



COUNCIL MINUTES

June 17, 2021

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 June 17, 2021, at 7:30 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

John Giles
Jennifer Duff
Mark Freeman
Francisco Heredia
David Luna*
Julie Spilsbury
Kevin Thompson

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Dee Ann Mickelsen
Alfred Smith

(*Participated in the meeting through the use of video conference equipment.)

Mayor Giles conducted a roll call.

1. Review and discuss items on the agenda for the June 21, 2021, Regular Council meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflict of interest: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

In response to a question from Councilmember Luna regarding Item 3-l, **(Public Safety Training Facility Burn Building Project – Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR), Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) (District 5))**, on the June 21, 2021, Regular Council meeting agenda, Assistant Fire Chief Cori Hayes mentioned the design is a little smaller than the original but by optimizing the space, a functional building design for long-term use has been created. She added construction will begin upon approval.

Responding to an inquiry by Mayor Giles related to Item 3-h, **(Five-Year Term Contract for the Purchase of Axon Flex On-Body Camera Equipment, Supplies and Evidence.com Storage and Controlled Electrical Weapon Equipment and Supplies for the Mesa Police Department (Replacements/Upgrades) (Sole Source) (Citywide))**, on the June 21, 2021, Regular Council meeting agenda, Police Technical Services Division Manager Patrick Phelps explained the five-year renewal of the contract includes replacement of the existing cameras and adding 211 additional cameras which will provide all essential officers cameras. He remarked the data storage is included and covers the body cameras and the Taser energy weapons.

Mayor Giles voiced his desire to learn more about the policies as to when an officer is required to have the camera on.

Police Commander Robert Rash stated any time an officer responds to a call for service in the field they are required to activate the Axon camera. He added policy revisions are being considered surrounding specialty assignments such as school resource officers who may not turn the body camera on in a school setting; however, when responding to an incident the camera must be activated.

In response to multiple questions from Mayor Giles regarding Item 3-i, **(Purchase of Real Time Crime Center Equipment and Services (Additions) for the Mesa Police Department (Citywide))**, on the June 21, 2021, Regular Council meeting agenda, Commander Rash informed Council that the real-time crime center will be located on the third floor of PD headquarters after doing some minor remodeling of the current tactical operations center. He commented initially the center will be staffed during the busiest times and days of the week and will eventually be staffed 24/7. He remarked the center operator will be monitoring the live feed from the cameras and providing real-time information to responding officers in the field. He noted the cameras purchased for the parks will also be integrated into the crime center, and eventually transportation cameras, City facility cameras, and cameras within the community. He shared that a violent perpetrator in Pioneer Park was quickly apprehended due to the camera monitoring.

Vice Mayor Duff asked what the appropriate protocol is for residents who have cameras and may have information regarding a criminal incident.

Commander Rash discussed the Community Connect program which is part of the real-time crime center where residents can register their cameras with Mesa PD. He advised until the registry is available, residents can contact the non-emergency number to provide information related to a crime.

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Duff, Commander Rash explained PD does have access to the neighborhood app, which detectives and crime prevention officers will monitor. He added Mesa PD is notified if a resident registers a Ring doorbell camera.

Mr. Phelps clarified Community Connect is an umbrella program consisting of two pieces. One piece is the live-feed portion that is geared toward businesses and the other piece is citizens' home security cameras where PD can pull up a map and view which residents have registered cameras in a certain area.

Mayor Duff suggested using the CityLink app where a photograph can be uploaded as a way for citizens to contribute information such as a license plate or an incident that is occurring. She said residents are a valuable tool in combating crime in the neighborhoods.

Mr. Phelps commented on the large technology component to the real-time crime center, stating the objective is to unify all the different resources available to increase the processing speed.

Responding to a question posed by Vice Mayor Duff related to cameras in the parks, City Manager Christopher Brady reported four mobile cameras have been purchased and discussions will occur between PD and the Parks Department on the placement of those new cameras.

In response to a question from Councilmember Heredia, Commander Rash stated the target is to have the crime center operational by the end of the year or beginning of next year. He mentioned

much of the equipment will be compatible with the existing cell phone technology that officers use currently and information will be sent directly to their cell phone or vehicle computer.

Mr. Phelps expanded by saying the main application for the Real Time Crime Center also has a mobile piece that will go on the officers' cell phones to move data back and forth through the application.

Councilmember Thompson brought up concerns of oversight to ensure privacy for citizens.

Commander Rash advised the policy is being developed which will include audit capability and the software itself has capabilities to audit what the officers are looking at as far as video to ensure privacy is preserved.

2-a. Hear a presentation, discuss, and provide a direction on the Climate Action Plan.

Environmental Management and Sustainability Department Director Scott Bouchie introduced Environmental Management and Sustainability Deputy Director Laura Hyneman and Diversity and Special Projects Manager Andrea Alicoate and displayed a PowerPoint presentation to present the first climate action plan for the City of Mesa. **(See Attachment 1)**

Mr. Bouchie stated the Climate Action Plan is a guiding document to highlight our shared vision for sustainability and climate action goals. He remarked the first draft will lay out specific actions and provide context to the community as outreach begins. He said the City of Mesa (COM) has a culture of sustainability and the Climate Action Plan is a continuation of efforts to lower our environmental impact. (See Page 2 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Bouchie indicated the Climate Action vision began with the current sustainability initiatives, in addition to the focus areas and strategic initiatives that Council recommended during the strategic planning session. (See Page 3 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Bouchie highlighted the six focus areas that provide the framework for further areas of study and implementation. He added each area is not separate from each other but may provide co-benefits that cross the focus areas. He provided examples of co-benefits. (See Pages 4 and 5 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Bouchie pointed out the aspirational goals will be measured and will include a plan to reach the goals. He noted the departments will continue to be the owners of their projects and programs but will be able to use the plan as a guide in making future decisions to ensure the programs fit into the Climate Action Plan. (See Page 6 of Attachment 1)

Mr. Bouchie explained Mesa's top goal is carbon neutrality. He said emissions anywhere affect people everywhere and this is not just a Mesa issue, but a global issue. He outlined the four aspirational goals the City is hoping to achieve. (See Pages 7 and 8 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Alicoate discussed the first step will be an educational campaign through social media, newsletters, and other channels to inform the community on the Climate Action Plan. She mentioned collaborating with Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities (PR&CF) on master planning efforts and community engagement that will include surveys, focus groups, and community meetings. (See Page 9 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Alicoate stated the City is looking for public input to help prioritize the action items listed in the Climate Action Plan and provide feedback in order to set future community-wide action items. She added the information gathered will go into the next updated version of the plan, as the plan is an evolving, living document. She remarked the information will be available through different levels, including the full Climate Action Plan, an info sheet, and a promo card. She said the information will be available through the website at MesaAZ.Gov/ClimateAction. (See Page 10 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Alicoate identified a data dashboard that was created based on the Council strategic initiative "Healthy Environment," to give the public the ability to view the current available data in an effort to be transparent. (See Page 11 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Hyneman pointed out that a greenhouse gas inventory was conducted to understand the carbon footprint from City operations. She remarked 2019 was the baseline year because 2020 was such a unique year. She added the inventory will expose opportunities for improvement and initially the focus will be on the five largest sectors. (See Page 12 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Hyneman commented that City departments will be bringing forward projects and strategic investments that support the Climate Action Plan. She noted a report for each of the projects will include feasibility, an explanation of how that project achieves or moves forward the aspirational goals, data on how the project meets the targets within each focus area, and how the project reduces greenhouse gas emissions in the COM. She stated the Climate Action Plan will be updated as targets are achieved, further information is available, and as new technology emerges. (See Page 13 of Attachment 1)

In response to a question posed by Councilmember Spilsbury regarding what "prepare workforce" refers to on Slide 4, Mr. Bouchie explained that entails teaching the workforce how to protect themselves from the heat and staying hydrated to avoid negative health effects. He mentioned there are some departments that change the work hours to begin earlier, provide drinks and snacks, as well as cooling vests.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Heredia, Ms. Hyneman indicated mobile combustion is comprised of vehicles, generators, or anything that emits emissions of any sort.

In response to additional questions from Councilmember Heredia, Mr. Bouchie explained the greenhouse gas inventory shows where the emissions are coming from, and then specific programs or projects can be put in place to reduce the emissions in those areas. He mentioned Phase 1 of the Flare to Fuel project, which takes the existing biogas at the Northwest Water Reclamation Plant and upgrades to pipeline quality standards to fuel the solid waste vehicles, is moving forward. He said regulatory and financial hurdles are being worked on for Phase 2. He remarked the COM is working on coming up with analytical methods to prove that food waste does meet the intent of the renewable fuel standards to make the project financially viable.

Vice Mayor Duff indicated the presentation is just an overview of the Climate Action Plan and more details can be found on the website. She suggested doing a presentation to all advisory boards in the City because it touches every department and there is great interest. She pointed out the City is sponsoring a green business program working with Local First. She recommended creating a sustainability advisory board so the tremendous interest from the citizens can be carried forward in the long-term plan. She added the people who are most affected by climate change are the ones who contribute the least to the problem.

Councilmember Freeman expressed the need to work with third-party vendors to make sure they are doing their part in reducing the carbon imprint. He asked whether there will be additional costs to utility users because vendors are raising the cost of supplies, and everything is getting more expensive.

In response to a question from Councilmember Luna related to whether Mesa Public Schools (MPS) and larger employers will be engaged in developing the Climate Action Plan, Ms. Alicoate stated the educational awareness campaign will occur throughout the summer and will engage employers. She remarked staff will connect with MPS to provide notification through the schools when the focus group conversations begin.

Mayor Giles indicated he is impressed with the ground that has been covered and the time invested into this project so far. He mentioned that the pillars are mainstream and straightforward, and he likes that community engagement is part of the plan. He acknowledged the challenges but is reassured that by reaching out to all significant partners will create a meaningful movement in the community.

Mr. Brady clarified the implementation of the Climate Action Plan happens by each department making proactive decisions to create change and understanding their role. He stated the plan is a continuation of the things Mesa has been doing on areas such as solar, waste reuse, and shade studies.

Councilmember Heredia asked if Council reports could include a summary of the carbon-reducing projects that are being developed.

Mr. Brady agreed that Climate Action Plan information will be updated at every available opportunity.

Vice Mayor Duff reported while the plan begins with the COM addressing ways to reduce the carbon footprint, the plan must be carried out citywide by residents and businesses to reach our goals. She said she is proud that the COM is a leader in making these changes. She added one reason energy costs are rising is due to the increased demand from global warming and until the climate is changed, the demand for energy will continue to soar.

Mayor Giles recommended amending the resolution to include a provision that, at a minimum, Council receives an annual update on the progress of the Climate Action Plan.

Mayor Giles thanked staff for the presentation.

2-b. Hear a presentation and discuss proposed modifications to an approved Smart Growth Community Plan to allow a mixed-use transit-oriented development located east of Dobson Road and north of Main Street.

Planning Director Nana Appiah introduced Downtown Transformation Manager Jeff McVay and displayed a PowerPoint presentation regarding a modification to the Smart Growth Community Plan that was approved in 2016. **(See Attachment 2)**

Mr. Appiah explained the 21-acre property is located on the northeast corner of Dobson Road and Main Street. He said the discussion at the time of approval back in 2016 was to zone the 21 acres from General/Limited Commercial and Infill District 2 to a Smart Growth Community. He added the transects approved in 2016 will not change. (See Pages 2 and 3 of Attachment 2)

Mr. McVay commented that of the 21 acres, 10 acres is currently the Sycamore Station Park-n-Ride and Transit Center. He reported Federal Transit Administration (FTA) dollars were used to purchase a capitalized 56-year lease for the development of the Park-n-Ride and Transit Center, adding there is currently approximately 41 years left on the lease. He pointed out in 2015 when the Central Mesa extension opened, demand for parking at the Sycamore Station reduced significantly, allowing new redevelopment options. (See Page 4 of Attachment 2)

Mr. McVay stated the developer, who owns the remaining 11 acres on the south and west side of the Park-n-Ride, approached the City with an overall development plan. He said the original zoning request required a development agreement with the City not only because of the zoning, but more importantly because the City's interest in the Park-n-Ride was included as part of the overall development plan. He advised because the Park-n-Ride was purchased and improved with FTA dollars, there is a requirement that approximately \$4 million must be reinvested back into transit. He discussed neighborhood groups are concerned with the project and believe the commitments made by the developer are not being met; however, the City was not a participant in those neighborhood meetings. He mentioned with just over 40 years left on the lease, the project was not economically feasible, and the developer has been working in good faith to negotiate the fee simple ownership of the underlying land. He verified negotiations between the developer and the landowner were not successful and the master plan needed to be reconsidered to include the Transit Center as an integral part of the plan. (See Page 5 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Appiah described the Smart Growth Community Planning is similar to the form-based code transect district. He remarked when a property is outside the form-based code area, there is an opportunity to carry the same standard regulations into another area; however, in order to do that the developer must go through the Smart Growth Community Planning. He outlined the requirements. (See Page 6 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Appiah stated the site is located within a mixed-use activity district with the objective of allowing mixed-use communities that are pedestrian friendly and close to public transit, which ties into the intentions of the Climate Action Plan. (See Page 7 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Appiah acknowledged the zoning designations have not changed from 2016. He outlined the proposed plan is seeking to remove the parcel line to allow development as one parcel and change the configuration to separate the city parcel. He summarized the specific modifications being requested. (See Pages 8 through 11 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Appiah indicated when a development application is received, the information is passed on to the school district to determine whether there is adequate capacity to service that development. He presented the school analysis information which shows there is adequate capacity. (See Page 12 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Appiah commented before the plan was approved in 2016 there was extensive public participation and discussion and since then the developer has continued to engage the community. He mentioned the developer recently met with neighborhood representatives to discuss the proposed changes. (See Pages 13 and 14 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Appiah said based on the findings of the general plan, the zoning ordinance, and the Smart Growth Community Plan requirements, the proposal meets all conditions and goals. He added the Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Board did recommend approval and staff will be recommending approval. (See Page 15 of Attachment 2)

Councilmember Thompson discussed his memory of the project in 2016 of wanting to keep the commercial/retail component forward facing and pushing the multi-family housing to the back of the property because of the high-volume use at Sycamore Station. He asked if that strategy remains with the modified plan.

Mr. McVay replied from an overall development proposal, the idea is to push the intensity to Main Street and place the townhomes and single-family development further back into the neighborhood setting closer to the school.

Councilmember Heredia spoke about his understanding of the project since 2016. He said there are probably five to eight cars in the parking lot on any given day with unsafe activity occurring right next to the school. He spoke about the valid concerns of having market-rate apartments, but this is an important piece needed to leverage and build density based on the assets in the area, such as the light rail and the Asian District. He expressed his support of the proposed change and hopes for future opportunities with the Transit Center area.

Mayor Giles pointed out that the modification is necessary because the developer was not able to acquire the piece of property that was designated for owner-occupied residential.

Mr. McVay confirmed Mayor Giles' comments, adding the developer worked in true good faith with the underlying property owner, offering well above appraised value and the property owner wanted five times the offer. He said the nearly \$4 million of FTA fair share that needed to be included into the development made the project unfeasible from an economic perspective. He mentioned that going forward staff can continue to have dialogue with the property owner to find out whether there is interest in partnering with the City and another developer to move forward with the project.

In response to a question posed by Mayor Giles related to the piece of property being described that has not been incorporated, Mr. McVay referred to the area inside the dotted lines in Slide 10.

Mr. McVay added the FTA fair share that must be reinvested back into transit is based on a depreciation model, so every year that passes without development means the improvements on the property depreciate and the FTA fair share reduces. He noted the zoning entitlement for townhomes is tied to the property and anyone wishing to change that would have to go through a rezoning process through P&Z and Council.

Responding to a question from Mayor Giles regarding the motivation of the property owners if they are receiving rent payments, Mr. McVay clarified the lease was capitalized and the funds were received upfront.

Mayor Giles recommended the possibility of getting a mediator involved in controversial zoning cases to help problem solve and assist in finding common solutions. He said the City needs to respect the concerns of the neighborhood while continuing to engage in resolving the issues.

In response to a series of questions from Councilmember Freeman, Mr. McVay explained that the access points off Dobson that transects through the site to the Transit Center is still there and must be maintained as part of any future development; the access point off Main Street is always maintained throughout the development proposal; and that the access point off Sycamore is to be maintained. He remarked the intent is to show that development can occur on the privately held land and when the Transit Center becomes available there is a developable piece that could be incorporated from a master planning perspective into that original development. He indicated

in 2016 there was discussion of a parking deck, but after more analysis of the demand less than 200 covered parking spaces were needed.

Responding to an additional question by Councilmember Freeman regarding whether Mr. Appiah would be the administrative zoning officer and clearance review, Mr. Appiah confirmed his understanding; however, the Smart Growth Community Plan is approving strict parameters that the developer must follow for staff to administratively approve.

Mayor Giles thanked staff for the presentation.

2-c. Appointments to various boards and committees.

It was moved by Councilmember Thompson, seconded by Councilmember Heredia, that the Council concur with the Mayor's recommendations and the appointments be confirmed. **(See Attachment 3)**

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Giles-Duff-Freeman-Heredia-Luna-Spilsbury-Thompson
NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

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

3-a. Sustainability and Transportation Committee meeting held on April 8, 2021.

It was moved by Councilmember Thompson, seconded by Councilmember Heredia, that receipt of the above-listed minutes be acknowledged.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Giles-Duff-Freeman-Heredia-Luna-Spilsbury-Thompson
NAYS – None

Carried unanimously.

4. Current events summary including meetings and conferences attended.

Mayor Giles –	MAG Transportation Policy Board Phoenix-Mesa Airport Authority
Vice Mayor Duff –	Sister Cities Board meeting - 40 th anniversary Dining for Dreams – Local First
Councilmember Freeman –	Environmental Services and Solid Waste recognition
Councilmember Luna –	Prensa Arizona interview

- Councilmember Thompson – Arizona League of Cities and Towns meeting
Chamber of Commerce CEO meeting – Veteran scholarship fund

- Councilmember Spilsbury – Natural History Museum Tour
Forensics Lab Tour
Volunteered at Paz de Cristo
Exterior Plus – ribbon cutting

Vice Mayor Duff wished everyone happy Juneteenth to celebrate the end of slavery on June 19, 1865, adding that tomorrow, June 18, Zen Nights will be holding a festival to celebrate the holiday.

Councilmember Thompson stated the Mesa Police Department Academy graduation will take place June 18, 2021.

5. Scheduling of meetings.

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

Monday, June 21, 2021, 5:00 p.m. – Study Session

Monday, June 21, 2021, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Meeting

6. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 9:16 a.m.

JOHN GILES, MAYOR

ATTEST:

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, 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 17th day of June 2021. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK

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(Attachments – 3)