



COUNCIL MINUTES

December 14, 2009

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 December 14, 2009 at 4:49 p.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

1. Review items on the agenda for the December 14, 2009 Regular Council Meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflicts of interest declared: None

Items added to the consent agenda: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

2. Hear a presentation and discuss the shared community complex at Mesa Community College.

Dr. Shouan Pan, President of Mesa Community College (MCC) came forward to address the Council along with Jared Langkilde, Executive Assistant for Marketing and Public Relations at MCC, Jeff Fore, Director of Athletics at MCC, and Steve Hogen, Athletic Director for Mesa Public Schools (MPS). Dr. Pan said that Mr. Langkilde would provide an overview of the facilities proposed for the shared community complex.

Mr. Langkilde noted that MCC has participated in the Fiesta District planning effort for the past ten years. He stated the opinion that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed to by MCC and MPS in 2007 could provide the key element that would recreate the Fiesta District as a destination. Mr. Langkilde advised that three mid-size facilities are being proposed: a

community events facility seating five to six thousand people, a stadium that could accommodate 15,000 to 20,000 people for athletic events, and a swimming/diving facility with a student recreation center that would be open to the public.

Mr. Hogen commented that MPS would like to have facilities available in the East Valley in order to provide Mesa Public Schools with the opportunity to host athletic events. He said that the facilities would be modeled on the regional pool concept utilized by the City. Mr. Hogen noted that the ability to hold State and national events at the new facilities would generate additional revenues for the City and local businesses.

Mr. Fore reported that at the present time MCC has difficulty attracting student athletes because of their poor facilities. He envisioned an athletic program that meets the standards of the National Junior College Athletic Association. Mr. Fore said that a recreation center would enable MCC to offer a comprehensive intramural program in addition to connecting with the community through wellness and recreational activities.

Mr. Langkilde, noting that MPS has one of the highest graduation rates in the Valley, stated the opinion that a number of MPS graduates would enroll at MCC if these types of programs and facilities were available. He added that the proposed facilities would also serve as an economic catalyst for the Fiesta District. Mr. Langkilde said that MCC and MPS representatives would like the opportunity to meet with City executives and the major stakeholders to discuss the feasibility of the proposal and to consider possible funding mechanisms.

Councilmember Kavanaugh said that he has been involved in the Fiesta District for many years, and he stated the opinion that the significance of the proposal is that it would be a joint effort of the public and private sector. He suggested that the City could serve as a facilitator for the process.

Councilmember Higgins said she concurred with the comments made by Councilmember Kavanaugh. She expressed support for the concept and for moving the discussions forward.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the proposed stadium could host State football and soccer championships as well as track and field meets; that the stadium would have artificial turf that improves with use; that all classifications of the 2009 State swimming championships were held at the Kino Pool; that the State Interscholastic Association supports the proposal for a stadium and has expressed an interest in locating their offices in the future facility; and that the facility would also benefit the MCC athletic programs.

Mr. Langkilde advised that the Fiesta District, with the largest concentration of hotels in the East Valley, would be able to provide accommodations for those attending events year round. He said that the proposed Community Events Center would be a medium-sized arena seating five to six thousand people that could host a variety of events, such as seminars, concerts, hockey games, ice shows, etc., and could be changed in a matter of hours to host a different type of event. Mr. Langkilde added that national entities, such as Fox Sports, have expressed an interest in utilizing these facilities.

Further discussion ensued relative to the fact that an example of a similar venue in Arizona would be the events facility in Prescott Valley; that the proposed center could accommodate MCC and MPS graduation ceremonies; that the center could serve as a mass casualty staging

area in the event of a disaster; that the Valley presently does not have a venue with a mid-range seating capacity greater than 2,500 but less than 14,000; and that the facilities would provide affordable, family-oriented events.

Mr. Hogen advised that to date discussions have not reached the point where MPS is prepared to make a specific financial commitment, but there is a definite understanding that the proposal would benefit MPS, MCC and the City of Mesa. He added that MPS would pursue State championship events for these facilities and work with other organizations such as the Convention and Visitors Bureau to attract business.

Mr. Fore cited several examples of junior college athletic tournaments and championship events that MCC has been unable to host because a venue of the appropriate size is not available.

Councilmember Somers suggested that a market analysis and feasibility study be conducted in addition to preparing a financial model for the project. He expressed support for moving forward with the discussions.

Mayor Smith noted that this is an exciting concept, and he acknowledged that a great amount of work remains to be done regarding the proposal. He added that incorporating the concept in the Fiesta District could be very successful, and he looked forward to receiving future updates. He thanked Dr. Pan and the other representatives of MCC and MPS for the presentation.

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

Councilmember Higgins: American/Israeli Public Affairs Committee Breakfast.

Mayor Smith: Lighting of Menorah at the Chabad of Mesa.

4. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

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

Tuesday, December 15, 2009, 9:00 a.m. – Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Ray Road & Hawes Road projects

Thursday, December 17, 2009, 7:30 a.m. – Special Council Meeting

Thursday, December 17, 2009, 7:35 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, December 17, 2009, 9:00 a.m. – Community & Neighborhood Services Committee Meeting

5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:18 p.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 December, 2009. 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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