

JUDICIAL ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

January 8, 2003

The Judicial Advisory Board of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on January 8, 2003 at 8:00 a.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Chairman Joe Shipley
James Keppel
Judith O'Neill
Linda Rottman
Joan Ruffennach

COMMITTEE ABSENT

Cecil Patterson
Marilyn Wilson

STAFF PRESENT

Denise Bleyle
Kathleen Broman
Pat Granillo
Brian Poulson
Walter Switzer

(Items on the agenda were discussed out of order, but for purposes of clarity will remain as listed on the agenda.)

(Chairman Shipley arrived at the meeting at 8:05 a.m. The Chairman excused Boardmembers Patterson and Wilson from the entire meeting.)

1. Update on the Mesa City Court by Presiding City Magistrate Walter Switzer.

Presiding City Magistrate Walter Switzer provided the members of the Board with a brief status report on the Mesa City Court. He advised that Magistrates Norine Richardson and Karl Eppich, who are both up for reappointment this year, are performing an exemplary job and stated that he does not foresee any problems with their reappointments; that the City Court, like other City departments, is grappling with Mesa's budget shortfall; that there are currently five unfilled positions in the department, and that the Court's overall caseload has increased by 2% this year, with a 10% increase in DUI cases.

In response to a series of questions from the Boardmembers, Judge Switzer clarified that all of the City Magistrates, with the exception of himself, carry similar workloads. He commented that due to Mesa's rapid growth and the issuance of more citations by the Mesa Police Department, it is anticipated that an additional City Magistrate will be necessary at some point in the near future. Judge Switzer also reported that City Magistrate Victor Ortiz has been appointed, on a temporary basis, to serve as Acting Presiding Magistrate of the Town of Guadalupe Municipal Court.

Chairman Shipley expressed appreciation to Judge Switzer for the update.

2. Approve minutes of October 2, 2002 meeting.

It was moved by Boardmember Rottman, seconded by Boardmember Ruffennach, that the minutes of the October 2, 2002 meeting be approved.

Vice Chairman O'Neill declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

3. Review and consider items related to the reappointment of Magistrates Norine Richardson and Karl Eppich, whose terms expire June 30, 2003.

a. Application for Reappointment

Senior Human Resources Analyst Kathleen Broman informed the Boardmembers that a letter has been prepared and signed by Chairman Shipley to formally invite Magistrates Norine Richardson and Karl Eppich to apply for reappointment to the Mesa City Court. She said that the letter, along with a disk and a hard copy of the Application for Reappointment, will be mailed to Magistrates Richardson and Eppich this week and that the application must be completed and returned to the Personnel Office by January 24, 2003.

b. Letter to Commission on Judicial Conduct

Management Assistant Denise Bleyle explained that a letter, signed by Chairman Shipley, will be sent to the Arizona Commission on Judicial Conduct to solicit the number of complaints or reprimands which may have been filed against either Magistrates Richardson or Eppich. She added that it is standard practice to conduct a background check on all magistrates who are applying for reappointment.

c. Courtroom Schedule

Ms. Bleyle stated that the Boardmembers were provided copies of a courtroom schedule for Magistrates Richardson and Eppich. She commented that Court Administrator Kathy Barrett has offered her assistance to the Boardmembers relative to this issue.

d. Distribute previous interview questions for review at next meeting

Ms. Bleyle advised that the Boardmembers have received a copy of the interview questions for their review and that modifications and finalization of the questions will occur at the February 5, 2003 meeting. She also stated that the Boardmembers will be provided survey information, the number of Notices of Change of judge for Magistrates Richardson and Eppich, and assigned various reference checks at that time as well. Ms. Bleyle noted that Magistrate Richardson will be considered for reappointment for her first four-year term and that Magistrate Eppich will be considered for his first reappointment for a two-year term. She added that the public hearing and interview of both magistrates will occur on March 5, 2003, commencing at 6:00 p.m.

4. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

Ms. Bleyle commented that in speaking recently with Boardmember Patterson, she has learned that he is unable to attend Wednesday morning Judicial Advisory Board meetings due to professional scheduling conflicts. She requested input from the Board with regard to the possibility of selecting a more convenient day for the February meeting to ensure Boardmember Patterson's attendance at that time.

Discussion ensued among the Boardmembers relative to alternative meeting days.

Ms. Bleyle informed the Boardmembers that the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, February 11, 2003, at 8:00 a.m.

5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting of the Judicial Advisory Board adjourned at 8:25 a.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Judicial Advisory Board meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 8th day of January 2003. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK