



“The mission of the City of Safford is to make Safford
a great place to live, work, and visit ”

**CITY OF SAFFORD
COUNCIL WORK SESSION/SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES
Monday, March 24, 2014 @ 6:00 PM
Safford Library Program Room, 808 S. 7th Avenue, Safford, Arizona**

PRESENT: Wyn “Chris” Gibbs, Mayor; Mary Bingham, Vice Mayor; Council Member’s Gene Seale, Arnold A. Lopez, Kenneth Malloque, James D. Howes, and Richard Ortega.

STAFF PRESENT: Eric Buckley, Interim City Manager; Sandra Findley, Executive Assistant; Ann Waite, Chief Financial Officer; Christine Fisher, Human Resources Director; John Griffin, Police Chief; Leanne McElroy, Library Director; Jenny Howard, Public Works Director; Dustin Welker, Planning & Community Development Director; Don Knight, Director FlexNet Meter Renewal Project; Randy Petty, City Engineer; and Amber Hogle, Deputy City Clerk and Dale Clark, who assisted with the audio/video recording of the meeting.

OTHERS PRESENT: Jo Hancock; Danny Smith; David Morse; Kevin & Kristi Johnson; Erik Swanson; Glen Orr; Susan Syfert; Kim Larkey; Steve McGaughey; and Jon Johnson, Eastern Arizona Courier and others who did not sign in.

1. **WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Gibbs called the meeting to order at 6:02:18 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL:** There was a quorum of the Council present (7).
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:** Mayor Gibbs led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
4. **OPENING PRAYER:** Dustin Welker offered the opening prayer.
5. **Discuss and review proposed changes to the Stage 3 and Stage 4 sections of the City of Safford Water Conservation Policy** . Interim City Manager Buckley explained the changes to Stage 3 and Stage 4 sections of the Water Conservation Policy.

- 1) Allow washing of vehicles in Stage 3 on designated watering days

2) Restricting vehicle washing in Stage 4.

3) Restricting restaurants from serving water unless otherwise requested in Stage 3.

Councilman Malloque requested it be made clearer to the public that if they are out of town or at work on their stated watering days we are willing to work with citizens and allow them to water when they are home, if not on their scheduled watering day.

Interim Manager Buckley agreed that we would be able to tell by the customer's water bill if they were still conserving water and only watering on the 2 days per week schedule.

6. **Presentation and discussion on properties owned by the City of Safford.**

The Council discussed possible city owned properties that could be sold and properties that were recommended to be viable land not to sell. Randy Petty presented the properties on the map in yellow as being city owned property (see attached). Properties the Council wishes to consider to sell may be brought back to a future meeting (in executive sessions since contracts would be discussed).

Mayor Gibbs suggestions properties to sell:

- 1) Central Avenue water tank site
- 2) 20th Street sewer lift station
- 3) 2 - Well sights located on Walmart
- 4) Well sights at Rocky lake water system

Malloque: #37 Future plans to take 14th Avenue as a through street? Yes

Vice Mayor Bingham inquired about selling Old Yard 2. Eric no specific reason we are hanging on to. Mayor Gibbs commented that Yard 2 may be considered for a new Fire Station if the whole block was purchased.

It was the consensus of the Council for staff to look in to getting rid of the four (4) properties per Mayor Gibbs.

7. **Discussion about establishing Intergovernmental Agreement with Graham County Park for irrigation water rates.**

Interim City Manager Buckley explained that he, Mayor Gibbs, and Vice Mayor Bingham met with County Manager Cooper and Supervisor Smith in regards to the current water rates, per expired IGA, at the Fairgrounds.

Mayor Gibbs stated that the County provides a service that serves the entire community. The County is considering eliminating the ponds and the fountain. He questioned if the Council wanted to give the County a reduced irrigation rate (around first tier pricing which is higher than what they were paying per the IGA) just for the Fairgrounds since the entire Valley and Safford citizens does benefit from the services the County Fairgrounds does provide.

Interim City Manager Buckley explained that the County does have wells, but the water was killing the fish and grass. As a result, they purchased a reverse osmosis system and plan to construct some evaporative ponds.

Councilman Ortega agrees it is fair to move forward with the IGA.

Councilman Malloque would like to see a use for the evaporative water rather than let it go to waste.

Councilman Seale does not have a problem working with the County; however, there are a lot of people who have issues with the high water rates. He feels a cap limit should be placed on their usage. Suggested a year period with a cap limit and revisit the subject in a year.

The Council concurred and asked staff to draft an IGA for the Council to consider at a future meeting.

8. **Discussion regarding the CH-1 Hangar Lease at the Safford Municipal Airport.**

Dustin Welker stated Ponderosa Aviation (AKA the Astro Hangar, one of the original wood/tin military hangars) requested to terminate CH-1 hangar. Ponderosa Aviation is subleasing to Wade Barnett. The City is trying to not allow subleases so Barnett has agreed to lease ½ of the hangar. Going forward the City actually sees the hangar as two T-hangars.

Councilman Malloque inquired if this hangar is more of a hazard than an asset due to the age? He believes someone should check the structural stability of the building.

Mayor Gibbs stated a ten year lease was signed in 2012 by Ponderosa; however, they were already subleasing to Mr. Barnett. Mr. Welker stated policies have been changed since then regarding the allowance of subleasing.

Mr. Welker stated the Council does have options regarding termination as stated in the lease Ponderosa signed.

Councilman Malloque inquired about the feasibility of tearing down the old hangar and building a new structure in the location. He asked if there any other locations available for lease for Mr. Barnett. (No)

Mayor Gibbs inquired if we were charging enough for the hangar to cover insurance, etc.? He stated Ponderosa has been good for our Airport and has been good about working with the City in the past. He asked staff to bring back on the next agenda to release Ponderosa and to do an evaluation on the existing structure.

9. **Discussion regarding possible parking restrictions at the MVD Parking Lot.**

Dusting Welker explained the City leases the parking lot from ADOT (Central Avenue and Main Street). The City and ADOT agreed to a lease agreement to alleviate some of the historic parking issues downtown. Merchants are supposed to park here to allow customers to park on Main Street. Currently, contract workers are using it as a car pool parking lot, forcing local merchants to park on the street and loosing parking for their customers.

Danny Smith on behalf of the Safford Downtown Association mirrored the request above and stated the downtown merchants would appreciate assistance.

Mayor Gibbs suggested a parking pass for merchants, however did note it would need to be policed.

Councilman Seale asked if the original reason for entering the lease was to develop parking for the merchants and their customers. (Yes) He suggested posting no parking between certain hours of the day signs.

Mr. Welker stated that staff will work with the Police Department to come up with a restrictive parking plan and signage and bring it back to the Council.

Danny Smith suggested sending a letter to Freeport. Freeport has been cooperative with issues in the past. Mr. Welker stated -a letter was sent; however , it is not a Freeport group.

10. **Adjourn Work Session and enter Special Council Meeting**

It was moved by Councilman Ortega, seconded by Vice Mayor Bingham, and carried unanimously to adjourn the work session and entered a special meeting at 7:24 pm. **MOTION ADOPTED**

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

11. First reading of Ordinance Number 14-003, an ordinance of the Mayor and City Council adding Section 13.24.090 to the City of Safford Municipal Code regarding the continued collection of Development fees and adding necessary definitions in Section 13.24.020. (Read Title of Ordinance only) Mayor Gibbs read the Title of Ordinance Number 14-003.

12. First Reading of Ordinance Number 14-004, an ordinance of the Mayor and City Council establishing procedures for the payment of new capacity fees for water utility services and wastewater utility services inside and outside the City of Safford by adoption of a new Chapter 13.25 of the City of Safford Municipal Code. Mayor Gibbs read the Title of Ordinance Number 14-004.

13. Consider approving and adopting Resolution Number 14-016, a resolution of the Mayor and City Council, restricting thirteen (13) individual parking spaces to two-hour parking for Park users only within the new parking lot at Firth Park. MOTION ADOPTED

The Council entered executive session at 7:20:00 p.m. to discuss Items 14.1 and 14.2.

The Council reconvened regular session at 7:58:01 p.m.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

1. Bids were received and opened on Wednesday, March 12th for the purchase of the Golf Course House. Pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes §38-431(A)(3)(7) the Mayor and City Council will enter executive session to discuss the Bid compared to the minimum acceptable amount previously discussed, consider rebidding with an advertised minimum bid amount, and consider the sale of the Golf Course House property located at 4000 North Frye Creek Road, Thatcher, Arizona. The Council may elect to go back into open session to take action.

It was moved by Councilman Malloque, seconded by Councilman Seale, and carried unanimously to reject all current bids received on the golf course house, reopen the bid, stating a minimum amount in bid based on the advice of the city attorney. MOTION ADOPTED

2. The Mayor and Council may enter executive session pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes §38-431.03(A)(1), (3) & (4) to select a

candidate for the position of city manager and offer the position to such person. The Council may elect to go back into open session to take action.

Councilman Ortega commented that the process of selecting a city manager has been a long process. Forty (40) plus applicants submitted applications. The Council conducted thorough interviews. He believes it to be at the best interest of the City to offer the position of City Manager to Mr. Horatio Skeete.

It was moved by Councilman Ortega, seconded by Councilman Howes, and carried unanimously to offer the position of city manager to Horatio Skeete, direct the City Attorney and H.R. Director to initiate a contract and require Mr. Skeete to begin employment with the City of Safford within two weeks. **MOTION ADOPTED**

Mayor Gibbs commented that the City had many exceptional candidates and interviewed five (5). He thanked Eric Buckley for his willingness to serve as interim city manager and thanked him for his passion to the City of Safford.

15. **ADJOURN**: It was moved by Councilman Malloque, seconded by Councilman Howes, and carried unanimously to adjourn regular session at 8:01:59 p.m.
MOTION ADOPTED