



# SUBLETTE EXAMINER

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## Marbleton council proposes monthly meetings at 5 p.m.

*P.S. Please don't flush those wipes down the drain*

By Joy Ufford, jufford@subletteexaminer.com

**MARBLETON** – Although the Marbleton Town Council's regular meetings have started at 7 p.m. on second Mondays of the month for years, members and staff are proposing a permanent change to 5 p.m.

For the past several months, Mayor Jim Robinson has worked out of town and council meetings are live-streamed with Zoom, allowing people to attend remotely while the Town Hall's capacity is limited to 10 or fewer people in person due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Having them at 5 p.m. has not shown a drop in the council's ability to meet and contractors and consultants attend via their computers. Robinson and councilmembers Mack Bradley, Roger McMannis, BJ Meador and Jeff McCormick came in person, with chairs spread throughout the meeting room.

The council approved first reading of the ordinance, which will be the subject of two more public hearings for comment at the June 8 and July 13 council meetings, also scheduled for 5 p.m.

Town Attorney Thayne Peterson said he might have a conflict with Mountain

View's municipal court but he could probably attend via Zoom, which the council agreed to continue so the public can watch.

"We're going to have some coronavirus issues again this fall and winter," said Robinson. "I think it's a good thing to continue on and make it available. I think it's worked out great."

Dominion Energy's Rick Mair attended by computer and said the contractor is "mobilizing" to replace natural gas pipes in town. He said he hoped groundbreaking would be this week with crews working Mondays through Fridays, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Robinson asked for a town employee to be notified if the company plans to work on Saturdays when town offices are closed.

The council then reviewed the McNiches' tabled conditional use permit for more than three dogs in town. The family provided the Marbleton Planning and Zoning Board with a plan to install privacy fencing to keep the dogs from barking as much. The plan offered different materials and designs for the council to approve.

"We asked them to do a privacy fence and to me this qualifies," Robinson said

## Graduation is a go

**SUBLETTE COUNTY** – The State Public Health Officer, Dr. Alexia Harrist, accepted an exception request from Sublette County School District No. 9 to host an outdoors graduation on Friday, May 29. The ceremony is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. In case of poor weather on Friday, administrators will host graduation the following Saturday, May 30, at 10 a.m.

The ceremony will take place at the Puncher football stadium. "Immediate family members," no more than eight per graduate, are invited to attend. Social distancing guidelines will be followed with family groups separated on the field and graduates in the stands.

After the ceremony, the community is invited to a vehicle parade where well-wishers can drive by the graduates on the sidewalk next to the football field.

of a basic plan. "We don't care what kind, correct?"

McGinnis, Bradley, Meador and McCormick agreed the original plan would work and voted "aye."

The council next approved a conditional use permit for the Willoughbys to have chickens.

Building permits were presented for Jared Schell's shed, for the Sherbrookes' woodshed to replace wood set on pallets and covered and Rebecca Streeter's chain-link fence for a dog run.

They also approved the Jones' permit for a fence.

The subject of lowering limits on fish taken from the Marbleton Community Pond from four to three per person was a longer discussion.

Wyoming Game and Fish recently delivered fingerling cutthroat trout and will be dumping larger stock to go with the rainbow trout already delivered, explained

Sam Bixler. A family of six, for example, can take 24 fish every time they fish there, which could put a big dent in the stock.

Public works supervisor Todd Brown said the town could post signs with a new limit.

"The way I read it, Game and Fish wants people to take their fish, but if we let everybody do that, we're going to run out of fish," he said. "Let's do three fish per person and see what happens. We'll need signs for that and for littering too."

The council agreed people are leaving behind a lot of cigarette butts in particular and Bixler suggested "no littering" signs. The council will consider more trash cans and perhaps a smoker's stand. Peterson said he would not want to bring his own family fishing there if the pond gets littered with butts and trash.

"There's lots of line laying around there too," Meador said.

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## One step closer to the hospital district

*Rural Health Care Board and Sublette Center sign MOU*

By Robert Galbreath, rgalbreath@subletteexaminer.com

**PINEDALE** – Following months of difficult negotiations, the Sublette County Rural Health Care District and Sublette Center agreed on a final memorandum of understanding to form a new hospital district last week.

Now that both sides are committed to moving forward as a joint organization, the Board of County Commissioners scheduled a discussion and vote to place a ballot initiative to establish a hospital district on the November ballot at their meeting today, May 19.

A copy of the signed MOU was not available for the public by press time on Monday morning. Details will be published once the parties release the document.

In a 4-1 vote, the SCRHC board of trustees approved the final version of the MOU at a special meeting on May 12.

Trustee Bill Johnson cast the lone

vote against the motion to approve the MOU. During discussion, he raised objections about holding an election to create a new hospital district and increasing the mill levy if voters approve the ballot in November. Waiting six months to move forward with a hospital district that may or may not be approved seemed pointless he said. Johnson added that he supported cutting taxes, not raising them, during a time of economic uncertainty.

"I'm not against the merger (with the Sublette Center) and I'm not against the MOU," he said. "I am against the election as strongly as I can be."

Patty Racich, chairman of the Sublette Center board of directors, confirmed on Friday, May 18, that their board approved and signed the MOU.

"We're moving forward and plan to keep working together," Racich said.

## Ultra Petroleum files Chapter 11

*Operator paid county taxes before filing*

WNE and staff reports

**SUBLETTE COUNTY** – The Pinedale Anticline – and one of Wyoming's most prolific natural gas producers – Ultra Petroleum Corp., filed for a joint Chapter 11 bankruptcy on May 14 in a Texas court following months of financial instability.

As a top taxpayer in Wyoming, the firm's insolvency could place the energy-dependent state's traditional revenue streams in further jeopardy.

However, "all of our taxes were paid early in advance of filing," Ultra's Kelly Bott said in an email Friday.

"Ultra paid in excess of \$50 million to our county," Sublette County Treasurer Emily Paravicini said Monday of Ultra's 2019 tax bill. "All our taxes were paid in full and on time."

The company hopes to erase debts of \$1.97 billion and another \$500 million in liabilities and emerge with little debt. Its subsidiaries Ultra Resources, Keystone

Gas Gathering, Ultra Wyoming, Ultra Wyoming LGS, UPL Pinedale, UP Energy Corp. and UPL Three Rivers Holding are jointly named in the filing.

**First bankruptcy**

In 2016, some shareholders opted for diluted stock that on May 18 is worth 1.1 cents each.

This time around, most shareholders will receive no recovery if Texas Judge Marv Isgur accepts its leaner recovery plan.



Ultra proposes its unsecured noteholders will receive "a pro-rata share of \$250,000" if their claim group accepts the new plan. They receive nothing if they don't accept this plan as laid out by Ultra.

Also, Ultra proposes its unsecured noteholders receive "a pro-rata share of \$250,000" if their group votes to accept the new plan. Further, they receive nothing if

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