



## INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 18, 2010

The Intergovernmental Affairs Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on February 18, 2010 at 9:49 a.m.

### COMMITTEE PRESENT

Kyle Jones, Chairman  
Alex Finter  
Dennis Kavanaugh

### COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

### STAFF PRESENT

Debbie Spinner  
Scott Butler

#### 1. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

#### 2. Hear a presentation, discuss and make recommendations on the 2010 Federal Legislative agenda.

Government Relations Director Scott Butler displayed a PowerPoint presentation to provide an overview of the City of Mesa's 2010 Federal Legislative agenda. **(See Attachment 1)**

Mr. Butler stated that Mesa's delegation, which is unchanged from last year, includes Senators John McCain and John Kyl and Congressional Representatives Jeff Flake and Harry Mitchell. He also highlighted a number of National League of Cities leadership positions held by members of the Council and Mayor Smith's participation with the U.S. Conference of Mayors. (See Page 3 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Butler reported that yesterday marked the one-year anniversary of President Obama signing into law the American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). He explained that to date, the City of Mesa has received \$71 million in stimulus-related monies, including \$47 million in Formula Grants (which are being used to fund park-and-ride lots; arterial street projects; Consolidated Canal pathway; Police grants; and Energy, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block grants) and \$24 million in Competitive Grants (to fund 25 police officers; Build America Bonds; fire station construction; and water/wastewater infrastructure).

Mr. Butler advised that Congress has begun the appropriations process for the FY 2011 Federal budget, which commences in October. He recounted that in FY 2010, Mesa received funding for

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, including \$10 million through the Military Airports Program for expansion of the airport terminal. Mr. Butler commented that additionally, Mesa received funding to complete the final design phase of the Va Shly'ah Akimel River Restoration Project.

Mr. Butler highlighted Mesa's discretionary spending requests for the FY 2011 Federal budget as follows: Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport – Taxiway P expansion and relocation of airport surveillance radar site; Public Safety – Mobile fingerprint ID; Small-business accelerator program at ASU Polytechnic; Early childhood educational readiness program, which is being developed jointly by Mesa's Museum for Youth and the Phoenix Children's Museum; Mesa Grande Cultural Park stabilization efforts; and the Gateway Area Highway Development Plan.

Mr. Butler remarked that a number of issues have been identified for FY 2011, one of which is the reauthorization of the Surface Transportation bill (SAFETEA-LU). He explained that the current bill expired September 30, 2009 and noted that it is currently funded under a "continuing resolution." Mr. Butler stated that the House, Senate and administration are in conflict regarding the length of time to which the bill should be extended and said that staff would continue to monitor the issue.

Mr. Butler further reported that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Act expired in September 2007 and commented that reauthorization is not completed. He said that staff would continue to monitor this item to ensure that funding for airport improvement projects, among others, are honored. Mr. Butler also commented that the Airport Improvement Program is the major source of funding for improvements at Gateway. He added that staff would explore opportunities for user fees at the airport, including an increase in passenger facility charges.

Mr. Butler advised that with regard to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Region received \$90 million in Federal funding, which was anticipated in FY 2010, in order to pay back the local communities for their commitment to the 20-mile light rail starter line. He noted that the administration is encouraging Congress to include economic development and transit oriented development when considering the cost-benefit assessments for light rail. Mr. Butler added that concerning the Mesa light rail extension, the City is requesting an additional \$8.5 million, which represents the Federal government's share of engineering work occurring on the project.

Addressing the area of Public Safety, Mr. Butler advised that staff continues to pursue funding for Public Safety Communications Interoperability, Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) grants. He stated that Justice Assistance Grants (JAG) and technology grants are being sought for the Fusion Center, a cooperative effort that allows police departments to work together to identify criminals who commit crimes in more than one jurisdiction.

Mr. Butler further spoke regarding issues related to the environment and explained that Mesa is currently in the process of working with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community to negotiate the local share of construction costs for the Va Shly'ah Akimel Project. He stated that last week, the City was notified that the Tribal Council voted to delay the appropriations request. Mr. Butler noted that the Indian Community took such action in the hopes that its revenues would stabilize within the next year and it would be in a better financial position to move forward with the request in the following year.

Mr. Butler further advised that because the President has imposed a three-year spending freeze on certain Federal projects, staff was uncertain whether construction monies would, in fact, be available for the project in the next year or two.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the Army Corps of Engineers has always been supportive of the Va Shly'ah Akimel Project; that if the project does not move forward in the upcoming fiscal year, staff is hopeful that it would remain one of the Corps' top priorities; that the cost of the construction phase of the project is estimated at \$138 million, of which two-thirds would be funded by the Federal government and the remainder by the local communities; and that the Army Corps of Engineers predicts that there would be four construction phases, with each phase taking an estimated ten years to complete.

Committeemember Kavanaugh commented that the Va Shly'ah Akimel River Restoration Project was started 13 years ago and said he would hate to see it dropped as a priority by the Army Corps of Engineers. He stated that every year, City staff and the Council have maintained communications with the appropriate Congressional and Army Corps of Engineer staff concerning the project and expressed concern regarding "an interruption in that dialogue."

Mr. Butler responded that for the first time in nine years, the Va Shly'ah Akimel Project was not recommended for funding in the President's budget. He reiterated that the President did not recommend that any new construction projects be started for the FY 2011 Federal budget, thereby demonstrating that the Va Shly'ah Akimel Project was not singled out in this regard.

Mr. Butler continued with his presentation and indicated that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds have been a valuable tool for local communities to address quality of life projects and noted that the administration continues to support efforts to fund the program. He said that staff would continue to monitor Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) mortgage reform efforts.

Mr. Butler said with regard to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), advocacy efforts would continue for a more balanced funding formula. He said that the Sunbelt areas of the country have been disproportionately affected by the funding formula for the program, which primarily benefits residents in cold weather states.

Addressing the Arts and Cultural area, Mr. Butler reported that efforts are ongoing to gain support from the Department of Interior for the historic preservation of the Mesa Grande Cultural Park. He stated that funding would also be sought for the Arizona Museum for Youth and for cultural programming at the Mesa Arts Center.

Mr. Butler acknowledged the presence of Boeing in Mesa and said that the City would continue to demonstrate support for ongoing military funding of the Apache Program and encourage expansion of the facility. He added that the City would work closely with Boeing to promote the Mesa site to Arizona's Congressional delegation.

Chairman Jones asked that the American Public Gas Association be added as a priority to Mesa's Federal Legislative agenda.

Committeemember Kavanaugh requested that when Mr. Butler makes this presentation to the full Council, that he includes the National League of Cities' (NLC) Federal Legislative priorities

for the next four years. He also stated that there was a possibility that President Obama may address the attendees at the upcoming NLC Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C.

Committeemember Finter expressed appreciation to Mr. Butler for his efforts and hard work.

Chairman Jones thanked Mr. Butler for his presentation.

3. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of February 2010. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

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LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

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(attachment – 1)