

CITIZENS' BOND REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 25, 2000

The Citizens' Bond Review Committee - 2000 of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on May 25, 2000 at 6:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

C. K. Sato, Chairman
Nick Carr
Barry Dickerson
Connie Gullatt-Whitman
Jack Gunter
Eric Jackson
Pat Langdon
Pat Mendivil
Will Moore
Dan Reeb
George Smith

STAFF PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson
Linda Crocker
Joe Holmwood
Barbara Jones
Wayne Korinek
Bryan Raines
Bill Way
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Barrett Marson
Marilynn Wennerstrom

COMMITTEE ABSENT

Judy Adams
Wilford Anderson
Robert Brinton
Charlie Deaton
Ferdie Guerrero, Jr.
Carol McCormack
Laurie Nichols
Beverly Selvage

COUNCIL PRESENT

Jim Davidson
Keno Hawker
Pat Pomeroy

1. Welcome and reintroduction of Participating Members – C.K. Sato.

Chairman Sato welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the members of the Committee for their efforts to attend this meeting on such short notice. Chairman Sato excused the members of the Committee who were unable to attend (see list above) and acknowledged the presence of City staff at the meeting.

2. Presentation and Discussion of the Issue – Councilmember Jim Davidson & City Manager Mike Hutchinson.

Councilmember Davidson thanked the members of the Committee for their willingness to assist the City Council once again and commended them on their past performance. Councilmember Davidson stated

that he is speaking for himself and as a sole member of the Mesa City Council. Chairman Davidson expressed concerns regarding the bond election and where the City goes from here relative to Parks and Recreation, and Capital Improvement projects that have been put on hold since the defeat of approximately \$62 million in bonds for the completion of those projects at the March Primary Election. Councilmember Davidson commented that stormwater bonds were also rejected by the voters but indicated that this area is not as crucial as the other two in terms of providing much needed services to the citizens of Mesa.

Councilmember Davidson informed the Committee that current funding in the Parks and Recreational area is capped at \$35 million and noted that voters rejected expanding that cap to \$62 million. Councilmember Davidson reported that the City's existing bonds will be depleted in 2002 and added that two-thirds of that amount will be used in the current budget cycle and the remaining one-third will be used in the 2001-2002 budget. Councilmember Davidson stated that funding for the proposed Five Year Capital Improvement Program for parks and recreation will fall dramatically short of what was envisioned.

Councilmember Davidson expressed the opinion that the current stock is insufficient to serve the needs of the citizens and discussed the results of a survey that was conducted among the Mesa Parent/Youth Association regarding the members' perception of the City's needs. Councilmember Davidson reported that a lack of ball fields and the need for lighted ball fields was listed repeatedly by the survey respondents and agreed that the existing fields cannot accommodate the 28,000 youths who participate in sports and athletic activities within the City of Mesa.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the Planning Department has identified the areas of the City where the growth levels of families has dramatically increased and noted that those areas are lacking in parks, community services and recreational amenities and discussed the difficulties associated with transporting youths across the 124 square miles of Mesa to locate an available park site that can be used.

Councilmember Davidson stated that should the Committee determine that a sufficient amount of parks/recreational sites and amenities exists to allow the City to wait an additional two years to vote once again on the bonding issues, the question then becomes how many children will not be provided an opportunity to participate in sports activities because of this four-year gap in providing the amenities.

Councilmember Davidson informed the members of the Committee that two Councilmembers support calling an election in September 2000 but noted that a majority of the Council believes that the bond issues should not be placed on the ballot of an election until March 2002. Councilmember Davidson urged the members of the Committee to consider recommending to the Council that the bond issues be placed on the ballot of an election in September 2000.

Assistant City Manager Mike Hutchinson noted that three bond issues were defeated at the March Primary Election and said that staff has been developing a list of which projects may be deferred and which projects are more pressing. Mr. Hutchinson discussed staff's opinion that the stormwater drainage projects may be delayed. Mr. Hutchinson advised that one of the major Capital Improvement Bond projects was the expansion of the Mesa City Court building and adjoining parking and explained that when the additional police officers that were approved by the voters are hired, this will impact the courts and create a need for additional support staff. Mr. Hutchinson expressed the opinion that this is a critical project and said that the cost is \$9.8 million.

Mr. Hutchinson stressed the importance of adequate planning in the parks and recreational area and said that land acquisition is a critical component in developing a parks system for the City over time. Mr. Hutchinson stated the opinion that land acquisition for parks is essential and added that the land may not be available at a later date and/or may significantly increase in price. Mr. Hutchinson also commented

that ballfield lighting is crucial and noted that the City of Mesa is already behind in their scheduled lighting of ball fields.

Mr. Hutchinson stated that the neighborhood park improvements are important and discussed the City's commitment to the citizens to stabilize neighborhoods by providing those amenities. Mr. Hutchinson also informed the Committee that staff has determined that golf course development (East Mesa golf course and the Junior Learning Center) may be deferred to allow more pressing projects to occur.

Mr. Hutchinson commented on the proposed expansion/land acquisition for the Mesa Southwest Museum and expressed the opinion that based on the acceleration in prices for land in the downtown area, the acquisition of this property should take place as quickly as possible.

Mr. Hutchinson added that staff is prepared to respond to questions from the Committee regarding these matters.

3. Discuss and consider:

- a. Whether various projects should be brought back to the voters this September as part of the Primary Election?
- b. What projects, if any, should be included for reconsideration?
- c. If projects warrant reconsideration, should the potential ballot questions be subdivided into more specific groupings?

Mr. Hutchinson noted that the Council has requested that the Committee address each of the above-listed questions (a, b and c) and encouraged the members of the Committee to pose questions to staff and provide input relative to these issues.

Councilmember Davidson commented that Mayor Brown and a majority of the Council who support waiting until 2002 to place these issues before the voters has questioned the course of action that would be followed in 2002 if the bond issues are placed on a September 2000 ballot and once again defeated. Councilmember Davidson added that Mayor Brown has expressed the opinion that it is too soon to place these items before the voters once again and that an earlier defeat in September may jeopardize the vote in 2002. Councilmember Davidson stated the opinion that placing these items on another ballot is, in fact, in accordance with the will of the voters and said that he is hearing that the citizens didn't understand the issues and would vote differently if given another opportunity.

Committeemember Mendivil expressed the opinion that an additional priority would be the 6th Street Maintenance Facility and noted the deplorable condition of that building.

Committeemember Langdon stated that all of the proposed bond proposals were appropriate based on the City's current and anticipated growth and added that he shares Mayor Brown's concerns. Committeemember Langdon questioned whether the bond issues could be placed on the ballot of a Special Election to be held in the Spring of 2001.

Discussion ensued relative to timing and the importance of proceeding with the critical bond issues; the fact that a full ballot may negatively impact the vote on the bond issues, particularly in view of the fact that the City's issues would be placed at the end of the ballot; the fact that the County has offered the City a substantial reduction in cost for participating in the September rather than November election (15 cents per registered voter versus 73 cents); the fact that the County has indicated that the ballot for November is already full but the bond issues could be placed on the September 12, 2000 ballot; staff's opinion that the

City's bond attorney's suggestion regarding language changes to the General Obligation bond items significantly contributed to the defeat of those bonds, and the fact that the same language is now a statutory requirement.

In response to a question from Committeemember Mendivil relative to educating the public on these issues and providing visual proof that for example the 6th Street Maintenance facility is in need of repair, Mr. Hutchinson discussed restrictions that are placed on the City regarding the type of materials and information that may be provided to the public.

City Clerk Barbara Jones informed the Committee that the cost to hold a November 2000 or a March 2001 Special Election would be approximately \$150 to \$170,000 while a September election would cost approximately \$60,000. Ms. Jones clarified that the amount does not include the cost of the publicity pamphlet and other costs that are not provided by the County.

Committeemember Reeb thanked Councilmember Davidson for his efforts in this regard and said that the Committee supported almost all of the bond issues that they reviewed for possible placement on the March 2000 election. Committeemember Reeb suggested that the Committee look into what they can do as a whole to promote the bonds, for example, forwarding a letter to the newspaper in support of the proposals. Mr. Reeb expressed the opinion that the Committee should address the land acquisition for the Southwest Museum, the Capital Improvements and the Park bonds and determine what can be put before the voters in concise language for their approval.

Committeemember Smith stated the opinion that should the Committee determine that the projects are valid, the items should be placed on a ballot for voter consideration as quickly as possible.

Chairman Sato questioned whether any members of the Committee were adamantly opposed to the placement of bond issues on the ballot of either a September 2000 or March 2001 election. Chairman Sato stated that in the absence of opposition, he would like the Committee to determine which issues should be placed on the ballot and which issues may be deferred to a later date.

Councilmember Davidson informed the members of the Committee that Councilmember/Mayor Elect Keno Hawker was present at the meeting and suggested that Councilmember Hawker be provided an opportunity to present his opinion regarding this issue.

Councilmember Hawker expressed the opinion that all of the bond issues may be deferred until the regularly scheduled March 2002 Primary Election. Councilmember Hawker added that funds may be limited for some of the work that is scheduled and land costs may escalate in the interim, but said that the court expansion and the acquisition of raw land should be delayed. Councilmember Hawker commented that he is reluctant to place any issues on a ballot when the voters have clearly indicated their opposition. Councilmember Hawker pointed out that the voters did approve funding for Police and Fire projects and expressed the opinion that the voters were aware of the different issues and voted against allowing the City to accumulate additional debt.

Councilmember Hawker cautioned the Committee against proceeding too quickly with these issues and added that should the Committee decide to pursue the placement of the issues on a ballot, he would recommend that the language be specific and state that the proposed items are absolutely critical to the City of Mesa. Councilmember Hawker also stated that he would prefer the placement of the issues on the September 2000 ballot and expressed the opinion that the voters will be hesitant to approve any additional funding requests once they have voted on all of the issues included on the November 2000 ballot.

Additional discussion ensued among the members of the Committee relative to the placement of pro and/or con arguments in the publicity pamphlet and the fact that the Committee could pursue the

placement of an argument, the fact that the members of the Committee unanimously support staff's recommendation that stormwater issues be deferred to a later date, staff's opinion that renovation of the 6th Street Maintenance facility be delayed and revisited by staff in one year, and the fact that the City of Mesa has never levied a secondary property tax.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Director Joe Holmwood and Community Services Manager Wayne Korinek addressed the Committee relative to parks and recreation bonds. Mr. Korinek referred to a handout distributed to the members of the Committee which outlined the various proposed projects including land acquisition. Mr. Korinek stressed the importance of securing land for future parks within the City of Mesa and added that the acquisition of land located on the west side of Macdonald is necessary in order to accommodate expansion of the Southwest Museum. Mr. Korinek discussed the importance of acquiring land for the development of a future District Park and expressed concern that delaying this purchase may result in the inability of the City to locate an alternate site for the park.

Committeemember Moore stated the opinion that parks and recreation projects, if placed on the ballot and marketed heavily, will mobilize a different constituency of families who are affected by the loss of the proposed parks and ball fields. Committeemember Moore indicated his support for proceeding with an election in September 2000 and said that the ballot should be limited to park land acquisition, youth athletics, and swimming pool issues. Committeemember Moore added the opinion that projects which benefit the youths of our City will be approved by the voters.

Committeemember Gullatt-Whitman stressed the importance of land acquisition and added that projects such as Park of the Canals and the Mesa Grande Ruins should be not delayed.

Committeemember Gunter spoke in support of calling an election in September 2000 and commented that the turnout at special elections is significantly less than at regularly scheduled elections.

Committeemember Langdon stated the opinion that land acquisition is a top priority and urged the Committee to support placing this issue on the ballot of whatever election date is decided.

Committeemember Jackson concurred with Committeemember Moore's remarks relative to the fact that a constituency does exist which supports park and recreation projects. Committeemember Jackson added that these items should be placed on the ballot of the September 2000 election.

Chairman Sato commented that although the final decision will be the responsibility of the City Council, it is his hope that the Committee will provide the Council with specific recommendations for their consideration.

Chairman Sato requested input relative to a recommendation that the land acquisition issues be placed on the ballot of the September 12, 2000 election and that all of the other bond issues be deferred to either the March 2001 or March 2002 election. Chairman Sato added that this recommendation includes acquisition of land for the Southwest Museum.

Committeemember Smith recommended that issues relating to park land acquisition and youth activities (first and second bolded items on the attached memorandum from Mike Hutchinson dated May 16, 2000) be placed on the ballot for total funding in the amount of approximately \$40 million.

Committeemember Dickerson concurred with Committeemember Smith's remarks and noted the importance of providing in-depth information in the publicity pamphlet relative to these items and their impact on the youths of the City.

Committeemember Langdon also agreed with the recommendations presented by Committeemember Smith.

Committeemember Reeb expressed concerns regarding the placement of land acquisition issues on the ballot and questioned whether these items should be deferred.

Committeemember Smith also stressed the importance of proceeding without delay and said that he would prefer the placement of two questions on the ballot, one that would include the two items from the memorandum and a second question that would relate to land acquisition for the museum.

Additional discussion ensued among the members of the Committee relative to combining the first two bolded items listed in the memorandum and the acquisition of land for the Southwest Museum into one question rather than two.

Chairman Sato requested input from the Committee relative to placing land acquisition items on the ballot.

Committeemember Smith cautioned the Committee against cluttering the ballot and said that he supports placing land acquisition for the Southwest Museum on the ballot.

Committeemember Moore commented that he supports both items one and two in the memo and combining them into one question for the September ballot. Committeemember Moore also spoke in support of the acquisition of the museum land.

Committeemember Dickerson said that he supports the placement of one question containing items one and two and the land acquisition question for the museum on the ballot of the September 12, 2000 election.

Committeemembers Gullatt-Whitman, Pat Mendivil and Jack Gunter concurred with Committeemember Dickerson's remarks.

Committeemember Carr stated the opinion that the only item that should be placed on the ballot of the September election is land acquisition.

Committeemember Langdon said that he also agrees with Committeemember Dickerson's comments and added that he would support either a combined question or two separate questions.

Committeemember Smith also supported Committeemember Dickerson's remarks.

Committeemember Reeb concurred that only one item should be placed on the ballot (combining items one and two in the memo) but added that there are items under each of those categories that he would recommend be deferred to a later date. Committeemember Reeb stressed the importance of lowering the total amount and placing only items of critical importance on the ballot.

Committeemember Jackson concurred with Committeemember Dickerson's suggestion.

Chairman Sato expressed support for the placement of two separate questions on the ballot of the September 12, 2000 election.

It was moved by Committeemember Moore that the Committee recommend to the City Council that a September 2000 election be called and that one question be placed on the ballot to go before the voters

that would include the first and second bolded items in Mr. Hutchinson's memorandum and land acquisition only for the Southwest Museum.

In response to a request for input from Chairman Sato, Committeemember Reeb stated that he would support deferring certain land acquisitions and said that he would promote only specific items that would result in the immediate spending of funds that improve existing park facilities and expanded facilities to make them available in the near term.

Committeemember Moore commented on the fact that not only will the land be more expensive in the future, the sites may not be available if the City does not act as quickly as possible. Committeemember Moore added the opinion that development and acquisition funding should also be included in the question.

Chairman Sato requested that members of the Committee who support the placement of the first and second bolded items in Mr. Hutchinson's May 16, 2000 memo and land acquisition for the Southwest Museum, for a total amount of \$43.4 million, under one question on the ballot of the September 12, 2000 election raise their hands.

Chairman Sato announced that the vote is seven ayes and four nays with Chairman Sato and Committeemembers Carr, Langdon and Reeb voting nay.

Chairman Sato also stressed the importance of the Committee authoring an argument to be placed in the publicity pamphlet for the September 2000 election, if approved by the Council, and said that he will work with Committeemember Langdon on a draft argument for the Committee to review. Chairman Sato added the opinion that the proposed argument should be part of the total proposal that is forwarded to the Council.

Committeemember Gunter stressed the importance of clarifying for the record that the four votes that were cast against the motion were done so because the Committeemembers were divided on proposed tactics and language and not because they disagreed that the items should be placed on the ballot.

Committeemember Langdon stated that his opposition is based solely on his opinion that two questions rather than one should be placed on the ballot.

Committeemember Carr commented that he believes that land acquisition items only should be placed on the ballot.

Committeemember Reeb expressed the opinion that the total amount of funding requests should be reduced. Committeemember Reeb stated that he supports land acquisition of the State land for the District Park and ball field lighting and upgrades.

Chairman Sato requested input from the Committee relative to the placement of the golf course, Historical Museum development and City Court Complex expansion issues on a future ballot.

It was moved by Committeemember Smith, seconded by Committeemember Jackson, to recommend to the Council that the above three listed items be placed on the ballot of the March 2002 regularly scheduled Primary Election.

Committeemember Reeb expressed concerns regarding the 6th Street Maintenance Facility and the Court Building expansion and stressed the importance of proceeding with these items as soon as possible. Committeemember Reeb questioned whether a single-line item relating to both of these issues could be

placed on the ballot of the November election. Committeemember Reeb added the opinion that a sufficient number of golf courses already exist in northeast Mesa at the current time.

Ms. Jones noted that the County has advised that the November ballot is completely full and said that in order to place this item on a November ballot, the City would have to call its own election and place the item Committeemember Reeb suggested on a separate ballot.

Committeemember Reeb stated that he will leave this matter up to the City Council to consider.

Chairman Sato requested that the members of the Committee indicate by a show of hands whether they support deferring the golf course, Historic Museum facility development and City Court Complex to the March 2002 Primary Election.

Chairman Sato announced that the Committee unanimously supports this recommendation.

Chairman Sato thanked City staff and the members of the Committee for their continued effort and support.

4. Public Comment.

Chairman Sato stated that there were no citizens present wishing to present input at this time.

5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Citizens' Bond Review Committee - 2000 Meeting of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 25th day of May 2000. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 2000

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

Attachment

May 16, 2000

TO: MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL
FROM: MIKE HUTCHINSON
SUBJECT: Potential Bond Authorization Groupings

During your Council Study Session on May 15, Council directed staff to investigate potential restructuring of the Parks and City Court facility components of the previously submitted bond questions. In response to Council's direction, staff has met and developed the following five potential bond question groupings and their potential values:

Park Land Acquisition, Development and Renovation (\$20.6M):

- Bambi/64th St. Neighborhood Park Development
- New Neighborhood Park Development
- Neighborhood Park Acquisition
- Community Park Acquisition
- District Park Acquisition
- Sherwood Park Renovation
- Riverview Park Playground Renovation

Youth Athletic & Swimming Pool Facilities and Multi-use, Canal Bank, Path Development (\$19.3M):

- Recker & Thomas Youth Sports Complex
- Athletic Field Lighting
- New Pool at Smith Jr. High (Adobe & Crismon)
- Carson Pool Renovation
- McDowell to Greenfield Multi-use, Canal Bank path
- Greenfield to Granite Reef Multi-use, Canal Bank path

Golf Course Development (\$10.7M):

- Riverview Golf Course Junior Learning Center
- Red Mountain Golf Course

Historic and Museum Facilities & Acquisition(\$11.4M):

- Park of the Canals Development
- Mesa Grande Ruins Development
- Southwest Museum Land Acquisition, Expansion & Design

City Court Complex Expansion (\$9.8M):

Please advise if your have any questions or comments.