



WRITTEN REPORT

To: Honorable Mayor Clark and Ridgway Town Council
From: Preston Neill, Town Manager
Date: May 8, 2020
RE: **Town Manager's Report**

INTRODUCTION

This report serves as an update to Council on key projects, activities and community issues.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC UPDATE

I can't believe it's May. The pandemic doesn't just belong to March and April. It's now making a grab for May. I'm truly inspired by how we're sticking with it and working together to keep Ridgway and Ouray County safe and healthy.

With the change of seasons, I think all of us can feel the energy building up. Everyone wants to burst into action and get outside. While there's nothing wrong with that, it's imperative that folks continue practicing social distancing and abiding by applicable public health orders in order to help keep our numbers down. As you probably know, Governor Polis issued his Safer-At-Home Order in late April and it is slated to remain in place until May 26th. The Safer-At-Home model still requires that vulnerable individuals remain at home but allows limited reopening of certain businesses. Individuals are encouraged to stay at home as much as possible and practice social distancing to reduce the likelihood of disease transmission, but certain activities, such as gathering in groups of no more than ten for activities, are permitted. Workplace restrictions remain necessary to implement standard social distancing requirements, cleaning standards, and other items necessary to reduce the possibility of disease spread. Certain businesses and activities require specific guidance based on their business practices, and those are included in Safer-At-Home Order, which is available to view in its entirety at <https://covid19.colorado.gov/covid-19-in-colorado/public-health-executive-orders-resource>.

The community's long-term recovery is one of our top priorities. We had a great webinar with DOLA earlier this week as a way to kickstart the community recovery process. We thought it was a good step in starting to address community recovery from the long-term consequences of the pandemic. It has us thinking really hard about how to help rebuild our economy, bolster our health systems, and adapt to a "New Normal." We're currently following the incident command system and at the Unified Command level, it's becoming clearer by the day that there's a gap to fill in relation to tasks and responsibilities related to economic recovery County-wide so we're looking to evaluate ways to fill that gap.

The lack of clarity and certainty is hard to manage. We all just want to know when. I wish I could tell you what day things will return to normal. I hope you enjoy this nice weather and find ways to keep your spirits up.

My best to all of you and your families.



BUDGET UPDATE

In anticipation of negative financial impacts to the Town due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Council adapted the FY2020 Budget during the April 8th Regular meeting. Council reviewed line items in the General, Water and Sewer Funds that contain various projects and capital expenditures and elected to freeze a number of items for the time being totaling \$585,900 (\$335,900 in the General Fund and \$250,000 in the Water Fund). With General Fund Expenditures totaling \$3,086,682 in the FY2020 Adopted Budget, this equates to a 10.88% reduction in the General Fund. With Water Fund Expenditures totaling \$1,044,398, this equates to a 23.93% reduction in the Water Fund.

There were also a number of items that Council decided could potentially be reduced in scope and thus cost, if deemed necessary by staff. Staff is planning to present updated financial reports at the July Council meeting for further review and discussion by Council. While we anticipate we'll have several months and perhaps years of revenue impacts, we're starting from a sound financial position and have time to work through strategies to maintain our services to the community.

TOWN OF RIDGWAY YOUTUBE CHANNEL

The Town of Ridgway now has its very own YouTube Channel! We have integrated our video recordings from the Zoom video conferencing platform with YouTube so that residents can watch past meetings online. Check it out at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtwVSRiXtjKbTpy5sHw42EQ>. The Town Council's Special Meeting from April 24th and the Planning Commission's Regular Meeting from April 28th are uploaded and ready for public viewing.

We have also partnered with the Open Media Foundation, a media and technology nonprofit organization, to utilize and embed their online video platform on our website to make watching past meetings that much easier. Check it out at <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/ridgway/ridgway-town-council>.

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE WEBINAR

Councilors Grambley and Schuyler have been registered for an Effective Governance webinar that CML is offering later this month. The webinar is free to CML municipal members. The webinar will take place on Wednesday, May 20th, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and it will be presented by CIRSA Executive Director Tami Tanoue and CML Executive Director Kevin Bommer. They will provide insight into key leadership challenges municipal elected officials face and discussion topics include high-level personnel issues, open meetings/open records, ethics, and other issues. More information about these workshops is available at <https://www.cml.org/home/networking-events>. If any other members of Council have an interest in attending this webinar, please let me know as soon as possible and I'll get you registered.

Bo and I intend to schedule a time to meet with Councilors Grambley and Schuyler after the CML webinar to go over some big picture stuff and review topics like meeting protocol, quasi-judicial matters, executive sessions and the chain of command between Council and staff.



CLERK'S DEPARTMENT UPDATE

From Pam Kraft, Town Clerk/Treasurer:

Annual Clean Up Day Event Update

We had another successful cleanup day on April 25th. Alpine Bank chose to cancel electronic recycling which compliments the event, and hopefully it will resume next year, as it is a needed service.

Events Update

I have notified all the participants in this year's Love Your Valley Festival that the event will not be held on May 30th due to COVID-19. We are waiting to see about the outcome for the movie nights in the park, and the concert series.

Budget Update

I am continuing to monitor budgeted revenues and expenditures. The Town's financial status is solid at this time.

Sales & Use Tax Software System Update

The Town has signed up to participate in a statewide program offering out-of-state sales tax remitters a single website to file sales tax for numerous municipalities and counties throughout the state. This will provide ease for filers (like Amazon) and may boost the Town's sales tax receipts if vendors were unaware the Town is home rule and were remitting sales tax collected in town to the state.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT UPDATE

From Chase Jones, Public Works Services Administrator:

Street Grading

Throughout the month of May, unpaved Town streets will be graded for annual maintenance. A detailed schedule can be found on the Town website and is posted at Town Hall. Please remove any parked vehicles from Town rights-of-way when grading is planned.

Irrigation

As residences begin to charge up their sprinkler systems please remember to have backflow prevention devices tested and check for system leaks.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

From Shay Coburn, Town Planner:

Building permits remain at about the same pace as the last few years. To give you an idea, the number of permits issued January through April for this year and the past three years are:

2017 – 12 permits issued
2018 – 13 permits issued
2019 – 8 permits issued
2020 – 11 permits issued



COMMUNITY INITIATIVES UPDATE

From Diedra Silbert, Community Initiatives Facilitator:

Heritage Park Improvements

Colorado Creative Industries (CCI) awarded the Town a \$10,000 grant for Heritage Park Improvements. Since those improvements will not be moving forward to the extent planned this season, CCI agreed to allow the Town and Creative District to utilize these funds to reimburse businesses for appropriate reopening expenses due to COVID impacts. Though there had been a 1:1 match required at the time of application and award, CCI has dropped that match requirement. Procedures and publicity will be developed as quickly as possible. The Colorado Main Street 2019 mini-grant extension, which was also slated for \$5,000 of Heritage Park Improvements and must be completed by June 30, 2020, can be utilized to clean up, level, lay gravel, and place picnic tables in an area near the parking lot, south of the Visitor Center's pergola, with labor and equipment from Public Works.

Ridgway Space to Create

A team of three presenters, Mayor John Clark, Diedra Silbert, and Andrew Michaelson from Artspace, made a virtual presentation to the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority on May 5 to complete our second application for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits for Space to Create. The presentation went well, and we are keeping our fingers crossed that we will be selected for funding this time. A response is expected from CHFA by the end of the month. You can find design views, schematic and elevation plans that were submitted with the application under Resources on the Space to Create webpage on the Town's website (www.colorado.gov/ridgway/space-create-ridgway).

First Fridays

It is unclear at this time whether First Fridays will move forward this summer season, but it is highly unlikely. The June event will probably be cancelled soon due to public health orders. Discussion has taken place about developing some sort of virtual First Friday, but it is unlikely to be ready by early June.

Ridgway Independent Film Fest

The Ridgway Independent Film Fest is scheduled for November 6-7, 2020. A Call to Filmmakers was distributed with a final entry date of September 25, 2020. Pass the word along to any filmmakers you know! More information is available at www.ridgwaycreativedistrict.com.

Conference and Event Cancellations

The National Main Street Conference and the State Creative Districts Convening and CCI Summit were all cancelled this month. They are slated for 2021. Ride the Rockies held on for some time but finally cancelled at the end of April. They intend to use the same route through Ridgway in June 2021.

Collaboration with Ridgway Area Chamber of Commerce

Town and Chamber staff are working together to post relevant COVID-19-related resources on websites and to directly email businesses. Various email lists of businesses and entrepreneurs were merged for this period to minimize the numbers of emails businesses receive. Necessary collaboration on Heritage Park plans is also taking place.



Town Website Platform

The Town is aiming to roll out a new version of the Town website with improved appearance and functionality in the next few weeks. This upgrade was required by the Statewide Internet Portal Authority (SIPA) which hosts our website, with some technical support provided to implement it. (It's still been more work than anticipated!)

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- **Regular Town Council Meeting** – May 13, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Joint Policy Group Work Session in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic** – May 14, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom
- **Planning Commission Regular Meeting** – May 26, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Ridgway Main Street Board Workshop** – May 27 or June 3, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Regular Town Council Meeting** – June 10, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom

JOKE OF THE DAY

What's Forrest Gump's password?

1forrest1