



COUNCIL MINUTES

March 5, 2001

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 March 5, 2001 at 5:05 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker
Jim Davidson
Bill Jaffa
Dennis Kavanaugh
Pat Pomeroy
Claudia Walters
Mike Whalen

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson
Neal Beets
Barbara Jones

(Mayor Hawker excused Councilmember Jaffa from the beginning of the meeting. Councilmember Jaffa arrived at 5:20 p.m.)

1. Review items on the agenda for the March 5, 2001 Regular Council Meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff with no formal action taken. There was specific discussion relative to the following items:

Mayor Hawker declared potential conflicts of interest on agenda items 5b (Two replacement asphalt patch trucks as requested by the Street Maintenance Division) and 5j (Desert Sands Water Line Relocation. City of Mesa Project No. 99-57.1) and said he would refrain from discussion/participation in these items.

Mayor Hawker advised that Councilmember Jaffa will declare a potential conflict of interest on agenda item 9g (Z00-65 North of the northwest corner of Sossaman Road and Germann Road) and will refrain from discussion/participation in this item.

2. Hear a presentation on aircraft overflight issues in Mesa and throughout the Phoenix metropolitan area.

Neighborhood Services Manager Wayne Balmer addressed the Council relative to this agenda item and advised that as traffic volumes have dramatically increased at Sky Harbor Airport, portions of Mesa, Tempe and Scottsdale have become adversely impacted by aircraft overflights. Mr. Balmer displayed graphics to illustrate such increases in eastbound departures from Sky Harbor through the 4 DME "gate," an area 5,500 feet wide and 1,800 feet high through which all aircraft must fly as they pass over populated

areas. Mr. Balmer noted that currently, Sky Harbor averages approximately 1,600 to 1,800 flights daily. Mr. Balmer also discussed noise contours at Sky Harbor and stated that the largest noise contour is 65 DNL, which is a measurement utilized by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to determine where noise attenuation is required. Mr. Balmer said that by 2015, there will be a reduction in noise contours at Sky Harbor due to technology and aircraft improvements. Mr. Balmer also detailed various noise studies which are presently underway including the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) RASP Study, the State Aviation Needs Study and the Northwest 2000 Plan.

Falcon Field Airport Director Mark Meyers spoke regarding growth projections at Sky Harbor Airport. Mr. Meyers advised that with 627,000 annual operations, Sky Harbor is currently the fifth busiest airport in the world, ranking behind Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas/Forth Worth and Atlanta. Mr. Meyers explained that by 2005, Sky Harbor anticipates that annual operations will increase to 648,000, and in 2015, to 773,000. Mr. Meyers commented that at the present time, a fourth runway is not depicted on the Sky Harbor Airport Master Plan, but that additional property has been acquired for operational expansion. Mr. Meyers added that Sky Harbor officials have indicated that they will consider the possibility of cooperating with a reliever airport.

Lynn Kusy, Executive Director of Williams Gateway Airport, reported that in 2000, Williams Gateway had 180,000 operations and that it is projected that by 2015, the number will increase to 354,000. Mr. Kusy noted that representatives of Williams Gateway have conferred with Sky Harbor officials regarding how Williams Gateway can best assist Sky Harbor relative to such issues as serving as an alternative site for air passengers and cargo flights. Mr. Kusy emphasized that it is imperative that an ongoing dialogue continues between Sky Harbor and Williams Gateway.

Mr. Balmer advised that the FAA is in the process of evaluating a project which would modify the airspace and air traffic procedures at Sky Harbor. Mr. Balmer informed the Council that as a result of the project, increased overflights in the East Valley and anticipated aviation growth, staff has drafted a letter to Gus Nezer, an FAA representative, (See Attachment) which outlines Mesa's concerns that Williams Gateway not be overshadowed in its role as a viable alternative site to Sky Harbor. Mr. Balmer requested Council input regarding this matter and added that if there is interest expressed by the Council, staff will arrange for a presentation by the FAA and/or Sky Harbor to further address these issues.

Mayor Hawker spoke in support of staff forwarding the letter to Mr. Nezer and also stressed the importance of addressing regional aviation requirements.

Councilmember Pomeroy endorsed staff's letter and expressed the opinion that as a result of FAA's modifications of airspace and air traffic procedures at Sky Harbor, there will be a more equitable distribution of overflights in the entire Phoenix metropolitan area.

Councilmember Walters thanked staff for their presentation and stated that it is crucial that Mesa be sensitive to this issue and continue the dialogue regarding Williams Gateway as a reliever airport.

Councilmember Jaffa concurred with the comments of the other Councilmembers and expressed his willingness to actively participate in this matter.

Vice Mayor Davidson advised that he would support a presentation by the FAA to address the manner in which pilots approach the 4 DME gate and also to address the future impact on Williams Gateway if a fourth runway were to open at Sky Harbor Airport.

Mayor Hawker thanked staff for their input and concurred with Vice Mayor Davidson's suggestion regarding a presentation by the FAA.

3. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

- a. Downtown Development Committee meeting held February 15, 2001.
- b. Fire Committee meeting held February 22, 2001.
- c. Judicial Advisory Board meeting held February 7, 2001.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Davidson, seconded by Councilmember Kavanaugh, that receipt of the above-listed minutes be acknowledged.

Mayor Hawker declared that the motion carried unanimously by those present.

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

There were no reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

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

Tuesday, March 6, 2001, 7:30 a.m. – Joint Breakfast Meeting with Dobson Ranch Board of Directors

Wednesday, March 7, 2001, 4:00 p.m. – Fire Committee

Thursday, March 8, 2001 – Study Session – Cancelled

Thursday, March 15, 2001, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

6. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

There were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

KENO HAWKER, MAYOR

ATTEST:

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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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 5th day of March, 2001. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2001

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

Pag
Attachment

March 7, 2001

Mr. Gus Nezer
FAA, Phoenix TRACON
2800 E. Sky Harbor Blvd.
Room 112
Phoenix, Arizona 85034

Dear Mr. Nezer:

In recent months many of the residents of Mesa, like those in the other cities that surround Sky Harbor, have become increasingly concerned about issues related to aircraft overflight from the airport. This has particularly become an issue with the opening of the third runway and the discussion of a future fourth runway. As you are aware, the northern portion of Mesa, like the northern portion of Tempe and the southern portion of Scottsdale, is located directly east of Sky Harbor; and is subject to an increasing amount of over flight as traffic volume at Sky Harbor increases .

It has also come to our attention that the FAA will be considering changes in the airspace and air traffic procedures for Sky Harbor. In part, this is to be expected as the airport continues to grow, but it is also a source of concern for both our citizens and elected officials. We support the continued safe operation of Sky Harbor, but we also urge that the arrivals and departures be done in a manner that reflects consideration for the citizens and communities over which the aircraft fly in the process.

We understand that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires all Federal agencies to consider the environmental implications of their proposed actions, and we trust your office will adhere to these environmental review processes to the full letter of the law - but we also hope that you will consider the intent of the law - and the quality of life concerns of your neighbors as you develop your future recommended changes. We would also ask that FAA consider possible benefits from the use of new aviation technology in designating future flight tracks that can meet both your aviation and environmental objectives.

Mesa has supported the use of the 4DME "gate" procedure, which was intended to ensure that aircraft achieve and maintain sufficient altitude as they pass over populated areas so that they are not perceived as being an unwelcome intrusion. As Sky Harbor traffic continues to grow, it is important that air traffic procedures continue to address the potential negative ramifications of increasing aircraft over flight.

Mesa also supports the concept of dispersing larger aircraft to other airports in the area that are able to accommodate them. In fact, we are counting

on Williams Gateway Airport being positively viewed in the aviation community as an alternative to the exclusive use of Sky Harbor for all air passenger and air cargo flights in the future. In fact, we would like to talk with you further about what we can do now to establish arrival and departure paths for Williams in order to accommodate additional traffic at Williams in the future.

We recognize that Mesa benefits in a variety of ways from our proximity to Sky Harbor, and we are not looking to handicap or curtail Sky Harbor in its role as the primary airport serving Maricopa County, and in many ways, all of Arizona. What we are looking for, however, is recognition on the part of FAA and the City of Phoenix that in order to keep Sky Harbor a healthy, successful airport, given its somewhat constricted and "central city" location, the support and cooperation of the surrounding communities is vital. We will all benefit from the success of Sky Harbor as long as it is managed properly - and we will all feel the pain and anger of our citizens if airspace management problems arise.

In order to do our part to help with the process where we can, and to provide a direct channel to help facilitate clear communications between the City of Mesa and the FAA on airspace issues, I have asked Mr. Mark Meyers, our Falcon Field Airport Manager, to take an active role in the process. He will keep me and our City Council apprised of proposed changes to the operations at Sky Harbor that could affect Mesa and its residents. Mark will be contacting you in the near future to determine how he can most productively be involved in the process. In the meantime, if you would like to contact Mark, his number is 480-644-2450.

In closing, thank you for your consideration of our requests. We see them as important issues that will be with us for years to come, and we hope we can reach a resolution to these issues that all parties can support.

Should you have any questions, or desire any further information from me, please feel free to give me a call at 480-644-2066.

Sincerely,

Mike Hutchinson
City Manager

CC:
Mayor and City Council
City of Tempe
City of Scottsdale