

COUNCIL MINUTES

July 10, 1997

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Policy Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on July 10, 1997 at 4:00 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

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

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Cindy Barris
Neal Beets
Dan Brewer
Dennis Compton
Jack Friedline
Mike Hutchinson
Harry Kent
Kari Kent
Eric Norenberg
Ruth Anne Norris
Les Olsen
Bryan Raines
Andrea Rasizer
Becky Richardson
Denise Samuel
Kevin Snow
Dave Spaur
Ron Von Burg
Mike Whalen
Mindy White

OTHERS PRESENT

Tom Flaaen
Chris Moeser
Dan Nowicki
Others

1. Further discussion and consideration concerning Cox Communications' request to change their license requirement as it pertains to public access programming.

Tom Flaaen, Government Affairs Specialist, Cox Communications, outlined a revised proposal by Cox Communications to amend the current cable license to reflect changes within the industry while simultaneously addressing concerns expressed recently by Council. Mr. Flaaen noted three major components of the proposal:

- Cox's requirement to provide public access would remain; however, the time dedicated to public access use would be reduced to reflect historic local usage (8 hours per week). Local programming created by Mesa residents would be given preference under this approach. The

requirement to provide a studio in the City of Mesa would be deleted. After six months, the City and Cox will reevaluate the public access obligation based on usage and viewership.

- Cox will provide a second education access channel in the areas already rebuilt (within 30 days after the amendment) and in additional areas as the Mesa rebuild proceeds.
- After Cox implements digital compression in the Mesa system, Cox will provide a second government access channel for use by the City. Cox will determine whether to locate the channel in the analog or the digital portion of the channel lineup. Cox will enable the City to secure the video and audio on this channel if it so desires. Cox will furnish converters enabling City locations to view the channel; the number of converters Cox will furnish at no charge will be specified in the license amendment.

Mr. Flaaen indicated that the proposal will enable public access to continue and will additionally allow Cox to expand its community programming efforts. Mr. Flaaen spoke concerning the interest expressed by Mesa Public Schools in the potential opportunity to utilize the public access channel for educational programming.

Councilmember Kavanaugh stated the opinion that the revisions represent an improvement when compared to the original request but questioned the effect of eliminating the studio in Mesa and potential impacts if the City determines in the future that additional time should be dedicated to public access. Mr. Flaaen outlined anticipated actions to assist/accommodate studio users during the period of transition (e.g., identify/investigate new technology available to create programs) and the anticipated six-month review with City staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the changes and negotiate any modifications that may be necessary.

Councilmember Kavanaugh suggested that any revisions reflect flexibility relative to the number of hours to be dedicated to public access use.

(Councilmember Payne arrived at the meeting at 4:07 p.m.)

In response to questions from Councilmember Giles, Mr. Flaaen spoke concerning efforts to expand community programming (envisioned to be commercially supported) and potential options to assist current studio users. Mr. Flaaen indicated that the provision of a studio is not a legal mandate.

Councilmember Giles indicated support for the proposal and expressed appreciation to Cox Communications for their efforts in developing the revisions.

In response to a question from Councilmember Kavanaugh, City Attorney Neal Beets advised that federal law does not dictate details relative to public access operation. Mr. Beets stated that the City's current cable license is in the form of an ordinance and that an ordinance (introduction, public hearing, and enactment) would be required to amend the license. Mr. Beets spoke in favor of a public hearing process, particularly because the proposed modification involves public access, and noted that some individuals may prefer a public hearing process similar to that required for renewal of the license.

Vice Mayor Gilbert stated support for proceeding with the development of a draft ordinance incorporating the proposed changes. Vice Mayor Gilbert suggested that consideration be given to articulating within the agreement measures to assist public access users.

In response to a question from City Manager Charles Luster, Mr. Flaaen said that he is unsure at this time when digital compression will be implemented throughout the entire City but indicated a willingness to develop a time frame for commitment.

Mayor Brown suggested that staff begin preparation of an ordinance for Council review and consideration.

2. Hear a report concerning the new Mesa Web Page.

Public Information Specialist Kevin Snow introduced Principal Systems Analyst Les Olsen, who serves as the City's Internet webmaster.

Mr. Snow outlined two major recent events relative to the Internet: a) the debut on June 2, 1997 of a new Mesa Web page and integrated design and b) an increase of 8,000 hits during the past month from external customers (36,000 visits to 44,000 visits).

Mr. Snow displayed the new Web page and demonstrated the video welcome by Mayor Brown. Mr. Snow explained that on the front page, individuals are able to directly access the visitor center; job opportunities; parks and museums (which includes a "clickable" map); and the library. Mr. Snow advised that links are also provided to new information, City services, City government, events, and a site map. Mr. Snow delineated components of each area.

Mayor Brown commended the individuals involved in the development/maintenance of the Web site.

In response to questions from Vice Mayor Gilbert, Mr. Olsen discussed the City's Internet connection to Arizona State University and electronic mail operations via Lotus Notes. Mr. Olsen briefly outlined technological advances being developed within the industry that would accommodate interactive operations and integrate Library services.

Councilmember Kavanaugh questioned the possibility of providing information kiosks in locations such as shopping malls. Mr. Snow expressed the opinion that an Internet hookup for kiosks would be the least labor intensive. Mr. Snow noted that Management Services Manager Dan Brewer is exploring options to enable interactive activity through the Internet such as making utility payments via credit card.

Councilmember Kavanaugh commended staff for their efforts to date and encouraged increased opportunities for citizens without computers to access information.

Vice Mayor Gilbert commented concerning the trend to integrate technology with the provision of municipal services. Vice Mayor Gilbert mentioned the availability of the Internet to Library patrons.

Councilmember Giles noted the extensive use of the Internet and spoke in favor of pursuing interactive services.

Mayor Brown thanked Mr. Snow and Mr. Olsen for the report.

3. Hear and consider a report from the Solid Waste Division regarding new concepts in the solid waste program.

Solid Waste and Facilities Director Jack Friedline outlined a "Pay-As-You-Throw" (PAYT) approach for solid waste services provided by the City. Mr. Friedline distributed a fact sheet prepared by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) describing a PAYT (also called unit-based or variable-rate pricing) program and highlighted advantages to this type of system, including: a) waste reduction/prevention, b) reduced waste disposal costs, c) more equitable waste management fee structure, d) increased participation in composting and recycling programs, and e) increased understanding of environmental issues.

Mr. Friedline reviewed steps taken during the past three years in support of a PAYT program. Mr. Friedline provided detailed information pertaining to the implementation of the blue barrel recycling, bulk item collection/appliance recycling, and green waste programs; establishment of a variable rate based on barrel size; proposed implementation of a landfill entrance fee; and development of a clean sweep program to discourage illegal dumping.

Mr. Friedline stated that staff presently recommends several fees and fee adjustments for FY1997-98 to shift Mesa's solid waste fee schedule towards full-cost recovery of services provided beyond the basic twice-per-week collections (one recycling, one garbage):

- Increase the bulk item collection rate from \$5.00 per load to \$7.50 per load.
- Increase the appliance collection rate from \$5.00 to \$7.50 for the first appliance and \$5.00 for each additional appliance collected up to four appliances per service call monthly.
- Establish a \$5.00 fee for residents bringing trash loads up to 2,000 pounds once per month at the Salt River Landfill.
- Adjust the furlough rate from a 50 percent reduction in the residential solid waste fee to total a \$5.00 reduction.

Mr. Friedline presented photographs and discussed each of the recommendations.

Mr. Friedline noted that the EPA has approximately \$30,000 in grant monies available to award to the City to develop a campaign to educate citizens concerning the PAYT program. Mr. Friedline requested direction from Council relative to the PAYT program before proceeding with the grant proposal.

Councilmember Kavanaugh indicated support for exploring the PAYT program. In response to a question from Councilmember Kavanaugh, Mr. Friedline briefly highlighted collection procedures implemented in surrounding communities.

Vice Mayor Gilbert spoke in favor of user fees. Vice Mayor Gilbert identified what he believes are major objectives of the Solid Waste Division: a) contribute to the General Fund, b) extend the life span of the landfill or develop an alternative, c) establish a materials recovery facility, d) reduce the overall waste stream, and e) establish an equitable collection cost based on usage rather than a fixed fee. Vice Mayor Gilbert suggested that in the future, staff indicate how proposed recommendations will serve to satisfy each objective. Vice Mayor Gilbert encouraged staff to identify a specific time frame for conversion from a fixed fee to a collection cost based on waste generated.

Councilmember Giles indicated general support for a policy whereby individuals who generate more waste, pay more. Councilmember Giles expressed concern regarding the recommendation to implement a fee for citizens bringing materials to the landfill given the limitations of the current green waste program at this time.

Councilmember Payne requested data supporting reported reductions and advantages of a PAYT program as indicated in the material prepared by the EPA.. Councilmember Payne expressed the opinion that the proposal before Council appears to represent further government intrusion upon consumers.

Mr. Friedline stated that staff will provide the requested information but added that representatives within the industry have personally related to him benefits experienced through the utilization of a PAYT program.

Mayor Brown encouraged expansion of the green waste program. Mayor Brown thanked Mr. Friedline for the presentation.

4. Hear from Chief Compton concerning the Oklahoma City bombing.

Fire Chief Dennis Compton utilized slides and presented data/statistics pertaining to the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, reported to be the largest crime in U.S. history. Chief Compton provided an overview of the incident, outlining the sequence of events and highlighting notable dates. Chief Compton spoke concerning rescue efforts, including those of the Phoenix Urban Search and Rescue Team, and the importance of the multi-agency coordination (MAC) center.

Chief Compton indicated that in the near future he will be presenting to various City staff members more detailed information regarding the bombing and advantages/disadvantages of rescue procedures used.

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

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

- Tuesday, July 15, 1997, 7:30 a.m. - Council Seminar
- Tuesday, July 15, 1997, 8:30 a.m. - General Development Committee Meeting

- Friday, July 18, 1997, 7:30 a.m. - Study Session

Mr. Luster advised that the July 11, 1997 Study Session has been canceled.

6. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Policy Session adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

WAYNE BROWN, MAYOR

ATTEST:

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Policy Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 10th day of July 1997. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 28th day of July 1997

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK