



COUNCIL MINUTES

March 21, 2005

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 March 21, 2005 at 5:00 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker
Rex Griswold
Kyle Jones
Tom Rawles
Janie Thom
Claudia Walters
Mike Whalen

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson
Debbie Spinner
Barbara Jones

1. Review items on the agenda for the March 21, 2005 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: 3d (Griswold); 4e, 4f (Hawker); 9b (Walters)

Items removed from the consent agenda: 6k, 6l, 6m, 7a, 9a

Items added to the consent agenda: 3a

Items deleted from the agenda: 6b

2. Discuss and consider a recommendation to offer an employment severance package to eligible employees.

Financial Services Manager Bryan Raines addressed the Council and provided a brief overview of this agenda item. He reported that the proposed employment severance package is different from the typical severance package in that while City departments are encouraged to look at the opportunity to eliminate and/or combine positions to achieve a savings for Mesa's budget, that is not a requirement of the program. Mr. Raines commented, however, that what is required is to produce twice the savings with regard to the cost of the severance package which would go back to the City prior to refilling a vacant position. He added that this would be accomplished by staff calculating the savings and providing those figures to the various departments, which would make staffing level decisions based on the targeted savings.

Mr. Raines further indicated that there are currently 100 City employees eligible for retirement and said that if 25 were to take the voluntary employee severance package, the City would realize a savings of approximately \$1 million the first year and \$500,000 the second year.

Mr. Raines briefly outlined the two severance package options as follows:

- For employees eligible to receive retirement benefits at the time of their voluntary separation from service – Two weeks of base pay, plus one additional week of base pay for every year of service, capped at a maximum equal to 16 weeks of base pay or \$25,000, whichever is less; or
- For employees not eligible to receive Arizona State Retirement System (ASRS) benefits at the time of their separation from service – Two weeks of base pay, plus one additional week of base pay for every year of service, capped at a maximum equal to 12 weeks of base pay or \$25,000, whichever is less.

Mr. Raines stated that upon request, outplacement services would be provided by the Human Resources Division, and added that an employee could also request the continuation of medical, dental and vision coverage at the current premium rate for 90 days. (After the 90-day period, COBRA is an option at the employee's expense.)

In response to a question from Councilmember Thom, Mr. Raines clarified that employees who are eligible for a reduced benefits retirement, early retirement or full retirement would be considered for the proposed severance package.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker, City Manager Mike Hutchinson clarified that he is unaware of a mandatory retirement age for municipal employees and said that the Arizona State Retirement System allows an individual to work as long as they are able to do so.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Walters, seconded by Councilmember Rawles, to direct the City Manager to offer and immediately implement a voluntary employee severance package to eligible employees.

Carried unanimously.

3. Appointments to boards and committees.

Mayor Hawker recommended the following appointments to boards and committees:

HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD

Everette Woods, Sr. – Term Expires June 30, 2007

HOUSING GOVERNING BOARD

William Egan, Sr. – Term expires December 31, 2005

It was moved by Vice Mayor Walters, seconded by Councilmember Thom, that the Council concur with the Mayor's recommendations and the appointments be confirmed.

Carried unanimously.

4. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

There were no minutes to be acknowledged.

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

Councilmember Griswold	East Valley Partnership Meeting; Sertoma Club Meeting; Tour of the Mesa Arts Center; Big Band Dance at Falcon Field Airport
Councilmember Thom	The Induction of Eagle Scout Justin Warner; ADOT Meeting
Vice Mayor Walters	National League of Cities Conference; Diversity Dialogue; Mock City Council
Councilmember Jones	National League of Cities Conference

6. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Wednesday, March 23, 7:30 a.m. – Joint Meeting, Dobson Ranch Homeowners' Association

Thursday, March 24, 2005, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, March 24, 2005, 9:30 a.m. – Transportation Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 24, 6:00 p.m. – Williams Gateway Freeway Public Open House at ASU-East, Student Union Ballroom

Thursday, March 31, 2005, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Monday, April 4, 2005, TBA – Study Session

Monday, April 4, 2005, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

7. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

There were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

8. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

KENO HAWKER, 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 the 21st day of March 2005. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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