom Kenaston as Planning Commission second alternate for term expiring August 2023. Seconded by Susan Elger.

Elger: Aye

Zumpft: Aye

Player: Aye

Smith: Aye

Aton: Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Dansie thanked Ms. Everitt and Mr. Hall for their hard work and wiliness to meet the tight time schedule and quick turnaround or results.

- Mr. Hall said that TPL was happy to provide assistance in the future.

F. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 9:57 am made by Stan Smith. Seconded by Lisa Zumpft.

Aton: Aye

Elger: Aye

Zumpft: Aye

Player: Aye

Smith: Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

Katy Brown, Deputy Town Clerk

APPROVAL: _____ DATE: _____

A recording of the public meeting is available by contacting the Town Clerk's Office. Please call 435-772-3434 or email springdale@infowest.com for more information.



PO Box 187 118 Lion Blvd Springdale UT 84767

REMOTE MEETING ATTENDANCE RECORD

Meeting: Town Council Regular Meeting 08/20/20

Zion National Park Superintendent Jeff Bradybaugh

Conner Hall, Trust for Public Land

Miranda Everitt, FM3 Research

Chuck Passek