

# COUNCIL MINUTES

November 18, 1999

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 November 18, 1999 at 7:30 a.m.

## COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Wayne Brown  
Jim Davidson  
John Giles  
Keno Hawker  
Bill Jaffa  
Dennis Kavanaugh

## COUNCIL ABSENT

Pat Pomeroy

## STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster  
Wayne Balmer  
Neal Beets  
Denise Bleyle  
Gary Bradley  
Tanya Collins  
Linda Crocker  
Randy Fleischauer  
Jack Friedline  
Mike Hutchinson  
Barbara Jones  
Karl Kolhoff  
Ron Krosting  
Karen Kurtz  
Jeff Martin  
Frank Mizner  
Keith Nath  
Ruth Ann Norris  
Joe Padilla  
David Plumb  
Bryan Raines  
Andrea Rasizer  
Tom Remes  
Becky Richardson

## STAFF PRESENT (CONT.)

Kathleen Savagian  
Gordon Sheffield  
Jenny Sheppard  
Doug Tessendorf  
Lois Underdah  
Bill Way  
Kim West  
Mindy White  
Paul Wilson  
Larry Woolf  
Others

## OTHERS PRESENT

George Fahnbulleh  
Barrett Marson  
Ralph Pew

Mayor Brown excused Councilmember Pomeroy from the meeting and Councilmember Jaffa from the beginning of the meeting.

### 1. Hear and discuss an update on Pinal County water farm.

Assistant Utility Manager Karl Kolhoff presented the Council with a brief synopsis of the above-agenda item. Mr. Kolhoff advised that in 1985, the City of Mesa acquired over 11,000 acres of agricultural land in Pinal County for utilization as a "water farm." Mr. Kolhoff noted that the water farm has the capability of providing an estimated 30,000-acre feet of ground water per year to the residents of Mesa, and in order to achieve this goal, the City must protect the ground water quality, quantity and associated water rights. Mr. Kolhoff added that at the present time, there are 15 different farmers leasing parcels of land; however, in an

effort to achieve the objective of utilizing the water within the City of Mesa, the City must first convert the existing grandfathered water rights to a Type I, non-irrigation water right. Mr. Kolhoff said that in order to accomplish this goal, the agricultural usage of the land must be discontinued and alternative revenue-producing enterprises must be instituted which would minimize the on-site water utilization.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the City has partnered with the Desert Botanical Gardens in an effort to re-vegetate the existing farmland to its original desert growth; the fact that Pinal County is designing a new 468-acre expansion of the Picacho Reservoir, and the fact that lease revenue for 1999 was approximately \$625,000 and that expenses included bond debts, long-term improvements, well repairs and taxes.

(Councilmember Jaffa arrived at the meeting at 7:40 a.m.)

Councilmember Kavanaugh thanked Mr. Kolhoff for his presentation and expressed appreciation to staff for maintaining the City's water portfolio.

Mayor Brown thanked staff for their input.

2. Discuss and consider a report on large-scale retail buildings.

Community Development Manager Wayne Balmer presented the Council with a brief history of the above-agenda item. Mr. Balmer stated that the City has received applications from several "big box" developers and that staff is currently seeking input from Council relative to design guidelines to submit to the builders.

Senior Planner Gordon Sheffield highlighted the contents of a brief video presentation with regard to several large-scale retail locations throughout Mesa.

Councilmember Kavanaugh expressed appreciation to staff for the presentation and spoke in support of the manner in which staff is proceeding, stressing effective control and creative design. Councilmember Kavanaugh cautioned, however, that due to the massive size of the retail projects, staff should further examine site designation in terms of the community and also give consideration to locales that would not adversely impact residential neighborhoods.

Councilmember Jaffa asked whether staff has given consideration to the use of sub-floors and multi-story construction as a means to more efficiently utilize the large-scale developments. Councilmember Jaffa also expressed concerns pertaining to the proximity of these sites (adjacent to major arterial streets and freeways) and also relative to surrounding residential communities. Councilmember Jaffa questioned the most appropriate manner of proceeding with the current applications.

Councilmember Davidson expressed the opinion that the City's input which is conveyed to the architectural firms that design large-scale developments may not sufficiently influence design standards. Councilmember Davidson also noted that he is opposed to the division of industrial, office and manufacturing-zoned land to be utilized for "big box" retail development sites.

Vice Mayor Giles concurred with the opinions of the other Councilmembers and stated that he would be in support of revisions to the Master Plan that would designate specific corridors in Mesa for the location of "big box" developments. Vice Mayor Giles also expressed appreciation to staff for their efforts with regard to the implementation of design requirements for large-scale retail establishments.

Councilmember Hawker spoke in support of the placement of the "big box" developments in close proximity to major arterial streets, freeways and transit lines, which would accommodate consumer access to the proposed site without impeding on nearby residential neighborhoods. Councilmember Hawker also

recommended that design standards relative to setbacks could be modified from the current 10 foot to possibly a 30 to 50-foot range, as well as additional refinements to the landscaping corridor located along the street. Councilmember Hawker indicated that he would be opposed to a ban on “big box” development in the City of Mesa due to the desires of consumers to receive better and faster service at lower costs, and stated the opinion that if these retail services are not offered, the City will lose increased revenues.

Mayor Brown concurred with the opinions of the other Councilmembers.

Mr. Balmer noted that the architects who are charged with the design of large-scale retail developments often are restricted in the design process due to the developer’s allocated budget, which results in less creativity. Mr. Balmer added that staff is attempting to convey the message to the developers that an increase in the allocated budget may be required as a means by which to achieve a satisfactory design concept.

Councilmember Davidson recommended that staff consult the American Institute of Architects and research design alternatives for large-scale retail developments.

Mayor Brown thanked staff for their presentation and input.

3. Discuss and consider a proposed ordinance amending Chapter 14 of the Zoning Ordinance, Design Guidelines, regarding design criteria for signage.

Mr. Balmer and Mr. Sheffield presented a brief overview of the agenda item and noted that staff is seeking direction from Council relative to amending the design criteria for signage.

Mr. Sheffield provided graphics demonstrating examples of current sign ordinance regulations. Mr. Sheffield informed the Council that the proposed ordinance amending Chapter 14 of the Zoning Ordinance, Design Guidelines, would specify a greater degree of architectural enhancement for sign structures and sign components. Mr. Sheffield added that the code amendment would provide the applicants and staff with the necessary direction to design and evaluate sign proposals, and said that in conjunction with the code amendment, staff would implement an administrative change by requiring that all submittals to the Design Review Board include proposed signage.

Vice Mayor Giles and Councilmember Kavanaugh concurred with the proposed recommendations of staff and the Design Review Board. Vice Mayor Giles remarked that the proposed ordinance would create noticeable improvements throughout the City and also improve the overall appearance of the City’s commercial and retail areas.

Mr. Balmer advised that the proposed ordinance would enable the City to develop design review standards, which could be applied throughout the City, whether the review is accomplished by staff or the Design Review Board.

In response to a question from Councilmember Davidson, Mr. Balmer advised that the proposed ordinance would apply to the Town Center, but added that design changes would be submitted to the Downtown Development Committee (DDC) as opposed to the Design Review Board. Mr. Balmer added that the amendment would not affect public school signage.

Councilmembers Jaffa and Hawker concurred with the opinions expressed by the other Councilmembers.

Mayor Brown expressed appreciation to staff for their presentation.

4. Discuss and consider approving a proposed City Housing and Human Services Funding Philosophy.

Human Services Coordinator Karen Kurtz provided the Council with a brief overview of the proposed City Housing and Human Services Funding Philosophy (See Attachment).

Ms. Kurtz stated that the intent of the funding philosophy is to assist the Housing and Human Services Advisory Board's deliberations in supporting a coordinated and comprehensive human services delivery system. Ms. Kurtz stated that the newly recommended Human Services Funding Philosophy includes the following changes: 1) changing the name from Housing and Human Services Funding Priorities to Housing and Human Services Funding Philosophy; 2) City funds are only one resource in a system of resources that includes other governmental agencies, private foundations, the business sector and also the resources and efforts of the people that the City is trying to help; 3) titles of the funding categories have been changed to match the continuum of care service categories and 4) the Board recommends that Transitional Services be considered a priority one and Crisis Services be considered a priority two.

Vice Mayor Giles thanked Ms. Kurtz for her efforts and encouraged staff to continue to work with the other funding organizations.

It was moved by Councilmember Kavanaugh, seconded by Councilmember Davidson, that staff's recommendation relative to a proposed City Housing and Human Services Funding Philosophy, be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Brown-Davidson-Giles-Hawker-Jaffa-Kavanaugh  
NAYS - None  
ABSENT - Pomeroy

Mayor Brown declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

Mayor Brown thanked Ms. Kurtz for her presentation.

5. Discuss and consider joint planning for updates of the General Plan, Parks and Recreation Plan and Transportation Plan.

Assistant City Manager Mike Hutchinson addressed the Council relative to this agenda item. Mr. Hutchinson indicated that in an effort to update the City's General Plan, Parks and Recreation Plan and Transportation Plan, staff has recommended that the coordinated efforts of this task be combined into a single process. Mr. Hutchinson also noted that it is staff's recommendation that the Council, through a Request for Proposals (RFP), authorize the hiring of a consultant to coordinate the updating of the Master Plans. Mr. Hutchinson stated that staff, through a technical advisory committee, would review the RFPs and subsequently offer a final recommendation to the Council. Mr. Hutchinson added that the process would require approximately 18 months to complete.

It was moved by Councilmember Kavanaugh, seconded by Councilmember Jaffa, that staff's recommendation relative to joint planning for updates of the General Plan, Parks and Recreation Plan and Transportation Plan, be approved.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Brown-Davidson-Giles-Hawker-Jaffa-Kavanaugh  
NAYS - None

ABSENT - Pomeroy

Mayor Brown declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

Mayor Brown thanked Mr. Hutchinson for his presentation.

6. Appointments to boards and committees.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

David Dean – Fill vacancy for term expiring 6/30/00.

It was moved by Councilmember Jaffa, seconded by Vice Mayor Giles, that the Council concur with the Mayor's recommendation and the appointment be confirmed.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Brown, Davidson-Giles-Hawker-Jaffa-Kavanaugh  
NAYS - None  
ABSENT - Pomeroy

Mayor Brown declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

7. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Charles Luster advised that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Thursday, November 18, 1999 – Finance Committee Meeting (Immediately following this meeting)

Monday, December 6, 1999, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

8. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

a. Hear from George Fahnbulleh regarding the “big box” issue.

George Fahnbulleh, a resident of Mesa, spoke in opposition to the development of “big box” retail establishments in Mesa. Mr. Fahnbulleh stressed the importance of proper planning in an effort to accommodate this type of retail operation and reduce the impact on surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Mayor Brown thanked Mr. Fahnbulleh for his comments.

9. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

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WAYNE BROWN, MAYOR

ATTEST:

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BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

Attachment

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 18th day of November 1999. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 1999

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BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK