

# COUNCIL MINUTES

December 8, 1997

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a joint meeting with the Mesa School Board in the Superstition Room North at the Rendezvous Center, 263 North Center Street, on December 8, 1997 at 7:32 a.m.

## COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Wayne Brown  
Pat Gilbert  
John Giles  
Dennis Kavanaugh  
Wayne Pomeroy  
Claudia Walters

## COUNCIL ABSENT

Joan Payne

## STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster  
Wayne Balmer  
Cindy Barris  
Mike Hutchinson  
Janice Jackson  
Lars Jarvie  
Barbara Jones  
Greg Jones  
Wayne Korinek  
Ellen Pence  
Andrea Rasizer  
Becky Richardson  
Doug Tessororf

## OTHERS PRESENT

Larry Christiansen  
Ron Peters  
Bernie Ronan  
Tom Verploegen

## BOARD PRESENT

Beth Coons  
Suzanne Davis  
Wayne Gardner  
Mike Hughes  
Tom Rhodes

## BOARD ABSENT

None

## STAFF PRESENT

Doug Barnard  
Joan Conner  
Debra Duvall  
Dave Eagleburger  
Chuck Essigs  
Paul Mohr  
Ray Rafford  
Janice Ramirez  
Fred Skoglund  
Judi Willis  
Jim Zaharis

Mayor Brown excused Councilmember Payne from the meeting.

### 1. Hear a presentation and discuss a proposed downtown education center.

Mayor Brown welcomed the members of the Mesa School Board and staff to the meeting and thanked each for their attendance.

James Zaharis, Superintendent, Mesa Public Schools (MPS), expressed appreciation to the Mayor and Council for the opportunity to meet.

Dr. Zaharis advised that discussion has been underway relative to activity within the downtown area, and in conjunction with the potential role of Mesa Public Schools, a proposal for a downtown education center has been developed. Dr. Zaharis reported that the East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT), currently located at the site of the former Mesa High School, will be relocating in approximately May/June 1998, and assets at the site will revert to MPS. Dr. Zaharis indicated that MPS has \$20 million available that could be utilized toward the development of a downtown education center incorporating the existing functional assets.

Dr. Zaharis noted the City's preliminary involvement in the joint purchase of the site of Golden's Gym and said that MPS has requested that the City acquire the additional land needed for the proposed downtown education center. Dr. Zaharis commented that the City presently has bond approval for the development of an aquatics center and discussions have occurred relative to sports/youth activities in the downtown area with venues for national and international events.

Dr. Zaharis displayed a schematic of the overall downtown education center site plan bordered on the west by Macdonald, on the south by Broadway, on the east by Center and Serrine, and on the north by 1st and 2nd Avenues. Dr. Zaharis stated that the City has agreed to the closure of Center as previously requested by MPS. Dr. Zaharis advised that the proposal represents a regional preparatory K-12 education center (K-8 at Franklin School, 9-12 at the high school) accommodating students from Mesa and the East Valley.

Dr. Zaharis reviewed a proposed layout of the parking areas and facilities, including a main academic building (replica of a prior structure) at the northwest corner, student center, technical building, fine arts facility, gym, and performing arts facility. Dr. Zaharis said that playing fields have not been proposed at this time; therefore, sports activities involving such fields are unlikely.

Dr. Zaharis indicated that in addition to the City's involvement in the acquisition of land and proposed development of an aquatics center, MPS will seek private funding sources to enhance the campus in three major areas: a) gym to field house (seating capacity for approximately 5,000 individuals, indoor track, after-hours availability to the community), b) performing arts to multimedia presentation facility (seating capacity for approximately 750 individuals, multimedia, multilingual capabilities), and c) technical building to a facility with enhanced technical components (enhanced technical curriculum possibly involving Mesa Community College).

Dr. Zaharis stated that at the request of the City, an alternative site plan has been prepared whereby the aquatics center would be located at the northwest corner of the campus. Dr. Zaharis displayed a schematic of the plan and indicated that either layout is acceptable.

Dr. Zaharis commented that the proposed education center represents a critical element of the City's downtown development and expressed the opinion that the project will be a welcome addition to downtown activities.

In response to a question from Mayor Brown, Dr. Zaharis clarified that MPS has requested that the City acquire land needed for the project but that a portion of the \$20 million available from MPS will be utilized for the development of parking areas. Dr. Zaharis stated that preliminary discussion has occurred with land owners and is expected to continue in early 1998.

Wayne Gardner, President, MPS Board, requested additional information pertaining to anticipated costs for MPS and the City. Dr. Zaharis indicated that \$20 million will be provided by MPS for renovation and new construction, exclusive of proposed enhancements, and the City will provide funding to purchase the remaining land (approximately \$2 million) and construct an aquatics center (approximately \$5.5 million).

City Manager Charles Luster indicated that the \$5.5 million will construct the first phase of an aquatics center but is not sufficient for an Olympic-size facility. Community Development Manager Wayne Korinek reported that construction of an aquatics center in phases is feasible and stated that an expanded facility will cost a total of approximately \$10 million.

In response to a question from Suzanne Davis, MPS Board, Dr. Zaharis estimated the cost for the three major proposed enhancements (to be supported with private funding) at \$7-\$10 million and the project total, including enhancements, at approximately \$37-\$40 million.

Dr. Zaharis responded to questions pertaining to cost/facility comparisons of the downtown center and other campuses throughout the community. Dr. Zaharis spoke concerning the availability of MIPS assets in the downtown area once EVIT relocates, the benefit of the proposed downtown center in reducing high school populations at other campuses, and the City's participation in the project.

Dr. Zaharis and President Gardner noted support of the proposal by the MPS Board. Larry Christiansen, President, Mesa Community College, indicated an interest in the project by Mesa Community College and commented concerning the potential availability of funding to be utilized toward the proposal.

Discussion ensued pertaining to time frames for construction (possibly to begin as early as November 1998), advantages of each of the two proposed site plans, and the potential for a larger performing arts facility at Center and Main Street pending voter approval.

Dr. Zaharis summarized the interest in the joint proposal by MPS and the City. Dr. Zaharis indicated that in addition to efforts to secure private funding, subsequent actions include the acquisition of land, further refinement of the plan, and formal approval.

Mayor Brown suggested that another meeting be scheduled with MPS in a few weeks.

Mayor Brown thanked the members of the MPS Board and staff for their time and input.

## 2. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 8:16 a.m.

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WAYNE BROWN, 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 8th day of December 1997. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that quorum was present.

Dated this 23rd day of January 1998.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK