



**“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 MINUTES
Monday, May 27, 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: Horatio Skeete, 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 Georgia Luster, City Clerk. Dale Clark, who assisted with the audio/video recording of the meeting.

OTHERS PRESENT: Reverend Gail Carlsen, Glen Orr, Dennis Whisman, Sam Napier, Art Mata, Jay Wright, Gary Thompson, John Howard, Kelly Owens, Jacque Attaway, Kenny McKinney, Bill Perry, KATO Radio, 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 6:00:15 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL:** A quorum of the Council was present (7).
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:** Mayor Gibbs led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
4. **OPENING PRAYER:** Reverend Gale Carlsen offered the opening prayer.
5. **BUDGET PRESENTATIONS:** (Presentations attached)

Mr. Skeete stated the last two operational budgets will be presented to the Council this evening. They are the budgets of Engineering and Public Works.

Engineering : (See Attachment)

Randy Petty, City Engineer, presented the recommended budget of the Engineering Division. Secondly, he reviewed Streets, Parks, Economic Development and Airport grant funding.

Councilman Malloque inquired about the City fixing 14th Avenue (by SUSD). Mr. Petty responded that staff is also concerned about 14th Avenue and is aware that it needs to be re-constructed, but believes funding for the project is still out a couple years. He also noted that staff is looking into grants for the project.

Public Works : (See Attachment)

Jenny Howard, Public Works Director, presented recommended budgets for Public Works Administration, Building & Maintenance, Street Lights, Parks, Sanitation, Highway User Fund/Streets, Golf Course, and Fleet Management Services. There were no questions regarding the recommended Public Works budget.

Councilman Lopez inquired about revisiting the re-hiring of employees laid off during the downed economy (July 2011). Mr. Skeete stated that he would review policies and procedures.

Fund Balance Review : (See Attachment) ___

Ann Waite, Chief Financial Officer, reviewed the forgiveness of the Inter-fund loans between the General Fund, Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF), Utility funds and Warehouse Fund. She explained the net impact of forgiving the debt will be an increase of \$1,421,483 to the General Fund and Highway User Fund's (Street Fund) spendable fund balance. A decrease of the same amount will be recognized by the Proprietary Funds (Utility and Warehouse Funds).

Mr. Skeete stated that he intends to present a series of fund balance reports for the next fiscal year with projected changes. He will do this quarterly to keep the Council informed. It is his goal to manage resources and the collection of revenues available in order to respond efficiently to emergencies if required. Large scale emergencies may qualify for financial assistance in the form of reimbursements from FEMA and the State usually is available.

Mayor Gibbs likes the idea of balancing the inter-fund loans,

Additionally, Mr. Skeete noted that during the last audit, the auditors did note that the City needed to aggressively address these inter-fund loans and be prepared just in case the City should face an emergency.

Mr. Skeete also noted that the landfill funds will be addressed as soon as the report and the new life expectancy of the landfill are documented. Issues and concerns associated with the landfill including the closure of the landfill will be presented to the Council when that report is complete.

6. Discussion regarding amending Section 1.36.020, of Chapter 2.36 Police Department, of the City of Safford Municipal Code removing authority from the City Manager and placing the authority to appoint the Safford Police Chief with the City Council.

Mr. Skeete stated this item is a request by the Council body concerning placing the authority to hire and fire the Safford Police Chief and removing authority from the City Manager. He noted that the Municipal Code currently allows the City Manager to appoint the chief of police with the approval of the city council before the city manager proceeds to hiring an individual. Secondly, he referred to information provided by the League of Arizona Cities and Town which does a listing of those councils that hire the police chief directly and those that have the manager hire. He noted seven jurisdictions hire the police chief with the Council's approval as the City of Safford currently does

- Council hires police chief: Twenty-seven jurisdictions out of eighty-four jurisdictions
- Manager hires police chief: Fifty jurisdictions out of eighty-four jurisdictions
- Manager w/Council hires police chief: Seven jurisdictions out of eighty-four jurisdictions. A few jurisdictions actually have contracts with the chief of police approved by the city council.

Councilman Lopez stated that he requested the item be discussed because the Council was not involved in the selection of the police chief after the previous city manager left. He believes the council needs to be involved and asked the opinion of the council body.

Mr. Skeete commented that he just completed interviews of three candidates for the position of police chief. He did inform each candidate that this issue will be discussed and considered by the city council. He explained if the council preferred to change the Code it would take approximately sixty days to change.

Councilman Seale stated he did not have a problem with the current process because the police chief, as most of the department heads, reports to the city manager. The city manager makes the recommendation and the council still has some input and has the authority to approve or disapprove his recommendation. He stated his only concern was that the proper hiring procedures were not followed and that the position was not advertised and interviews were conducted. He is good with the way the process is done currently.

Councilman Malloque stated that he understands the current Code gives the city manager authority to recommend to the council and that the council has the authority to approve or disapprove his recommendation. However, to prevent abuse of power, he believes it would be more fair to the employee or to the sitting police chief if the termination requires the vote of the city council. Therefore, the city manager or no single person could put pressure on the chief for him to do something that was not right. He

stated he is okay with the current process but directed the city manager to write this form of termination language in the Code.

Mr. Skeete stated that there is not clear direction in the Code, but because of the process of bringing the police chief on board, he believes the city manager is obligated to bring back the termination before the council before the city manager could terminate.

Mr. Skeete stated that he will work with the city attorney and draft language to discuss the structure of hiring and firing the police chief that will be brought back before the council in a council work session.

It was moved by Councilman Malloque, seconded by Councilman Ortega and carried unanimously to adjourn to executive session to discuss Item 7: 1 and 2. **MOTION ADOPTED**

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

1) The City Council may enter Executive Session to consider appointing a candidate for the position of Police Chief for the City of Safford pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes 38-431.03(A)(3)(5). The City Council may return to open session to take action.

2). The City Council may enter Executive Session to consider appointing an Interim Police Chief for the City of Safford pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes 38-431.03(A)(3)(5). The City Council may return to open session to take action.

The Council reconvened regular meeting at 7:08:17 p.m.

It was moved by Councilman Ortega, seconded by Councilman Malloque and carried unanimously to accept the recommendation of the city manager to appoint Mr. Joe Brugman as the new Police Chief for the City of Safford.
MOTION ADOPTED

8. FUTURE MEETINGS:

- Monday, June 2, 2014 Special Council Meeting: Tentative Budget Adoption
- Monday, June 9, 2014 Regular Council Meeting
- Monday, June 23, 2014 Special Council Meeting: Adoption of Final Budget
- Monday, July 14, 2014 Regular Council Meeting: Adopt Tax Levy

Mr. Skeete took the opportunity to recognize and acknowledge John Griffin for his years of service with the Police Department of the City of Safford. His official retirement date is June 1, 2014. An open house wishing John Griffin and Jason Knight a happy retirement will be held on Wednesday, May 28th from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Police Department.

Vice Mayor Bingham requested an update regarding the following:

- Graham County Economic Development Contract
- Graham County Irrigation IGA
- Old Safford Theater concerns of being unsecure/unsafe
- Smartworks Contract

9. **ADJOURN:** It was moved by Councilman Malloque, seconded by Vice Mayor Bingham, and carried unanimously to adjourn regular session at 7:16:23 p.m.
MOTION ADOPTED

APPROVED:

Wyn "Chris" Gibbs, Mayor
City of Safford

ATTEST:

Georgia Luster, MMC, City Clerk

STATE OF ARIZONA)
) ss
County of Graham)

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the Special Council Meeting of the Safford City Council, Graham County, Arizona held Monday, May 27, 2014, and approved at a Regular Council Meeting on Monday, June 9, 2014. I further certify the meeting was duly called, held and that a quorum was present.

June 9, 2014
Date: _____

Georgia Luster, MMC, City Clerk