

COUNCIL MINUTES

February 1, 2007

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 February 1, 2007 at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Vice Mayor Claudia Walters
Rex Griswold
Kyle Jones
Tom Rawles
Scott Somers
Mike Whalen

COUNCIL ABSENT

Mayor Keno Hawker

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Barbara Jones

Vice Mayor Walters excused Mayor Hawker from the entire meeting.

1. Review items on the agenda for the February 1, 2007 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: 4e (Hawker)

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

Items added to the consent agenda: None

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

- a. Museum and Cultural Advisory Board meeting held on November 8, 2006
- b. Utility Committee meeting held on January 4, 2007
- c. Parks and Recreation Board meeting held on January 18, 2007

Councilmember Griswold requested a correction to the Utility Committee meeting minutes in reference to his comments in paragraph four of page ten.

City Clerk Barbara Jones advised that the Utility Committee minutes would be amended to reflect the correction.

It was moved by Councilmember Somers, seconded by Councilmember Jones, that receipt of the above-listed minutes be acknowledged, as amended.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Griswold-Jones-Rawles-Somers-Walters-Whalen
NAYS – None
ABSENT - Hawker

Vice Mayor Walters declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

Carried unanimously.

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

Councilmember Somers: Meeting of the State Coordinating Council for Homeland Security.

Vice Mayor Walters: Represented the Mayor at an Arizona Municipal Water Users (AMWUA) retreat.
Groundbreaking ceremony for the Light Rail Station in Mesa.
Opening of a new house for girls at Sunshine Acres.
Represented the Mayor at a Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) meeting.
Transportation Coordinating Committee Meeting.

Councilmember Griswold: Police Department Awards Banquet.

4. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

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

Monday, February 5, 2007, TBA – Study Session

Monday, February 5, 2007, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 6, 2007, 6:00 p.m. – District Town Meeting (District 5)

Thursday, February 8, 2007, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, February 15, 2007, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Tuesday, February 20, 2007, TBA – Study Session

Tuesday, February 20, 2007, 5:45 a.m. – Regular Council Meeting

5. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

a. Hear from Danny Friedman, Field Representative, Congressman Harry Mitchell's Office.

Mr. Friedman was not present.

- b. Hear from Doris Ramos regarding traffic noise at the southwest corner of McKellips and Val Vista.

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Walters, City Attorney Debbie Spinner advised that the Council could comment on issues presented by speakers under “prescheduled public opinion appearances” because the agenda indicates the topic.

Ms. Ramos addressed the Council regarding excessive traffic noise and increased incidence of crime in the Arboleda subdivision, and she stated that the existing six-foot perimeter wall was not an effective barrier. She requested that the City consider including a sound barrier wall similar to the wall on Gilbert Road in the plans for future street improvement projects.

At the request of Vice Mayor Walters, Deputy City Manager Jack Friedline advised that at some point in the future the City plans to improve a number of the intersections on McKellips Road between Gilbert and Power Roads. He advised that mitigating congestion could possibly mitigate some of the sound. Mr. Friedline said that staff would investigate other methods of mitigating noise, such as landscaping, and he noted that the installation of rubberized asphalt would also eliminate some of the traffic noise.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that staff would request that the Police Department’s Crime Prevention Unit contact Ms. Ramos; and that staff would investigate the variance requirements, if any, that would enable the subdivision to construct an eight-foot wall.

Vice Mayor Walters thanked Ms. Ramos for her comments.

- c. Hear from Steve Collins regarding new Fire Inspection fees

Mr. Collins advised that as the operator of four group homes in the City of Mesa, he recently received a letter from the Fire Department informing him of the fee increase. He expressed concern that he received no notice of a public hearing regarding the proposed fee increase. Mr. Collins said that the fee for each of his homes would increase from \$50 to \$250, in addition to a \$15 fee to be submitted with a data collection form. He suggested that the City utilize on-line services to collect fees and information. Mr. Collins stated the opinion that group homes of ten or less residents should be classified as low risk.

Ms. Spinner reviewed the City Charter requirements regarding the introduction of ordinances and public hearings. She stated that the City’s practice of posting the meeting notice and publishing the ordinance and public hearing notice in a newspaper complies with State law and the Charter requirements.

Councilmember Griswold, Chairman of the Fire Committee, explained that the fees are necessary to recover the Fire Department’s costs to perform inspections, and he advised that the classifications are based on the Fire Code.

Councilmember Somers said that the fees charged by the City of Mesa are typical of fees imposed by other cities throughout the Valley, and he noted that the fee structure is designed to provide cost recovery for the services provided.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the City is making an effort to improve automation and online services throughout the City. He noted that City departments have been challenged to utilize technology as an alternative to adding staff.

Assistant Fire Chief Cliff Puckett advised that fire inspection fees could be paid by mail. He added that the classification of group homes as being high risk is based on the fact that some of the residents may not be able to exit the home in a timely manner in the event of an emergency because of a handicap or a medical condition.

Vice Mayor Walters noted that the occupancy of group homes is transient in nature and that a home with ambulatory residents one week may have a different population the next week.

Mr. Collins stated that all of the residents of his group homes are required to be ambulatory. He said that housing non-ambulatory individuals would require the installation of fire sprinklers in the facility.

Vice Mayor Walters thanked Mr. Collins for his comments, and she noted that the Council would monitor the program during this first year of operation. She stated that the Council established these fees by resolution based on a recommendation from the Finance Committee.

6. Items from citizens present.

Brenda Capizzi, 28 South Olive Street, a director of a group home in Mesa, expressed concern regarding the increased fire inspection fee. She said that her facility accepts only ambulatory residents, and she stated the opinion that group homes should not receive a high-risk classification. Ms. Capizzi advised that each resident is charged a fee and that the facility operates without receiving State or Federal assistance.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 8:16 a.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 1st day of February 2007. 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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