

Council accused of building without permit

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Sometimes even the local government sets itself up for some “public heckling.”

At its last meeting, Pinedale’s town council chose to table an application for a building permit due to the applicant beginning the remodeling process of the proposed site.

Council member Dave Smith specifically requested during the tabling that the applicant be present to receive the building permit as Smith said he felt it worthy of “a little public heckling” for disregarding the town’s required process.

At the end of the meeting Monday, however, it was council’s turn for reprimand from the public.

Former Planning and Zoning Chairman Paul Rock, dismissed from his position last year by the council, called to the board’s attention its own neglect of securing a building permit prior to beginning construction on their new town shop.

The new shop, which began construction in late September last year, is located near the town sewer lagoon on the outskirts of town. According to Rock’s notes copied from the county’s records and town Engineer Eugene Ninnie’s monthly reports, Ninnie, himself did not obtain the building permit, until December.

“I’ve been juggling about nine balls over here and I guess I dropped one,” Ninnie said in defense.

Upon pointing out the oversight, Rock was questioned by the council as to what he wanted to see done about the situation.

“I think it’s a personal attack by you on the town engineer,” Mayor Steve Smith said.

Other members of the council agreed, seeing the presentation as continuing a feud between the two that began, and led to, Rock’s dismissal from the board.

Rock stated he just wanted to do “his part” towards the “public heckling” that the council saw fit for the applicant whose permit was tabled in its last meeting.

“I just want to know why you are so exercised when a private person violates (the rules) ... but it is no big deal when Mr. Ninnie does it,” Rock said.

Council admitted to the mistake and agreed to contact the county office to determine if there was anything to be done about the oversight.

According to Wyoming statute, applicants who neglect to follow a local government’s regulations on planning and zoning (in this case a building permit), are open to fines of not more than \$750 for each offense.

In other town news:

- Municipal Officer Jennifer Gocke reported she continues to receive complaints on Ridley’s Family Market concerning lights, parking and other items. She stated she and Ninnie are currently working with the owner to fix the problems, although, she said, they were problems that could not be fixed overnight. Council also added some concern over the store’s new propane dispensing and whether or not it met state laws for sale.

“The whole operation is less than stellar, quite frankly, and I don’t want them dispensing gas,” Dave Smith said.

- Animal Control Officer Julie Early reported picking up four dogs last month; one was claimed, two were adopted and one belonged to the county. She also reported one dog bite, which did not result in any charges being pressed, and a stolen dog. Early added she would now work later in the week on a rotation to help with problems occurring after normal hours.

- A public hearing was held for the annexation of the Pinedale Campground. With no public comment or discussion from the board, council moved into the first reading of the resolutions that would allow the annexation, which passed unanimously.

"I am excited to get the last county in-holding," the mayor said.