

COUNCIL MINUTES

October 28, 2004

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on October 28, 2004 at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker
Rex Griswold
Kyle Jones
Tom Rawles
Janie Thom
Claudia Walters
Mike Whalen

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson
Debbie Spinner
Barbara Jones

Mayor Hawker excused Councilmember Thom from the beginning of the meeting. She arrived at 7:35 a.m.

1. Review items on the agenda for the November 1, 2004 Regular Council meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflicts of interest declared: 3a, 5i, 5j, 5l, 9m (Hawker); 4a (Whalen)

Items removed from the consent agenda: 6b, 9i

Items added to the consent agenda: None

2. Discuss and consider the following transit issues.

Mayor Hawker advised that transit issues and related expenditures would be discussed later today at a Council retreat.

Transportation Planning Administrator Kevin Wallace introduced the following representatives of the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA): Paul Hodgins, the East Valley Management Team leader, and Gary Gretz, who has responsibility for the Dial-A-Ride Programs. He also advised that City of Mesa Transit Operations Specialist Matt Dudley was present to provide information on the Bus Stop Master Plan.

- a. Intergovernmental Agreement with the Regional Public Transportation Authority for fixed-route transit services.

Mr. Wallace stated that the annual Transit Service Agreement commits Mesa to pay RPTA approximately \$4.5 million for fiscal year 2004/2005 transit services. He added that an estimated \$400,000 in RPTA provided customer services are also included in the agreement for a total of \$4.9 million. Mr. Wallace advised that this agreement converts Mesa's transit program from a locally provided service to a regionally provided service. He added that the lease and potential sale of Mesa's transit facility to RPTA are included in the contract. Mr. Wallace explained that the City's goal is to consolidate transit services under one contract in order to have more efficient, cost-effective programs and that other partners in this effort include Gilbert, Chandler, Tempe and Scottsdale. He advised that staff is requesting that the Council review the resolution which authorizes the City Manager to execute the agreement with RPTA.

In response to a question from Councilmember Rawles, Mr. Wallace stated that the eight-year contract is subject to annual funding approval by the Council. He noted that Section 2 contains a provision for termination of the agreement by either party.

Deputy City Attorney Joe Padilla explained that these types of contracts include a provision that states that the terms are binding only if the Council decides to continue funding the program.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the new contract includes a provision that fees could be renegotiated if service levels increase or decrease by 25 percent; that incrementally over a period of years seven or eight of the 12 fixed and four express routes would be funded with regional dollars; and that the regional program does not provide Sunday bus service.

Mr. Padilla advised that Page 6 of Section 5.4 of the Transit Service Agreement outlines the process for terminating the agreement.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that all City bus service will be provided through the RPTA contract; that citizen complaints relate to a reduced number of buses serving some routes and overcrowded buses serving the express routes; that problems experienced during the transition to the new service provider continue to be addressed; that the regional contract for bus service provides the City with greater cost savings; that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) boundary encompasses the area within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of the fixed bus route; that the eight-year contract term provides a greater cost savings than a shorter term contract; and that the City of Mesa's costs are considerably lower than the costs of Tempe or Phoenix.

- b. Intergovernmental Agreement with the Regional Public Transportation Authority for East Valley Dial-A-Ride service.

In response to comments by Councilmember Thom, Mr. Wallace clarified that Dial-A-Ride service is available for ADA eligible individuals and for individuals aged 65 and over. He added that ADA eligible individuals receive priority for the service.

Vice Mayor Walters noted that as a result of the increased demand for Dial-A-Ride service by the ADA eligible population, efforts are being made to transition the senior population to more cost-effective types of transportation services.

Mr. Wallace advised that the Dial-A-Ride costs under the RPTA contract have increased for fiscal year 2004/2005, but that the overall blended costs for Dial-A-Ride and the fixed routes are expected to be lower in the year 2005/2006. He noted that Federal law prohibits denial of transportation service to ADA clients, and that the senior population is being transitioned to fixed route bus service and other ride choice programs.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that Dial-A-Ride provides service on Sunday for non-ADA clients; and that staff will provide information on the number of ADA clients served on an annual basis.

c. Bus Shelter and Bus Pullout Master Plan.

Mr. Wallace stated that the Bus Stop Master Plan (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office) was prepared by Mr. Dudley as the capstone research project for his Masters Degree program at Arizona State University (ASU). He explained that the report provides a formalized process for addressing bus passenger shelters and bus pullouts. Mr. Wallace advised that staff is recommending the construction of 16 additional passenger shelters and two bus pullouts.

Mr. Dudley displayed a PowerPoint presentation (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office), which provided an overview of the Bus Stop Master Plan. He advised that the plan includes the following activities:

- Create a planning process for the installation of bus stops, shelters and pullouts.
- Establish infrastructure and program needs for shelters and pullouts.
- Implement policies of the Mesa Transit Plan.
- Develop a process for proper planning and coordination of bus stop amenities.

Mr. Dudley reviewed the elements of the Regional Transportation Plan including routes, available funding, arterial projects and goals. He advised that the main components of the Bus Stop Master Plan include the following:

- Bus Stop Assessment Field Guide (BSAFG)
- Passenger Shelter Prioritization Study
- Bus Pullout Prioritization Study

Mr. Dudley stated that the Bus Stop Assessment Field Guide is the driving force behind the Bus Stop Master Plan. He noted that the document provides a "one-stop guide" for evaluating the need for new shelters or for reviewing existing shelters. Mr. Dudley advised that the shelter analysis includes passenger counts, special needs of the area due to the proximity of hospitals or senior centers, population density, and the waiting time for the next bus to arrive. He said that bus pullouts are prioritized based on factors that include traffic volumes in each direction, the frequency of buses, passenger boarding counts, the number of traffic lanes, and social economic factors.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that Local Transportation Assistance Fund-2 (LTAF) revenues are required to be utilized for transit purposes; that the number of people waiting at a bus stop should be a consideration when proposing a bus pullout; that staff will attempt to balance the issues related to the number of people waiting and the traffic volume when proposing a bus pullout; that buses in pullouts experience delays as a result of waiting to re-enter the traffic lane; and that some cities have granted buses the right of way when exiting a pullout.

Councilmember Rawles commended Mr. Dudley for his dedication, and he expressed the opinion that the analysis in his report is extremely thorough.

In response to questions from Councilmember Whalen, Mr. Dudley advised that an in ground bench costs \$300 and that a bench included as a part of the bus shelter costs approximately \$450. He reported that the City of Mesa has 683 bus stops, 115 of which have shelters. Mr. Dudley stated that 12 percent of the bus stops located in Council District 2 have shelters and 20 percent of the bus stops have some type of seating.

It was moved by Councilmember Whalen that the Council accept staff's recommendation relative to agenda item 2c.

Councilmember Rawles recommended that the Council delay consideration of this item until the November 1st Regular Council Meeting.

Mayor Hawker declared the motion failed due to the lack of a second. He noted that the consensus of the Council appears to be that this item will be considered at the next Regular Council Meeting, and he requested that staff place the item on Council Meeting agenda for consideration.

Mayor Hawker thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Hear an update and consider proceeding with the development of the Hawes Loop Connector Trail.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson advised that staff has been addressing the trail project for several years, but a small legal issue remains relative to the City's liability on the easement, which staff anticipates will be resolved in the next few days. He stated that staff recommends that the Council move forward on this project.

Councilmember Griswold advised that the public trail behind Las Sendas is being severed by development. He stated that a new public trail is being constructed that will provide access to the national forest trails to the general public and the residents of Las Sendas.

Parks and Recreation Management Support Administrator Tim Barnard advised that the multi-purpose project has been a collaborative effort including City staff, Councilmembers, the Parks and Recreation Board, the Las Sendas Homeowners' Association, the Mountain Bike Association, and the Tonto Rangers.

Mayor Hawker requested that staff bring this item forward for Council consideration when all of the legal issues have been resolved.

4. Hear reports on meeting and/or conferences attended.

Vice Mayor Walters:	MARC Center Dedication
Councilmember Jones:	Financing the Future Meeting Reed Park Opportunity Zone Kickoff
Councilmember Thom:	Tour of Banner Baywood Hospital ASU East Reception for the Provost Arizona Women's Hall of Fame MARC Center Grand Opening

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Monday, November 1, 2004, TBA – Study Session

Monday, November 1, 2004, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council meeting

Thursday, November 4, 2004, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, November 4, 2004, 2:00 p.m. – Towing Industry Forum

Wednesday, November 10, 2004, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Wednesday, November 10, 2004, 4:00 p.m. – Police Committee

Monday, November 15, 2004, TBA – Study Session

Monday, November 15, 2004, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council meeting

Thursday, November 18, 2004, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, November 18, 2004, 9:30 a.m. – Fire Committee

6. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

There were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

7. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

8. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 9:19 a.m.

KENO HAWKER, MAYOR

ATTEST:

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 28th day of October 2004. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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