

COUNCIL MINUTES

October 15, 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 October 15, 2007 at 5:12 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker
Kyle Jones
Scott Somers
Claudia Walters
Mike Whalen

COUNCIL ABSENT

Tom Rawles

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

Councilmember Whalen participated in the meeting through the use of telephonic equipment.

1. Review items on the agenda for the October 15, 2007 Regular Council meeting.

There were no questions or comments from the Council regarding this item.

2. Discuss and provide direction on the process for appointing a Councilmember to fill the vacancy of District 5, including identifying the candidates to be interviewed.

Mayor Hawker recommended the following finalists for the District 5 City Council appointment: John Perkinson, Darrell Truitt and Terry Benelli. He thanked all of the citizens who submitted applications and expressed an interest in serving the community. Mayor Hawker stated that because of the extensive community service and professional backgrounds of the above-listed candidates, in his opinion, any one of them would be a strong contributor to the Council during the seven-month term.

Vice Mayor Walters commented that there was "a very deep pool" of candidates and concurred with Mayor Hawker's recommendation. She also expressed confidence that District 5 would be well represented by any one of the above-listed citizens.

Mayor Hawker said that it is anticipated that the Council would conduct interviews of the three finalists at the October 18th Study Session. He noted that the Councilmembers were provided a document drafted by former City Attorney Neal Beats, which outlined the selection process of an interim Councilmember in the past.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Walters, seconded by Councilmember Jones, that Mayor Hawker's recommendation of John Perkinson, Darrell Truitt and Terry Benelli, as the finalists for the District 5 City Council appointment, be approved.

Councilmember Whalen voiced appreciation to Mayor Hawker for his recommendation. He noted, however, that at the October 4, 2007 Study Session, the Council discussed the possibility of the Mayor bringing three to five recommendations to the Council for consideration. Councilmember Whalen requested that Phillip Austin be added to the list of finalists.

Councilmember Somers concurred with Councilmember Whalen's suggestion.

Vice Mayor Walters stated that she would amend her motion to include Mr. Austin as a finalist if Councilmember Jones, who seconded the motion, concurred.

Mayor Hawker voiced opposition to an amended motion.

Vice Mayor Walters said that because Councilmember Rawles is absent, it is necessary for four Councilmembers to support the motion in order to receive a majority vote.

Councilmember Jones expressed support for Mayor Hawker's recommendation. He said that he would prefer that the process not "turn into a circus" because each of his fellow Councilmembers would like to add names to the Mayor's list.

Vice Mayor Walters advised that she would support the original motion and commented that she did not want to be placed in the position of advocating one applicant over another.

Mayor Hawker called for the vote.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Hawker-Jones-Walters
NAYS - Somers-Whalen

Mayor Hawker declared the motion failed for lack of a majority vote by those present.

It was moved by Councilmember Somers, seconded by Councilmember Whalen, that John Perkinson, Darrell Truitt, Terry Benelli and Philip Austin be selected as the finalists for the District 5 City Council appointment.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Somers-Whalen
NAYS - Hawker-Jones-Walters

Mayor Hawker declared the motion failed for lack of a majority vote by those present.

Vice Mayor Walters stated that she would make a motion for reconsideration. She commented that she is not opposed to Mr. Austin, but would prefer not to expand the list of finalists to five or six.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Walters, seconded by Councilmember Whalen, that John Perkinson, Darrell Truitt, Terry Benelli and Philip Austin be selected as the finalists for the District 5 City Council appointment.

Councilmember Jones stated that he would support the inclusion of Mr. Austin's name on the list.

Mayor Hawker called for the vote.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Jones-Somers-Walters-Whalen
NAYS - Hawker

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried by majority vote of those present.

Vice Mayor Walters made the suggestion that the Council consider a less formal setting for the interviews rather than the Lower Council Chambers. She stated that a possible venue might be Centennial Hall, which has been used for the City Manager and the City Attorney's interviews.

Mayor Hawker stated that he would prefer that the finalists be interviewed in the Lower Council Chambers. He noted that because the Study Session is televised, it would allow the residents in District 5 to view the finalists and the manner in which they respond to the Council's questions.

Councilmembers Whalen and Jones concurred with Mayor Hawker's comments.

Discussion ensued relative to the process for the October 18th interviews; that each finalist would be given approximately three minutes to make an opening statement; that the Councilmembers would ask each candidate one question of their choosing (approximately 15 minutes in duration for all questions and answers); that the finalists would be allowed a brief period of time to make a closing statement; that the Council is permitted to ask substantive questions of the finalists (i.e., what issues do they view as important for the City), but not with regard to protected classes (i.e., age or ethnic background); that speakers would not be allowed to address the Council during the interview process; and that on October 25th, the Council would vote on the appointment.

Mayor Hawker thanked his fellow Councilmembers for their suggestions and input.

3. Appointments to boards and committees.

Mayor Hawker recommended the following appointments to Boards and Committees:

HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD

James May – Term Expires June 30, 2010

It was moved by Vice Mayor Walters, seconded by Councilmember Jones, that the Council concur with the Mayor's recommendation and the appointment be confirmed.

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

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

Mayor Hawker: Williams Gateway Airport Authority meeting

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady reported that on October 16th, the City of Mesa would participate in the TopOff 4 exercise. He explained that briefings would be held at the Mesa Police Department at 1:30 p.m. and stated that the Councilmembers were invited to attend.

Mr. Brady stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Thursday, October 18, 2007, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, October 18, 2007, 8:00 a.m. – Intergovernmental Affairs Committee

Thursday, November 8, 2007, TBA – Council Retreat

City Attorney Debbie Spinner offered a brief analysis of the process undertaken by the City to address election-related complaints submitted by citizens.

6. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

KENO HAWKER, 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 15th day of October 2007. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK