



COUNCIL MINUTES

January 14, 2010

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 January 14, 2010 at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Scott Smith
Alex Finter
Dina Higgins
Kyle Jones
Dennis Kavanaugh
Dave Richins
Scott Somers

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

Councilmember Richins arrived at the meeting at 7:34 a.m.

1. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction on Focus on Mesa – Council Strategic Initiatives.

Assistant to the City Manager Natalie Lewis displayed a PowerPoint presentation (**See Attachment 1**) and briefly highlighted the Council's efforts in August 2008 to develop a series of Strategic Initiatives. She stated that on October 29, 2009, the Council celebrated the organization's successes in the prior year as it related to responding to the Strategic Initiatives; clarified the Strategic Initiative statements; and prioritized examples or suggestions of projects that they believed were important to begin in the next year.

Ms. Lewis explained that today's presentation would provide the Council an opportunity to ensure that the wording of the Strategic Initiative statements is correct (See Page 1 of Attachment 1) and also to clarify, if necessary, the examples or suggestions of projects that respond to each of the Strategic Initiatives. (See Page 2 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Lewis briefly reviewed the Council Strategic Initiative statements.

Mayor Smith stated that with regard to the Regional Leadership statement, he questioned whether the phrase "and the process inclusive" is grammatically correct. He also commented that it was important for the Council to determine what they want to accomplish through regional leadership and how such a decision would impact the City of Mesa. Mayor Smith stated that Mesa "needs to move beyond things that require regional cooperation" because, in his opinion, that is not leadership. He remarked that because Mesa is the third largest community in

Arizona, it has an opportunity and a responsibility to “advance the notion” that regional success will create local success. Mayor Smith added that the language in the above-referenced statement is “a great start,” but suggested that the Council “could aim higher.”

Ms. Lewis responded that she would work on the wording for the Regional Leadership statement. She suggested, as a possible option, incorporating language such as “regional leadership to advance solutions ...”

Mayor Smith further noted that his fellow Councilmembers are actively engaged in pursuing regional leadership opportunities and said that such efforts are for the purpose of advancing the community and benefiting its residents.

Ms. Lewis referred the Council to the examples of projects that respond to each Strategic Initiative. She stated that she listed the items in a general manner so that the audience would have a sense of the Council’s priorities. Ms. Lewis noted that the Council was provided more detailed samples of individual Councilmember comments or suggestions, as well as high-priority objectives from the Council’s discussion in September 2008.

Mayor Smith said that the inclusion, for example, of the Zoning Code and the Chicago Cubs under Economic Development reflects the Council’s approach that such items are significant economic tools for the City. He acknowledged staff’s efforts to identify the most appropriate Strategic Initiative under which to list the examples or suggestions.

Councilmember Somers suggested that the HEAT Initiative (Healthcare, education, aerospace and tourism), as coined by Mayor Smith, be added to the Economic Development category. He suggested that it might be appropriate to incorporate education, which is already included in this category, as part of the HEAT Initiative.

Councilmember Finter inquired if the numerical ranking of the examples under each of the Strategic Initiatives would remain once the document is released to the public.

Ms. Lewis clarified that the current listing of the examples or suggestions is based on the Council’s discussions and prioritization exercises which took place on October 29th. She acknowledged that in some cases, the process was somewhat rushed, which resulted in a preliminary prioritization. Ms. Lewis stated that she could replace the numbers with bullets so that the items are of equal value or, in the alternative, the Council may wish to provide additional feedback regarding the prioritization of the items.

Mayor Smith suggested that it might be appropriate for the Council to repeat the prioritization exercises in the future when they have more time to devote to the process.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that until the Council has the opportunity to repeat the prioritization exercises, staff would eliminate the numerical ranking of the examples or suggestions.

Councilmember Somers commented that because the Council’s priorities change from time to time, if they rank projects in numerical order, it is unlikely they would revisit the list six months later. He suggested that only those items that the Council has identified as true priorities be included on the list.

Mayor Smith concurred with Councilmember Somers' comments and said that at certain times, one priority may take precedent over another. He also suggested that if the Council chooses to not focus on a particular item, that it not be included on the list.

Mayor Smith directed that Ms. Lewis eliminate the numerical ranking of the examples or suggestions. He also stated that if the Council has feedback regarding items that should not be included on the list, that are not relevant now but may be relevant next year, that they contact Ms. Lewis. Mayor Smith added that if the Council determines that additional discussion or debate is necessary with regard to a certain item, perhaps they should revisit the list of priorities.

The Council provided the following direction relative to the Financial Stability examples or suggestions: 1.) That Item 10, "Property tax," be removed; 2.) That Item 11, "Market/privatization reviews," be reworded (i.e., "Innovation/privatization reviews" or "Innovative service delivery model"); 3.) That Item 12, "Additional revenue strategies," be modified to "Revenue strategies;" and 4.) That staff include a brief definition of the term "City Edge."

Mr. Brady informed the Council that staff intends to share the Council Strategic Initiatives with the community, and specifically the members of the Citizen Advisory Boards and Committees.

Mayor Smith expressed support for staff familiarizing the Citizen Advisory Boards and Committees with the Council Strategic Initiatives which, in his opinion, should be "the road map" by which Council decisions are made.

Mayor Smith thanked Ms. Lewis for the presentation.

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

Mayor Smith: Town Hall Meeting with U.S. Senator John McCain at Leisure World

Councilmember Finter acknowledged the Mesa Fire Department (MPD) for quickly responding to three serious house fires in his district in the last month. He stated that the customer service provided to the homeowners after the fires were extinguished was greatly appreciated.

3. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

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

Monday, January 18, 2010, 7:00 a.m. – MLK Breakfast, Mesa Marriott

Monday, January 18, 2010, 11:00 a.m. – MLK Parade

Thursday, January 21, 2010, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, January 21, 2010, 5:00 p.m. – Public Meet and Greet for Police Chief Candidates

4. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

- a. Hear from Barry Stonehouse regarding the wastewater treatment plant's use of methane gas.

Barry Stonehouse, President of Alcor Energy Solutions, addressed the Council and stated that his company manufactures turbine engine generators that burn fuel in order to produce renewable and regular energy. He commented that his company was interested in working on a project with the City of Mesa to produce energy at the Northwest Water Reclamation Plant and said that the facility, the City and other companies could benefit from the proposal.

Mr. Brady stated that if it was agreeable with the Council, he would recommend that this item be forwarded on to the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee (TIC) for further review. He noted that it would provide staff and Mr. Stonehouse an opportunity to address the Committee in greater detail.

Mayor Smith said that there was Council concurrence with regard to Mr. Brady's recommendation.

5. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

6. Convene an Executive Session.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Jones, seconded by Councilmember Finter, that the Council adjourn the Study Session at 8:09 a.m. and enter into an Executive Session.

- a. Discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, salaries, discipline, dismissal, or resignation of a public officer, appointee or employee of the City. (A.R.S. §38-431.03A(1))

1. City Attorney

- b. Discussion or consultation with the City Attorney in order to consider the City's position and instruct the City Attorney regarding the City's position regarding contracts that are the subject of negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid or resolve litigation. (A.R.S. §38-431.03A(4)). Discussion or consultation with designated representatives of the City in order to consider the City's position and instruct the City's representatives regarding negotiations for the purchase, sale or lease of real property. (A.R.S. §38-431.03A(7))

1. Chicago Cubs Spring Training

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Executive Session adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

SCOTT SMITH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LINDA CROCKER, 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 14th day of January 2010. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

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(attachment – 1)