

COUNCIL MINUTES

November 7, 1997

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 7, 1997, at 7:31 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Wayne Brown
Pat Gilbert
John Giles
Dennis Kavanaugh
Joan Payne
Wayne Pomeroy

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Pauline Backer
Wayne Balmer
Kathy Barrett
Neal Beets
Denise Bleyle
Linda Crocker
Luigi Digirolamo
George Forster
Lars Jarvie
Barbara Jones
Ron Krosting
Dorinda Larsen
Earl Lloyd
Rich Lorig
Frank Mizner
Keith Nath
Ruth Ann Norris
Ellen Pence
Bryan Raines

STAFF PRESENT (CONT.)

Andrea Rasizer
Tom Remes
Becky Richardson
Doug Tessendorf
Jamie Warner
Mindy White
Paul Wilson
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Joanie Flatt
Bev Hart
Jan Hibbard
Chris Moeser
B.J. Tatro
Jans Tingen
Janet Vinzant
Mike Zell
Others

1. Hear a report, discuss and consider the photo radar/red light program.

Police Chief Lars Jarvie provided the Council with brief background information relative to this agenda item and introduced Arizona State University (ASU) Associate Professor Janet Vinzant and B.J. Tatro, representing B.J. Tatro Consulting. Chief Jarvie stated that Ms. Vinzant and Ms. Tatro were retained by the City to perform expert research and analysis relative to whether the photo radar/red light program has impacted the number of accidents throughout the City. Chief Jarvie noted that the report is based upon statistics covering the seventh-month period February through August 1997 and therefore is very preliminary.

Ms. Vinzant and Ms. Tatro provided a summary of their background and qualifications and noted that following initial discussions with Chief Jarvie in August 1996, it was their recommendation that the study be conducted over a two-year period of time in order to

reflect accurate, in-depth statistics. Ms. Vinzant and Ms. Tatro highlighted the contents of a report submitted to Council relative to this issue.

Discussion ensued relative to selected crash sites, the division of the City into four separate quadrants for analysis purposes, and the fact that no fatal crashes occurred during the preliminary seven-month period.

Ms. Vinzant stated the opinion that based on the collected data to date, it appears that the photo radar and red light camera technology is having a positive effect on decreasing the number of accidents. Ms. Vinzant emphasized that the report is preliminary and stressed the importance of collecting data over a full two-year period of time in order to provide an accurate evaluation.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the scope of the assignment undertaken by Ms. Vinzant and Ms. Tatro, the possibility of conducting future studies to determine whether photo radar and red light camera technology modifies behavior, the positive and negative effects of 'speed traps,' the fact that modifying study factors at this point would affect the overall analysis, and consulting costs.

In response to a question from Councilmember Payne, Police Chief Jarvie expressed the opinion that the study represents a cautious approach in determining whether technology actually can reduce the number of traffic accidents in the City of Mesa.

Ms. Tatro advised that both long and short term outcomes may be determined as a result of any evaluation and noted that the current study focuses on the outcome linked to safety, specifically crash rates, rather than the volume of citations issued and/or behavioral changes.

In response to a request from Councilmember Payne, Chief Jarvie indicated that additional statistics relative to speeding citations would be provided at a later date.

Mayor Brown commented on the fact that the statistics are too preliminary at this time to determine accurate findings. Mayor Brown added that the actual number of citations issued during the last seven months is significantly below previously anticipated projections.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the contract with the company which provides the equipment expires January 2, 1998, the need for Council direction relative to extending the contract, dismissed and non-deliverable citations, a request from Councilmember Payne for statistics relative to the collection rate for citations issued to out-of-state drivers, the possibility of retaining photo red light cameras and eliminating photo radar, and the fact that analyzing various quadrants will assist in determining whether lower accident levels are universal or location specific.

Councilmember Payne spoke in opposition to photo radar and discussed initiative efforts to eliminate photo radar usage in Mesa.

Mayor Brown requested that staff provide additional information relative to the possibility of utilizing photo red light cameras in the future and eliminating photo radar.

Following additional discussion among the Council, Mr. Luster advised that renewal of the contract for the equipment will be placed on the agenda of the November 17, 1997 Regular Council for consideration.

Mayor Brown thanked Ms. Vinzant and Ms. Tatro for their input.

2. Consider a proposed policy implementing state law concerning deadly weapons in City buildings.

City Manager Charles Luster advised that staff has developed a proposed policy relative to the carrying of deadly weapons in City buildings for Council review.

Mayor Brown stated the opinion that a policy similar to the policy currently in effect in the City of Scottsdale's should be explored and directed staff to further research this issue.

Mayor Brown and Councilmembers Payne and Kavanaugh spoke in support of providing gun lockers at the City Council Chambers building and, at a minimum, at those locations where metal detectors will be installed.

Mr. Luster indicated that staff will pursue this matter and report to the Council at a future Council Study Session.

3. Deleted.

4. Discuss and consider chairs for the remodeled Council Chambers.

Mr. Luster directed the Council's attention to a representative sample of the spectator chairs which have been used in the upper Council Chambers for the past 18 years. Mr. Luster commented on complaints received from the public relative to the uncomfatableness of the chairs, and requested that the Council consider including upgraded chairs as part of the Council Chambers remodeling process.

Assistant to the City Manager Bryan Raines stated the opinion that although the proposed chairs are not ergonomic, they are considerably more comfortable and offer better support than the current chairs. Mr. Raines added that costs are estimated at approximately \$250 per chair and urged the Council to approve this request.

Councilmember Pomeroy spoke in support of approving the addition of upgraded chairs in the Council Chambers.

Mayor Brown stated that it is the consensus of Council that the recommendation of staff be approved.

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

Mayor Brown advised that there were no reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

6. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

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

Friday, November 21, 1997, following Study Session - Utility Committee meeting

7. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

Shirley Wheat, 2262 West Del Oro, spoke in favor of providing gun lockers in various City buildings for the convenience and safety of the public. Ms. Wheat encouraged the Council to study this issue further.

In response to a question from Ms. Wheat, City Manager Charles Luster advised that proposed lockers will be keyed and explained that the weapon owners will be the only persons with access to the weapons.

Mayor Brown stated the opinion that City employees would also be provided locker space in which to store their weapons.

Mayor Brown thanked Ms. Wheat for her input.

Jans Tingen, 959 East 10th Avenue, stated that the Constitution grants citizens the right to bear arms in defense of themselves and/or their state. Mr. Tingen complimented the Council on their administrative decisions to date and stressed the importance of providing sufficient locker space for weapons and ensuring that the confidentiality of the weapon owner is protected.

Mayor Brown commented that the City of Mesa has decided not to adopt a separate policy regarding this issue and will abide by current State laws.

8. Items from citizens present (maximum of three speakers for five minutes per speaker).

Mayor Brown advised that there were no items from citizens present.

9. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 9:02 a.m.

WAYNE BROWN, MAYOR

ATTEST:

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

Study Session
November 7, 1997
Page 5

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 7th day of November 1997. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 20th day of November 1997

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK