



City of Apache Junction, Arizona

Meeting Minutes City Council Work Session

Meeting location:

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

www.ajcity.net
Ph: (480) 982-8002

Friday, October 20, 2017

Central Arizona College, Room F115

8:00AM - 3:00PM

The public is welcome to observe the discussion however participation in this work session is limited to members of the city council, city staff and the meeting facilitators.

There will be a thirty minute lunch break at the discretion of the city council.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Serdy called the meeting to order at 8:10am.

B. ROLL CALL

Those in attendance were:

Mayor Serdy
Vice Mayor Wilson
Councilmember Rizzi
Councilmember Struble
Councilmember Evans
Councilmember Waldron
Councilmember Barker
City Manager Bryant Powell
Assistant City Manager Matt Busby
City Attorney Joel Stern
Public Information Officer Al Bravo
Management Analyst Anna McCray
Administrative Assistant Jill Miller
Parks & Recreation Director Liz Langenbach
Finance Director Donna Meinerts
Public Works Director Mike Wever
Economic Development Director Janine Solley
Captain Troy Mullender
Marketing & Communication Specialist Matthew McNulty
Water District Director Frank Blanco
Library Manager Tracey Curtis
Development Services Director Larry Kirch

C. AGENDA ITEMS

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1. Introduction of facilitators, Tara Jackson and Evelyn Casuga, and overview of agenda.

Tara Jackson and Evelyn Casuga introduced themselves and reviewed the agenda for the day.

2. Review and discuss ideas and recommendations from the September 15, 2017 Community Town Hall Final Report with council.

City Council discussed their thoughts on the town hall. Council thought it brought a lot of different people together in a room that probably would not normally be in the same place at the same time. It allowed them to hear their beliefs—including those that may be misinformed. While challenging to listen to the conversations without responding, it is critical that they do a much better job of getting the word out to the public about all of the work that the city is doing.

The communications piece is essential. City council and city staff will work to get the meetings on Facebook and other outlets that are easily accessible to our citizens. Council wants to especially target the young people, going to those communications sources that will allow them to reach them best. They need to correct some of the misperceptions that members of the community have—this includes misperceptions about taxes and taxes paid by snowbirds in particular.

It was interesting that participants realized that they are often their own worst enemy in supporting a positive image. It was good to hear the positive comments from the public and to realize that they do know about some of the good things that the city is doing. There were some good suggestions for change that we should consider.

It was also informative and interesting to hear what participants agreed to do themselves as citizens of this community.

The conversation highlighted the need for council and city staff to work with school districts and other governmental bodies that tend to operate independently and may even be outside our city's boundaries but yet are connected in the ways our citizens are impacted. We're all in this together and need to find ways to more effectively and proactively work together.

Suggested Actions Based on Town Hall

1. **Action Committees**

- a. Use participants and ideas to form action committees.

2. **Media/Communications**

- a. Use outlets used by younger generations (snapchat, etc.)
- b. Correct misperceptions on unofficial blogs and social media. City staff needs direction and may need to develop a specific strategy for how to respond to misinformed posts.
- c. Social media can be used as a positive, even when there are misinformed posts. It's a way to engage with citizens and to show the good things we are doing.
- d. Try to meet them where they choose to be—on a blog, over the telephone as part of engagement with members of the media or otherwise. This usually means additional and more diverse resources which can be a challenge. Create a wider variety of opportunities for the community to connect with us.
- e. Consider updating and revising the communication plan. As part of an updated communication plan, we should consider seeding promotional videos and other media resources on the internet and in social media that will cause potential Winter visitors to come to our city.

3. **Economic and Downtown Development**

- a. **Wayfinding Strategy:** Create Signage to attract visitors and tourists to sites in downtown such as the Lost Dutchman's monument. We need to take more advantage of traffic that passes near us and let these people know that we have restaurants and attractions

(including, for example, visitors to the Renaissance Festival). The problem is funding but there may be some things we can do now with minimal funding—even if it's not to the level we ultimately want to have.

b. **Technology:** Use technology to allow people to find sites of interest (parks, etc.). This is a partnership with parks and recreation and downtown to work towards this goal. There are also some pilot projects in the works.

c. **Place making:** Make this a destination to live for people. Then, industries will want to relocate here.

4. Hold Follow up Towns

- a. **Provide facts and background for an informed discussion.**
- b. **Do at regular intervals on specific topics.**

- 3.** Discussion on a vision statement including definition, contents, potential verbiage and examples in the creation of a proposed new vision statement for the City of Apache Junction.

City Council discussed the current vision statement and concluded that it is too long and should be modified to be shorter and more descriptive of what they want Apache Junction to be. The youth council should also be involved in the efforts to modify the vision. Important words and phrases to consider when developing the vision statement should be unique, outdoor/natural environment, great place to live now and in the future, clean, vibrant, active, economics, western and where rural meets urban.

City staff will formulate a revised vision statement based off council feedback, share it with the Youth Advisory Council and present it at a future council meeting for discussion and potential direction to staff.

- 4.** Discussion on a mission statement including definition, contents, potential verbiage and examples in the creation of a proposed new mission statement for the City of Apache Junction.

City Council discussed the current mission statement and agreed the statement should be modified to read, "We will focus and invest in quality of life and planned improvements with the finest municipal services".

City staff will place this on an upcoming council agenda for discussion and possible direction to staff.

- 5.** Discuss, determine and rank city council priorities based on the vision and mission statements created at this meeting, the results of the September 15, 2017 community town hall and the current city council work plan.

City Council discussed priorities to be:

1. Communication: Update webpage and other communications outlets (including traditional non-electronic handouts) to show parts of the work plan that have been completed or are in progress. Consider taking the show on the road whenever possible.

2. Image: We need to work on improving our image. Consider trees and other beautiful landscaping and vegetation as well as public art.

3. Permanent base adjustment: Let's move forward.

4. State Land: Redo the BLM leases and try to take over the land. We are in the middle of the

effort—always ongoing. Nothing additional to do now.

5. Zoning bank: In progress.

6. Possible merger with county islands. Keep communications open and ongoing to be ready for a merger if the opportunity arises. Continue to build relationships and trust.

7. Sewer: Consider methods for more effectively managing sewer needs and issues.

8. Water capabilities. Consider methods for more effectively managing water needs and issues, including methods for more effectively managing storm water.

9. Trash— Consider methods for more effectively managing trash needs and issues.

City staff will place this on an upcoming council agenda for discussion and possible direction to staff.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Serdy adjourned the meeting at 12:53pm.