

TOWN OF HOTCHKISS 2017

NEWSLETTER

MAYOR'S CORNER

2016

The year 2016 was a tumultuous year. The political rancor and divisiveness even touched our little town. We were front row witness to many of the issues facing America from the vote in May on retail marijuana to coal mine closings, and the national elections in November. I am grateful and proud of the people in our Hotchkiss community as we disagreed, argued, and yet still respected each other and continued to work together for our betterment. Thank you to all the citizens and community members who put so much time and effort into making us the best Town on the Western Slope.

Some of the highlights the Town has seen in 2016 include:

Public Safety thru the leadership of Marshall Dan Miller implemented the use of body cameras to accurately provide the citizens an account of their work and continues the Neighborhood Watch Program. Deputy Shaklee developed the Citizens Police Academy open to all of the North Fork. Our Public Safety officers are true professionals and steadfast members of the community. I recommend everyone take a moment and visit with them and ask about the Citizen Ride Along program. We wish the best for Deputy Shaklee in his transfer to the Delta County Sheriff's Department and welcome Officer Chris McDonald and his family to Hotchkiss.

Director Mike Owens has a talented Public Works staff. They were especially busy in 2016 with a sanitary sewer line upgrade that replaced and repaired thousands of feet of 100 year old lines. This was a large undertaking that had been in planning for many years. Hotchkiss has some of the most up to date infrastructure in the North Fork due to the hard work and foresight of Public Works. Their next project is the 450,000 gallon water storage tank above Town on Barrow Mesa. Its useful service life is nearing its end and Public Works is developing a plan for replacement as part

of the long term plans for our Town. Give the guys a wave when you see them out clearing snow or checking the streets.

Marlene and Ginger have had their hands full in 2016. We rely on them to accurately track the expenses and revenues for the Town then add on the many Public Safety and Public Works projects, all with the impact from the diminishing revenues from taxes paid by the coal mines that closed. Public funds require an extra special level of scrutiny and our financial team has been exemplary in doing so. We have the responsibility to Hotchkiss residents to be provide an accurate forecast of the Towns financial status. In 2016 we had a revenue shortfall of \$ 28,000 due mainly to shortfalls in property and severance taxes.

Decades of frugal budgeting provides reserves to cover this amount. The 2017 budget is open to all to inspect and can be found on the website or at Town Hall.

2017

My hopes and prayers for 2017 include a more unified nation and increasing prospects for people in the North Fork. I believe we can set the example by our efforts and actions here in Hotchkiss. Civil and respectful discourse, hard work, frugal and transparent budgets are the minimum standards we expect from each other. And while the Town is projecting an out of balance budget for 2017 in the amount of \$120,000, we are also seeing signs that the future is improving.

The advent of high speed affordable broadband internet service to the North Fork is an amazing accomplishment. DMEA, Elevate, Delta County, Region 10 and many others have worked hard to make this service a reality. Small business, special districts, and families will benefit from this service.

The Hotchkiss Chamber of Commerce is taking the lead on initiating a multi-year program called Colorado Main Street managed by Division of

TOWN OF HOTCHKISS 2017

NEWSLETTER

Local Affairs. The support and input the Chamber receives from DOLA, the Chamber members, the Town, and the community will drive a revitalized downtown. Look for more information on this in 2017.

The Town is also working hard on a 2017 Master Plan review led by the Planning Commission, which will coincide and complement the Delta County Master Plan revision. Please watch for and return the survey which will ultimately provide the data for the Master Plan. This is the basis for our Town's vision for many years.

We also look forward to the opening of the new North Fork Medical Clinic on Hotchkiss Avenue. Our Delta County Hospital recognizes what a hub we have here and is building a facility to provide medical care for the entire North Fork. Grand Opening may be as soon as Mother's Day weekend to coincide with the annual Hotchkiss Sheep Camp and Dog Trials.

In closing I encourage all to step up and volunteer with the many wonderful organizations we have. Service groups like the Lions Club, North Fork Ambulance, Elks Lodge and others are rewarding ways to invest your time. Newer groups, like Farm to Fiddle and The Nature Connection have exciting opportunities to challenge you. As always I hope to see everyone at the Board of Trustees meetings, typically held the second Thursday of every month at Town Hall.

**Mayor Wendell A. Koontz
and Hotchkiss Board of Trustees**

MARSHAL'S CORNER 2016

During the year of 2016 the Marshal's office continued to have an active group for Neighborhood Watch. We have added FaceBook for our community to follow.

Crime for the Town has not increased and shows a trend of violent crimes decreasing. We still have our criminal mischief, domestics and thefts. To help combat crime we are asking our community to be vigilant, and lock their homes and cars to help prevent thefts.

Deputy Corporal Lloyd continues to stay busy with training, evidence and record keeping among his other duties. Deputy Shaklee prepared and tracked all of the department members training, a job that has increased tremendously over the last year with the new state requirements.

The Department was able to secure a federal grant to purchase 5 ballast vests for the officers, cutting the cost to the Marshal's Office by half.

Body cameras were purchased at the end of December, 2015. With these, we have been able to record actual footage on scene and use the footage in court, helping paint the picture for juries and judges. It is also another tool we can use for training. We now have over 1000 hours of videos and we only keep videos for 120 days before we close them out due to storage space.

Deputy Shaklee resigned at the end of the year to take a position with the Delta County Sheriff's Department. As a result, we hired Deputy Chris McDonald for this position. We welcome Deputy McDonald and his family to our community and hope to have a long tenure with him.

We want to thank our community in their support of our office. Without your help and input we would not be able to perform our jobs as efficiently.

**Marshal Dan Miller & Hotchkiss Marshal's
Department- Deputy Lloyd and Deputy
McDonald**

TOWN OF HOTCHKISS 2017

NEWSLETTER

PUBLIC WORKS CORNER 2016

The Town of Hotchkiss Public Works Department spent 2016 involved in the rehabilitation of the sanitary sewer collection system. This consisted of replacing nearly all the collection system south of the railroad tracks and west of 4th Street. This project started late in 2015 and was finished in August of 2016.

2nd Street started failing due to heavy equipment travel during the sewer project. In early fall of 2016, 2nd Street was rebuilt between Bridge Street and Orchard Street.

The Public Works Department drained the lower domestic water tank on Barrow Mesa for inspection. The tank is old and needed some immediate attention. The Public Works Department along with the Town Engineer will research the best path forward for replacing or rebuilding the current tank.

Again, thank you for being patient as we maintain and rebuild infrastructure. This work can be very frustrating to the businesses and home owners in our great town.

Have a great 2017 from the Hotchkiss Public Works Crew.

**Director Mike Owens & Public Works
Department- Leonard McCulloch, Don White
and Greg Allen**

CLERK'S CORNER 2016

First, we would like to THANK everyone who donated gifts, money and their time to the Hotchkiss Santa Program. It was a huge success!! We were able to help 21 children and several families. What a GREAT community we live in!

The Town and Double J Disposal will have a Town yard cleanup in the Fall for citizens within Town. The dates and times will be forthcoming.

The Town of Hotchkiss has a Facebook account and website. Check it out for Town information.

A Few Reminders; permits are required for building within Town, annual licensing of dogs, and the Town has zoning regulations.

**Marlene Searle, Town Clerk
Ginger Redden, Deputy Clerk**

Town of Hotchkiss
276 W. Main Street, P.O. Box 369
Hotchkiss, CO 81419
(970)872-3663

clerk@townofhotchkiss.com

www.townofhotchkiss.com

FRIENDLIEST
TOWN AROUND