



COUNCIL MINUTES

March 1, 2006

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Joint meeting with the Dobson Ranch Homeowners' Association Board of Directors at the T.C. Eggington's Brunchery, 1660 Alma School Rd., on March 1, 2006 at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT	STAFF PRESENT	DOBSON RANCH BOARD PRESENT	DOBSON RANCH STAFF PRESENT
Keno Hawker, Mayor Rex Griswold Kyle Jones Tom Rawles Janie Thom Claudia Walters	Christopher Brady Michael Dvorak Jack Friedline Bill Haney Jim Huling Barbara Jones Keith Nath	Michele Ray-Brethower, Pres. Kelly Boycks Ted Disbrow Barry Hegrenes Glen Kirk Tom Minor Sandra Murray Walter Switzer	Lynda Bailey Faye Bristow Bob Dowle Donna Chapman Renee' Coburn John Knapp
COUNCIL ABSENT	Bryan Raines Scot Rigby Rod Ross John Wesley		OTHERS PRESENT
Mike Whalen			Katherine Halstead Shelly Mardany Frank Mizner Laurie Nichols Bill Voigt Mike Wall

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Dobson Ranch Board President Michele Ray-Brethower thanked everyone for their attendance and Mayor Hawker requested that everyone introduce themselves.

2. Update on City Budget.

City Manager Christopher Brady reported that meetings were held last month with City Council to establish priorities regarding the budget. Mr. Brady discussed the forecasted budget shortfall and advised that a reduction of approximately \$25 million to the budget is necessary in order to balance the budget as required by law. He informed those present that due to the City's current financial situation it will be necessary to impose a secondary property tax on any future bond sales. In addition, Mr. Brady

commented on the compelling need to sell land owned by the City of Mesa in Pinal County, which is an additional step in an effort to assist with the City's debt service payments.

Mr. Brady stated that the City Council will be presented various options relating to the budget including the impacts to the budget should the sales tax proposal be approved but not the property tax or any combination thereof.

Financial Services Manager Bryan Raines announced that the City's fiscal year commences July 1st and reiterated Mr. Brady's comments relative to the fact that the budget will be impacted as a result of the outcome of the election in May. Mr. Raines reported that, throughout the month of March, the City Council will be discussing potential reduction alternatives and commented on the short timeframe (between the election and the adoption of budget, July 1st) for staff to prepare and present the appropriate final budget alternative.

In response to a question posed by Boardmember Glen Kirk, Mr. Brady reported that the proposed budget cuts include a significant number of reductions in personnel, library hours, museums, parks maintenance, park rangers, and police officers located on school sites along with a variety of other programs at risk.

Mr. Raines highlighted the fact that the City has had a hiring freeze on non-public safety positions that become vacant and indicated that after evaluation by the City Manager's Office many of those positions remain vacant based on Mesa's current budgetary condition.

In response to a question regarding the proposed property tax, Mr. Raines outlined the impact to the average homeowner with an assessed limited property value of \$200,000 and reported that the property tax would be estimated at approximately \$200.00 a year.

3. Explanation of City policy towards payday loan stores.

Planning Director John Wesley provided the current regulation for the City regarding Payday Loan Centers. Mr. Wesley commented on the fact that the current Mesa City Zoning Ordinance allows for the location of these Centers in most of the commercial zoned districts without any type of review or restrictions. Mr. Wesley pointed out that the State Legislature in 2000 passed a Senate Bill that authorized the creation of these Centers and stated that the City of Mesa currently has approximately 95 to 100 Centers located throughout the City. Mr. Wesley provided a map that illustrated the locations of the Centers.

Mr. Wesley commented that based on citizens' interest, the City Council has provided direction to staff to study the issue for the possible development of regulations regarding Payday Loan Centers. Mr. Wesley stated that Council's direction involves research by staff regarding other cities' requirements and regulations and noted that staff would present a recommendation to Council in June or July of this year. Mr. Wesley pointed out the fact that should new restrictions or regulations be adopted, existing Centers would not be affected (grandfathered).

4. Update on Dobson Ranch landscaping issues.

Development Services Manager, Jack Friedline, outlined some of the landscaping issues associated with the north side of Dobson Road, west of Carriage Lane. Mr. Friedline commented on the fact that the trees located in this area should not have been planted because of their growth capacity and

consequently have impacted the Salt River Project power lines located above. He reported that the trees will be removed along with the turf and replaced with xero-scape landscaping and trees.

Mr. Friedline pointed out that the type of plantings and selection of trees will be coordinated with Dobson Ranch staff representative, Lynda Bailey. He also informed those present that Lenny Hulme is the City's Deputy Director for Transportation who is in charge of field operations including street maintenance and that this employee would be working closely with Dobson Ranch regarding this project. Mr. Friedline indicated that this project should be completed in June of 2006.

Mr. Friedline also commented on other coordinated efforts with the City of Mesa and Dobson Ranch, including median enhancements on Baseline Road. He reported on the willingness of Dobson Ranch to purchase the plants and the City's role to plant and maintain those improvements.

Mr. Friedline spoke of the new ultra-thin bonding asphalt that will be utilized in smaller residential streets including overlay work south of Guadalupe Road and west of El Dorado. He stated that these projects should be started in the next few months.

In closing, Mr. Friedline pointed out that the road improvements to Dobson Road (major rehabilitation from Southern Avenue to the south end of the City limits to the western canal) is a \$2 million dollar project.

5. Update on sewer improvements.

City Engineer, Keith Nath, provided history regarding the siphon built by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) in the location of Price Road and Dobson Road during a 1997/98 timeframe. Mr. Nath explained that significant odors occurred at that location shortly after the siphon was built and in order to address the problem, the City subsequently built an odor control facility located in the southwest corner of Baseline Road and the Loop 101. He commented that although that facility did partially reduce the odor emitted, additional remedial efforts are necessary in order to resolve the odor problem.

Mr. Nath reported that a new multi stage odor control facility would be built in the area on land that the City acquired from ADOT. Mr. Nath stated that ADOT has recently agreed to participate in funding the cost of the new odor control facility and pointed out that the City Council has already awarded that contract. Mr. Nath announced that the project is scheduled to start in June of this year with a completion date sometime in September.

Mr. Nath also informed those present that efforts would be initiated to rehabilitate the siphon. He advised that in order to do the repair work to this facility, road restrictions on Baseline Road are necessary. He mentioned that, in addition to the siphon improvements, the cleaning of the sanitary sewer's fifty-four-inch line would take place as an ongoing maintenance effort to assist in reducing the odor issues.

In response to a question regarding the impact of the odor problem at Dobson Road and Baseline, Mr. Nath stated that although there will be some improvement to that location based on the cleaning of the lines there are other issues that contribute to the odors emitted in that area. In addition, Mr. Nath stated that efforts to improve odors at the structure located at Elm and Emerson will be also be expended.

6. Explanation of enterprise zones, business recruitment.

Management Assistant II, Scot Rigby, provided information (handouts) relating to Enterprise Zones including a map, which depicted the current Enterprise Zones located in Mesa. Mr. Rigby stated that these specified zones have recently been approved and adopted by the City as well as approved by the State. He explained that an enterprise zone is a State program that is designed to provide opportunities for private development to develop in a specific area that may be experiencing some economic struggles. Mr. Rigby touched on the benefits of the program, which includes a three-year tax credit to an employer and a property tax reclassification for a period of five years.

Mr. Rigby outlined the criteria levels required for a development in an Enterprise Zone and commented on the fact that the evaluation process starts with an analysis of the 2000 census figures and a review of poverty levels noted in the potential enterprise zone.

Mr. Rigby commented that an additional topic for discussion is in the area of business recruitment. He outlined four major projects that will assist the City in achieving its goal of recruiting businesses with high paying salaries for employees. He indicated that one project is the Banner Pediatric Hospital, which will be located at the Banner Desert Hospital site. He stated that this proposed six-story tower with 220 pediatric beds would be the second pediatric hospital in the entire valley. Mr. Rigby stated that this state-of-the-art facility would also bring 780 jobs with an average salary of \$50,000.

Mr. Rigby commented on the fact that Westcor will be announcing sometime in April or May of this year their renovation plans for the exterior and interior of Fiesta Mall.

Mr. Rigby discussed the proposed project, Fiesta Towers, which is a development of four 10-25 story luxury condominiums with retail located on the ground floor. He commented on the fact that the light rail corridor may have been the impedance for this type of project (high density).

Mr. Rigby discussed the activity occurring at Falcon Field including the location of an aviation aide firm with approximately 100 jobs utilizing 100,000 square feet of space. Mr. Rigby informed everyone that other aviation type businesses have expressed an interest in the area based on the freeway access that is now provided.

Another project mentioned by Mr. Rigby was the expansion to Mesa Community College's campus and parking areas.

7. Update on crime issues in Dobson Ranch.

Police Commander Mike Dvorak announced that he is the Commander of the Dobson Patrol District, which is located at 2505 S. Dobson. Commander Dvorak pointed out that there are 125 personnel, 91 of which are patrol officers that service the area seven days a week from that location and substation.

Commander Dvorak reported that calls for service in the Dobson Ranch area continue to increase, with 400 additional calls received over the previous year's level. He stated that the increase in calls for service may be attributed to the community's awareness in reporting suspicious activities, requesting welfare checks and responses to alarms. He commented on the fact that crime statistics demonstrate a decrease in the last two years in the Dobson Ranch area.

Commander Dvorak discussed the issue of traffic safety and reported that last year the City of Mesa experienced a significant amount of issues relating to traffic safety. Commander Dvorak advised that based on last year's traffic statistics, the Department is providing additional education regarding traffic laws as well as greater enforcement of traffic violations particularly in school zones. He reported that because there are approximately 100,000 individuals in a 3-mile by 5-mile area (Dobson Ranch), a densely populated area, traffic safety issues remain paramount.

Commander Dvorak also touched on other work priorities within the Police Department, which included drug activity, domestic violence and a notable fraud investigation that initially surfaced from the Dobson area. He also pointed out that street level drug activity and drug labs have decreased in the last two years and reiterated that the calls for service are likely the positive contributing factor. Commander Dvorak reported that in the last six months twenty-five drug houses were closed down.

In closing, Commander Dvorak stated that crime trends in the last two years indicate that there has been a decrease in property crimes, which also includes a dramatic decrease in auto thefts. In addition, he reported that out of the top ten addresses responsible for the greatest number of calls for service, only one is from the Dobson Ranch area.

Commander Dvorak discussed the graffiti program and confirmed the fact that graffiti appears to be on the incline and commented that this change also relates to the increase in street level gang activity. Commander Dvorak discussed the measures that have been taken by the Police Department in making several arrests of higher profile gang members and stated the opinion that these operations have had a significant impact. Commander Dvorak reported on the positive feedback received from neighborhoods relative to the graffiti program and specifically the City's graffiti hotline.

8. Other questions.

Dobson Ranch Boardmember Ted Disbrow inquired as to the City's role in addressing issues relating to the abandonment of commercial property or commercial property that is not maintained or improvements that have been made to properties that detract from the Community.

Vice Mayor Walters stated that as far as properties that are not maintained (weeds, etc.), the City's Code Compliance Department should be contacted to enforce the City's ordinances that protect our neighborhoods. Vice Mayor Walter encouraged everyone to report any problem of this type to that Department.

Councilmember Rawles discussed his long-term concern with citizens who do not exercise their right to vote and pointed out that the Dobson Ranch area has been notorious for not voting. He encouraged any efforts that may change these long-standing voting statistics.

9. Adjournment.

In closing, Mayor Hawker, thanked Dobson Ranch Boardmembers for their service and commented on the fact that Dobson Ranch has traditionally had a sense of the community, which is reflected by its property values.

Without objection, the Joint Meeting with the Dobson Ranch Homeowners' Association Board of Directors adjourned at 8:50 a.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 Joint Meeting with the Dobson Ranch Homeowners' Association Board of Directors held on the 1st day of March 2006. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 2006

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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