

COUNCIL MINUTES

August 5, 2002

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 August 5, 2002 at 4:00 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker
Rex Griswold
Kyle Jones
Dennis Kavanaugh
Janie Thom
Claudia Walters
Mike Whalen

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson
Debbie Spinner
Barbara Jones

1. Review items on the agenda for the June 24, 2002 Regular Council Meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff with no formal action taken. There was specific discussion relative to the following items:

Mayor Hawker declared potential conflicts of interest on agenda items 5j (Desert Wells Zone 24" Waterline Thomas Road, East of Thomas/Recker Intersection to Power Road) and 5k (Gas Line Replacement Paradise Palms Trailer Resort) and said he would refrain from discussion/participation in these items.

Mayor Hawker stated that agenda item 9 (Consider approving the Parks and Recreation 2025 Strategic Master Plan) would be removed from the consent agenda and that item 9.1.d (Proceeding with developing an agreement between the City and Arizona Bronze) would be added to the consent agenda.

2. Hear a presentation on the Community Spirit Program.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson provided a brief historical overview of the Community Spirit Program and said that during recent years, this program has greatly exceeded management's expectations and provides valuable support to local agencies and schools. He stated that the annual fund drive is beginning and the new Chair of the Community Spirit Committee is Deputy Fire Chief Mary Cameli.

Chief Cameli addressed the Council and introduced former Community Spirit Chair Lori Ball and next year's Chair Al Price. She stated that there are approximately 150 Community Spirit representatives who represent the City's 4,000 employees. Chief Cameli reported that although last year's fund drive goal was \$295,000 and City employees raised approximately \$344,000. She outlined the various fund drive activities, including the annual pledge card drive, various food sales and ball tournaments held throughout the year, a golf tournament sponsored by Parks and Recreation that raised in excess of \$9,000 last year, and numerous other fund raising activities.

Chief Cameli reported that in addition to the United Way Fund Drive, employees participate in numerous other activities that help support the community, including an annual food drive, which raised in excess of 3200 pounds of food last year, and an annual event sponsored by the Salvation Army and Mervyns in which 60 employees assist needy children to shop for school clothes. She further reported that each year City employees adopt a local elementary school and provide numerous sources of support including a school supplies drive and a "Change Can Make a Difference" drive, which raised approximately \$4,500 in loose change last year. She reported that each year during the holiday season, employees adopt local families and that last year 200 families received assistance. Chief Cameli voiced appreciation to all City employees, administrators and elected officials who participate in the Community Spirit program.

Chief Cameli stated that this year's fund drive is "Television" and the slogan is "Turn on the Spirit." A videotaped presentation was aired in the Council Chambers that depicted various Community Spirit activities.

Mayor Hawker thanked staff for the presentation and commended City employees for their commitment to the community.

3. Discuss and consider various neighborhood mitigation requests related to the Multipurpose Facility.

Neighborhood Outreach Director Tanya Collins and Neighborhood Services Coordinator Debbie Driscoll addressed the Council concerning this agenda item. Ms. Collins reported that during the last three months, staff has worked with neighborhood groups in the area of the proposed Multipurpose Facility. She reported that staff conducted 18 neighborhood meetings during May and that 550 residents participated in those meetings. She referred to and commented on staff's report concerning this matter together with attachments, which outline the numerous mitigation requests submitted by residents concerning this issue. Ms. Collins also referred to an August 2, 2002 memorandum authored by Assistant City Attorney Monica Michelizzi, which was also provided to the Councilmembers and which outlines the neighborhood mitigation requests that have been incorporated into the proposed Disposition and Development and Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and the Tourism and Sports Authority (TSA).

Ms. Collins said that staff is seeking Council's input with respect to efforts in this regard and the various mitigation requests submitted by neighborhood residents.

Councilmember Walters commented on request #1 (Build sound and dust barriers along 8th Street and Dobson and other streets around the Multipurpose Facility; plant trees all along 8th Street, Dobson, north of 8th Street on Alma School Road) on Attachment 1. She voiced the opinion that the City should comply with this request regardless of the outcome of this project.

She further stated that in the event the Multipurpose Facility does not go forward in Mesa, the list of mitigation requests should be maintained and utilized in conjunction with any future development of the property at this location.

In response to a request from Councilmember Walters, City Attorney Debbie Spinner discussed commitments made by the TSA with respect to addressing noise concerns. She reported that the TSA has agreed to certain noise standards, which include compliance with the City's noise ordinance measurements (outside of 1000 feet from the facility) after 11:00 p.m. on Sundays through Thursdays and after midnight on Friday and Saturday nights, and closing the facility roof at 10:00 p.m. on event nights to help further mitigate noise.

Discussion ensued regarding the fact that the roof is not anticipated to fully insulate all noise; the fact that the TSA has agreed to provide a meeting room at the facility to be used for neighborhood meetings related to the facility; the suggestion relative to mitigating noise at night from "back-up beepers" during construction; the fact that the TSA has agreed to ensure that construction trucks use the Loop 202 Dobson Road exit to gain access to the site; that staff intends to minimize "down time" associated with relocation of the ball fields; that the TSA brought forward a suggestion to implement 24-hour telephone service at the facility to be used in conjunction with facility issues and complaints; the fact that staff intends to utilize methods and lessons learned in connection with illegal parking and other game day issues experienced at HoHoKam Park; the fact that residents voiced opposition to allowing neighborhood residents to park cars in yards on event days; the fact that the TSA has indicated that barricades will be used on event days to help prevent parking in neighborhoods and that tow trucks will be on hand to tow illegally parked vehicles.

Councilmember Walters voiced appreciation to staff for their work on this project and also to residents who have participated in the process.

Ms. Collins stated that staff has developed numerous relationships with neighborhood groups in this area of the City as a result of this issue and that regardless of the outcome of the project, staff intends to continue strengthening those relationships.

Mayor Hawker said that although he appreciates the list and the citizen participation it represents, he has concerns regarding promoting unrealistic expectations and stated the opinion that several items on the list may not occur.

Ms. Collins reported that staff will continue efforts to maintain open lines of communication with neighborhood residents.

Mayor Hawker thanked staff for the update.

4. Hear an update on the July 6, 2002 sobriety checkpoint and consider proceeding with a Labor Day checkpoint on Monday, September 2, 2002.

Police Chief Jan Strauss addressed the Council concerning this agenda item and reported that the Department has successfully utilized sobriety checkpoints since 1999. Chief Strauss introduced Commander Steve Toland.

Commander Toland reported that the Police Department conducted a sobriety checkpoint on Saturday, July 6, 2002, on southbound Power Road near McDowell Road. He added that the sobriety checkpoint was conducted in conjunction with the Arizona DUI Task Force and that the location of the checkpoint was selected based on the frequency of DUI arrests during summer months from traffic returning from the lake and river recreation facilities along Bush Highway.

Commander Toland referred to and commented on staff's report concerning this matter, which included graphics and statistics outlining the various activities conducted and citizen comments regarding the process. He further reported that the recent checkpoint was the most successful ever conducted by the Department and resulted in the arrest of 38 impaired drivers, including 8 felony DUI arrests and 8 Extreme DUI (BAC above .15%) arrests, plus an additional 27 arrests for underage consumption. He added that over 3530 vehicles passed through the checkpoint, officers made approximately 2500 contacts and 2000 informational brochures were distributed to citizens.

Mayor Hawker stated that he continues to oppose the use of sobriety checkpoints and added that he favors the use of saturation patrols. He suggested that staff conduct saturation patrols instead of a sobriety checkpoint over the Labor Day holiday weekend as a test project to compare the effectiveness of the two methods.

Councilmember Griswold advised that he and Councilmember Walters observed the recent checkpoint operations. He stated that contrary to his previous concerns, traffic moved quickly and numerous impaired drivers were already being processed by 2:30 p.m.

Councilmember Walters voiced support for conducting sobriety checkpoints and appreciation for the opportunity to observe the checkpoint operations. She said that she was impressed with the demeanor of the officers and the reaction of the citizens.

Discussion ensued regarding the fact that the Department routinely publishes the dates and locations of sobriety checkpoints; various comments that were provided by citizens regarding the checkpoint; the fact that the United States Supreme Court has upheld the use of sobriety checkpoints; the fact that one of the goals of the Department in conjunction with conducting sobriety checkpoints on holiday weekends is to reduce the number of impaired-driver related traffic accidents; the correlation between the number of lake and river users and the number of arrests made at the checkpoint; the fact that saturation patrols generally require more manpower than sobriety checkpoints; and the fact that during sobriety checkpoints, officers interact with citizens on a number of safety issues, including the use of seat belts and child restraint seats.

Councilmember Whalen stated support for continuing the use of sobriety checkpoints and added that he also supports conducting checkpoints on a more frequent basis and conducting random checkpoints.

It was moved by Councilmember Whalen, seconded by Vice Mayor Kavanaugh, that the Police Department proceed with a Labor Day checkpoint on Monday, September 2, 2002.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Griswold-Jones-Kavanaugh-Walters-Whalen
NAYS - Hawker-Thom

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried by majority vote.

5. Further discussion and consideration on the utility bill and remittance envelope method to be implemented with the new Customer Information System.

Utilities Manager Dave Plumb addressed the Council and provided an overview regarding this agenda item. He reported that pursuant to Council direction at the August 1, 2002 Study Session, staff conducted utility bill weight tests to determine the postage cost impacts anticipated in connection with the new billing system and reverting to a dual envelope utility bill. He reported that staff anticipates that 5% of the City's utility bills will require a second page, which represents approximately \$16,000 in additional postage costs each year. He added that the additional postage combined with the \$8,000 additional cost for the two-envelope system represents an approximate \$24,000 annual increase over the current send-and-return utility bill system.

Mayor Hawker voiced the opinion that the send-and-return system is not a customer-friendly system. He said that although he previously supported converting to the send-and-return system because of the cost savings, he now favors returning to the two-envelope system in order to provide a more convenient system for customers.

Councilmember Thom commented on the environmental benefits associated with the send-and-return system and voiced support for its continued use.

It was moved by Councilmember Thom, seconded by Councilmember Griswold, that use of the send-and-return envelope system be continued in conjunction with the new Customer Information System.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Griswold-Jones-Kavanaugh-Thom
NAYS - Hawker-Walters-Whalen

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried by majority vote.

Mr. Plumb advised the Council that two send-and-return envelope styles are available, the style currently used by the City which has a top-flap opening and also a side flap opening style. Mr. Plumb displayed both envelope styles in the Council Chambers.

Mayor Hawker and Councilmembers Griswold and Walters stated a preference for the side-flap opening style.

It was moved by Councilmember Griswold, seconded by Councilmember Jones, that the side flap opening send-and-return envelope be utilized in the future in conjunction with the new Customer Information System.

Discussion ensued regarding the fact that there is minimal cost difference between the two send-and-return envelope styles; that staff intends to test the new billing and mailing system in November and that the target date for full implementation of the new system is December 9, 2002.

Carried unanimously.

6. Discuss and provide direction concerning the utility bill format for the ABC (A Better Community) program.

Management Assistant II Denise Bleyle addressed the Council concerning this agenda item and provided an historical overview regarding the ABC Program. She reported that in February 2002, The Arizona Republic Charities discontinued its participation in their program, which previously matched funds donated by all communities participating in the program. She added that staff is seeking Council direction with regard to the manner in which the ABC program is incorporated into the newly designed utility bills, which are expected to be implemented at the end of the year. She noted that at the February 14, 2002 Study Session, Council directed staff to maintain the \$1.00 preprinted voluntary donation on the bill and also to allow customers to donate or pledge more than \$1.00 and to allow Surepay customers to participate in the program as well.

Ms. Bleyle reported that on average, 12% of the City's customers participate in the program and during the last fiscal year, in excess of \$197,000 was donated to the ABC program.

Discussion ensued regarding the process used for customers who wish to donate more than \$1.00 each month; the issue of not including the \$1.00 voluntary donation in the bottom figure printed on the bill; and the fact that the new billing system provides flexibility with regard to bill format.

Vice Mayor Kavanaugh suggested that the last line on the bill reflect the total utility amount due, not including the \$1.00 voluntary donation.

Mayor Hawker voiced the opinion that including the \$1.00 donation amount in the total amount on the last line of the bill is deceiving. He voiced support for Vice Mayor Kavanaugh's suggestion that the total utility amount due, excluding the ABC donation, be printed on the last line of the bill.

Councilmember Thom suggested that staff utilize the Open Line or some other publicity method to provide customers information regarding the charities their donations support and commented that she is aware of confusion that exists concerning this issue.

In response to Councilmember Thom's comments, Ms. Bleyle advised that staff intends to include an article concerning the program in the Open Line in the near future.

Mayor Hawker directed staff to draft and present at a future meeting a new sample of the future bill format which incorporates the total utility amount (only) due on the bottom line of the bill, and also to produce a sample of the form that would be used by customers wishing to donate additional funds to the program.

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

Councilmember Walters reported on her participation with members of the Citizens Transportation Advisory Board in the preview of the Light Rail System in Salt Lake City. She noted that although Salt Lake City's system is now widely used and appreciated by residents, it has been a 20-year project and was very controversial in the beginning.

Mayor Hawker reported that he recently had the opportunity to interview legislative candidates Louise Daggs and Gary Pierce and he noted that he discussed the issue of State shared revenues with these candidates.

Councilmember Griswold reported that the Land Development Ad Hoc Committee conducted its first meeting earlier that day. He said that the goal of the Committee is to work with Development and Planning staff to ensure that the City becomes a model of efficiency and business friendliness.

Mayor Hawker voiced appreciation to Councilmember Griswold for chairing the Land Development Ad Hoc Committee.

8. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Thursday, August 8, 2002, 7:30 a.m. – Executive Session

Thursday, August 8, 2002, 8:00 a.m. – Study Session

Monday, August 12, 2002, 5:30 p.m. – Special Council Meeting

Monday, August 19, 2002, 8:30 a.m. – Land Development Ad Hoc Committee

Tuesday, August 20, 2002, 4:00 p.m. – General Development Committee

Monday, August 26, 2002, TBA - Study Session

Monday, August 26, 2002, 5:45 p.m. - Regular Council Meeting

9. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

There were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

10. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:30 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 Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 5th day of August 2002. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

pjt