

Berthoud voters to face public notice question

Town seeks to lift requirement to publish proposed ordinances

By Pamela Dickman Reporter-Herald Staff Writer

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Berthoud is asking its residents to allow the town to cut what officials are required to publish in the local newspapers, saving the town money.

Voters, in the town's election in April, will be asked to allow the town to publish only the titles of proposed ordinances and not the entire text. The full information, then, would be available at the town's website and in town hall.

A second ballot question would enable the town not to publish its monthly bills in the newspaper, again listing them on the Internet and at the town offices.

"What Berthoud is doing is really no different than what other towns have looked at doing," said Sam Mamet, executive director of the Colorado Municipal League.

"The voters will have to decide whether it is a good thing."

Proponents of similar measures argue that the change saves money, particularly in tight economic times. Berthoud estimates saving \$2,000 to \$5,000 per year.

Opponents, however, claim that publishing only the titles and not the bills hinders residents' access to public information.

Colorado law allows statutory municipalities to take such measures to the voters, which many have done over the past decade, according to Mamet. This year, he expects about a handful of towns to join Berthoud in the April 3 election.

"It's usually a mixed bag in each election," Mamet said.

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