

Thayne Town Council
Work Session

October 10, 2017

Council in attendance: Mayor Lainhart, Councilman Schwab, Councilman Heward, Councilman Wicks, Clerk Hillstead and Assistant Clerk Rachelle Hyde. Not in attendance: Councilman Woolley.

Public Meeting Open at 7:00 PM

Welcome: Mayor Lainhart Presiding

Prayer: Mayor Lainhart

Pledge of Allegiance: Clerk Hillstead

Adoption of Agenda.

Motion-Councilman Heward

Seconded-Councilman Schwab

Motion Carried

Thayne Fire Department

-Assistant Chief Toby Merritt started a conversation with the Town Council regarding the Thayne Fire Department becoming a District. Merritt stated that the Lincoln County Commissioners approached the Fire Department about becoming a District; the Thayne Fire Department would be the last department in the county to do so. Merritt stated the Fire Department is just researching it for now and would like the Town's input.

- Mayor Lainhart stated that he has looked into the Wyoming State Statutes regarding Fire Districts. The County Commissioners can decide that they would like to form a district, which then would be on the ballot and if the majority votes to create the District then it will be created. The Town is required by State Statute to provide fire protection. As a District, they could contract with the Town or the Town could just be a district. The issue with not contracting with the Town is that the District could only tax up to a 3 mill levy and since the Town of Thayne residents are already taxed with an 8 mill levy; those residents could not be taxed by the District.

-Chief Marc Clark stated that the Department is not trying to take anything away from the Town of Thayne; they are just trying to be proactive. From what Clark understands, the Commissioners could no longer fund the Fire Department and force them into a District. Chief Clark added that maintenance is every expensive and that the Department has already grown out their Fire Hall and that they are not up to code. The Thayne Fire Department takes great pride in that they have been able to run the way they have for so long.

-Mayor Lainhart asked if the Department if they have received any input from the County Treasurer on what income the Department could expect if they went to a District with a 3 mill levy. Merritt answered that without having something on paper where the boundaries could be seen, it was estimated roughly \$282,000 a year. Lainhart added that the mill levy would have to be set every year with a board of directors.

-Assistant Chief Merritt commented that he has talked with the Mayor of Star Valley Ranch and they would be willing to support the Fire Department going to a District. Merritt asked the Town Council that if the Department decides to move forward with becoming a district what the Town's feelings would be. Mayor Lainhart felt as though it was a good idea, that the Town wouldn't give up as much as they would gain. Lainhart asked if there was value added for the Thayne Fire Department to become a District; the Department replied with a yes.

-Chief Clark asked as far as their current building and ownership of the trucks, how would that be worked out with the Town of Thayne. Mayor Lainhart stated that if the Town maintains the District as the Thayne and Rural Fire and if the trucks will still be housed in the Town of Thayne and the Fire Hall will still in the Town, the district can have the trucks and building. Councilman Heward added that the Town would be willing to give the District the trucks and building but it would be on a contract to provide the Town of Thayne fire protection. Heward asked the Department for some cons to becoming a District. Marc Clark answered with loss of control. Clark commented that most of their decisions are made in business meeting but with becoming a District, there would be a new board overlooking the Districts decisions outside of the Fire Department.

-Lance Skinner added that the Department's trucks are old; they look good but are old. These trucks are so super expensive and a few of the ones that the Department has aren't going to last much longer. The Department has done really well but looking down at the future with the price of these trucks, if the Department doesn't pick up more funding they can't keep up. With being a District, they can take out loans due to having a guaranteed amount coming in, so that can be used for collateral. Merritt added that now trucks are being made taller and longer and that would cause them to need a bigger Fire Hall.

-Mayor Lainhart and Council agreed that the Town is on board with the idea and that the Fire Department should keep perusing. Lance Skinner added that next year is an election year so that if this is going to be perused it needs to be on the ballot and we need to do this early enough so that we can start campaigning and educating.

-The Thayne Town Council and Thayne Fire Department discussed the possibility of putting a new Fire Hall down on the Town's sewer lagoon property. Mayor Lainhart stated that he feels that would be a great place for a new Fire Hall. Water and sewer are already fairly close to the property and with the new North Waterline Project there will be an 8 inch line. Clark added that it would be great to have a fire hydrant out on the training ground.

-Mayor Lainhart concluded with the Town would be willing to do whatever is needed and help out with anything to make the District work and that the Town absolutely wants to be part of the district.

Motion to Adjourn at 7:37pm.

Motion- Councilman Woolley

Seconded- Councilman Heward

Motion carried