

# Medicine Bow continues to prepare for growth

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Medicine Bow Fuel and Power project proposed by DKRW may have given Medicine Bow the push to begin preparing for growth, but Mayor Kevin Colman said the town is better situated regardless of whether or not the project moves forward.

"How many times in Wyoming have we heard 'we're coming, we're coming' and 10 years later it's still, 'we're coming, we're coming'?" Colman said. "We want to be positioned for the ball to roll smoothly if something else comes through."

The plant, which would produce gas from coal, could begin production as early as 2014, according to literature provided by DKRW. Its environmental impact statement has yet to be submitted.

At its regular meeting Monday, the Medicine Bow Town Council passed a resolution and the first reading of an ordinance that may ease the transition, should Medicine Bow grow in the near future.

As of the 2000 U.S. Census, the town had 274 residents.

The resolution extends the jurisdiction of the town to the unincorporated area around the city, which, by state statute, is up to one mile past its border.

"We wanted more opportunity to say what can or cannot happen in areas that have the potential to impact Medicine Bow," Colman said. "The regulations (will be) based on our building codes — we want to know the quality of work being done."

The ordinance, which requires two more readings before it becomes official, would allow the town's planning commission to approve permits for the construction of buildings within Medicine Bow. Colman said the ordinance formalizes a practice already in place.

"By doing it this way, there's not any chance of someone coming back and 20 years down the line wanting to redo something because of a verbal agreement (between the board and the commission)," he said.

Karen Heath, town clerk and treasurer, said there was a time in the 1980s when a lack of activity led to the dissolution of the planning commission.

"There was a time when they thought it wasn't really needed," she said.

Colman said that the current planning commission has been in place for at least three or four years.

"This (ordinance) is taking (the commission) to the next level, giving it a clear direction," he said.

The town council has approved plats for a new subdivision, Colman added, that could result in increased requests for building permits.

"If DKRW comes, the best case scenario, and the subdivision goes into effect, people will be wanting building permits to put up homes," he said. "That could mean 40 or 50 at a time and that's going to take a long time to do. (The planning commission) is more than qualified to look at those."

Colman said there are no further matters related to growth scheduled to go before the council at this time.

Heath said she was glad to see the town prepare for growth.

"It's good for any town to plan ahead for expansion," she said. "The world's population isn't shrinking, even here — especially here with everyone coming to Wyoming looking for jobs — it's better to look forward (and) control development than to let it sprawl."

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