



COUNCIL MINUTES

April 21, 2005

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 April 21, 2005 at 7:39 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

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

COUNCIL ABSENT

Claudia Walters

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson
Debbie Spinner

Mayor Hawker excused Vice Mayor Walters from the entire meeting.

1. Hear an update on the Maricopa County Regional Trail System Plan.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson introduced Christopher Coover, Regional Trail Manager for the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department.

Mr. Coover noted that each Councilmember was provided a copy of the "Maricopa County Regional Trail System Plan Executive Summary" (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office). He stated that the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors adopted the Regional Trail System Plan in August of 2004 and directed staff to initiate design and construction activities. He noted that the Maricopa Trail is a 240-mile trail alignment that connects all nine County parks. Mr. Coover advised that in addition to funding the planning effort, the County allocated "seed money" for the initial five years in order to enable staff to apply for grant funding and to provide "matching funds" when required.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker, Mr. Coover advised that liability issues were addressed with the Salt River Project (SRP). He noted that meetings have not been scheduled with the Roosevelt Water Conservation District (RWCD), and he expressed the hope that the City of Mesa would participate in joint discussions with RWCD representatives. Mr. Coover reported that the 50-year old County Parks' system has approximately 3.4 million visitors per year, who pay a daily admission fee of \$5 per car. He stated that the non-motorized Maricopa Trail would be open for public use without an admission fee.

Responding to a question from Mayor Hawker regarding access along the Central Arizona Project (CAP) canal, Mr. Coover reported that the CAP Board has approved the trail north of Granite Reef at the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. He noted that the CAP is a land partner in the project, but no legal agreement has yet been finalized regarding liability. He added that the CAP Board has agreed in concept that the canal is to be utilized for recreational purposes.

In response to comments from Councilmember Griswold, Mr. Coover noted that if donated funds were available, the Maricopa Trail could eventually be connected to the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.

Mayor Hawker thanked Mr. Coover for the presentation.

2. Discuss and consider authorizing the City Manager to enter into agreements relating to the proposed Hawes Loop Connector Trail.

Mr. Hutchinson credited Councilmember Griswold for initiating the trail project, and noted that representatives of Blandford Homes and volunteers who live in the area have cooperated in this effort.

Parks and Recreation Management Support Administrator Tim Barnard stated that the project has been a true community effort that included assistance from William Puffer representing Friends of the Tonto and representatives of the Tonto National Forest Service and the Mountain Bike Association of Arizona. He advised that funds are presently available in the Parks' Department budget to move forward with the project. He reported that a low bid of \$13,500 was received from Dennis Smith of Northwest Woodlands Services. Mr. Barnard added that an agreement with the Las Sendas Community Association requires the installation of flexible trail signs at a cost of approximately \$5,000, which results in a total of \$18,500 for the City's construction costs. He added that the City would assume responsibility for the trail's operation and maintenance at a projected cost of \$3,000 annually. He also noted that the Mountain Bike Association has volunteered to provide ongoing assistance with special projects and maintenance activities for the trail.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker, City Attorney Debbie Spinner advised that liability issues regarding the trail system are addressed by the State's "recreational use" Statute, which requires a plaintiff to prove willful or gross negligence on the part of the landowner. She added that the Statute is designed to encourage public entities to make public lands available for recreational purposes.

Mr. Barnard stated that the low bidder, Dennis Smith, is fully bonded and licensed, and that he has had extensive trail construction experience in the western United States. He reported that Mr. Smith is presently under contract to the City of Scottsdale to construct a similar project. Mr. Barnard said that he would provide information to the Council regarding the amount of liability insurance carried by Mr. Smith.

- a. Accepting the conveyance of a portion of Las Sendas open space for use as a multi-use trail.

It was moved by Councilmember Griswold, seconded by Councilmember Thom, to authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement to accept the conveyance of a portion of Las Sendas open space for use as a multi-use trail.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Hawker-Griswold-Jones-Rawles-Thom-Whalen
NAYS - None
ABSENT - Walters

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

- b. Proceeding with construction of the Hawes Loop Connector Trail.

It was moved by Councilmember Griswold, seconded by Councilmember Thom, to authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement to proceed with construction of the Hawes Loop Connector Trail.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Hawker-Griswold-Jones-Rawles-Thom-Whalen
NAYS - None
ABSENT - Walters

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

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

- a. Police Committee meeting held April 11, 2005.

It was moved by Councilmember Jones, seconded by Councilmember Rawles, that receipt of the above-listed minutes be acknowledged.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Hawker-Griswold-Jones-Rawles-Thom-Whalen
NAYS - None
ABSENT - Walters

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

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

Councilmember Griswold: Apache Wells Homeowners' Association Meeting

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

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

Monday, April 25, 2005, 7:30 a.m. – Budget Hearing

Tuesday, April 26, 2005, 7:30 a.m. – Budget Hearing

Thursday, April 28, 2005, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, April 28, 2005, 8:00 a.m. – Budget Hearing

Monday, May 2, 2005, TBA – Study Session

Monday, May 2, 2005, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

Thursday, May 5, 2005, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, May 12, 2005, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Monday, May 16, 2005, TBA – Study Session

Monday, May 16, 2005, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

6. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

There were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 8:01 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 21st day of April 2005. 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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