



City of Apache Junction, Arizona

Meeting Minutes City Council Meeting

Meeting location:

City Council Chambers
at City Hall
300 E. Superstition Blvd
Apache Junction, AZ
85119

apachejunctionaz.gov
Ph: (480) 982-8002

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

B. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Heck gave the invocation and Councilmember Cross led the meeting attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Mayor Wilson
Councilmember Nesser
Councilmember Heck
Councilmember Johnson
Councilmember Cross
Councilmember Soller

Excused: 1 - Vice Mayor Schroeder

Staff in Attendance:

Bryant Powell, City Manager
Matt Busby, Assistant City Manager
Jennifer Pena, City Clerk
Joel Stern, City Attorney
Patrick Ainsworth, Economic Development Director
Evie McKinney, Deputy City Clerk
Michael Pooley, Police Chief
Rudy Esquivias, Development Services Director

D. CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Nesser moved, seconded by Councilmember Cross to approve the Consent Agenda.

Yes: 6 - Mayor Wilson, Councilmember Nesser, Councilmember Heck, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Cross and Councilmember Soller

No: 0

Excused: 1 - Vice Mayor Schroeder

1. [24-056](#) Consideration of acceptance of agenda.
2. [24-057](#) Consideration of approval of minutes of the regular meeting of February 6, 2024.

E. AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

3. [24-039](#) Presentation of 25-year Service Award to Officer Eric Reimann, of the Apache Junction Police Department.

Police Chief Michael Pooley recognized Eric Reimann's 25 years of service as an Apache Junction Police Officer with words of appreciation, and highlighted his dedication to being in uniform on patrol all of his time served. City Manager Bryant Powell also addressed Mr. Reimann with a certificate and service award, and commended him on his stabilizing influence and credibility with fellow officers.

F. REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL UPDATES

4. [24-058](#) Brief summary of intergovernmental updates from mayor and councilmembers.

Councilmember Cross stated the television show, "Best of America by Horseback" recognized Apache Junction and the City Administration for years of dedicated service to the Equine Industry and encouraging guests from around the country to enjoy the beauty of Arizona by horseback. They proclaimed the City as "Choice Best of America by Horseback Premier Tourism Destination." Councilmember Cross also highlighted the Annual Pony Express event on March 2, 2024 at 10:00 AM. The route will start at City Hall and Mayor Wilson will be the first rider. The route will be posted on the City's facebook page.

Councilmember Heck attended a Greater Phoenix Economic Council Meeting, where discussion of Arizona's water position was the main topic. He stated Arizona is still using the same amount of water as it did in the 1950's, and spoke about the importance of water conservation. Councilmember Heck also reminded everyone of the Lost Dutchman Days event on February 23-25, 2024.

Mayor Wilson shared statistics on the Lost Dutchman marathon that took place on February 17, 2024. There were 2,710 participants, hundreds of volunteers and spectators for a total of 7,000 people involved in the event. He attended a ribbon cutting for a new concourse at the Phoenix Mesa Gateway Airport, which added 5 new gates and 30,000 feet of floor space. Mayor Wilson also attended the groundbreaking for the new development in the City "Residences at Apache Trail."

G. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

5. [24-059](#) City Manager's Report.

City Manager Bryant Powell thanked everyone for their help and participation in the Lost Dutchman Marathon and the upcoming Lost Dutchman Days events.

6. [24-078](#) Presentation and discussion with Police Chief Michael Pooley regarding an update on the AJPD Flock program.

Police Chief Michael Pooley gave an update on the Flock camera system that the Police Department uses. He shared statistics regarding the amount of license plates the 25 cameras have picked up and the camera benefits. He shared the cameras helped solve several crimes, including a suspect in a hit and run fatality.

Councilmember Heck asked how quickly the Police department receives the license plate information after it is captured. Chief Pooley stated it is within a minute and a half.

Councilmember Soller commented about his experience with the Flock Camera Systems and the benefits.

7. [24-060](#) Announcement of Current Events.

Assistant City Manager Matt Busby spoke about the upcoming Lost Dutchman Days on February 23-25, 2024. More information can be obtained on the event website at lostdutchmandays.org. He also reminded everyone to visit apachejunctionaz.gov to sign up for the City weekly newsletter.

H. PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. [24-062](#) Presentation, discussion, public hearing, and consideration on Purchase and Sale Agreement with Golden Triangle QOZB, LLC, for approximately 10.64 gross acres of land located in downtown Apache Junction north of the previous site of the Grand Hotel.

Councilmember Soller moved, seconded by Councilmember Johnson that the Purchase and Sale Agreement with Golden Triangle QOZB, LLC for approximately 10.64 acres located in the downtown area north of the previous site of the Grand Hotel and authorize the city manager or his designee to execute on behalf of the city any further documents necessary or appropriate to effectuate the City's purposes in entering into this agreement be approved.

Yes: 6 - Mayor Wilson, Councilmember Nesser, Councilmember Heck, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Cross and Councilmember Soller

No: 0

Excused: 1 - Vice Mayor Schroeder

Economic Development Director Patrick Ainsworth presented the property where the Grand Hotel was formerly located at the northeast corner of W. Apache Trail and N. Apache Trail has been vacant for over 20 years. The City of Apache Junction has taken a proactive role to spur investment in the downtown area with the addition of Flatiron Park and the streetscape improvements along N. Apache Trail and the Focal Point.

To further promote development and investment in the downtown area, the Apache Junction Economic Strategic Plan consists of a strategy to identify land sites to purchase and help prepare for desired development. The subject site recently became available for purchase and the current property owners and the City have negotiated the following terms:

- Purchase price of the 10.64-acre property is \$2,940,300
- Any septic system improvements on the property will be removed by the current owner and a reimbursement not to exceed \$100,000 will be paid for by the City of Apache Junction
- The City of Apache Junction will have 90 days from the approval date of the agreement to review all documents and reports associated with this property to ensure there are no outstanding issues with the property
- The current property owner will transfer any and all existing proportionate rights, easements, and agreements conveyed on this property to the City of Apache Junction as part of the sale.

Once the City takes ownership, City representatives will embark on a process to actively bring various businesses to the site which may include restaurants, retail, hospitality and entertainment uses.

Councilmembers had concerns including the proposed usage of the land, blocking views for current homeowners and if this will fall into the strategic plan for a downtown area.

Mr. Ainsworth responded to Councilmembers concerns.

Mayor Wilson opened the public hearing.

George Schroeder commented he is opposed to any tall buildings for this property.

Donna Carr stated she would not like anything more than two stories for this property and would like to see the store fronts designed like a mining town.

Mehmood Mohiuddin supported the purchase of the land.

No further discussion was held and the public hearing was closed.

I. OLD BUSINESS

J. NEW BUSINESS

9. [24-063](#) Presentation, discussion, and possible consideration of awarding contract for Concentrated Downtown Master Plan Update RFP #ED2023-002 to SWABACK in an amount not to exceed \$99,000.00.

Councilmember Nesser moved, seconded by Councilmember Soller that the contract for the Concentrated Downtown Master Plan Update RFP # ED2023-002 to SWABACK in an amount not to exceed \$99,000.00 be approved.

Yes: 6 - Mayor Wilson, Councilmember Nesser, Councilmember Heck, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Cross and Councilmember Soller

No: 0

Excused: 1 - Vice Mayor Schroeder

Economic Development Director Patrick Ainsworth presented the Economic Development Strategic Plan, (adopted in 2022), and the Apache Junction General Plan, (adopted in 2020), have both called for an update to the Downtown Redevelopment and Implementation Strategy, (DRIS) (adopted in 2010). With recent attention to the downtown, the City finds it prudent to

advance the implementation of these two plans and move forward with updating the DRIS document, but with a concentration on the Downtown Core area.

To meet the needs of the economic development division, the city issued a Request for Proposals on December 11, 2023, with a reply deadline of January 10, 2024. Three proposals were received, and one was deemed nonresponsive. The two proposals evaluated were:

SWABACK \$ 90,000.00

Upfront Planning & Entitlements \$ 88,932.14

City staff has reviewed the proposals for proven technical ability, qualifications/experience, proposed solution/method of approach and pricing. SWABACK was deemed the most responsive and responsible bidder.

City staff requests council award the contract to SWABACK, including a 10% contingency fee for a total amount not to exceed \$99,000.00.

Councilmember Cross inquired about the purpose of the 10% contingency fee.

Mr. Ainsworth and Purchasing Administrator Kimberly Heldt responded 10% is a typical contingency fee for a contract.

10. [24-054](#) Presentation, discussion, and possible consideration of approval of extension through June 30, 2024, of the individual towing contracts currently in place with Apache Sands Towing, CL King Towing, and Phoenix Metro Towing which are due to expire on April 5, 2024.

Councilmember Cross moved, seconded by Councilmember Johnson that an extension of the individual towing contracts with Apache Sands Towing, CL King Towing, and Phoenix MetroTowing through June 30, 2024 be approved.

Yes: 6 - Mayor Wilson, Councilmember Nesser, Councilmember Heck, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Cross and Councilmember Soller

No: 0

Excused: 1 - Vice Mayor Schroeder

Management Analyst Robert Wisler presented the current police towing contracts with Apache Sands Towing, CL King Towing, and Phoenix Metro Towing will expire April 5, 2024. The City will be competitively bidding for services for the next ten years and would like to have the new contracts align with the fiscal year. The staff recommendation is to extend the existing contracts through June 30, 2024.

Councilmembers questioned if there will be changes to the contracts.

Mr. Wisler stated it is an extension of the current contracts and no other changes will be made.

K. COUNCIL DIRECTION TO STAFF

L. SELECTION OF MEETING DATES, TIMES, LOCATIONS, AND PURPOSES

M. CALL TO PUBLIC

Donna Carr, 2178 W. Virginia Street, Apache Junction, would like to see more shops for younger people and for marijuana smoking to be banned at City events. She also stated there should be petition forms for the public on the City's website.

George Schroeder, 2444 W. Virginia Street, Apache Junction, spoke on the squatter issue, residents in his neighborhood dying, and an illegal gate around the house that burned down near his home. He also stated nuisance laws need to be enforced.

Kelly Paolisso, 737 Teaberry Street, Encinitas, California, (representative for a group with the same concern), addressed the killing of hundreds of small pets by an unregistered business in the City. She stated Chief Pooley spoke to her and they are investigating this so she thanked the Police for their help.

Council commented on the house that burned down not having an illegal gate per the Fire Chief's confirmation and that smoking and vaping is not legal in City parks. They also asked if the City Manager could look into having a petition form added to the City website.

N. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Wilson adjourned the meeting at 8:04 p.m.

ACCEPTED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2024, BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF APACHE JUNCTION, ARIZONA.

SIGNED AND ATTESTED TO THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2024.

WALTER "CHIP" WILSON
Mayor

ATTEST:

JENNIFER PEÑA
City Clerk

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Apache Junction, Arizona, held on the _____ day of _____, 2024. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2024.

JENNIFER PEÑA
City Clerk

