

COUNCIL MINUTES

August 30, 2004

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 30, 2004 at 4:50 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT	COUNCIL ABSENT	OFFICERS PRESENT
Mayor Keno Hawker Rex Griswold Kyle Jones Tom Rawles Janie Thom Claudia Walters Mike Whalen	None	Mike Hutchinson Debbie Spinner Barbara Jones

1. Review items on the agenda for the August 30, 2004 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: 5f (Hawker)

Items added to the consent agenda: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: 6c (Griswold), 7f (Rawles)

Items deleted from the agenda: 6l

2. Hear a status report, discuss and consider the City of Mesa Land Development Work Plan.

Building Safety Director Terry Williams advised that Planning Director John Wesley and Assistant Fire Chief Dan Stubbs were also present to provide the quarterly Land Development Work Plan update (a copy of the PowerPoint presentation is available for review in the City Clerk's Office).

Mr. Williams reported that three items remain on the Building Safety Division's list:

- Staff continues to implement the Tidemark Permitting software system, and "E-pay," the last major element, will enable a permit to be ordered and paid for online.

- Staff anticipates that a proposal to simplify the permit fee structure will be available to the Council in approximately three months.
- A Building Services Finance Group will be created that will be responsible for internal audit and oversight of fee collections, as recommended last fall by the City Auditor.

Mr. Williams advised that in response to customer complaints regarding the telephone communications system, the following improvements have been implemented:

- An interactive voice response system was initiated three years ago, and presently the system processes approximately 800 inspection requests per week.
- Since the last report to Council, the Building Safety Call Center has been installed which strives to screen and direct calls to the appropriate person. The caller is guided through a series of prompts to direct the caller to the proper person.
- New telephones are being installed today for Building Safety personnel located in the Municipal Building.

Mr. Williams advised that the Division maintains a display board listing the key completed accomplishments, such as the recent adoption of the 2003 International Building and Fire Code, the creation of the Project Coordination Team, the repeal of the residential appliance permits, the Strategic Plan update, the creation of the Screening Team Process, and the creation of three Process Management Teams, one each for Permitting, Plans Review and Inspections.

Mr. Wesley reported that the Planning Division has completed the majority of items that were on the original work plan. He provided information on three items that have not yet been completed:

- Work continues on Sub Area Plans. The Citrus Plan has been completed, and work on the Lehi Area Plan is ongoing.
- The General Development Committee as well as other Boards and groups reviewed the Infill Development Policy. The Policy will be scheduled for Council review in the near future.
- The Planning Division's Process Management Teams were initiated in the past few months to review the Subdivision Process and Annexations. Another team will be formed shortly to address the Pre-submittal Process. A current initiative is to examine the Design Review Process in order to provide better coordination with the Planning and Zoning process,

Mr. Wesley advised that the following items that were not included on the original work plan are presently being addressed:

- Staff is processing three major General Plan Amendments.
- The Planning/GIS section is updating the method of preparing maps and new types of information that will be available to other City divisions and the public.

Mr. Wesley outlined the highlights of the Planning Division's accomplishments over the past couple of years:

- The Desert Upland Standards were recently completed.
- The Freeway Landmark Monument Sign Ordinance offers new standards.
- Interactive zoning maps are available on line to staff and the public.
- The public participation process for zoning applications was approved by the Council.

- The Council approved SCIPS (Substantial Conformance Improvement Permits) and DIPS (Development Incentive Permits) in 2002, and approximately 30 applications have been reviewed to date.
- Preliminary Plan Review Teams were established to provide coordination between the staffs of Building Safety and Planning in an effort to assist applicants in identifying requirements early on in the process.

Assistant Chief Stubbs reported on three Fire Department items:

- During the Fire Code adoption process, the Council directed staff to review the sprinkler amendments. A proposal will be presented at a Fire Committee on September 20th.
- At the request of Councilmember Whalen, the Fire Department investigated providing the Police Department with the same emergency access capability to gated communities as that of the Fire Department. He reported that the tools to provide this access are on order and should be available to the Police Department within a few weeks.
- The 20-year old Fire Department records management system is in the process of being replaced. The new system will integrate business records and greatly enhance the turnaround time for customer information requests.

Assistant Chief Stubbs advised that the highlights for the past year and a half include:

- Staff implemented an inspection procedure program that unified the method by which inspections are conducted.
- The 2003 International Building and Fire Codes were adopted.
- The department's website is constantly being updated, and the site now includes inspection and prevention information.
- Fire prevention inspector zones were established to maintain the continuity of the same inspector being responsible for the same area.
- The department partners with the Valley Fire Marshall's Association and the Arizona Fire Code Committee, and staff attends training sessions to maintain regional consistency with other Valley communities.
- The fire sprinkler ordinance has been reviewed and will be presented to the Fire Committee on September 20th.

Mr. Williams reported that the three divisions have completed 47 of the individual and joint projects that were on the original list, which accounts for approximately 80 percent. He noted that of the eight to twelve major projects that remain, many would be completed by the end of the year. Mr. Williams asked if the Council was interested in continuing to receive periodic reports on this set of improvements.

Vice Mayor Walters requested that staff continue to provide periodic updates until such time as an Infill Policy has been finalized. She suggested that future reports focus on new items, and she also expressed appreciation for the tremendous progress that has been made in this area.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson advised that the Infill Policy would be scheduled for presentation at a Study Session in the next few weeks.

Vice Mayor Walters noted that the Design Review Board minutes in the Council packet appeared to be incomplete regarding the discussion of the Infill Policy, and she requested that staff obtain additional information from the Board.

Mayor Hawker complimented staff for their efforts to streamline the process and improve the turnaround time for applicants. He advised that the consistency of inspectors has been an issue, and he emphasized the importance of addressing the issue through training. Mayor Hawker stated the opinion that when a common sense solution to a problem conflicts with an existing written rule or procedure, staff should be flexible and endeavor to arrive at a reasonable solution.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker, Assistant Chief Stubbs advised that the Fire Department maintains records of commercial building maintenance inspections. He noted that the information is available to the public for a fee.

Mr. Williams advised that Building Safety provides a similar service for records retrieval of site plans, floor plans and certificate of occupancy information. He noted that requests could be made online, and a schedule of fees is available for records retrieval and copies.

Councilmember Griswold commended staff for their efforts to update the Building Codes, and he requested that staff continue to provide Tidemark system updates to the Council. He also concurred with Vice Mayor Walters' comments regarding the Infill Policy. Councilmember Griswold advised that the Ad Hoc Redevelopment Committee was discussing the possibility of establishing an approval process for infill rehabilitation projects different from that utilized for new buildings.

Responding to Councilmember Griswold's question regarding digitalizing of records and utility maps, Mr. Wesley advised that staff is investigating software availability and reviewing records retention schedules.

In response to a question from Councilmember Whalen, Assistant Chief Stubbs advised that in addition to "hard copies," plans of major facilities such as hospitals, shopping malls and other "target hazards" are available on computer for Fire Department personnel, but he was unsure of their availability to the Police Department. He noted that the Fire Department's strategic planning process includes a policy to regularly update the information on existing buildings.

Councilmember Whalen complimented staff regarding the improved fire inspection process.

In response to a question from Mr. Hutchinson, Mayor Hawker confirmed that the Council would like to receive quarterly updates until the Infill Policy is complete.

Mayor Hawker thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of boards and committees.

- a. Board of Adjustment meeting held August 10, 2004.
- b. Design Review Board meeting held August 4, 2004.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Walters, seconded by Councilmember Jones, that receipt of the above-listed minutes be acknowledged.

Carried unanimously.

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

Councilmember Thom: Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies
(CALEA) Public Forum for the Police Department
Cricket Store Opening at Broadway and Sossaman

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

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

Thursday, September 2, 2004 – Study Session (Cancelled)

Tuesday, September 7, 2004, TBA – Study Session

Tuesday, September 7, 2004, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

Thursday, September 9, 2004, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, September 16, 2004, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Monday, September 20, 2004, 3:00 p.m. – Fire Committee

Monday, September 20, 2004, TBA – Study Session

Monday, September 20, 2004, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

Thursday, October 28, 2004 – Council Retreat

6. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

There were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:20 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 30th day of August 2004. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK