



2005 CITIZEN BOND COMMITTEE

October 12, 2005

The 2005 Citizen Bond Committee met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on October 12, 2005 at 6:02 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Eric Jackson, Chairman
Craig Ahlstrom
Beth Coons
Linda Flick
Pat Gilbert
Robert Hisserich
Greg Holtz
LaShawn Jenkins
Albert McHenry
Judy O'Neill

COMMITTEE ABSENT

Scott Rhodes
Bob Saemisch
Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo

STAFF PRESENT

Anthony Araza
Fire Chief Harry Beck
Police Chief Dennis Donna
Eric Norenberg

Chairman Jackson advised that Committeemembers Villanueva-Saucedo and Saemisch were excused from the meeting. He also announced that Michele Fiore resigned from the Committee due to business obligations, and he expressed appreciation for her past service.

1. Approval of minutes of previous meetings.

It was moved by Committeemember Coons, seconded by Committeemember McHenry, that the minutes of the September 14, 2005 meeting be approved.

The motion was carried unanimously by those present.

It was moved by Committeemember McHenry, seconded by Committeemember O'Neill, that the minutes of the September 21, 2005 meeting be approved.

The motion was carried unanimously by those present.

2. Hear and discuss a presentation on Public Safety Bonds.

Police Chief Dennis Donna addressed the Committee and introduced Assistant Chief G. T. Fowler and Fiscal Management Supervisor Lisa Andrews. He noted that the City's Communications Director, Mike Brown, was also present to provide information on several projects related to Public Safety communications.

Chief Donna displayed a PowerPoint presentation (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office) and cited the following as examples of Public Safety projects addressed by previous bond elections:

- Phase 1 of the Red Mountain Substation.
- Helicopters.
- The Technical Services Building.
- Public Safety Training Auditorium.
- 800 MHz trunked radio system.
- Police Central Substation.
- Justice Complex Parking Structure.

Chief Fowler continued the presentation and stated that he would first identify proposed Police Department projects and then outline the Public Safety projects, which impact both the Fire and Police Departments. He provided information on the following proposed bond projects:

Replace Two Helicopters.

Two replacement helicopters are proposed, one in 2006/07 and the other in 2009/10, which would enable a five-year replacement cycle for the department's three helicopters. The two units that would be replaced presently have hours in excess of the normal 10,000 hours of use, which increases maintenance expense and raises safety concerns.

Upgrades for the Pistol Range Targeting System and Range Improvements.

The upgrades and improvements are necessary in order to train new recruits and provide in-service officer training. The proposed new modular unit with air conditioning would replace the existing unit that has been in service for 30 years and facilitate year-round training.

Special Investigations Building Remodel – Phase I.

The Special Investigations Building, which houses the department's surveillance teams, narcotics and gang units, and undercover operations, requires remodeling in order to maximize its use. The location of the building is not identified because of the nature of the operation.

Remodel of the Old City Court Building.

When the new City Court building is constructed, the Criminal Investigations Unit would utilize the remodeled, old court building.

Remodel the Center Against Family Violence.

This facility is housed in a building that was formerly used for commercial purposes, and as existing tenant leases expire, remodeling is necessary in order to provide space for additional detectives and improve security. The Center provides a secure environment at a location where suspects are not processed.

Expansion of the Public Safety - 911 Dispatch Center.

Expansion of the facility is required in order to accommodate additional dispatchers as the City reaches build out. Last year 1.4 million calls were received by the Center, which resulted in 465,000 dispatches.

Red Mountain Substation – Phase II.

Two substations can be accommodated at the same site, and Phase II for the second substation will be required in order to address future population growth to the east.

Williams Gateway Substation #215 Remodel.

The current building was originally constructed by the Air Force and is shared by the Fire and Police Departments. The building does not adequately meet the needs of either department, and the proposed new facility would be shared by both departments until a new terminal is constructed on the east side of the airport, at which time the Police Department substation would be relocated inside the terminal building.

Additional Evidence Freezer.

Evidence is required by law to be maintained indefinitely. The existing freezer is at 97 percent capacity, and a contingency plan exists to utilize portable freezers until a new freezer is constructed.

Building Treatment for 800 MHz Radio Coverage.

The 800 MHz system represents a substantial improvement over the old system, but radio communications can be compromised in basements or in buildings with a high steel and concrete content. The bond proposal addresses the installation of an antennae system in the ceiling grid of certain buildings in order to improve communications necessary for the safety of firefighters.

Chief Fowler advised that the next four items relate to the communications system, which impacts the entire City by enabling and improving communications between dispatchers and Public Safety personnel.

Microwave Replacement Program.

The existing system, which includes ten radio tower sites on the City's fire stations, is old and replacement parts are no longer available. The proposal to replace the system would also increase capacity and continue the development of the Public Safety Communications System.

Mesa TOPAZ Wireless Network Lifecycle Planning.

Mesa and the City of Phoenix are partners in the 800 MHz system, and Mesa's arm of the system is referred to as TOPAZ, an acronym for the Trunked Open Arizona Network. The proposed \$3 million in bonds represents the estimated cost of future upgrades and maintenance expense based on current system usage. A key advantage of the system is that Public Safety personnel can directly communicate with each other in all areas of the Valley without going through a dispatcher, and this feature would be particularly valuable during a Valley-wide crisis.

Thompson Peak Communications Site.

Radio towers facilitate the 800 MHz system, and a mountaintop is an ideal location. Mesa presently leases space on the existing Thompson Peak tower, which is owned by the Central Arizona Project (CAP), but the tower is unable to accommodate additional equipment. The bonding would enable the City of Mesa to partner with Maricopa County, the owner of the Thompson Peak property, and the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) to construct a tower that would meet the City's future communication needs. By eliminating the lease payments presently paid to the CAP, the City could recover its share of the tower construction costs in approximately five years.

700 MHz Trunked Voice/Data Radio System – FCC Regulated.

The growth of the Valley metropolitan area requires that the 800 MHz communications system be expanded into 700 MHz, which will accommodate future needs and provide improved voice communication and data transmittal. Existing 800 MHz radios and equipment are compatible with 700 MHz, and the bonding amount addresses construction costs in 2007/08 through 2009/10. The City is presently testing 700 MHz communications on State of Arizona frequencies loaned to the City, and the 700 MHz plan has been approved by the State. Regional approval and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approval of the 700 MHz plan must also be obtained.

Chief Fowler summarized the presentation by noting that the 2005/06 Operation and Maintenance budget is \$122.7 million, and the proposed capital projects represent an increase in Operation and Maintenance and Personnel costs in the amount of \$1.8 million or 1.5 percent.

In response to questions from Committeemember Gilbert, Chief Fowler advised that helicopter engines are replaced frequently, but the frames, which also experience significant wear, cannot be replaced. He also advised that at the time a new helicopter is received, the old would be sold or traded in. Chief Fowler said that police protection is provided to WGA because the airport is located within the City of Mesa. He explained that the operation would be similar to that at Phoenix Sky Harbor where Transportation Security Administration (TSA) personnel are present in addition to the Phoenix Police Department. Chief Fowler noted that police officers are armed and have the authority to make arrests, while TSA personnel are unarmed and have no arrest authority.

Assistant Fire Chief Gary Bradbury responded to questions from Committeemember Gilbert by advising that both public and private buildings would be retrofitted with the new technology infrastructure, and he noted that examples of these buildings include the Mesa Arts Center, the

Central Police Station, shopping malls and hospitals. He added that requirements for new construction are being considered and the subject has been discussed with the Fire Committee.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the 700 MHz system is one of the highest dollar amounts in the Public Safety bond proposal; that the 700 MHz system will enable Public Safety officers to communicate each other and with dispatchers when the capacity of the 800 MHz system is maximized; that data can be transmitted at a higher speed on the 700 MHz system; that the importance of a communication system was highlighted by the 9-11 situation; that the department should be prepared when the FCC releases the 700 MHz system; that other municipalities pay a fee to participate in the system; that the 800 MHz is the basis for the system and the 800 and 700 MHz are integrated and will work together; that the \$3 million for the TOPAZ Wireless Network Lifecycle Planning is for equipment and software upgrades; that Homeland Security grant funds are not readily available; and that the City continues to seek other grant funding.

In response to questions from Committeemember Hisserich, Chief Fowler advised that the department's planning goal for a five-year replacement cycle for helicopters has not been met in the past due to budget issues. He added that extending an aircraft's life to 20,000 or 25,000 hours would impact efficiency and safety.

Further discussion ensued regarding the fact that less than 40,000 of the annual dispatch calls received by the City of Mesa are for other municipalities; that Mesa receives 100 percent cost recovery for the dispatch call service; and that Apache Junction and the Town of Gilbert also pay a maintenance fee.

Committeemember Ahlstrom suggested that the helicopters be placed on a seven-year cycle rather than a five-year cycle.

In response to a question from Committeemember O'Neill, Chief Fowler advised that Mesa's pistol range has existed for 35 years, and he stated that other agencies pay a fee to utilize the facility.

Chairman Jackson noted that the Center Against Family Violence was an impressive operation, and he suggested that Committeemembers who are not familiar with the facility arrange for a tour.

Responding to a question from Committeemember Ahlstrom, Chief Donna explained that the Center Against Family Violence is a component of the Criminal Investigations Division. He advised that victims are processed at the Center rather than at the Police Station, and that approximately 60 to 70 Police Department employees are located in the facility to address domestic violence crimes, crimes against children, and cyber crimes. He added that the Center includes a forensic laboratory unit that examines computers relative to child pornography. Chief Donna said that ancillary services, such as caseworkers from Child Protective Services, a County Attorney and a Victim Services unit, are also present to ensure that victims have access to the necessary types of assistance. He noted that the Center partners with community social service providers that are not housed in the facility.

In response to a question from Committeemember Coons, Capital Improvement Project Administrator Anthony Araza advised that the bond debt for equipment, such as fire engines, is structured according to the life of the asset.

Chairman Jackson noted that Chief Donna is retiring at the end of the year, and he expressed appreciation for his years of service.

It was moved by Committeemember Holtz, seconded by Committeemember O'Neill, that the Committee approve the Public Safety Bond proposal.

The motion was carried unanimously by those present.

Chairman Jackson thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Hear and discuss a presentation on Fire Department Bonds.

Fire Chief Harry Beck displayed a PowerPoint presentation (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office). He advised that the department has a critical need for additional fire apparatus, which are lifelines for firefighters and enables them to save lives. Chief Beck added that facility improvements would be addressed as well as the department's partnership with Mesa Community College (MCC).

Chief Beck noted that Fire Department responses are projected to increase by 25 percent to a total of 65,000 by the year 2010. He advised that the department's goal is a four-minute response 90 percent of the time. Chief Beck reported that the department is meeting the goal only 68 percent of the time. He said that all firefighters are cross-trained in several disciplines, and he noted that 80 percent of the department's responses are related to emergency medical activities. Chief Beck advised that Mesa has 0.82 firefighters per thousand in population, which compares to .0.96 in the City of Phoenix and 1.05 in the City of Tucson. He stated that fire prevention and public education are also important activities, but the department presently has contact with only 20 percent of the population. Chief Beck further advised that the City's budget crisis has resulted in the department being unable to maintain the necessary infrastructure that is required to meet current service demands.

Chief Beck introduced Administration Services Specialist Radona Orlando, and he advised that Assistant Chief Bradbury would continue the presentation.

Chief Bradbury reviewed the following projects that were funded by previous bond elections:

- Fire apparatus replacement.
- Remodeling of Fire Station #206 and the adjoining Volunteer Center.
- Construction of Fire Stations #201 and #217 and remodeling of Station #202.

Chief Bradbury noted that "intervention time" is utilized to plan future capital facilities, and he explained that the term refers to the amount of elapsed time between receipt of a call for service and the on scene arrival of an emergency unit. He stated that the department's goal is to arrive at a fire within the first five minutes. Chief Bradbury explained that fires expand quickly between five and eight minutes, and that beyond eight minutes there is an increase in the amount of damage, danger to firefighters, and potential loss of life. Chief Bradbury stated that an

emergency response to a respiratory or cardiac arrest incident is most effective within a four to six minute time period, and that a delayed response could result in the victim suffering critical brain damage.

Chief Bradbury reviewed station locations and highlighted those areas where new stations are being proposed. He noted that the bond proposal includes fire stations, land acquisition, vehicles and equipment, training center improvements, and improvements to existing fire stations. Chief Bradbury provided information on the following proposals:

New Development Projects

- Fire Stations 218 and 220 are infill facilities that are required to meet the increased service demands and standard response times in west Mesa and central/east Mesa.
- Fire Station 219 supports the demand for emergency coverage in the growth areas of east and southeast Mesa.

Aging Infrastructure

- Fire Station 215 at Williams Gateway was constructed by the military in the 1950's and is a joint project with the Police Department.

Support for Certification/Training and Regulatory Requirements

- Fire Stations 215, 213 and 214 require Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance in addition to expansion and remodeling.
- Public Safety Training Facility expansion includes classrooms and offices, defensive tactics (for the Police Department), tactical props, and Firefighter Breathing Air Replenishment (FBAR).

Chief Beck reported on the proposed partnership between the City of Mesa and MCC partnership, which includes the following projects:

- Public safety paramedic training center.
- Command training classrooms.
- Fire Administration project (funded in an existing bond authorization).

Chief Beck advised that construction of the Fire Administration facility was delayed during ongoing partnership discussions with MCC. He explained that the MCC partnership would result in reduced costs and expanded use of the structures. Chief Beck noted that this proposal is Phase I of the partnership, and that additional phases under consideration include an Emergency Operating Center (currently located in the basement of the Police Building, but funded in an existing bond authorization), which could also serve as a regional operating center and provide an opportunity for virtual, reality-type emergency operations training. Chief Beck added that locating facilities in conjunction with MCC's Technology Center would place the Fire Department within the high tech infrastructure corridor. He noted that future plans also include consideration of the following:

- A Command Training Center, which would be utilized for virtual training to manage an emergency.
- A Regional Training Center (one in the West Valley, one in Phoenix and one in Mesa for the East Valley), which would draw individuals from other areas of the country and throughout the State of Arizona.

Chief Bradbury summarized the presentation by noting that the additional O&M and personnel costs, annualized over the life of the new bond projects, are estimated at \$4.8 million (an estimated increase of nine percent).

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that staffing and construction of facilities go hand in hand; that construction of a bonded fire station has been delayed due to budget constraints relative to staffing; and that the department constantly attempts to balance response times according to the number of emergency incidents in a particular area and the geographic outposts.

In response to a question from Chairman Jackson, Assistant Fire Chief Dan Stubbs confirmed that the West Mesa Fire Station on University Drive is one of the busiest stations in the country and one of the oldest in the City of Mesa. He advised that the station responds to approximately 4,000 calls a year, and that the call response time has dropped from 75 percent last year to a current rate of approximately 63 percent. Chief Stubbs stated that areas further to the east currently meet the response time goal 53 percent of the time.

Committeemember Gilbert requested that staff provide the Committee with the average response times for each station.

Further discussion ensued relative to the fact that ladder trucks are very expensive and that ladder tenders are operated when the capability of a ladder truck is not needed; that a ladder tender is a four-door, two-ton truck equipped with a ladder that is more efficient to operate; that Rural Metro is the initial responder to calls for service from County islands, but the City will provide mutual aid backup assistance; and that the Council decided that the FBAR retrofit of existing buildings would be paid for by the City.

Responding to a question from Committeemember McHenry, Chief Beck advised that he was aware of the Arizona State University (ASU) Polytechnic facility. He noted that one facility may not meet the needs of the entire region, and that meetings are planned with ASU staff to discuss the manner in which that facility can be coordinated with the MCC downtown campus and the need for emergency operating centers in the East Valley.

Additional discussion ensued regarding the fact that some fire recruits enter the department with Emergency Medical Technician training, but advanced paramedic training is accomplished in house; that the City of Mesa trains approximately 30 paramedics a year for the City; that MCC would utilize the facility for paramedic training and other allied health courses; that \$2 million is the City of Mesa's share of the MCC campus facility; that the facilities would meet the current needs of both the Mesa Fire Department and MCC; that the project provides an opportunity to offset Fire Department operating costs; and that the contractual details are in the process of being negotiated.

Chairman Jackson noted that the bond project approved five years ago addressed the remodeling of Fire Station #1, and he requested an update regarding that facility.

Chief Beck advised that the facility houses the Public Education and Code Enforcement groups and provides a location for the department's volunteers. He expressed the hope that the fire station would be incorporated into the Historic District in the future.

Chairman Jackson thanked staff for the presentation, and he also expressed appreciation to the Fire Department employees for their many hours of community service.

It was moved by Committeemember Holtz, seconded by Committeemember Hisserich, that the Committee approve the proposed Fire Department Bonds except for the items listed on line 2 and lines 27 through 30 (see Attachment 1).

Committeemember Flick expressed concern that the cuts proposed by the motion would impact the department's readiness and ability to provide service.

Further discussion ensued relative to the fact that continual training is required in order to prepare the department for high-risk, low frequency incidents; that the functional props (item number 2) represents tank cars and training props related to flammable liquids, flammable gas, and hazardous materials that are a part of the Public Safety Training Facility that is owned and operated by the City, that these types of activities will not be moved to the downtown campus; and that the Fire Department would like to continue their long-term partnership with MCC.

Chief Beck noted that the training costs would be the same with or without a partnership with MCC, but the partnership will reduce the operating costs for facilities that the City would otherwise have to operate. He added that the City already owns the property, and that this project addresses a critical need and creates the opportunity to offset operating costs.

Committeemember Holtz expressed the opinion that the Committee has not been provided with sufficient information regarding the benefits of a partnership with MCC.

Chief Beck noted that MCC has designated \$2.5 million to the project that is presently available, and that they also have allocated \$9 million to the future fire-training component. He stated the opinion that the partnership would enable both the City and MCC to benefit from the economies of scale.

Committeemember Coons noted that failure to bond this item could result in the City not having the funds available at the proper time, which could jeopardize the project.

Committeemember Gilbert suggested that the Committee tentatively approve the bonds and request additional information prior to final approval. He expressed the opinion that the Council would ensure that the partnership with MCC is in the best interest of the community.

Chairman Jackson noted that the partnership could also provide a significant economic impact for the community.

Committeemember Gilbert called for the question.

The motion failed by a majority vote of those present (Committeemembers Hisserich and Holtz voting aye).

It was moved by Committeemember Gilbert, seconded by Committeemember McHenry, that the Committee tentatively adopt the proposal for Fire Department Bond Program, subject to receiving additional information regarding the MCC partnership and pending discussion of the bonds at the final Committee meeting.

The motion was carried by a majority vote of those present (Committeemembers Hisserich and Holtz voting nay).

4. Scheduling meetings and general information.

Special Assistant to the City Manager Eric Norenberg advised that staff would provide the information requested by the Committee. He added that although the final Committee meeting is scheduled for October 26th, the Committee might be reconvened at a future date following Council consideration of the proposed bond package and prior to the bond election.

5. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

6. Adjournment.

Without objection, the 2005 Citizen Bond Committee meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting of the 2005 Citizen Bond Committee of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 12th day of October 2005. 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 (1)