

COUNCIL MINUTES

May 9, 2000

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Budget Review Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on May 9, 2000 at 8:00 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Vice Mayor John Giles
Jim Davidson
Keno Hawker
Bill Jaffa
Pat Pomeroy
Councilmember-Elect
Claudia Walters

COUNCIL ABSENT

Mayor Wayne Brown
Dennis Kavanaugh

STAFF PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson
Wayne Balmer
Denise Bleyle
Gary Bradbury
Jamie Brennen
Dennis Compton
Linda Crocker
Gil Damiani
Stacy Damp
Dennis Dona
G.T. Fowler
John Geier
Pat Granillo
Barbara Jones
Dorinda Larsen
Greg Marek
Jeff Martin
Dee Ann Mickelsen
Frank Mizner
Dick Mulligan

STAFF PRESENT (CONT.)

Ellen Pence
Ron Poulin
Cliff Puckett
Bryan Raines
Andrea Rasizer
Tom Remes
Becky Richardson
Jenny Sheppard
Jan Strauss
Jamie Warner
Jeff Welker

OTHERS PRESENT

Barrett Marson
Betty Beard
Kathy Tolman
Mike Whalen
Others

1. Budget overview.

Vice Mayor Giles excused Mayor Brown and Councilmember Kavanaugh from the meeting and Councilmember Davidson from the beginning of the meeting. Vice Mayor Giles also welcomed Councilmember-Elect Claudia Walters and City Council Candidates Kathy Tolman and Mike Whalen to the Budget Review Hearing.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson reported that the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2000/01 is currently estimated at \$550,000,000, representing an increase of 2.5% over the previous year's budget. Mr. Hutchinson stated that based on anticipated revenues, the proposed budget is out of balance at this time, but that potential fee adjustments and utility rate increases will offset the shortfall. Mr. Hutchinson further advised that there is a loss of \$7.6 million in revenue as a result of the loss of the City's food sales tax.

Mr. Hutchinson commented that the general focus of the proposed budget constitutes neighborhood redevelopment; transportation, including street maintenance and freeway construction; public safety (police and fire staffing); and capital funding at Williams Gateway Airport. Mr. Hutchinson said that there is a total of \$26.7 million of unfunded supplemental requests at this time.

Mr. Hutchinson expressed appreciation to staff for their efforts in preparing the proposed budget and gave special recognition to Bryan Raines and Jamie Warner.

Growth Issues

Planning Director Frank Mizner presented maps and provided an overview of current and anticipated growth and development trends. Mr. Mizner spoke concerning City boundaries, annexations, historic growth patterns, the U.S. Census and Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) projections, the composition of Mesa's housing stock and current/anticipated residential and commercial development.

Discussion ensued pertaining to the City's annexation of land outside of Maricopa County and also within the City for new parks; the current response of Mesa's citizens to the U.S. Census; the Growing Smarter Initiative; the General Plan; a future update of the Master Plan.

2. Mayor and Council budget and the City Manager's Office budget.

Mr. Hutchinson advised that the Mayor and Council's budget includes the addition of three full-time City Council Assistants.

Mr. Hutchinson reviewed the proposed budget for the City Manager's Department, including the City Manager's Office, Public Information, Internal Audit, and the City Clerk's Office. Mr. Hutchinson noted increased expenses with the addition of three full-time Deputy City Managers; the personnel shift in the Public Information Division with the formation of the Diversity Office and Human Relations Advisory Office; and a decrease in the budget due to the biannual transition from an election year to a non-election year.

Councilmember Hawker questioned the availability of utilizing Channel 11 for more citizen-based educational programming including such topics as recycling, water usage and U.S. Census information.

Discussion ensued relative to upgrading the system to allow City employees to remote access the City's computers.

3. Redevelopment and Economic Development Departments.

Economic Development Director Dick Mulligan addressed the members of the Council relative to this agenda item. Mr. Mulligan stated that two notable changes to the proposed budget include a program which would assist small and minority-owned businesses, and also a program which would allow Williams Gateway Airport to become a designated U.S. Customs Port of Entry.

Mr. Mulligan also outlined the goals and major functions of the Economic Development Division programs which include communications and research; business retention and expansion; corporate locations; international business development; small business development, and administration and finance.

Mr. Mulligan responded to further questions from Councilmembers Pomeroy and Hawker pertaining to Williams Gateway Airport as a U.S. Customs Port of Entry and the necessary costs which would be incurred by the City in order to achieve that goal.

Councilmember Jaffa requested that the Economic Development Division have a more visible presence at future Council meetings and present periodic progress reports relative to current Megacorp and Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) activities.

Redevelopment Director Greg Marek advised that the Redevelopment Division fulfills two primary functions: redevelopment and a Citywide historical preservation program. Mr. Marek also detailed upcoming projects including the Arts & Entertainment Center, the Aquatic Center, the Mesa Verde Sports Club, and various streetscape improvements. Mr. Marek added that the Redevelopment Division is in the process of updating various zoning ordinances with regard to the Concept Plan; upgrading promotional and marketing material with the assistance of the Mesa Town Center and endeavoring to acquire more statues to be displayed in the downtown area.

Mr. Marek stated that proposed historic preservation projects include assisting the Mormon Temple in their efforts to be placed on the Historical Register and also researching possible interest among residents in the Lehi area relative to the designation of historic districts in that locale.

Councilmember Jaffa expressed the opinion that the Redevelopment Division should stay focused on the Downtown Redevelopment Plan and also stressed the importance of focusing on redevelopment in the area of West Main Street. Councilmember Jaffa also stressed the necessity of additional street lighting in the downtown area to attract more businesses.

Discussion ensued relative to proposed parking lot projects; the coordination of landscaping projects in the downtown area with the Transportation Department; light rail transit options and the Mesa Cultural Walk.

Vice Mayor Giles expressed the opinion that restaurant recruitment and expansion should be a primary focus of the Redevelopment Division as a means to attract more interest in the downtown area. Vice Mayor Giles also questioned the possibility of developing the Crismon Homestead for its historical value.

Vice Mayor Giles thanked the staff for their presentation.

4. Police Department.

Police Chief Jan Strauss addressed the Council relative to this agenda item. Chief Strauss detailed several of the current trends in law enforcement in the City of Mesa, which are contributing factors to the current budget request, which include the proliferation of methamphetamine laboratories, an increase in the number of complex criminal investigations and school campus safety.

Chief Strauss stated that it is the Police Department's highest priority to provide quality customer service to Mesa's citizens at every point of contact, and in an effort to achieve that goal, the department is requesting as a part of the FY 2000/01 budget, the addition of 25 new full-time officers, 16.5 civilian positions and three municipal security officers. Chief Strauss also commented that overtime has increased dramatically due to the insufficient number of officers currently employed with the Police Department.

Vice Mayor Giles expressed appreciation to Chief Strauss and the Police Department for their professionalism and their positive presence in the community.

Councilmember Jaffa concurred with Vice Mayor Giles' opinions and addressed his concerns relative to the insufficient number of certified police officers and the resulting overtime.

Discussion ensued relative to the implementation of a video arraignment system.

In response to questions from Councilmember Hawker, Chief Strauss indicated that the Police Department loses approximately 50 police officers a year, and that as a result of the competitive nature of attracting qualified officers, the Department is actively involved in a variety of recruitment and career development programs.

Councilmember Pomeroy expressed the opinion that innovative and creative recruitment programs are necessary to enable the Police Department to secure the services of the most qualified candidates.

Discussion ensued relative to the DARE program and the fact it creates a positive impact on the citizens of Mesa and is an integral component of community policing, district boundary changes and police response times within the community.

Vice Mayor Giles stated the opinion that the video arraignment system has the potential to be a cost-saving measure for the City. Vice Mayor Giles also commended Chief Strauss for the effectiveness of the sex offender tracking unit.

(Councilmember Davidson joined the meeting at 10:00 a.m.)

Councilmember Hawker questioned the possibility of cross training municipal security officers.

Vice Mayor Giles thanked Chief Strauss and her staff for their presentation.

5. Break.

At 10:20 a.m. Vice Mayor Giles called for a short recess. The meeting reconvened at 10:45 a.m.

6. Fire Department.

Fire Chief Dennis Compton addressed the Council relative to this agenda item. Chief Compton introduced the members of staff present at the meeting and highlighted an organizational breakdown of the Fire Department.

Chief Compton addressed the major components of the Fire Department's focus in the following areas: Fire Prevention, Public Education and Emergency Response.

Chief Compton indicated that the primary emphasis of Fire Prevention is through the implementation of inspections, investigations and Code management as well as enforcement through educational programs such as Partners In Prevention, which primarily focuses on enforcement through education and self-inspection in lower hazard occupancies. Chief Compton stated that another integral part of Fire Prevention is public awareness of automatic fire sprinklers in commercial and residential structures.

Chief Compton informed the Council that the Public Education arena includes many programs such as the Risk Watch Program, which is an education program in partnership with the National Fire Protection Association; Volunteer Coordination Connectors; Car Seat Safety Program, which is an ongoing adult component of Risk Watch; Adult Life Safety; Citizen Emergency Responder Class; and Senior Safety Class.

Chief Compton advised that the area of Emergency Response includes fire suppression, emergency medical, hazardous materials, water, high voltage, aircraft rescue and technical rescue.

Discussion ensued relative to the Fire Department's emergency services response times via geographical locations; the specialized training and nature of ladder companies; various aspects of departmental training and preparation including on-line training; domestic preparedness; safety; rapid intervention; and rehabilitation.

Chief Compton noted that because of the nature of the decentralized workforce, the Fire Department is in need of a video-audio communication system, which would ultimately link 24 remote locations. Chief Compton also discussed the necessity of Battalion Management Centers, which would decentralize management and improve neighborhood accessibility to information and assistance.

Chief Compton outlined the Fire Department's major budget items, which include the construction and renovation of various facilities, the replacement of mobile computer terminals and land acquisitions for three new fire stations in southeast and east Mesa.

Vice Mayor Giles thanked Chief Compton for the national recognition he has brought to the Fire Department and also to the City of Mesa.

Discussion ensued relative to supplemental request items including one new ladder company in central Mesa and a domestic preparedness package which includes a toxicology program.

Councilmember Pomeroy voiced concern that due to the current shortfall in the proposed budget, the Council is faced with the difficult task of determining which request items merit funding.

Councilmember Jaffa expressed appreciation to Chief Compton and the Fire Department and also commended their efforts relative to the passage of the automatic fire sprinkler ordinance.

Additional discussion ensued relative to Fire Prevention Customer Service Technicians and the Risk Watch Program.

Vice Mayor Giles expressed appreciation to Chief Compton and his staff for their presentation.

Vice Mayor Giles also commended Chief Geier for his outstanding service to the City of Mesa and wished him well in his retirement.

7. Adjournment.

Vice Mayor Giles thanked staff for the budget update.

Without objection, the Budget Session adjourned at 12:00 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 Budget Review Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 9th day of May, 2000. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 2000

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK