

COUNCIL MINUTES

February 1, 2001

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 1, 2001 at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

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

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson
Neal Beets
Barbara Jones

(Mayor Hawker excused Councilmember Jaffa and Vice Mayor Davidson from the beginning of the meeting. Councilmember Jaffa arrived at the meeting at 7:33 a.m. Vice Mayor Davidson arrived at the meeting at 7:40 a.m.)

1. Review items on the agenda for the February 5, 2001, Regular Council Meeting.

All the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff with no formal action taken. There was discussion among the members of the Council relative to various agenda items.

Mayor Hawker stated that agenda items 4i, 4n, 4o, 9a and 10 will be removed from the consent agenda.

Mayor Hawker stated that agenda item 7 will be deleted from the consent agenda.

2. Discuss and consider recommendations concerning City Council redistricting issues.

- a. Approve awarding the contract to National Demographics Corporation in the amount of \$79,500.00 for redistricting services.
- b. Approve forming a five-member Council District Commission.

Assistants to the City Manager Jeff Martin and Ellen Pence and Deputy City Clerk Cindy Barris, members of an internal City redistricting team, addressed the Council relative to this agenda item. Mr. Martin advised that it is the recommendation of staff that a contract be awarded to National

Demographics Corporation (NDC) to revise Mesa's existing six Council districts to reflect changes in population and demographics pursuant to the 2000 decennial census.

Ms. Barris informed the Council the City must receive districting approval from the Department of Justice by November 12, 2001, which is the first day that nomination petitions may be filed. Ms. Barris explained that the districting initiative prohibits the Council District boundaries from being redrawn after the first day that the petitions can be filed. Ms. Barris added that prospective candidates will be permitted to file their petitions from 120 days (November 12th) to 90 days (December 12th) before the election. Ms. Barris stressed that the Request for Proposals (RFP) requires the submission of the final plan to the Department of Justice in early August with a 60-day turnaround. Ms. Barris said that in early October, final approval will occur. Ms. Barris commented that staff will have to determine the required number of signatures per district for filing nomination petitions.

Mr. Martin informed the Council that the Department of Justice has an expedited pre-clearance process for jurisdictions which meet specific criteria. Mr. Martin stated that it is the opinion of NDC that Mesa will meet such specifications and ultimately receive approval within a 60-day time frame.

In response to a question from Councilmember Jaffa, Ms. Barris clarified that campaign packets are routinely available in October, but on occasion, candidates may wish to circulate nomination petitions prior to that time. Ms. Barris stressed that pending final approval of the boundary lines by the Department of Justice, candidates who attempt to acquire signatures may run the risk that such signatures will be invalid if the residents do not reside within the appropriate Council district.

Councilmember Jaffa requested additional input from the City Attorney's Office regarding this matter and stressed the importance of completing the redistricting process in an appropriate and timely manner in order to provide the candidates sufficient time in which to organize and conduct effective campaigns.

Discussion ensued regarding the fact that the districting initiative requires that redistricting occur upon the completion of a decennial census; the fact that it is the recommendation of staff to conduct the redistricting process when the census data becomes available on April 1 and not to defer the process until the 2004 election, and the fact that the RFP demands an aggressive completion schedule.

Mayor Hawker voiced support for staff's recommendation to proceed with the redistricting process and added that to do otherwise may be interpreted as circumventing the law.

Ms. Pence advised that it is the recommendation of staff that the Mayor recommend and the Council appoint a five-member Council District Commission by late February to allow the Commission time in which to hold an organizational meeting in March prior to receipt of the census data. Ms. Pence invited the Council to submit the names of prospective citizens. Ms. Pence also commented that a user-friendly citizen kit will be available on the City's web site for those residents who wish to participate in this process.

Mr. Martin stated that it is the unanimous recommendation of the redistricting team that NDC be awarded the contract based on their experience nationally, their success in coordinating districting and redistricting services for five Arizona municipalities, and their previous experience in assisting Mesa in its redistricting process. Mr. Martin added that the RFP stressed the experience of the contractor as opposed to the cost to render services.

Councilmember Kavanaugh spoke in support of staff's recommendations. Councilmember Kavanaugh also addressed Councilmember Jaffa's concerns and noted that although the ultimate Council district boundaries will not be determined until the Department of Justice renders its approval, it does not prohibit prospective candidates in Districts 4, 5 and 6 from forming campaign committees, filing Statements of Intent with the City Clerk's Office and engaging in fundraising activities. Councilmember Kavanaugh emphasized the necessity of determining an appropriate timeframe for candidates to take out nomination petitions.

It was moved by Councilmember Kavanaugh, seconded by Councilmember Pomeroy, that National Demographics Corporation be awarded a contract in the amount of \$79,500 for redistricting services for the City of Mesa.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker, Ms. Barris advised that the number of signatures to be required per district for filing nominating petitions is being reviewed by the City Clerk's Office and the City Attorney's Office. Ms. Barris estimated that the number will range between 300 and 400 signatures.

Councilmember Walters voiced the opinion that candidates who reside on the edge of a district have less of an advantage than those who reside on the far end or in the middle of a district. City Attorney Neal Beets advised that the Council district system was a voter-approved issue and that whenever a decennial census is conducted, there will be changes in the Council district boundaries.

Planning Director Frank Mizner commented that the Council districts are currently based on the 1995 census, and if the 2000 census data reveals that Mesa has a population of over 400,000, that will represent a 20% increase in the districts. Mr. Mizner added that geographically, the size of the districts in west Mesa will increase, whereas the size of the districts on the east side will lessen.

Councilmember Walters suggested that nomination petitions be made available simultaneously to all candidates to prevent an unfair advantage in gathering signatures.

Councilmember Pomeroy spoke in support of the motion and praised NDC for its experience and expertise regarding this matter.

Carried unanimously.

Mayor Hawker advised that with regard to item b, he does not support the inclusion of prospective Council candidates on the Council District Commission.

Councilmember Jaffa encouraged staff to develop specific criteria with regard to citizens who have expressed an interest in becoming a member of the Council District Commission.

Discussion ensued among the Council regarding the desired composition of the Council District Commission.

Mayor Hawker encouraged the members of the audience who wish to participate on the Council District Commission to submit their names to their Council representatives for consideration.

It was moved by Councilmember Pomeroy, seconded by Councilmember Jaffa, that the formation of a five-member Council District Commission be approved.

Carried unanimously.

(Councilmember Kavanaugh left the meeting at 9:45 a.m.)

3. Hear a presentation from Maricopa Association of Government (MAG) staff on growth related issues.

Eric Anderson, Transportation Manager of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), addressed the Council relative to this agenda item. Mr. Anderson advised that the Phoenix metropolitan area is at a crossroads regarding its rapid population growth and said that it is imperative that long-term regional issues be addressed to ensure positive impacts on future generations.

Mr. Anderson referred to graphics displayed in the Council Chambers and provided a brief overview of a variety of issues including projected population increases; increases in the Hispanic population; projected average population span; income disparity; distribution of growth in Maricopa County; anticipated growth in Pinal County; transportation levels of service; quality of life issues; increased passenger flights and air cargo traffic at Sky Harbor Airport; projected travel times throughout the Valley; facility fees; current and future travel speeds; funding outlook for long-range plan, and future technology.

Mr. Anderson advised that in order to address the ever-increasing traffic congestion in the Valley, it is necessary that Maricopa County's residents alter their travel behaviors, reduce the length of commuter trips, create a more effective job/housing balance, and also minimize the amount of miles traveled in the Valley.

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Davidson, Mr. Anderson explained that MAG's models include expanded transit services such as bus and light rail systems, but do not presently include commuter rail. Mr. Anderson added that in the development of a 20-year plan model, MAG can only include revenues which are projected to be available at that time.

Discussion ensued regarding strategies which will be addressed by MAG in the near future including the distribution of employment and population, transportation, and the impact of various transportation packages on travel patterns.

Councilmember Walters thanked Mr. Anderson for his presentation and recommended that the members of the Mesa 2025 Committee be given the opportunity to view this presentation.

Councilmember Jaffa thanked Mr. Anderson for his input, but noted that the Growing Smarter legislation was not included in the MAG presentation and expressed concerns that Maricopa County, unlike Valley cities, is not mandated to adhere to its provisions.

Mayor Hawker also requested that the members of the Mesa 2025 Committee be afforded the opportunity to view the videotape of Mr. Anderson's presentation. Mayor Hawker thanked Mr. Anderson for his input.

4. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

- a. Police Committee meeting held January 18, 2001.
- b. Transportation Advisory Board meeting held January 16, 2001
- c. Transportation Committee meetings held December 11, 2000 and January 24, 2001.

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

Mayor Hawker declared the motion carried unanimously by those present.

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

Councilmember Walters reported on her attendance at a recent Constitution Celebration dinner.

6. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Monday, February 5, 2001, 3:30 p.m., Police Committee meeting

Monday, February 5, 2001, TBA, Study Session

Monday, February 5, 2001, 5:45 p.m., Regular Council meeting

Thursday, February 8, 2001, 7:30 a.m., Study Session

Thursday, February 15, 2001, 7:30 a.m., Study Session

Tuesday, February 20, 2001, TBA, Study Session

Tuesday, February 20, 2001, 5:45 p.m., Regular Council meeting

Thursday, February 22, 2001, 7:30 Study Session (Budget Overview)

(Mayor Hawker announced that the East Valley Mayors' Luncheon will be held on Thursday, February 1, 2001 at 11:30 a.m.)

7. Prescheduled public opinion appearances.

There were no prescheduled public opinion appearances.

8. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

9. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 9:55 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 1st day of February, 2001. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 2001

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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