

COUNCIL MINUTES

August 14, 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 August 14, 2006 at 4:15 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT	COUNCIL ABSENT	OFFICERS PRESENT
Mayor Keno Hawker Rex Griswold Kyle Jones Tom Rawles Scott Somers Claudia Walters Mike Whalen	None	Christopher Brady Debbie Spinner Barbara Jones

1. Review items on the agenda for the August 14, 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: 7d, k, m and n (Hawker); 9k, l, m and n (Griswold)

Items removed from the agenda: 3c

Items added to the consent agenda: 9b

2. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction to staff regarding the new Court Building, including the following:

a. Parking Issues

Senior Town Center Development Specialist Patrick Murphy and Tom Verploegen, President of the Downtown Mesa Association, were present to provide information on parking issues.

Mr. Murphy displayed a "Parking Analysis" chart (see Attachment 1) that outlined the parking space availability in the area of the proposed new Court Building. He reported that after meeting the demand of the proposed Court facility (based on 12 courtrooms), the Pomeroy Garage would have 326 unused parking spaces, which is sufficient to address the parking requirements of a 122,000 square foot office building.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker regarding the fact that previous reports indicated that approximately 220 spaces were committed on a long-term basis, Mr. Verploegen explained that currently 199 spaces are committed for long-term use, and that “decal” parking spaces leased on a month-to-month basis represent the difference in numbers.

Mr. Murphy said that a 138,000 square foot office building requires 368 parking spaces and that 128 on-street spaces were available within a 3-1/2 minute walk, which addresses the 42 space deficit (368 required spaces less 326 available parking spaces) in the Pomeroy Garage.

Mr. Verploegen clarified that 268 on-street parking spaces are located within a 3-1/2 minute walk of the proposed Court facility and that 128 of these spaces are typically available for use. He stated the opinion that adequate parking is available to meet the needs of both the Court facility and a future office building. He also confirmed that the property located south of Pete’s Fish and Chips would not be required for future parking.

b. Project Budget and Scope

City Manager Christopher Brady noted that the Council did not have an opportunity to study the information (see Attachment 2) provided shortly before this meeting. He stated that staff would present an overview of the material, and he suggested that the Council refer the project to a Council Subcommittee, such as the General Development Committee (GDC), for a detailed evaluation and a recommendation to the full Council.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker regarding the Construction Manager at Risk (CM at Risk) contract, City Engineer Keith Nath recommended that the Council move forward to approve the contract. He stated that an immediate decision on the Court Building design was not necessary, and that a Council decision within the next two months would be satisfactory.

Mr. Nath displayed a chart titled, “Required Project Size & Budget” (see page 1 of Attachment 2), that outlines five alternatives for construction of the Court facility based on 2007 dollars. He noted that the first option for a \$33,616,000 building is within the original budget as approved by the voters in 2004. He explained that the building would be smaller than originally planned as a result of escalating construction costs.

Presiding City Magistrate Matt Tafoya advised that the City presently has eight courtrooms.

Mr. Nath stated that options two through four list the estimated costs to address the future requirement for additional courtrooms through 2020. He reviewed the information listed on the pages titled “Additional Requested Spaces by Option” (see pages 2, 3 and 4 of Attachment 2).

Councilmember Rawles said that he would delay his questions until the GDC meeting if the Councilmembers supported Mr. Brady’s recommendation to refer the issue to the Committee.

Dick Shiffer, a principal with RNL Architects, advised that his firm performed the “Judicial Needs Assessment.” He stated that six different models were prepared, and he displayed the page titled “Methodology for Projecting Judicial Positions and Court Rooms” (see page 5 of Attachment 2). Mr. Shiffer emphasized that the data is a “projection” rather than a “prediction.” He reported that Methods I and IA are based strictly on population, and he added that Methods II, III, IIIA and IV each employ different methods to calculate the “Filings per Judicial Officer.”

Mr. Shiffer referred to the "Comparison of Alternative Methodologies" (see page 6 of Attachment 2), which projects the number of Judicial Officers. He said that that an average of all the methodologies indicates a requirement for twelve Judicial Officers in 2015, which would equate to 12 courtrooms, and he added that all of the numbers in 2025 are larger than 11. He recommended that although the maximum number of courtrooms would not be constructed initially, that the project be "master planned" to provide the flexibility to add future courtrooms when needed.

It was moved by Mayor Hawker, seconded by Councilmember Griswold, that the proposed Court Building be referred to the General Development Committee for further review, evaluation, and a recommendation to the full Council.

Carried unanimously.

Mayor Hawker offered the Councilmembers who do not serve on the GDC an opportunity to ask questions or offer comments.

Councilmember Griswold requested that staff obtain a valuation of the Main Street property in the event the Council decides to sell the property, and he inquired whether the sale proceeds could be applied to the cost of the Court Building.

Responding to a suggestion by Mayor Hawker that a night court operation could reduce the requirement for additional courtrooms, Judge Tafoya stated that operating costs (staffing, security, etc.) would be a major consideration. He noted that similar studies in the past concluded that the costs to operate a night court were excessive.

Mayor Hawker requested that staff develop cost data regarding the implementation of a night court system compared to the cost to increase the number of courtrooms from ten to twelve.

In response to a comment by Councilmember Griswold that future technological innovations should be anticipated, Judge Tafoya noted that an imaging system recently approved by the Supreme Court is being implemented. He explained that time and space constraints at the Maricopa County Jail limit the use of video technology.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that security plans should include current technology; that the new Court facility is projected to be operational in late 2009 or early 2010; that staff is preparing funding source information for the various alternatives; that members of the GDC will be provided a copy of the "Judicial Needs Assessment" report in advance of the next Committee meeting; that the Committee's evaluation will include comparable fees charged by other cities; and that the GDC will also address the estimated remodeling costs and financing required to convert the existing Court facility for Police Department use.

Mayor Hawker thanked staff for the presentation.

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

Vice Mayor Walters:	Mesa Public Schools Employee Dinner Mesa Leadership Class Event Neighborhood Meeting at Edison Elementary School Phoenix Press Conference regarding the Serial Shooters
---------------------	--

4. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Christopher Brady stated that the scheduling of meetings is as follows:

Thursday, August 17, 2006, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Thursday, August 24, 2006, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session (Cancelled)

Monday, August 28, 2006, TBA – Study Session

Monday, August 28, 2006, 5:45 a.m. – Regular Council Meeting

Thursday, August 31, 2006, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

Tuesday, September 5, 2006, TBA – Study Session

Tuesday, September 5, 2006, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

5. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

a. Hear from Doree Kelley regarding A-frame sign issues.

Ms. Kelley advised that her business, Arizona Music Time at 925 South Gilbert Road, was cited by the Code Compliance Division for Sign Code violations. She reported that removal of the A-frame sign resulted in reduced revenues. Ms. Kelley distributed copies of pictures of A-frame signs (copies are available for review in the City Clerk's Office) that are present in sections of Mesa located outside of the Town Center area.

Mayor Hawker noted that a discussion on A-frame signs is scheduled for the August 31st meeting, and he directed staff to update Ms. Kelley regarding the date and time of the meeting.

6. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 5:19 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 14th day of August 2006. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

baa
Attachments (2)