

COUNCIL MINUTES

February 14, 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 February 14, 2002 at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Hawker
Jim Davidson
Bill Jaffa
Dennis Kavanaugh
Pat Pomeroy
Claudia Walters
Mike Whalen

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson
Debbie Spinner
Barbara Jones

1. Review items on the agenda for the February 19, 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 stated that items 5g (Bleacher Safety Modifications. City of Mesa Project No. 02-070) and 7d (Approving and authorizing the City Manager to execute a Cooperative Agreement among Maricopa County, City of Chandler, Town of Gilbert, Town of Queen Creek and the City of Mesa for the purpose of developing a master plan for the future development of San Tan Mountain Regional Park in Pinal County) will be removed from the consent agenda.

Mayor Hawker stated that item 8b (Z01-72 – The 500 block of South Higley [east side]) will be added to the consent agenda.

Vice Mayor Davidson declared a potential conflict of interest on agenda item 7c (Granting a Power Distribution Easement to Salt River Project near Recker Road and Queen Creek Road) and said he would refrain from discussion/participation on this item.

2. Discuss and consider ABC Program updates.

Management Assistant Denise Bleyle addressed the Council relative to this agenda item and provided an update on the City's ABC Program, which allows Mesa utility customers to donate to various charities within the community through their utility bills.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that as of February 14, 2002, the Arizona Republic Charities (ARC) will no longer provide matching funds for donations made to the ABC Program and that staff is seeking alternative matching fund sources; the fact that staff has been working to implement a new Customer Information System (CIS), which will feature an updated billing application and require a newly designed/formatted utility bill; the fact that customers using the Surepay system will be allowed to donate to the ABC Program, and the fact that the new bill format will shade and bold the boxes containing the "Utility Amount Due" to more clearly distinguish between the amount due and the donation amount.

Ms. Bleyle explained that staff is seeking direction from Council relative to Option 1, Retain the ABC Program's \$1.00 Voluntary Donation, or Option 2, Implement a Pledge System. She briefly outlined the significant features of each option. (See Attachment.)

Mayor Hawker stated that he would support Option 2, which would enable customers to indicate any specific amount they want added to their utility bills, and would also permit Surepay customers to participate in the ABC Program. Mayor Hawker requested input from the Council relative to this matter.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that a Mesa utility customer's voluntary pledge would be itemized in the "Other" section of the utility bill, and the fact that an individual who makes a voluntary donation will not be penalized if he or she is unable to fulfill their pledge amount due to a change in financial circumstances.

Councilmember Pomeroy expressed support for Option 2.

Vice Mayor Davidson expressed concerns that the implementation of the pledge system would increase staff's workload. He also stated that he would not want to see a request for additional employees to accommodate the program.

In response to a question from Councilmember Walters, Ms. Bleyle clarified that utility customers are not permitted to designate pledge donations to specific community charities.

Mayor Hawker advised that it is the consensus of Council to permit Surepay customers to participate in the ABC Program and also to allow utility customers to pledge any specific amount they want to be added to their monthly bill. He requested input from the Council with regard to retaining the \$1.00 Voluntary ABC Donation.

Mayor Hawker reported that he has received numerous telephone calls from citizens who are upset over the fact that the \$1.00 Voluntary ABC Donation is preprinted on the bills. He stated that he would prefer Option 1B, which would leave the total payment amount at the bottom of the payment stub blank and would require the customer to complete the bottom line total amount paid.

Councilmember Kavanaugh expressed support for Option 1A, which would continue the practice of preprinting the total "Utility Amount" and "Voluntary ABC Donation" line on the stub of the new utility bill format. He explained that although there were numerous citizen complaints when the ABC Program first began, the number has dropped to an estimated 12 to 40 complaints per month. Councilmember Kavanaugh added that staff's recommendations enhance the ABC Program by offering Surepay customers the opportunity to contribute to the program and is also in direct response to Mayor Hawker's suggestion that Mesa utility customers be allowed the opportunity to pledge additional amounts.

It was moved by Councilmember Kavanaugh, seconded by Councilmember Walters, that staff's recommendations for Option 1A (Retain the \$1.00 Voluntary Donation) and Option 2 (Implement a Pledge System and allow Surepay customers to contribute to the ABC Program), be approved.

Vice Mayor Davidson voiced support for the motion and concurred with Councilmember Kavanaugh's comments.

Mayor Hawker expressed opposition to staff's recommendations and expressed the opinion that Mesa utility customers who wish to donate to the ABC Program should write in the amount of their donation. He added that a preprinted donation should not be included on the bill.

Councilmember Walters stated support for the motion and noted that the ABC Program offers Mesa utility customers an easy method of contributing to various community charities.

Councilmembers Jaffa and Whalen concurred with the opinions of their fellow Councilmembers. Councilmember Whalen commented that the ABC Program is a valuable funding source for many community charities and said the program should continue.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Davidson-Jaffa-Kavanaugh-Pomeroy-Walters-Whalen
NAYS - Hawker

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried by majority vote.

Mayor Hawker thanked Ms. Bleyle for her presentation.

3. Appointments to boards and committees.

Mayor Hawker recommended the following appointments to Boards and Committees:

HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD

Donna Klamm

It was moved by Councilmember Pomeroy, seconded by Councilmember Kavanaugh, that the Council concur with the Mayor's recommendation and the appointment be confirmed.

Carried unanimously.

4. Hear an update and consider issues associated with the proposed site(s) for the Multipurpose Facility.

- a. Consider submitting a Multipurpose Facility proposal.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson updated the Council relative to this agenda item. He referred to a map displayed in the Council Chambers and reviewed various points of interest including the proposed site for the multipurpose facility (southwest of Dobson Road and the Red Mountain Freeway (Loop 202); Riverview Park, which would be retained at its present location; Riverview Golf Course, which would be eliminated as part of the proposal; property currently owned by Arizona State University (ASU), and a possible site for 19,000 parking spaces. Mr. Hutchinson explained that staff is currently in negotiations with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and ASU to obtain additional parking spaces which could be utilized by the City in conjunction with a shuttle system to the multipurpose facility. Mr. Hutchinson added that various parking garages in downtown Mesa may also provide additional parking spaces.

Mr. Hutchinson reported that the deadline for host cities to submit their proposals to the Tourism and Sports Authority (TSA) is tomorrow at 5:00 p.m. He explained that in an effort to bridge the City's current \$33 million funding gap to finance the multipurpose facility's site preparation and infrastructure, staff is attempting to form partnerships with various entities including the Arizona Cardinals and the City of Tempe. Mr. Hutchinson added that field exploration and laboratory testing of the proposed site has been completed.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that staff's ongoing discussions with the Hurley family, the owners of the proposed site, have been positive and productive with regard to the City's proposal; the fact that staff is attempting to ensure that the multipurpose facility will enhance private sector development, and the fact that the elimination of the Riverview Golf Course would provide the City additional parking spaces.

In response to a question from Councilmember Pomeroy, Mr. Hutchinson clarified that in addition to Mesa's proposal, the five remaining sites include downtown Phoenix, 40th Street and the Loop 202, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Fort McDowell Indian Community, and the Gila River Indian Community.

Discussion ensued relative to potential land costs for the Hurley and ASU properties, and possible land swaps between Tempe and Mesa.

Councilmember Kavanaugh expressed support for the facility's site placement due to the fact it would mitigate the impact on residential neighborhoods to the south, provide appropriate transportation access, and offer opportunities for ancillary development on the Hurley property.

Vice Mayor Davidson concurred with Councilmember Kavanaugh's comments and also urged the TSA to reconsider the rollout field as a requirement of the multipurpose facility. Vice Mayor

Davidson also voiced concerns regarding the close proximity of the Northwest Water Reclamation Plant to the multipurpose facility.

Councilmember Walters commended Mr. Hutchinson and staff for their efforts to keep Mesa residents abreast of the issue in a very public and open manner.

Councilmember Pomeroy stressed the fact that Riverview Park would be retained under the City's proposal and that it would serve as a buffer between the multipurpose facility and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. He also noted that the placement of the site would provide the visitors with view of the surrounding mountains as opposed to looking at the water reclamation plant.

Mayor Hawker stated that he would welcome a partnership with Tempe to assist Mesa in bridging the \$33 million funding gap to finance the facility's infrastructure and site preparation. He voiced concerns, however, regarding Tempe's annexation of City land. Mayor Hawker also urged support for the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community's proposal and said that consideration should be given to a cooperative effort between Mesa and the Indian Community to construct a bridge across Dobson Road which would provide greater accessibility to the site.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker relative to the recent environmental test results at the City's proposed site, City Engineer Keith Nath explained that four test borings reflected soil-bearing pressures in the range of approximately 14,000 pounds, which meets the TSA's preliminary requirements. He also said that two deep borings hit ground water at 69 and 78 feet respectively. Mr. Nath added that if the Mesa site is ultimately selected by the TSA, further soil testing will be required; however, at this time, it is not anticipated that the City will incur additional testing costs.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker, Mr. Hutchinson clarified that despite the fact the City's proposal does not address a \$650,000 annual lease payment which the Cardinals are obligated to make to the City of Tempe, it is one of many issues that staff will discuss with the TSA in the upcoming weeks. He stated the opinion that if Tempe waived or reduced the fee, Mesa's proposal may be more appealing to the Cardinals and that it might allow them to contribute additional funding towards land acquisition and/or related costs.

Mayor Hawker commented that although there is currently a \$33 million funding gap, he supports forwarding the City's proposal to the TSA. He commented that potential ticket surcharges or assistance from the National Football League (NFL) may occur in the future. He requested input from the Councilmembers relative to this issue.

Further discussion ensued regarding the projected operational and maintenance costs of the multipurpose facility.

Councilmember Whalen voiced support for the proposal and thanked staff for their efforts and hard work in this regard. He stressed the importance of reaching out to neighboring communities for support to ensure that the facility is developed in the East Valley.

Councilmember Kavanaugh expressed support for proceeding with the submission of the proposal and concurred with Councilmember Whalen's comments. He stated that public and

private partnerships are essential for the proposal's success. Councilmember Kavanaugh added that the development of the multipurpose facility in the East Valley would encourage the cleanup of the County islands between Tempe, Mesa and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. He cautioned, however, that moving City boundaries to accommodate a project such as this could create a legal quagmire.

Councilmember Jaffa concurred with Councilmember Kavanaugh's comments. He also suggested that staff pursue Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) with various entities in an effort to achieve partnerships as opposed to considering annexation proceedings.

Councilmember Walters stated that with the current budget shortfalls in many East Valley communities, the City's ability to form private partnerships becomes even more crucial. She discussed Mesa's previous partnership with Tempe and encouraged staff to reestablish the alliance. Councilmember Walters also concurred with Councilmember Kavanaugh's opinion regarding annexation. She commented that Mesa has an excellent site, but assured the City's residents that the Council is doing nothing more than submitting a proposal at this time and emphasized that no financial commitment has been made by the Council relative to this matter. Councilmember Walters thanked Andrea Esquer and staff for their efforts and hard work with regard to the proposal.

It was moved by Councilmember Walters, seconded by Councilmember Kavanaugh, that submission of the Multipurpose Facility proposal to the Tourism and Sports Authority be approved.

Vice Mayor Davidson expressed support for the motion and urged other East Valley cities to partner with Mesa in an effort to reduce the \$33 million funding shortfall.

Councilmember Pomeroy voiced support for the motion as long as the City's funding shortfall is met and that the taxpayers of Mesa and the State of Arizona are not burdened with such costs. He added that in his opinion, Mesa has always been the best site for the multipurpose facility.

Councilmember Jaffa stated that he would support the motion, but stressed that receipt of additional financial information is essential in order to enable the Council to accurately assess the feasibility of the project.

Councilmember Walters concurred with Mayor Hawker's suggestion relative to supporting the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and its proposal.

Carried unanimously.

Mayor Hawker thanked staff for their presentation.

5. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of boards and committees.

- a. Downtown Development Committee meeting held January 28, 2002.
- b. Economic Development Advisory Board meeting held January 8, 2002.
- c. Joint meeting of the Joint Master Planning Committee/Transportation Subcommittee held January 15, 2002.

- d. Judicial Advisory Board meeting held January 2, 2002.

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

Carried unanimously.

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

Vice Mayor Davidson reported on his and Councilmember Whalen's attendance at a recent conference in Mesa's Sister City Guaymas, Mexico. He provided an update on some of the major topics of discussion including housing, immigration and also the reestablishment of a student exchange program. He added that he also had the opportunity to meet with Guaymas Mayor Bernardino Cruz Rivas.

Councilmember Whalen stated that during his visit to Guaymas, he became aware of the city's traffic control system and the fact that when a light has been green for a period of time, it begins to flash green just before it turns yellow. He requested that Transportation Director Ron Krosting conduct research relative to this method of traffic control and its feasibility in the City of Mesa. Councilmember Whalen stressed that this method could represent an effective means by which to warn motorists when a traffic light is turning yellow and to reduce the number of red light runners.

Councilmember Jaffa advised that he and other Councilmembers attended the Development Advisory Forum which addressed an update of the design guidelines and a review of the new upfront fees process.

7. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

Tuesday, February 19, 2002, TBA – Study Session

Tuesday, February 19, 2002, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

Thursday, February 21, 2002, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Monday, February 25, 2002, 3:30 p.m. – Finance Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 28, 2002, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, February 28, 2002, 9:30 a.m. – General Development Committee Meeting

8. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

There were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

9. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 9:02 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 Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 14th day of February 2002. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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Attachment