

# COUNCIL MINUTES

July 6, 2006

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 July 6, 2006 at 7:30 a.m.

## COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker  
Rex Griswold  
Kyle Jones  
Tom Rawles  
Scott Somers  
Claudia Walters  
Mike Whalen

## COUNCIL ABSENT

None

## OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady  
Debbie Spinner  
Barbara Jones

(Vice Mayor Walters participated in the meeting through the use of teleconferencing equipment.)

### 1. Review items on the agenda for the July 12, 2006 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: 6d (Hawker), (Whalen)

Items added to the consent agenda: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

### 2. Hear a presentation and provide direction on the Va Shly'ay Akimel Salt River Ecosystem Restoration project.

Councilmember Rawles declared a potential conflict of interest and said he would refrain from discussion/consideration in this agenda item.

Assistant to the City Manager Jim Huling introduced Kayla Eckert, the Chief of Planning for the Arizona/Nevada Planning Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Mike Ternack, USACE Project Manager, and Senior Civil Engineer Gordon Haws, who were prepared to assist him with the presentation.

Mr. Huling reported that last evening, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRP-MIC) Tribal Council voted unanimously to enter into a Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED) Agreement with the City of Mesa and the USACE relative to the Va Shly'ay Akimel Salt

River Ecosystem Restoration project. He explained that staff is seeking to place the PED Agreement on the July 12, 2006 Regular Council Meeting agenda to obtain similar approval by the Council.

Mr. Huling referred to a PowerPoint presentation and offered a brief historical overview of the restoration project. (A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available for review in the City Clerk's Office). His comments included, but were not limited to, the following: that in April 2000, the City of Mesa entered into an agreement with the USACE and SRP-MIC to conduct a Pre-planning Study to explore the possibility of initiating an ecosystem restoration project for the 12-mile corridor of the Salt River from the Pima Freeway (SR 101) to the Granite Reef Dam; and that the primary objectives of the project include restoring the riparian ecosystem to the degree that supports native vegetation and wildlife, establishing a functional floodplain that mimics the natural processes, and providing recreational opportunities.

Mr. Huling indicated that in January 2005, the Council authorized staff to proceed with negotiations with the Tribal Community and the USACE relative to the development of a Design Agreement. He explained that if the PED Agreement were approved, a detailed engineering design of the ecosystem restoration options selected during the Feasibility Study would begin. Mr. Huling further spoke regarding six USACE environmental projects currently underway in the Phoenix area and said that if all of the projects were completed, there would be a near continuous restoration of the Salt River from the east end of the Valley to the west.

Ms. Eckert referred to photographs displayed in the Council Chambers and offered an extensive overview of the restoration project and the objectives of the Feasibility Study; the Recommended Plan; the proposed recreational component; the Design and Construction phase cost sharing; estimated project costs; estimated annual operation and maintenance costs; and the anticipated design schedule. She also explained that the design cost sharing would total \$5 million, with the Federal government's portion being \$3.75 million and the local sponsors' share an estimated \$1.25 million (City of Mesa - \$625,000 and the SRP-MIC - \$625,000).

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the City's share of the design costs would equate to \$156,250 annually for fiscal years 2006/07 through 2009/10; that for FY 2006/07, it is anticipated that the Flood Control District of Maricopa County would agree to contribute \$100,000 to the project and significantly reduce the City's costs; that it is further anticipated that the City would receive an additional \$200,000 in Federal appropriations for the current fiscal year; and that the restoration project is among a select few in the western United States that is still being considered for funding and has received significant support at the Federal level.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker, Mr. Huling clarified that although Mesa's share of the design costs is \$625,000, the PED Agreement contains a provision that would not obligate the City to contribute funding each fiscal year. He explained that the City and the Tribal Community must make an annual request to Congress for ongoing appropriations, and said that if it was determined that Mesa could no longer afford to contribute to the ecosystem restoration project, it would refrain from engaging in that process.

Further discussion ensued relative to the fact that the Design Agreement would establish the plans and specifications for Phase 1 (the downstream reach of the project), and that the parties would then enter into a Construction Agreement before that phase was built; that each of the three phases would be designed and constructed as "stand alone" or separate elements; that the City's percolation ponds in Phase 1 would remain functional and intact; and the accessibility of the proposed trail system.

Mayor Hawker commented that he has supported the ecosystem restoration project since its inception and stated that he envisions it as a tremendous amenity for the entire Phoenix metropolitan area. He expressed appreciation to the Federal government for its appropriations, but noted, however, that when the construction process begins, Mesa “will not be at the same table with its wallet open.” Mayor Hawker voiced support for moving forward with the project, especially knowing that Mesa has a “fall back position” if it is unable to contribute future funding. He added that he would explore other funding options, such as obtaining grant funds from the gaming tribes who have opted to share local revenue proceeds (up to 12% per quarter) with surrounding communities.

Councilmember Griswold concurred with Mayor Hawker’s comments and stated that if Mesa could obtain grants for its share of the design costs this fiscal year, he would support the project. He stressed, however, that it would be necessary to reassess this issue next year, depending on the City’s financial status at that time.

Additional discussion ensued relative to USACE’s goal to stabilize the banks of the Salt River and change it from a degraded position to a more natural condition.

Vice Mayor Walters commended Mayor Hawker’s recognition of the restoration project’s long-term benefits to the City. She acknowledged that Mesa has made an ongoing commitment regarding the project, but said that its status must be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it “continues to make sense” for Mesa.

Councilmember Somers expressed a series of concerns regarding the project and said that although it would have a positive impact on the community, Mesa is in a “significant financial crisis” and must establish its financial priorities. He voiced support for placing the PED Agreement on the July 12, 2006 Regular Council Meeting agenda for consideration, but noted that he would “prefer to proceed cautiously,” especially in view of recent reductions in City services. Councilmember Somers added that he would also like a commitment from the Flood Control District that the agency would make the \$100,000 contribution toward the PED Agreement.

Mr. Huling and Mr. Ternack responded to a series of questions posed by Councilmember Somers concerning flooding issues and the Flood Control District’s funding commitment.

Mayor Hawker stated that it is the consensus of the Council that the PED Agreement be placed on the July 12, 2006 Regular Council Meeting agenda for discussion and consideration.

3. Hear a presentation on residential trash and recycling/green waste collection day changes.

Environmental Management Director Christine Zielonka and Operations Research Analyst Ray Froehlich addressed the Council relative to this agenda item. Ms. Zielonka reviewed staff’s proposal to change the collection days for residential trash, recycling and green waste in the three zones that have been established within the City. She stated that currently, Zone 1 has trash and recycling/green waste collection on Monday and Thursday, Zone 2 on Tuesday and Friday, and Zone 3 on Wednesday and Saturday. Ms. Zielonka explained that the Solid Waste operation services approximately 30 to 34 routes each day and said that staff’s goals include balancing truck and operator needs, maximizing truck usage, and minimizing the total number of drivers that are needed to perform those functions.

Ms. Zielonka further commented that because the Solid Waste operation has been impacted by an increase of approximately 20 to 25 new residential customers each week, with a majority of the growth located in south and southeast Mesa (Zone 3), changes in collection days for approximately 9,000 residential customers will be implemented. She explained that this would increase the capacity in Zones 1 and 2 (the western and central area of the community) and allow for growth potential in Zone 3. (See Attachment 1.)

Ms. Zielonka informed the Council that the changes would become effective October 2, 2006. She advised that an extensive residential notification process would occur, with postcards being mailed on September 4<sup>th</sup> and September 19<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Zielonka also stated that the boundary/day changes would be posted on the City's website, as well as e-mail notifications sent through the City's registered neighborhoods in the affected areas of the community. She added that staff would implement a collection plan to ensure that missed barrels are picked up at no additional cost to the residents.

Mayor Hawker thanked staff for the presentation.

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

There were no reports on meetings or conferences attended.

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Wednesday, July 12, 2006, 2:30 p.m. – Transportation Committee

Wednesday, July 12, 2006, TBA – Study Session

Wednesday, July 12, 2006, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

Thursday, August 10, 2006, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Monday, August 14, 2006, TBA – Study Session

Monday, August 14, 2006, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

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 8:40 a.m.

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KENO HAWKER, MAYOR

ATTEST:

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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 6th day of July 2006. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

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BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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