



**The Minden Town Board held a Public Workshop Meeting to discuss the structure and organization of the Town budget on Monday, March 14, 2011, at the Town Manager's Office, CVIC Hall Annex, 1604 Esmeralda Avenue, Suite 201, Minden, Nevada, beginning at 6:00 p.m.**

Board present: Matt Bernard, Charles Condrón, Roxanne Stangle, John Stephans, and Steve Thaler.

Staff present: Trish Koepnick, Bruce Scott, Tim Russell, Roger Van Alyne.

1 The public workshop meeting was called to order by Chairman Stephans.

2. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Steve Thaler.

3. Stangle/Condrón moved for approval of the agenda

Mr. Stephans spoke of an issue related to the budget that is appropriate to address tonight. It concerns the deficit of the County and the possibility that the County would reduce the tax rate for Minden from to .71 to .64 in the general fund which comes from property tax, and this reduction will raise the tax rate for the County. They are also looking at Gardnerville and Indian Hills. The people of Minden would still pay the same but Minden would not receive the revenue. He said that Minden has been fiscally responsible and should not be penalized for that, as well as the fact that we have cooperated and worked extremely well with the County concerning the water agreements. Minden is already taking a hit because the State Taxation Department has notified us of a cut in revenue. He believes that it is necessary at this time to freeze wages and hiring. We also need to address the shortfall in the funding of our six major projects.

4. Public Comment:

Bob Hadfield referred to his knowledge of the situation from his own experience as County Manager. Michael Brown had quoted a state law that Mr. Hadfield had helped to get passed which allows the County to do this, but Mr. Hadfield knows that there are other statutes which allow for municipalities to enter into agreements as to how the dispersion of revenue takes place. There is a process called "buy down," and it allows the County to have an equal amount of money that they would have generated had they had that tax rate. The purpose is to get more revenue out of the general County; the problem would come if the County does not enter into an interlocal agreement to give that revenue back. The difficulty with this is that the County does not pay for our roads and parks, but they would be taking the tax rate that we use to maintain them, so it is in effect a double hit. Minden has contributed greatly to the overall financial capability of the County. Mr. Hadfield is greatly concerned with the prospect that the specialness of Minden will diminish because our roads and parks will suffer. Minden has a higher property tax rate which helps us have better roads and great parks. The County would take our money but give us nothing; it will benefit the rest of the County but Minden will suffer and this will be reflected in the property values. If they are going to take the money, what services will they provide? Mr. Hadfield is in the legislature defending the County because County is getting dumped on. He is not against Douglas County; he has been a County person his entire life. He understands that the Town's Board is advisory, but if they were not here the Town would have no parks and poor roads. There is little recognition for what the Minden Board does for the residents of Minden as well as for the County by providing services that the County would have to provide if Minden did not provide them, not to mention the lack of property taxes collected from the County buildings in Minden. It is not reasonable and not fair. Mr. Brown can quote the statute all he wants, but there are agreements between many entities such as Washoe County, Reno, Sparks, Clark County and Henderson, who have collaborated to make it work, and they understand that they do not just

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take the money. He does not understand how he can be asked to protect the County from the same “push it down” approach in the legislature when the County appears to be applying it here. It is a matter of common courtesy that the County should have the respect for the Town Board and talk to them before even coming up with a proposal. The County is not run by one person, nor is the Town run by one person, but the veil of secrecy that he observed and that the old Minden Board complained about for years seems to continue. Minden deserves better. This is his home and they are potentially affecting his property value by forcing Minden not to do some of the good things that made Minden more desirable, as opposed to some other County areas. It is not Minden’s fault that the County did not live up to their fiscal responsibility, and they did not have the courage to do what they needed to do years ago. The Minden Board did what was needed to do to assure a sound financial future for Minden and provide the services that the residents wanted and needed by increasing property taxes, and the County did not care; does this mean Minden is bad because Minden takes care of things and now the County wants the money? He does not understand.

Ray Wilson said that he was concerned because Minden has a new Board; if the County starts taking money, the next thing you know they will take the water system. He believes they will try to take over the Gardnerville water system and MGSD as well. MGSD is bringing it to a head as far as the County telling them what to do; MGSD will be doing work to their own standards not the County standards. He believes that the County is after their money, and the fact that the rates for MGSD are so much lower than the County’s looks very bad for the County.

Ross Chichester said that Mr. Wilson makes a very good point. We have raised our tax rate in order to take care of Minden; the problem is that this is an easy place to take money from every year. Because property values are down, Minden has taken a hit, and this could be worse next year because property values will probably continue going down. Why is the County not looking at entities that the County has control over to lower their tax rate? Perhaps some services that the County gives should be looked at and modified. It is not fair to ask Minden residents to take a double hit.

Robert McMillan noted that last years’ budget worksheet was 22 pages and this year with a manager it is 68 pages, and this is without the wholesale water fund yet. He did not understand how the last column works and how it adds up, and he would like to know who the Town accountant is who could answer these kinds of questions. Mr. Stephans said that hopefully in the process of the budget workshop his questions would be answered and if not we will get answers for him.

Mr. Hadfield encouraged meeting with the County Commissioners about the tax rate issue, and if nothing changes, this could be addressed in the newsletter to the Minden residents so they know they will be paying the same taxes and getting less services.

Mr. Condron appreciated the large number of people present tonight and the help of the former Board members in this process.

Mr. Bernard said that he would be interested in meeting with Mr. Hadfield to learn more about what is allowed by state statute concerning the tax rate issue.

Mr. Keele noted that he has been informed by Gardnerville’s attorney that Gardnerville would be happy to work with Minden over this matter.

Mr. Wilson said that MGSD is trying to arrange for a meeting with local entities’ lawyers and engineers to speak to these issues.

Mr. Stephans said he understands that Michael Brown is intending to speak to each of the County Commissioners concerning this. It will only take the votes of three Commissioners to approve it. Minden, Gardnerville, and Indian Hills would sit down with the County and take a vote, and then it would go to the Department of Taxation. The only thing offered from the County is economic development money. His main concern is that once it starts it will be hard to stop. He believes that he has a right to voice his opinion

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as chairman and greatly appreciates the input of the former Board members on this issue.

**5. PUBLIC WORKSHOP MEETING: Discussion and presentation by Town Manager and staff to Town Board regarding the structure and organization of the Town's budget. The basis for discussion will be the draft tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 (FY 11/12). The tentative budget will NOT be approved at this Public Workshop Meeting. Approval of the FY 11/12 tentative budget is currently scheduled for the regular Town Board meeting on April 6, 2011.**

Budget workshop was held in preparation for the submittal of the tentative budget for 2011-2012.

6. Thaler/Stangle motioned to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.