



COUNCIL MINUTES

December 18, 2008

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 December 18, 2008 at 7:31 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Scott Smith
Alex Finter
Dina Higgins
Kyle Jones
Dennis Kavanaugh
Dave Richins

COUNCIL ABSENT

Scott Somers

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

Mayor Smith excused Councilmember Somers from the entire meeting.

1. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction on recommendations for the FY08/09 and 09/10 budget.

City Manager Christopher Brady addressed the Council and referred to a summary document titled, "Estimated Reductions Identified in General and Quality of Life Fund Sources" (see Attachment 1).

Mr. Brady noted that during previous budget discussions, staff reported that the State would not release \$821,000 in Local Transportation Assistance Funds (LTAFII) for the Gilbert Road bus route. He advised that as a result of staff's numerous calls to members of the Legislature during the past week, the funds have been reinstated. Mr. Brady said that a December 15th email confirmed that the City would be receiving the LTAFII fund allocation.

Mr. Brady reported that the contracts for employees authorized by the City Charter would be presented to the Council in January for formal action to implement the two percent adjustment. He noted that the two percent reduction for the Mayor and Council salaries would also be presented for consideration at that time.

Addressing the issue of merit pay, Mr. Brady noted that the timing of merit increases often results in a disparity between employees in the same classification. He advised that recent savings in fuel and commodities have been sufficient to enable continuation of the merit pay adjustments during the current fiscal year. Mr. Brady stated that the long-term goal is to develop a plan that enables the implementation of future merit pay increases on the same date for employees in the same job classification.

Mayor Smith explained that a merit pay freeze on January 1 in the middle of the fiscal year creates a disparity between employees in the same job classification with different review dates.

Mr. Brady advised that staff continues to develop a plan for Municipal Security and that information will be provided to the Council at a future date.

Councilmember Finter reported that after discussing response times with staff, he was comfortable with the plan prepared by the Police Department.

In response to concerns expressed by Councilmember Higgins, Mr. Brady advised that the positions eliminated in Economic Development are primarily administrative support positions. He explained that the remaining staff would assume most of these duties, and he said that additional administrative support may be available from the Public Information Office.

Councilmember Kavanaugh commended staff and stated the opinion that the proposal was well crafted. He expressed concern regarding the reduction in library services, which are typically heavily utilized during difficult economic times. Councilmember Kavanaugh also expressed concern regarding the reduction in hours for the aviation unit, and he encouraged staff to continue to investigate uses for the former Federal Building. He added that caution should be exercised when reducing services to ensure that property values are not diminished.

Vice Mayor Jones acknowledged that the process has been difficult, and he expressed appreciation to the entire staff for their efforts.

Councilmember Richins said that the innovations developed by staff were impressive, and he added that the loss of many employees was regrettable. He thanked staff and the department heads for their efforts.

Mayor Smith concurred with Councilmember Richins' comments, and he stated the opinion that the proposed innovations would benefit the City of Mesa in the next fiscal year and in the future. He expressed the hope that as the process continues, the City would develop methods of providing a high level of service in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Mayor Smith noted that the Council is seeking additional information regarding the Municipal Security function.

Mr. Brady advised that many of the decisions were required to be made in a short period of time, and he noted that over the next few months, programs and results would be continually monitored and may result in other adjustments.

It was moved by Mayor Smith, seconded by Vice Mayor Jones, to approve the implementation of the budget plan as proposed with the understanding that the plan includes the elimination of certain departments, the consolidation of other departments, salary/compensation adjustments across the board for all employees, and that beginning January 1, 2009 staff and management are authorized to proceed with the formal actions.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES –	Finter-Higgins-Jones-Kavanaugh-Richins-Smith
NAYS –	None
ABSENT –	Somers

Mayor Smith declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

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

Councilmember Kavanaugh:	Fire Department Academy graduation ceremony. Parks & Recreation Department Fit City Challenge Event.
Vice Mayor Jones:	Valley Metro Board Meeting.
Councilmember Higgins:	Santa's Landing at Falcon Field.
Mayor Smith:	Mesa Public Schools reception for outgoing Boardmembers.

3. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Thursday, January 8, 2009, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Monday, January 12, 2009, TBA – Study Session

Monday, January 12, 2009, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

Monday, January 26, 2009, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

4. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 8:06 a.m.

SCOTT SMITH, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LINDA CROCKER, 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 18th day of December 2008. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

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Attachment (1)