

COUNCIL MINUTES

June 5, 2006

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 June 5, 2006 at 5:00 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker
Rex Griswold
Kyle Jones
Tom Rawles
Claudia Walters
Mike Whalen

COUNCIL ABSENT

Janie Thom

COUNCIL-ELECT PRESENT

Scott Somers

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Barbara Jones

1. Review items on the agenda for the June 5, 2006 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: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

Items deleted from the agenda: 11k

2. Discuss and provide direction on FY 06/07 budget issues, including the following:

a. Human Services funding allocations.

Community Revitalization Director Kit Kelly noted that the Councilmembers received a copy of the "2006-07 Human Services Funding Recommendations" spreadsheet (see Attachment 1) that includes the funding recommendations prepared by Vice Mayor Walters.

Councilmember Rawles expressed appreciation to Vice Mayor Walters for her efforts regarding the funding. He stated the opinion that funds for the YMCA's National Youth Project should be restored to \$6570, and he advised that a private donation has been secured for the difference between that amount and the original amount requested.

Community Bridges – Substance Disorder Treatment Program

Councilmembers Jones and Whalen declared potential conflicts of interest relative to funding allocations for Community Bridges, Inc., and said they would refrain from discussion/participation in this item.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Walters, seconded by Councilmember Rawles, that Community Bridges be funded in the amount of \$90,295 for the Substance Disorder Treatment Program.

Mayor Hawker expressed the opinion that this program effectively reduces crime in the community, and he stated opposition to the motion that would reduce the funding allocation from \$96,865 to \$90,295.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Griswold-Rawles-Walters
NAYS – Hawker
ABSTAIN – Jones-Whalen
ABSENT – Thom

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

* (This funding allocation was reconsidered later during the Study Session.)

PREHAB of Arizona for the Autumn House and La Mesita Family Shelter Programs

Councilmember Whalen declared a potential conflict of interest relative to funding allocations for PREHAB of Arizona, Inc., and said he would refrain from discussion/participation in this item.

It was moved by Councilmember Rawles that funding be allocated to the Autumn House in the amount of \$34,895.

Vice Mayor Walters suggested that the motion also include funding for the other PREHAB of Arizona program, La Mesita Family Shelter.

Councilmember Rawles amended the motion to state that funding is to be allocated to the Autumn House in the amount of \$34,895 and to the La Mesita Family Shelter in the amount of \$60,973.

Vice Mayor Walters seconded the motion.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Griswold-Hawker-Jones-Rawles-Walters
NAYS – None
ABSTAIN – Whalen
ABSENT – Thom

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present and voting.

* **Community Bridges – Substance Disorder Treatment Program**

Councilmembers Jones and Whalen repeated their earlier declarations regarding potential conflicts of interest relative to funding Community Bridges' programs, and said they would refrain from discussion/participation in this item.

It was moved by Mayor Hawker that funding be allocated to Community Bridges' Substance Disorder Treatment Program in the amount of \$96,865.

Councilmember Rawles suggested that the Council delay consideration of this item until a future meeting. He expressed opposition to the motion that eliminated all funding for the YMCA's National Youth Project.

Mayor Hawker offered a compromise, which was accepted by Councilmember Rawles, to divide the \$6,570 in question between Community Bridges and the YMCA's National Youth Project.

Mayor Hawker amended his motion to state that funding is to be allocated to Community Bridges' Substance Disorder Treatment Program in the amount of \$93,580.

Vice Mayor Walters seconded the motion.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Griswold-Hawker-Rawles-Walters
NAYS – None
ABSTAIN – Jones-Whalen
ABSENT – Thom

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present and voting.

Human Services Funding

(This item does not include the previously approved funding for PREHAB of Arizona and Community Bridges.)

It was moved by Mayor Hawker, seconded by Councilmember Rawles, that the remaining funding allocations recommended by Vice Mayor Walters be approved, with the exception that the YMCA's National Youth Project would be funded in the amount of \$3,285.

Councilmember Griswold explained that this National Youth Project prevents crime by addressing children who are at risk and rewarding them with mini-bikes for good grades and school attendance.

City Attorney Debbie Spinner responded to concerns expressed by Councilmember Whalen that his support of the motion would be a vote to deny funding to agencies with which he has a potential conflict of interest. She advised that a potential conflict of interest would exist only if Councilmember Whalen attempted to shift fund allocations in order to provide a benefit to those agencies.

Mayor Hawker called for the vote.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Griswold-Hawker-Jones-Rawles-Walters-Whalen
NAYS – None
ABSENT – Thom

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

b. Exchange of personal day benefit for firefighters.

City Manager Christopher Brady advised that the Fire Department is proposing that in lieu of two personal leave days per year and the City's one-half of one percent deferred compensation contribution, each sworn Fire Department employee would receive a flat rate deferred compensation contribution in the amount of \$40 per pay period. He reported that only 12 of the 380 sworn fire department employees failed to utilize their personal leave day in the prior year.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact overtime expense is incurred when a firefighter utilizes a personal leave day; that the constant staffing requirement for sworn Fire Department personnel is not applicable to other City employees; and that funds currently allocated for the current one-half of one percent deferred compensation contribution and the Fire Department's overtime expense would address the cost of the \$40 flat rate deferred compensation contribution.

Mayor Hawker expressed support for the proposal although he noted that the Fire Department's existing work schedule was implemented at their request.

Councilmember Whalen also stated support for the proposal, and he expressed the opinion that a similar situation exists regarding staffing levels and overtime expenses for sworn Police Department personnel on patrol shifts.

Councilmember Rawles noted that he initially understood that the exchange of personal leave days was proposed as a result of firefighters being unable to utilize the benefit. He noted that the City Manager's report indicates that the personal leave is being utilized. Councilmember Rawles expressed concern that the City was establishing a disparity between firefighters and other City employees, but he advised that he would support the proposal due to the fact that the Fire Department has unique staffing requirements.

Councilmember-Elect Somers explained that the present work schedule for firefighters is cost effective and that implementing a 40-hour week could increase personnel requirements by a third. He noted that the proposal was cost neutral.

It was moved by Councilmember Jones, seconded by Vice Mayor Walters, that a flat rate deferred compensation contribution be implemented in the amount of \$40 per pay period for sworn Fire Department employees in exchange for two personal leave days and the City's present deferred compensation contribution in the amount of one-half of one percent of gross wages.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Griswold-Hawker-Jones-Rawles-Walters-Whalen
NAYS – None
ABSENT – Thom

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

In response to a question from Councilmember Rawles, Ms. Spinner advised that the Council could also address general budget issues under this agenda item.

Councilmember Rawles stated the opinion that the recommendation to implement a \$50 per month increase in the car allowance for 55 City employees was inappropriate in view of the existing budget situation.

It was moved by Councilmember Rawles that the Council instruct the City Manager to delete the \$50 per month car allowance increase for the 55 executive positions from the 2006/07 budget.

Mr. Brady advised that the budget proposal recommends that the 55 executive level City employees who are eligible for the car allowance receive a two percent cost of living (COLA) increase and a \$50 per month increase to the car allowance. He added that the budget includes a two and one-half percent COLA increase for the remaining City employees who are not eligible for a car allowance. Mr. Brady noted that the proposal returns the amount of the car allowance to the level that existed in 2001.

Councilmember Rawles stated that the difference in the COLA of one-half of one percent totals \$500 for an employee earning \$100,000 per year, and that the increase to the car allowance totals \$600 per year.

Councilmember Griswold seconded the motion.

Vice Mayor Walters stated the opinion that the City has been "balancing the budget on the backs of City employees" in recent years. She noted that the cost to drive a vehicle has increased substantially in the past year. Vice Mayor Walters explained that providing the additional one-half of one percent COLA in lieu of the car allowance would also increase the amount of the City's retirement and deferred compensation contributions. She further stated that the \$50 increase to the car allowance recognizes a real cost incurred by the employees, and she advised that she would not support the motion.

Councilmember Griswold expressed support for the motion, and he suggested that the Council reconsider the issue next year.

Mayor Hawker called for the vote.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Griswold-Rawles
NAYS – Hawker-Jones-Walters-Whalen
ABSENT – Thom

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

3. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees:

- a. Human Relations Advisory Board meeting held April 22, 2006.
- b. Finance Committee meeting held on May 1, 2006.

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

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Griswold-Hawker-Jones-Rawles-Walters-Whalen
NAYS – None
ABSENT – Thom

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

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

There were no reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

5. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

Thursday, June 8, 2006, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, June 15, 2006, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, June 22, 2006, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Monday, June 26, 2006, TBA – Study Session

Monday, June 26, 2006, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

6. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

There were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:43 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 June 2006. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

baa

Attachment (1)