

COUNCIL MINUTES

June 3, 2019

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Special Council Meeting in the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on June 3, 2019 at 6:05 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

John Giles
Mark Freeman
Jennifer Duff
Francisco Heredia
David Luna
Kevin Thompson
Jeremy Whittaker

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Dee Ann Mickelsen
Jim Smith

1. Conduct a public hearing on the proposed Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget and the proposed Fiscal Year 2019-20 Secondary Property Tax Levy, and take action on the Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget.

- 1-a. A public hearing on the proposed Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget and the proposed Fiscal Year 2019-20 Secondary Property Tax Levy.

Mayor Giles announced that this is the time and place for a public hearing regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget and the proposed Fiscal Year 2019-20 Secondary Property Tax Levy.

Verl Farnsworth, a Mesa resident, expressed his opposition to the budget since it includes the Arizona State University (ASU) building that was not approved by the citizens on Mesa, specifically that this item was opposed by 84,000 citizens. He requested a thorough evaluation of the City's finances from February 2018 to show funding was available without any risk to the citizens. He voiced concern related to the value of land, lack of parking, renovation of the adjacent building and the park to be built as part of the commitment to ASU. He forecasted with all the hidden costs that this project will cost closer to \$120 million and not the \$63.5 million that was stated.

Councilmember Whittaker stated that he would be opposing the budget for FY2019/20. He commented the budget is structurally imbalanced and not sustainable when the City is taking money from the reserve fund and expressed his disappointment with how the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) has been marginalized and turned into a wish list of projects, opposed to how the Charter intended. He stated the CIP should include a clear general summary of improvements to be undertaken in the next five years with the appropriate supporting information. He expressed concern relative to approving the budget when it is uncertain how it will impact utility rates. He also mentioned that he will be opposing this budget since transferring \$8.5 million dollars from the Enterprise Fund to the General Fund would lead to higher utility rates.

Councilmember Thompson stated he was undecided about his vote for tonight's budget because he thinks as a Council the citizens are being let down when it comes to properly funding the Police Department. He acknowledged that the Police Department is understaffed and hopes that the City can do a better job funding additional officers in the future. He stated the Police Department wants to ensure safety for Mesa citizens.

Mayor Giles agreed with Councilmember Thompson and stated this topic has been brought up multiple times which prompted the City to go to the voters last November to raise sales tax a quarter percent to fund and hire more police officers.

In response to a question from Mayor Giles, City Manager Christopher Brady responded by stating over the last seven years funds have been transferred from the Enterprise Fund to the General Fund for public safety purposes. He mentioned the City is going to continue to work with the Police Department and work on a plan to get more cadets through the academy and address Councilmember Thompson's concerns.

Mayor Giles commented the City needs to make it a priority to hire more officers and that it is not a lack of funding that is the issue. He stated the City needs to work with the Chief to increase the capacity to hire more officers.

Councilmember Thompson mentioned he would like to ensure the quality of officers is kept at the same standard that it is today.

Councilmember Duff stated she is in support of the needs of the Police Department and that she is on the board for Arizona League Public Safety Military and Courts Committee that gives assistance to municipal governments in Arizona, and it has been stated there is a huge shortage in recruiting officers statewide and not just in Mesa.

- 1-b. A resolution approving the budget for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2020. – Resolution No. 11356

It was moved by Councilmember Luna, seconded by Vice Mayor Freeman, that Resolution No. 11356 be adopted.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES – Giles-Freeman-Duff-Heredia-Luna-Thompson

NAYS – Whittaker

Mayor Giles declared the motion carried by majority vote and Resolution No. 11356 adopted.

2. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

3. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Special Session adjourned at 6:19 p.m.




JOHN GILES, MAYOR

ATTEST:


DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 3rd day of June, 2019. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.


DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK

jg