



**BASALT TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 13, 2022**

Basalt is an inclusive, sustainable, mountain community that boasts both historic charm and progressive vision. It is an engaging place to live, work and play while offering an abundance of creative, professional, educational and recreational outlets.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Bill Kane called the regular meeting of the Basalt Town Council to order at 6:03 PM on Tuesday, September 13, 2022. Also present were Council members Glenn Drummond, Dieter Schindler, Elyse Hottel and Ryan Slack. Council member Angela Anderson arrived shortly after roll call and David Knight was absent.

2. CONSENT AGENDA AND MOTION: 2A. Minutes: August 23, 2022

M/S COUNCILORS SLACK AND SCHINDLER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 23, 2022 MEETING AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

3. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments offered this evening.

4. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMENTS

Ryan Slack thanked the Town and staff for the pool this summer. He was happy to see the pool open with the new improvements; it was a big hit with his kids.

Elyse Hottel said doggie day at the pool was a lot of fun. There were probably 15 dogs and twice as many doggie parents at the pool for the last day of the season.

Bill Kane reported that he and Town Manager Ryan Mahoney had attended a RFTA meeting on September 8 where they had a long discussion about first and last mile and heard a presentation from the Downtowner representatives. The RFTA Board seemed well disposed to funding another year of Basalt Connect, though the Town would likely have to figure out how it will proceed long term. There was discussion of utilizing electric vehicles. Ryan Mahoney said the cost for the electric vans is quite a bit more and we would have to build the infrastructure to maintain the vans. It is something Council will need to explore before we take on the long term commitment. Basalt is being viewed as a test case by Carbondale and Glenwood. Ridership this summer bounced back up, and from RFTA's perspective, the cost per rider was about \$20, which is about half of what the cost would be for this type of shuttle service. There will need to

be greater continuity over time such as the drivers being employed for the full season, more rider predictability, etc., if we have the goal of getting people out of their cars.

5. MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Ryan Mahoney said the Town was finishing up a project on Swinging Bridge Lane. Last year, a project tore up some of the little park there and the Town is putting in some landscaping to clean it up.

The new River Park has had sod laid down, so it looks more like a park now.

The new Public Works barn will have a new foundation poured any time now, with the new building put on site and completed in short order.

PRESENTATIONS: 6A. Invoice Cloud - Online Utility Payment Program

Interim Finance Director Jenny Aragon was present to update Council on the new on-line utility payment program called Invoice Cloud. All of Basalt's water customers received a letter recently announcing the new online payment option where the utility customers can sign up for auto-pay, or can make one-time payments, online, for a small fee. To assume this service, the Town is paying a portion of that fee as well; they are not passing along 100% of the online convenience fee to the customer. People still have the option to pay by check with no additional fee. The system can also provide paperless billing if the customer chooses that option, and it can send payment reminders on behalf of the Town to the utility customers. The data comes into the Town's accounting system in real time and over time, we will be able to tell if this program improves collection percentages. It will be more efficient for staff and convenient for customers overall.

6B. Basalt Forward 2030 Solar Project Update

Town Engineer Catherine Christoff along with Ashley Brasovan and Donald Chung from McKinstry were present via Zoom. Mike Steiner of Holy Cross Energy was also present in the audience this evening. All were present to assist in the discussion of the Solar Project Update.

Catherine Christoff shared a PowerPoint presentation as she explained the Town had been working with Holy Cross and the School District on the development of a large solar and potential battery storage project. This was identified in the 2020 Master Plan and funded as part of the Basalt Forward 2030 projects. Catherine described how the team determined their goals and sites for a solar array and storage and presented its preliminary preferred plan including very preliminary scheduling and financial considerations to town staff, the school district and Holy Cross Energy. As part of that presentation, McKinstry presented their analysis of battery storage potential with the Basalt High School site being potentially the most viable. However, it was determined that this part of the proposal only provided a limited use potential – that is if the batteries were 100% full, it would power the school for only 20 hours. Given the \$1.4 million price tag, it wouldn't make sense to invest in this existing technology; but it may make sense in the future.

Catherine reviewed the different sites that were identified for solar arrays including the school district bus barn at El Jebel, a roof mounted site at Basalt Elementary School, a ground mounted array at Basalt High School, an array on top of the High School Concessions building and a roof top system at the Basalt Public Works building off of East Valley Road. The Basalt Middle School roof was evaluated but the age of the roof was not comfortable for the school

district to consider a roof top array. Ashley Brasovan offered a breakdown of the system size, year one production and the potential environmental offsets at each site, as well as the project financials for each site including potential grant funds that could offset about 50% of the total cost of the project. The projected annual savings of the whole portfolio of projects is estimated to be about \$37,000. The final slide of Ashley's presentation showed the various project phases which kicked off in February of 2022 with final design and construction anticipated late 2022 and into 2023.

Council asked various questions related to the operating economics, who would be responsible to maintain the system, and reimbursement of the power when this energy is put back on the grid. Mike Steiner explained the tariffs and net metering caps that would set the compensation rates that vary annually. Ashley discussed the matrix they created that detailed the operations and maintenance costs, and Donald Chung talked about the more technical aspects of operations and maintenance costs of the systems including preventive maintenance. The Town owns these systems, so the Town will ultimately be making the decisions on how much to spend on operations and maintenance and on what activities. McKinstry could assist in locating contractors and helping the Town determine cost benefits given the annual savings. Town Manager Ryan Mahoney discussed the potential split with the school district on the savings generated; the Town's portion could be used toward Green Team projects. Ashley noted the Town would be eligible for a tax credit as well; McKinstry would be digging into that more. Discussion was held on the anticipated payback time period for the project; at this point, McKinstry thought a 15-year payback was reasonable given the equipment, location, etc. Analysis of the Arbaney park pool solar offsets is forthcoming.

7. COUNCIL ACTIONS

7A. Continued Public Hearing and First Reading Ordinance No. 16, Series of 2022: An Ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of Basalt, Colorado, Approving Amendments to the Municipal Code, Amending Town Code Section 18-23, Sustainable Building Regulations

Senior Planner Sara Nadolny asked that Mike Steiner stay for this item, and introduced Amanda Poindexter and Jeff Dickinson of the Green Team's Green Code Committee. The Council reviewed this item in August, where a number of code amendments were introduced to the sustainable regulations, renewable energy program and pathway to net-zero. At that time, Council instructed the committee to bring back information on a number of different items as noted in the staff memo. Sara shared a PowerPoint presentation that outlined the Objectives: identifying the items above code, updates on the outreach conducted, update on the changes made since the August meeting, some clarifications that were important to bring forward, as well as a cost analysis that was performed by the consultants regarding these proposed changes.

Above Code items that were proposed for Council consideration included: Basalt Sustainable Building Regulations last amended in 2018; a Residential Home Energy Rating System (HERS) score of 40 or 45; mandatory on-site renewable energy systems, energy assessments and blower door tests for remodel projects, benchmarking commercial buildings of 20,000 sf or more for energy consumption, and changes to the Renewable Energy Mitigation Program. Sara explained the outreach and education staff had engaged in regarding these amendments including emails to hundreds of contractors, architects and design professionals in the valley, as well as advertising the amendments in the local paper, and a link to an informational video of the amendments available on the Town's Building Department website.

The comments received were used in the changes to the prior amendments. To clarify what was changed since first reading, the amendments were highlighted in the documents in this

evening's packet; staff continues to solicit feedback on the proposed amendments. An FAQ was also created and uploaded to the Building Department's web page. Staff had also met via zoom with some design professionals who had some specific points to hash out.

Changes made since the first reading of the Ordinance in August included:

- Removed duplicative items from the International Energy conservation Code (IECC);
- Reduced the solar requirement for residential remodels;
- Formalized an exemption and appeal process;
- Clarified off-street parking requirements for electric vehicle or electric ready spaces;
- Amended the Sustainable Building Regulations to be applicable to remodels of 750 sf (as opposed to 500 sf as formerly proposed);
- Changes were made to several definitions to match those in the IECC, language was clarified in several areas based on feedback from the design community, and an error was caught and corrected in the HERS scores.

Sara Nadolny clarified some items that may have been confusing at the last discussion. There was concern that there would be a penalty for sites that might have insufficient solar access. Sara clarified there is no penalty for sites that are lacking in good solar opportunity; those homeowners could meet their solar requirement by purchasing energy through the Holy Cross Pure Program. There was discussion of having a liaison for the Sustainable Building Regulations, but Amanda Poindexter (Full Circle Construction) does serve that purpose as a contractor for the Town by guiding applicants through the SBR process. The updates to the REMP program bring in changes that align Basalt with the requirements of neighboring communities in our valley. There will also be a REMP calculator available for use by the public. Lastly, a recent Colorado House Bill was passed that requires all residential and commercial buildings statewide to adhere to the 2021 IECC or equivalent beginning July 2023. The municipalities in the Roaring Fork Valley are working with a code expert/consultant to tailor the energy code to meet the needs of our community rather than adopting the code across the board. The Energy Code and 2021 Building Code will come before Council in the coming months.

Jeff Dickinson explained that he had performed a cost analysis on a variety of different projects using small lots like those at Stott's Mill and larger mixed use project lots like the BCC Parcel development. The goal has been to keep the costs associated with these items within 5% or less of the total project costs. There were some assumptions made using a best educated guess on construction costs per square foot. A spreadsheet included in the agenda packet was shared showing the Basalt Electrification Cost Analysis to get a sense of the magnitude of various projects.

Mayor Bill Kane opened the public hearing at 7:01 PM.

Katie (no last name given), introduced herself as a local homeowner in Basalt (in Emma?) and owns The Fireplace Company, the largest fireplace installer in the valley. She brought forth concerns related to affordable heating in the valley. Katie read some points she was given to read on behalf of the industry: We believe homeowners and renters should have a choice. Natural gas helps keep energy and utility bills affordable. Electric battery backup systems are expensive and could be cost prohibitive in an already expensive valley to live in. Natural gas complements electricity very well. It's resilient – when storms knock out electric power, and battery backups are not robust enough, no one will have heat if we're in an all electric system. Katie advocated for a bi-system of gas and electric. Katie noted that gas systems can also have battery backups and do work in the event of a full power outage. Katie said we would also want to consider these vessels of how we're transmitting natural gas, now or in the future, are going

to be used for hydrogen which is also a renewable natural gas. If we're not piping them in now, it's going to be very expensive to pipe them in in the future when those renewable energy sources are available. Electric is a lot more expensive to run and offers less heat.

Megan (no last name given), said she also works at The Fireplace Company. Megan said it wasn't just about fireplaces, but also about affordable housing. She believed Basalt was looking into purchasing affordable housing and should also be looking at affordable heating and cooling systems, too. Megan said she heard that with solar, we wouldn't see profits turn around within 15 years and asked why make the big push for electric if we won't see profits for a long time, and who can say the grid can sustain a Colorado winter like we have. When Texas experienced the rolling blackouts last year, there were no options for people with all electric systems and their pipes burst and they were freezing. Just last year when the gas was shut off in Aspen, it became almost a state of emergency. Megan thought piping for gas and getting rid of gas might not be the best choice at this moment. Megan appreciated the push for green energy, but backtracked some and said that coal creates electricity and who is to say that coal isn't emitting emissions into the air.

Mary Wiener, said she does the energy efficiency and building electrification programs for Holy Cross Energy. She heard people's concerns about going all electric, and commented that Black Hills electric rates (which had tripled in January) made Holy Cross electric rates pretty competitive now. Mary said that there was a new study that indicated having gas in a house was equivalent to having a smoker in the house. Mary offered to share the reports about health and safety between gas and electric, noting that having an electric home was safer. Holy Cross is 50% renewable energy now and hopes to be 100% by the end of the decade, so they don't burn a lot of coal right now, and members can help even more by offsetting their energy use through the Pure Program. Mary said the issue in Texas was very frightening. People were using propane in their homes and some died of carbon monoxide poisoning. They also really learned that their homes were not insulated correctly. Mary said that the cold climate heat pumps do work, though more expensive than a gas furnace, but were three times more efficient and would pay for itself a lot faster than a gas furnace or boiler.

There were no further public comments and Mayor Kane closed the public hearing at 7:10 PM.

Council questions followed concerning costs from a construction standpoint of these requirements. Amanda Poindexter said the costs would depend on what one was getting points for – the goal is to incorporate different materials and technologies and make a smaller impact. Amanda said the program had been in place for quite a few years now and having gone through a couple of times with contractors and owners, she sees them choosing a more efficient furnace or insulation over locally made cabinets, etc.

Staff was asked to address the question of whether there was a conflict of interest with Amanda working on this project. Ryan Mahoney did not think there was an issue as she was directed to assist in coming up with these legislative changes, modified by industry folks; Amanda only administers what Council adopts. Amanda doesn't stand to gain from these Council decisions.

Glenn Drummond asked how many people pay the mitigation fee versus just following the program. Amanda said the program has been very effective. Amanda said she would do a specific review for the energy and SBR regulations and the applicants would incorporate a lot of things in order to avoid fines or fees. They would rather not pay those fees and it benefits the owner and the contractor in the long run. Amanda said that probably 90% of those projects that do pay a fee, it's generally for a couple of points – nothing huge.

Elyse Hottel said she was in favor of beneficial electrification, but also didn't want people freezing in their homes. She asked staff to speak to the resiliency aspect. Amanda said the energy code is the number one item addressing the insulation and airtightness of a home, limiting things like burst pipes, when something does go wrong.

Jeff Dickinson noted another resiliency item would allow a battery back up tied to solar to create a pretty efficient resilient program for a home.

Elyse Hottel suggested Council needed to consider the square footage that these SBRs would apply to (750 sf if approve), and be sure that Council wasn't impeding people from adding ADUs in order to supply additional housing.

Bill Kane wondered what other municipalities had implemented a 25% onsite renewable. Aspen has, Carbondale is in the process. Boulder and Denver. Sara said they could bring back more information on that by second reading.

M/S COUNCILORS SCHINDLER AND ANDERSON THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 16,SERIES OF 2022 ON FIRST READING AND CONTINUE AND SET THE PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING FOR SEPTEMBER 27, 2022. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS HELD. THE MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Council also asked that the group bring back the comments from the building community for the next meeting. Michelle Thibeault said there weren't any points that were a deal killer; there were no overall issues from the design and construction communities.

7B. Public Hearing and First Reading Ordinance No. 19, Series of 2022: An Ordinance of the Town of Basalt, Colorado, Approving Amendments to Municipal Code Section 18-13, Tree Management

Assistant Planning Director James Lindt and Town Arborist Chris Beiser (via Zoom) were present to discuss updates and clarifications to the Town's tree code. Amendments were included in the council packet and recommended for approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The amendments were intended to better clarify tree removal mitigation requirements and allow for the Town Arborist to more effectively administer tree removal permits.

Chris Beiser noted the vast majority of the amendments were clarifications and updating the technical terminology to reflect current industry standards. The biggest chunk of amendments deals with the permitting process. Chris had created a dichotomous key that creates a set of standardized mitigation requirements. Chris reviewed the questions that will guide an individual through the process to help determine the permitting requirements in terms of replacement trees, or fees in lieu when removing a tree. Every case being rather unique, this isn't a hard and fast rule, but lays the framework for standardized decision making, so that no one is being singled out or asked to do more or less than a neighbor. There is some language that ties in other ordinances that we also enforce such as environmentally sensitive areas and riparian areas, and a section for the valuation of trees.

Mayor Kane opened the public hearing at 7:29 PM. There were no public comments and the hearing was closed.

Council asked about a strategy for letting the community know about these policies; education and outreach. Chris said he speaks with the tree contractors directly and has good lines of communication with them as well as with area HOAs; they are aware of the removal

requirements. The more difficult aspect is when a homeowner takes their chainsaw out and works to remove a tree in their yard.

Council asked about getting a tree permit to remove a tree, what would be the point of duplicating it with three day notice to the public works director, especially if you were working with the contractors. Chris said he found that it was better to make it easier for people to do the right thing and not make it a burden for them to get a permit. The three day notice was leftover from a current ordinance, a bit of a technicality. Ryan Mahoney added that that you also don't want a tree removal contractor showing up at a person's house and then trying to scramble to get a permit lined up. Chris said he's had very little reactive action on tree removals in town.

M/S COUNCILORS SLACK AND DRUMMOND TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO, 19, SERIES OF 2022 ON FIRST READING AND CONTINUE AND SET THE PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING FOR SEPTEMBER 27, 2022. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS HELD. THE MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

7C-1. Resolution No. 54, Series of 2022: A Resolution of the Town Council of Basalt, Colorado, approving an Agreement for Professional Services with JVA, Inc. for the development of a Basalt Water Utility Master Plan

Town Engineer Catherine Christoff and Public Works Director Boyd Bierbaum were present to discuss this item with Council. The Town owned municipal water system provides water treatment, storage and distribution services to 925 connections in east Basalt. Staff has put out an RFP for the development of a Basalt water utility master plan. The purpose of this master plan is to inform the planning of capital improvements, the operations and maintenance and develop a rate structure that can help fund the water enterprise. Two proposals were received by the August 10 deadline. A team led by JVA, Inc. Consulting Engineers, supported by Raftelis, local government and utility management consultants, and HRS Water Resources Engineering, was determined to provide the most qualified proposal.

Cooper Best of JVA, Inc., joined the meeting via Zoom and thanked the Town for the opportunity to work on this water project noting that the water utility master plan was a key document. They have worked with the Town of Basalt in the past and felt there was a strong relationship; they looked forward to working with the town staff on this project.

Bill Kane asked if it would be worth taking on, as part of this master plan, the water rights, source supply and durability of the Basalt Spring and Lucksinger Spring of the Town for the long term. Elyse Hottel was also interested in the carrying capacity and what we could sustain out of our 13 wells in town.

Boyd Bierbaum discussed the water increase that the town experienced after the Lake Christine fire; how the trees and plants that were burned/removed due to the fire were no longer absorbing that water and it increased the water flows at the springs and through the Town's water plant.

Catherine thought they would be able to, at least some extent, quantify the supply through a geology analysis – at least a brief, and maybe a brief look at the aquifer, but ultimately this proposal was really to look at the infrastructure of our system. This plan will help set up the budget and capital improvements for a five-year and 20-year interval, and set the associated fee structure to recoup some of the operations and maintenance costs. It will also set up capital improvements and clearly identified capital projects that will hopefully be ripe for receiving federal funds.

The overarching umbrella of the effort is for efficiency and conservation, despite how lucky we are to have an ample supply, the goal is to be sure we’re not using it to death and are conserving it properly; integrating all the right technologies for resiliency and to incentivize conservation.

M/S COUNCILORS HOTTEL AND SLACK THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL ADOPT RESOLUTION O. 54, SERIES OF 2022. THE MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

7C-2. Letter of Support for the Town’s application for the Colorado River District’s Community Funding Partnership to help fund the Water Utilities Master Plan

Mayor Kane said the second piece of this was to approve a letter of support for the Town’s application for the Colorado River District’s Community Funding Partnership to help fund the water utilities master plan.

M/S COUNCILORS SLACK AND DRUMMOND THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL APPROVE THE LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE TOWN’S APPLICATION FOR THE COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT’S COMMUNITY FUNDING PARTNERSHIP. THE MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Town Manager Ryan Mahoney added that the Town also needed to obtain letters of support from Eagle and Pitkin counties; they should be forthcoming.

8. INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDENCE: 8A. Accounts Payable; 8B. Advanced Agendas; 8C. Correspondence to the Town

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM.

The minutes of the September 13, 2022 meeting were read and approved this 27th day of September, 2022.

BASALT TOWN COUNCIL:

By: 
William G. Kane, Mayor



ATTEST:


Pamela Schilling, Town Clerk

This meeting can be viewed in its entirety on the Town of Basalt YouTube channel, or at www.GrassrootsTV.org, or by using this link: <https://townofbasalt.ompnetwork.org/sessions/253598?embedInPoint=1&embedOutPoint=6930&shareMethod=link>