



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, March 5, 2024

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

C. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Mayor Wilson
Vice Mayor Schroeder
Councilmember Nesser
Councilmember Heck
Councilmember Cross
Councilmember Soller

Excused: 1 - Councilmember Johnson

Staff in Attendance:

Bryant Powell, City Manager
Matt Busby, Assistant City Manager
Jennifer Pena, City Clerk
Joel Stern, City Attorney
Michael Pooley, Police Chief
Rudy Esquivias, Development Services Director
Ted Wolff, Public Works Director
Evie McKinney, Deputy City Clerk
Raquel Schatz, Public Works Project Engineer

D. CONSENT AGENDA

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

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

No: 0

Excused: 1 - Councilmember Johnson

1. [24-068](#) Consideration of acceptance of agenda.
2. [24-070](#) Consideration of approval of minutes of the regular meeting of February 20, 2024.

E. AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

F. REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL UPDATES

3. [24-072](#) Brief summary of intergovernmental updates from mayor and councilmembers.

Councilmember Cross announced a great success with the 3rd Annual Pony Express held this past Saturday. The event brought forth a donation to the Cowboys For Kids in the amount of \$1,000.00.

Councilmember Heck thanked everyone that participated or volunteered with the Lost Dutchman Days event. It was another successful year, and now that the City owns the Rodeo Grounds more opportunities will be offered at the future annual events.

Mayor Wilson commented on the success of the Pony Express event. He had the pleasure of partaking in the delivery and collection of various parcels. He gave thanks and appreciation to the Apache Junction Police Department for their professional assistance with escorting through intersections and keeping all the horses and riders safe. He also shared that he received many compliments for a very well ran Lost Dutchman Days, and offered his thanks and appreciation to all involved. He stated District 7 Senator Wendy Rogers was a participant in the parade, and later attended the rodeo and other festivities and enjoyed her time immensely.

Mayor Wilson attended a luncheon on March 5, 2024, at the state capitol that recognized Arizona's 15 county fairs. He shared invitations from three of Apache Junction's young citizens that participate in the local "Country Kickers 4-H Club", to attend the festivities for the Pinal County Fair, held March 13-17, 2024, at 11 Mile Corner in Coolidge, AZ.

G. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

4. [24-075](#) City Manager's Report.

City Manager Bryant Powell shared a reminder to Mayor, Councilmembers and staff regarding the Lost Dutchman Resort Neighborhood Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 8:30 a.m.

Mr. Powell expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Parks and Recreation department, Public Works, Apache Junction Police Department and the Superstition Fire and Medical District for a successful Lost Dutchman Days weekend. He also commented that this event could not be done without the Mayor and Council support to staff and all the volunteers. Beautiful photos of the various events were shared, and he reminded everyone that we are a learning organization and each year offers more opportunities to improve on things such as parking.

FEMA flood maps are updated every 5 -7 years. An Open House was recently held to share upcoming map changes to Apache Junction residents. This update is typically an 18 month process.

Memorial Services will be held for our previous Mayor Johnny Insalaco on March 13, 2024, at St. George's Catholic Church, 300 E. 16th Avenue, Apache Junction, AZ. Rosary will begin at 9:30 a.m., and services at 10:00 a.m. will be followed with a reception at the church. At 1:00 p.m. a second reception will be held at the VFW #9399, 133 N. Saguaro Drive, Apache Junction, AZ.

5. [24-037](#) Presentation and discussion on Pinal County and City of Apache Junction Transportation Maintenance and Improvement Fund.

City Manager Bryant Powell introduced Pinal County Deputy Director of Public Works/Development Services Andy Smith to share a presentation on the Pinal County and City of Apache Junction Transportation Maintenance and Improvement Fund.

Mr. Smith explained there are three revenue sources used for road maintenance and improvements within Pinal County. These are Vehicle License Tax (VLT), Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF) and a half-cent excise tax, which is referred to as the Transportation Maintenance and Improvement Fund (TMIF). The HURF tax has not increased since 1991. The half-cent excise tax was enacted in 1985, and went into effect in 1986. This tax was renewed in 2005 at the same percentage and will expire in 2026. This will most likely be on the November 2024 ballot for an extension, again at the same percentage of one half-cent.

Pinal County Government Relations & Policy Advisor Tami Ryall shared that some of the TMIF goals are to improve Public Safety services by offering safer intersections and well-connected streets, manage growth by assisting Pinal County residents with reduction in congestion, protect the taxpayers by ensuring roads last longer with preventative maintenance, and improve air quality by paving dirt roads to reduce airborne dust pollution. She shared financial history that directly impacts Apache Junction. During the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022/2023 Apache Junction received \$3.6 million from this fund, and thus far in FY 2023/2024 this amount has totaled \$2.2 million. Disbursement level is based on population size. Due to the increase of Apache Junction residents from the development on the state land to the south this amount will increase accordingly.

Apache Junction Public Works Director Ted Wolff shared how this fund has specifically impacted Apache Junction since the inception of the tax, by completion of 83 lane miles of repaving, 75 lane miles of pavement preservation, 9 lane miles of additional bike lanes, 4 lane miles of added sidewalks, 2 signalized intersections, 4 new street drainage improvements and 9 traffic signal safety enhancements

The County has been researching the collection and disbursement of the funds for the life of the tax and will be sharing through public outreach to Pinal County residents. Ms. Ryall shared the various methods of getting information out to the public to impress the importance of this fund. An Open House will be offered in Apache Junction on March 26, 2024, from 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at the Multi-Generational Center, 1035 N. Idaho Road, Apache Junction, AZ. Information will also be shared through the City's website at www.apachejunctionaz.gov.

6. [24-076](#) Announcement of Current Events.

Assistant City Manager Matt Busby shared the following upcoming events:

*Household Hazardous Waste Day, March 9, 2024, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 575 E. Baseline Avenue, Apache Junction

*Pickleball With the Police, March 15, 2024, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m., 1091 W. Southern Avenue, Apache Junction. Proceeds will benefit the Special Olympics of Arizona.

*Blues & Brews Festival, March 9, 2024, 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Flatiron Community Park

H. PUBLIC HEARINGS

I. OLD BUSINESS

J. NEW BUSINESS

7. [24-103](#) Presentation and discussion providing an update on the city's ongoing efforts to address park usage and community concerns related to parks and open space within city limits.

Management Analyst Rob Wisler presented a review and update on the activity of use at Flatiron Park and the volume of complaints received through the City's social media platforms regarding homelessness in the area. In September 2023 the City implemented new parking regulations and a Code of Conduct policy to regulate behavior by park users. Additional staffing has been added.

Up to date there has been a decrease of 59% in calls for Public Safety service, a considerable decrease in the number of complaints through social media and the impact of homeless individuals has significantly decreased in the downtown area. Mr. Wisler also shared various cleanup activities that have been addressed by a working group formed in August 2023. East Valley Backcountry Horsemen have been assisting with this cleanup effort. Before and after photos were shared of various cleanup areas. Overall, 56 sites have been cleaned by city staff and volunteers, and the estimated worth of these clean up efforts is more than \$10,000.

Council comments included the amount of trash created from the styrofoam products that are used for food give away from local charities, incentives offered and enforcement of rules.

Police Chief Michael Pooley shared the challenges in enforcing the rules and assigning citations. He mentioned the partnership with Horizon Health & Wellness, which has a homeless outreach team that goes out daily to visit one-on-one with the homeless individuals in Apache Junction and throughout Pinal County . Since July of 2023 contact has been made with 62 homeless individuals in the Apache Junction area, resulting in 37 of them now being housed. It was also shared that the Park Rangers do hand out trash bags to encourage cleanup efforts throughout the City.

8. [24-086](#) Presentation and discussion on Resolution No. 23-37, a Federally Patent Easement (FPE) Extinguishment of 7th Avenue (alignment) from Conestoga Road to Cortez Road for purpose of future development with the acknowledgement that current setbacks remain in place until the Utility Easements are Extinguished.

Project Engineer Raquel Schatz shared history regarding Federally Patented Easements, (FPE). She stated that for the area of 7th Avenue (alignment) FPE from Conestoga Road to Cortez Road has never been maintained by the city and is not classified as a local roadway. In addition, the FPE does not provide access to any parcels which would be landlocked in the event of extinguishment. Area transportation would not be adversely affected by an extinguishment. The purpose of this extinguishment is that the owner wishes to obtain a building permit for a future development on the property. Ms. Schatz concluded that Staff is recommending approval of this extinguishment.

9. [24-088](#) Presentation and discussion on Resolution No. 24-05, a Federally Patent Easement (FPE) Extinguishment of Roundup Street (alignment) for purpose of future development of undeveloped parcels inside the Apache Junction Townhome Development.

Project Engineer Raquel Schatz presented the unique case with this area, where the requested extinguishment alignment lies within an existing development. The Roundup Street (north alignment) Federally Patent Easement, (FPE) was leftover from the previous development, Apache Junction Townhomes. This alignment has never been maintained by the city and is not classified as a local roadway. In addition, the FPE does not provide access to any parcels which would be landlocked in the event of extinguishment. Area transportation would not be adversely affected by an extinguishment. The owner of the underlying property filed an application for the extinguishment. He is seeking this extinguishment to build the north side of Roundup Street and obtain building permits for a new development. Ms. Schatz concluded that Staff recommends approval of this extinguishment located on Roundup Street.

K. COUNCIL DIRECTION TO STAFF

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

M. CALL TO PUBLIC

Dan Tone, 1099 S. Cedar Drive, Apache Junction, shared his concerns regarding speeding traffic in his neighborhood on Cedar Drive, and the lack of citations being issued for speeding.

Andre Meek, 1327 S. Belair Road, Apache Junction, commented on the positive results regarding the placement of homeless individuals, the uncontrolled trash buildup in homeless encampments, and landfill fee reduction for volunteer time and resources to clean up these areas.

Donna Carr, 2178 W. Virginia Street, Apache Junction, expressed her concerns regarding crime in the area, towing services and the quality of our water.

Catherine Meek, 1327 S. Belair Road, Apache Junction, shared upcoming events scheduled at the Superstition Mountain Museum.

Council requested staff to address the speeding concern on Cedar Drive.

N. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Wilson adjourned the meeting at 8:14 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