MINUTES OF THE AVONDALE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF AVONDALE, ARIZONA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
April 4, 2022

A **Special Meeting** of the City Council of the City of Avondale, Arizona was convened at 11465 Civic Center Drive in open and public session at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Kenn Weise; Vice Mayor Veronica Malone; Council Members Tina Conde, Bryan Kilgore, Curtis Nielson, Mike Pineda, and Gloria Solorio.

Members Absent: None.

Other Municipal Officials Present: Cherlene Penilla, Acting City Manager; Tracy Stevens, Deputy City Manager; Nicholle Harris, City Attorney; Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk; Kirk Beaty, Public Works Director; Ken Chapa, Economic Development Services Director; Andrea Dumbrell, Human Resources Director; Memo Espinoza, Police Chief; Joel Evans, Facilities Director; Bryan Hughes, Parks and Recreation Director; Craig Jennings, Judge; Chris Lopez, Neighborhood and Family Services Director; Dale Nannenga, Public Safety Chief; Marshall Pimentel, Intergovernmental Affairs Administrator; Abril Ruiz-Ortega, Court Administrator; Jeffrey Scheetz, Chief Information Officer; and Pier Simeri, Marketing and Public Relations Director.

Audience: Approximately thirty members of the public were present.

1. ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK

2. NEW EMPLOYEE INTRODUCTIONS

The following employees were introduced to City Council. This item was for discussion only.

Finance and Budget Department
- Renee Weatherless, Finance and Budget Director

Fire and Medical Department
- Timothy Blum, Firefighter
- Tucker Bruen, Firefighter
- Eric Garcia, Firefighter
- Josue Montes, Firefighter
- Westley Tank, Firefighter
- Ryan Tramel, Firefighter

Information Technology Department
- Bill Bounds, Senior IT Network Engineer
- Austen Fortenberry, IT Desktop Technician 1 (absent for the meeting)

3. ESMERALDA "ESMIE" AVILA RETIREMENT PROCLAMATION

The City Council presented a proclamation recognizing Esmeralda “Esmie” Avila on the occasion of her retirement and for her 32 and a half years of service to the City of Avondale. This item was for discussion only.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, Council Member Kilgore moved to adjourn the Special Meeting; Vice Mayor Malone seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Council Member Conde	Aye
Council Member Kilgore	Aye
Council Member Nielson	Aye
Council Member Pineda	Aye
Council Member Solorio	Aye
Vice Mayor Malone	Aye
Mayor Weise	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

A **Regular Meeting** of the City Council of the City of Avondale, Arizona was convened at 11465 Civic Center Drive in open and public session at 6:10 p.m.

Mayor Kenn Weise asked an attendee to lead the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silent reflection for the Ukraine.

Members Present: Mayor Kenn Weise; Vice Mayor Veronica Malone; Council Members Tina Conde, Bryan Kilgore, Curtis Nielson, Mike Pineda, and Gloria Solorio.

Members Absent: None.

Other Municipal Officials Present: Cherlene Penilla, Acting City Manager; Tracy Stevens, Deputy City Manager; Nicholle Harris, City Attorney; Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk; Kirk Beaty, Public Works Director; Ken Chapa, Economic Development Services Director; Andrea Dumbrell, Human Resources Director; Memo Espinoza, Police Chief; Joel Evans, Facilities Director; Bryan Hughes, Parks and Recreation Director; Craig Jennings, Judge; Chris Lopez, Neighborhood and Family Services Director; Dale Nannenga, Public Safety Chief; Marshall Pimentel, Intergovernmental Affairs Administrator; Abril Ruiz-Ortega, Court Administrator; Jeffrey Scheetz, Chief Information Officer; and Pier Simeri, Marketing and Public Relations Director.

Audience: Approximately five members of the public were present.

1. ROLL CALL AND STATEMENT OF PARTICIPATION BY THE CITY CLERK

2. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES

None.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

Items on the consent agenda are of a routine nature or have been previously studied by the City Council at a work session. They are intended to be acted upon in one motion. Council members may pull items from consent if they would like them considered separately.

Mayor Weise asked if any Council Member wished to have an item removed from the Consent Agenda. Having no requests from Council, motion was made by Council Member Kilgore, seconded by Council Member Nielson, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Council Member Conde	Aye
Council Member Kilgore	Aye
Council Member Nielson	Aye
Council Member Pineda	Aye
Council Member Solorio	Aye
Vice Mayor Malone	Aye
Mayor Weise	Aye

a. MINUTES

City Council approved the February 7, 2022 City Council meeting minutes.

b. AWARD OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT (PSA) FOR EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT SERVICES

City Council (a) approved a Professional Services Agreement with Ralph Andersen & Associates , Executive Recruitment Services, to include the Executive Recruitment for the vacant City Manager position for a fixed fee of $34,500, and additional services as requested by the City; (b) authorized the necessary budget transfers; and (c) authorized the Mayor, or Acting City Manager and City Clerk to execute the necessary documents and any future amendments.

c. WIRED TELECOMMUNICATIONS LICENSE AND RIGHT-OF-WAY USE AGREEMENT WITH WYYERD CONNECT LLC

City Council approved the Wired Telecommunications License Agreement with Wyyerd Connect LLC and authorize the Mayor or City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk to execute the necessary documents.

d. PUBLIC WORKS TRANSIT BUDGET AMENDMENT

City Council approved a budget amendment increase for FY2022 in the amount $250,000 for the purpose of increased costs to the Valley Metro Intergovernmental Agreement for the operations of the ZOOM Circulator, and to amend the requisite administrative award authority, and authorized the Mayor, or City Manager and City Clerk to execute the necessary documents.

e. PUBLIC WORKS FLEET SERVICES FUEL BUDGET AMENDMENT
City Council approved a budget amendment increase for FY2022 in the amount $416,000 for the purpose of purchasing fuel for the City-owned fleet, and to amend the requisite administrative award authority, and authorized the Mayor, or City Manager and City Clerk to execute the necessary documents.

f. AWARD AUTHORITY AMENDMENT FOR PUBLIC WORKS
City Council amended the Administrative Award Authority for certain operating products and services for FY2021-2022 and authorized the Mayor, or City Manager and City Clerk to execute the necessary documents.

g. AWARD AUTHORITY FOR VEHICLE MAINTENANCE REPAIR
The City Council approved a request to increase spending authority for fire apparatus maintenance and repairs in the amount of $100,000.

h. ALAMAR PHASE 3 - FINAL PLAT - APPLICATION PL-21-0258
City Council approved a request by Mr. Frank Koo PE, Wood, Patel & Associates, Inc., for approval of a Final Plat for Alamar Phase 3. The proposed Final Plat creates 345 single-family residential lots, area tracts, and dedicates streets and easements on approximately 110 acres located north of the northeast corner of El Mirage Road and Southern Avenue.

i. RESOLUTIONS 1022-0422 AND 1023-0422 – MAINTENANCE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 33 FOR ALAMAR PHASE 3 FINAL PLAT
City Council approved the Petition for Formation, adopted Resolution 1022-0422, declaring its intention to form the City of Avondale Maintenance Improvement District No. 33, Alamar Phase 3 Final Plat, providing for the assessment, and adopted Resolution 1023-0422, declaring its intention to order the improvements within the newly established maintenance improvement district, providing for the assessment and declaring an emergency, and authorized the Mayor, City Attorney and City Clerk to execute the necessary documents.

j. ORDINANCE 2022-0422 - SRP POWER DISTRIBUTION EASEMENTS FOR 107TH AVENUE AND MCDOWELL ROAD PROJECT
City Council adopted Ordinance No. 2022-0422, granting two (2) power distribution easements to SRP in connection with the 107th Avenue and McDowell Road Intersection Improvement Project and authorized the Mayor or Acting City Manager, and City Clerk to execute the necessary documents.

k. ORDINANCE 2023-0422 - SECOND AMENDMENT TO THE LEASE AGREEMENT FOR PHOENIX CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
City Council adopted Ordinance 2023-0422, approving a second amendment to the lease agreement for Phoenix Children's Hospital and authorized the Mayor, or City Manager and City Clerk to execute the necessary documents.

4. REGULAR AGENDA

a. FIRE STATION #171

City Council will receive an update from staff and consider a request to direct staff on four potential options for Fire Station #171.

Cherlene Penilla, Acting City Manager, prefaced the presentation by stating that the topic relates to potential locations for the fire station. The station location study done in 2020 recommended that the station either remain in the Western Avenue area or be located farther southwest. Staff will return to Council in 30 to 60 days to present financial and funding information.

James Milanese, City Projects Administrator, identified the fire station location at 5th Street and Belmont, just southwest of the Sam Garcia Library. It was built in 1985 at 5,000 square feet and was reconstructed and expanded in 2004 to approximately 8,600 square feet. Basic station stats were reviewed, including service area and response times. Problems with the current facility were reviewed.

Staff requested a replacement fire station as a capital improvement project. The project included the relocation and reconstruction of Fire Station 171 with 10th Street and Western as a new location with a total budget of $13,300,000. The CIP also included the following project: Relocate detention center and police substation; Use same location as Station 171; total budget of 12,000,000. After the fiscal year began, the two proposed were combined into a single project with a budget of $25.3 million.

Mr. Milanese provided an overview of the project history. The current timeline has the project completion date of September 2023. To date, there has been no construction and no permits finalized. Thus far $17,000 has been spent through the 10 percent design phase. Site attributes for the 10th and Western site were discussed, as were the locations of Fire Stations 175 and 176. The optimal site for Station 171 was determined to be southwest of its current location and south of the railroad. Pros and cons regarding the four options identified for consideration were reviewed.

Mayor Weise stated that the Council has received comments for quite some time that the fire station on Belmont has a significant positive impact on the community and that the team likes being there. However, the station has outlived its usefulness and does not adequately express the value of its staff. He pointed out that when considering a station south and west of 171, there is not a great distance from that location to Alamar. Ben Avitia, Deputy Fire Chief, stated that proximity is not ideal; however, factors such as land attributes, bodies of water, transportation, and railroad tracks may divide areas and require additional station sites.

In response to a question from Council Member Conde, Mr. Milanese stated that the remodel does not include police and detention, but only the Fire Station 171. Council Member Conde commented that Fire and Medical Department staff input is vitally important to the decision. Chief Avitia commented that in fire service, two critical points for consideration are availability to take calls and how quickly calls can be responded to. Fire and Medical department staff recommend keep the station at the current location.

Council Member Kilgore concurred with Council Member Conde on the feedback from the staff within the Fire and Medical Department. He asked about effects on area businesses during construction. Mr. Milanese stated that this question will be addressed during the study. Council Member Kilgore encouraged outreach efforts to minimize impacts. In closing, he expressed appreciation to staff for the different options, expressed concern regarding the impact on the firefighters, and inquired on the plan if moving forward with Option 3. Mr. Milanese stated if Option 3 is selected, staff will continue to work inside the fire station; however, the vehicle location will be impacted.

In response to a question from Council Member Nielson, Chief Avitia defined as the dispatch to on-scene times with a six-minute response time goal. Council Member Nielson inquired on the square footage comparison of Fire Station 171 to Fire Station 172. Chief Avitia responded that Fire Station 172 is approximately 19,000 square feet. Council Member Nielson expressed support for Option 3, particularly in terms of supporting the health and well-being not only of the community, but the firefighters.

Council Member Pineda commented that based on feedback from Fire and Medical Department staff who support Option 3, he concurs with that recommendation; however, he would also like to hear from the new Chief.

Council Member Solorio cited the importance of the station to the community and to its Fire and Medical Department staff and voiced concurrence with Council Member Pineda for support of Option 3.

Vice Mayor Malone expressed support for Option 3 but had reservations regarding tearing down the old fire station as a historic site in the City. She would like staff to provide an overview of options for preserving the station. She asked whether the intent is to cease the design process for the detention center and police substation. She also asked about the square footage of the police substation at the relocation area. Memo Espinoza, Police Chief, stated that he does not have the square footage stats currently available; however, the northwest substation located adjacent to Estrella Community College is similar to the design for 10th Street and Western Substation. He confirmed that they will continue with the design, including modifications.

Vice Mayor Malone stressed the need for training and suggested having a training facility for fire and police at the location. She also encouraged use of virtual reality training modules. She discussed flooring and plumbing conditions of the Durango Fire Station.
Mayor Weise referenced the detention center and plans for demolition and asked about interim plans. Chief Espinoza stated that the detention center must remain open until a new one is available. The cost to send prisoners to the County is exorbitant. In terms of Vice Mayor Malone's comments regarding a training facility, it may be helpful to take a look at agreements with other cities for fire and police. Mr. Milanese noted that the design team can look at the potential for a training facility, however, additional funding would be necessary.

Council Member Kilgore moved to direct staff to construct a new fire station on the current site; Council Member Solorio seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Council Member Conde	Aye
Council Member Kilgore	Aye
Council Member Nielson	Aye
Council Member Pineda	Aye
Council Member Solorio	Aye
Vice Mayor Malone	Aye
Mayor Weise	Aye

b. PUBLIC HEARING - 2022 - 2023 HUD ANNUAL ACTION PLAN
City Council held a public hearing and received an update on the draft of the City's 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan which is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a condition to receive the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership funding (HOME). This item was for discussion only, no action was taken.

Christopher Lopez, Neighborhood & Family Services Director, stated that the Annual Action Plan (AAP) is an extension of the Five-Year Consolidated Plan. As such, it must further the goals of the consolidated plan. The goals were reviewed.

The City expects to receive $770,000 in Community development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. In addition to historically provided programs, the Workforce Development Program would create a cost share position to be stationed at the Resource Center. It would assist with growing workforce development needs as a result of COVID-19. Activities and proposed budgets were discussed.

The City is anticipated to receive $219,000 in HOME funds, which will be used towards the development of a new Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program. The TBRA will aid with up to 24 months for qualifying low-income households with a goal to serve five to seven households within the time frame. This should pair well with the new bridge housing program. Staff recommends a budget of $14,000 to support administration of the program and $205,000 for the TBRA, for a total County allocation of $219,000. A 25 percent match of $54,750 is required by the City. The total available allocation and match is $273,750. The next step and calendar were reviewed.

Mayor Weise opened the public hearing and did not receive any requests to speak. Mayor Weise closed the public hearing and opened the floor for comments from Council.

Mayor Weise noted that TBRA is intended to assist those in risk of losing their housing and he asked how these individuals are identified. Mr. Lopez stated that there is an application process. The Community Resource Center is skilled with its outreach efforts to educate residents of available resources. Applicants must meet low income criteria.

Council Member Conde asked whether the City offers case management services to families. Mr. Lopez stated that there is a great opportunity for the City to do so and they are doing more of this work. The City has a great Community Action Program Team as well as a great Housing and Community Development Team. The workforce development position is also complementing these efforts. Council Member Conde asked if some of the CDBG funds can be used for additional housing units in the future. Mr. Lopez said this is something that can be explored. There are several regulations and challenges with programming CDBG dollars. Council Member Conde referenced the iHELP program and asked whether there are funds available to purchase lockers for homeless individuals to utilize for storing belonging when they attend job interviews. Mr. Lopez said he believes there are resources in the current budget to take a look at this. As an alternative, the City can entertain a conversation with Lutheran Social Services as something they may pursue through the contribution's assistance program.

Council Member Kilgore stated that since being on City Council since 2014, he has observed that Neighborhood and Family Services Department has been excellent with utilizing its funding both properly and sufficiently. He spoke highly regarding the presented Tenant-Based Rental Assistance program.

Council Member Nielson asked about the parameters for use of the funds. Mr. Lopez stated that it is not a "use it or lose it" format; however, there is an expenditure timeliness requirement. There is a substantial amount of time for use of funds as well as ability to carry funds forward for a number of years. For this funding opportunity, the City will work with families who are already gainfully employed and need extra help to stay housed. It is anticipated that this resource will also be used for a continuation of the Bridge program. My. Lopez spoke about the outreach efforts of the Neighborhood and Family Services.

Council Member Pineda asked whether the 24-month period is a set time period for assistance or whether this can be reduced in order to serve more people. Mr. Lopez stated that the goal is to assist families to afford rents on their own and if successful, the City should be able to serve more people than currently anticipated.

Council Member Solorio inquired as to availability of materials in Spanish as well as the methods and means for reaching out to the community. Mr. Lopez stated that all typical modes and venues are used. The City endeavors to provide all documentation in Spanish and English. The City has a great team within multiple divisions, including direct access to seniors and community groups. Paper applications and materials are readily available for those without computer access.

Mayor Weise asked how TBRA and Section 8 go hand in hand. Mr. Lopez said TBRA will complement Section 8. An individual would not likely tap into both services and TBRA will help fill the gap. The goal is to develop a broad array of services to ensure support for anyone in need.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, Vice Mayor Malone moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting; Council Member Nielson seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Council Member Conde	Aye
Council Member Kilgore	Aye
Council Member Nielson	Aye
Council Member Pineda	Aye
Council Member Solorio	Aye
Vice Mayor Malone	Aye
Mayor Weise	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

A **Work Session** of the City Council of the City of Avondale, Arizona was convened at 11465 Civic Center Drive in open and public session at 7:43 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Kenn Weise; Vice Mayor Veronica Malone; Council Members Tina Conde, Bryan Kilgore, Curtis Nielson, Mike Pineda, and Gloria Solorio.

Members Absent: None.

Other Municipal Officials Present: Cherlene Penilla, Acting City Manager; Tracy Stevens, Deputy City Manager; Nicholle Harris, City Attorney; Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk; Kirk Beaty, Public Works Director; Ken Chapa, Economic Development Services Director; Andrea Dumbrell, Human Resources Director; Memo Espinoza, Police Chief; Joel Evans, Facilities Director; Bryan Hughes, Parks and Recreation Director; Craig Jennings, Judge; Chris Lopez, Neighborhood and Family Services Director; Dale Nannenga, Public Safety Chief; Marshall Pimentel, Intergovernmental Affairs Administrator; Abril Ruiz-Ortega, Court Administrator; Jeffrey Scheetz, Chief Information Officer; and Pier Simeri, Marketing and Public Relations Director.

Audience: Approximately thirty members of the public were present.

1. ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK

2. INTEGRITY LINE

City Council received a presentation from the City Attorney regarding the implementation of an Integrity Line. This item is for discussion only.

Nicholle Harris, City Attorney, stated that the Integrity Line was established at the direction of City Council. The City Attorney's Office has worked with the City Manager's Office and the Internal Auditor on best practices and implementation. The Integrity Line provides employees and members of the public with a method for reporting suspected ethical and compliance concerns. The initial proposal is for internal City staff use, but City Council may choose to offer access to the public in the future. An Integrity Line reduces losses to the City that result from fraud waste or abuse. It allows employees to report wrongdoing without fear of retaliation and guards against Council Member involvement in employee relations. Providing an avenue for employees to report wrongdoing helps improve workplace morale and employee satisfaction. The Integrity Line will be operated by Answer Now, Inc., an independent third-party vendor as a telephone and web-based program. There will be a management level review committee consisting of the City Attorney, City's Internal Auditor, City Manager and one yearly rotating department head.

Integrity Line policies were reviewed:

- Section 1: Identifies purpose and intent of Integrity line; used when employees feel they cannot report to appropriate city personnel
- Section 2: Identifies areas of concern covered by the Integrity Line; theft or misuse of City resources
- Section 3: Identifies areas not covered by the Integrity Line; emergency situations, departmental conflicts, personnel matters
- Section 4: Methods to report concerns
- Section 5: Processing reports; provide clear guidelines for how reports are processed, actions taken and notice to the parties
- Section 6: Dispositions of reports; provide regular information to the Council on the compliance concerns arising in the organization

Next steps in the process include approval of the Integrity Line policy, notification to employees and going live with the system. Marketing will include posters in break rooms and in other materials.

Vice Mayor Malone suggested including a message on the employee internal websites Ms. Harris stated a message will be added to the internal website. Ms. Penilla noted they will research adding a message within the employee payroll software. Vice Mayor Malone inquired about Scottsdale's audit committee, which consists of Council Members. Ms. Harris stated that Scottsdale's internal auditor receives and processes complaints. The internal auditor reports to the audit committee, which is made up of Council Members and staff. Vice Mayor Malone recommended that Avondale form its own Audit Committee that would mimic the functions of the Scottsdale and Phoenix audit committees.

Vice Mayor Malone asked about the timeline for activation of the program. Ms. Harris stated that the 1-800 number is up and running and the webpage has just come online. Once there is an approved policy and prepared marketing materials, the system can go live. It is currently proposed as an administrative policy. Vice Mayor Malone said she would prefer the format to be a chapter policy, where any proposed changes must be approved by City Council.

Mayor Weise stated that during the discussion, he has pulled up minutes from the Scottsdale Audit Committee and the agendas do not reflect that the committee deals with such as issues as this. Vice Mayor Malone suggested that the proposed new committee for Avondale could address Integrity Line issues and other City audit-related issues as needed. Ms. Harris stated that the internal auditor handles complaints and deals with fraud and abuse. That auditor reports to the audit committee on these issues as well as financial reporting.

Mayor Weise stated that having City Council handle this through an update via quarterly schedule would speed up the process, rather than forming a specialized committee. The City has a City Attorney and City Manager available to update Council on any urgent issues that arise. He would like to explore the Scottsdale and Phoenix committee approaches before making final decisions on the formation of a committee. Ms. Harris noted that staff will continue to report to City Council quarterly or as often as possible, even if the committee is formed.

Council Member Solorio agreed with Vice Mayor Malone that a chapter policy would be the best approach.

Council Member Pineda stated that as a true compliance measure, it should be independent of any department review. Ms. Harris stated that the internal auditor has prepared best practices for the Integrity Line. There were two options for a reviewing committee. These included the City Manager, City Attorney, Internal Auditor and one rotating department head. The other option was three members, including City Attorney, City Manager and the City's internal auditor. The proposed system allows Council Members who receive complaints from employees to direct such employees to the Integrity Line. The chapter policy will set forth the rules for operation, including practices and procedures, investigation methods and committee participation.

Ms. Penilla clarified that chapter policies are ordinances, which must come before Council for any changes. Chapter 22 covers the Ethics Policy which this portion of the policy would fit nicely within that Chapter. It could be placed in the personnel policies and procedures, which are all ordinances and must be brought to City Council for any changes and this would be an appropriate step. Vice Mayor Malone suggested forming a separate chapter to house the Integrity Line. Ms. Penilla affirmed that a new chapter can be added to the personnel policy and procedures to house the Integrity Line, as Chapter 23.

Council Member Nielson noted that that the specific details of the new governing policies can be changed as needed once the program has been in place and has been utilized. He cautioned against letting the Integrity Line simply become a complaint line. Ms. Harris stated that the accompanying marketing materials will address the specific purpose and function of the Integrity Line.

Council Member Solorio inquired if the selected agency has educational video to help staff understand the process. Ms. Harris noted she would check with the agency but believes it would be best to work with the City's internal marketing department.

Council Member Kilgore stated that the Integrity Line will provide an important resource that has never been available before; however correct implementation is critical. It should be a beacon of hope for those who have been ostracized and have felt there was no option for reaching out for help. He provided a personal example of how the system could be beneficial, noting having a system to protect those who are in the right. He is in support of a new chaptered policy.

Council Member Conde expressed support for a new policy chapter to allow Council to become aware of any proposed changes.

Vice Mayor Malone commented that in order to facilitate a change in culture, the City cannot have an internal auditor under the City Manager. The internal auditor needs to be separate and on its own or under the City Attorney's Office.

Mayor Weise concurred with the approach to establish a Chapter 23 to house the program. He would like the process to ensure that issues are not swept under the rug. He agreed that the auditor should report to the City Attorney. It was agreed that drafting of the policy will continue and staff will bring it back to Council for further discussion.

Ms. Harris noted that normally the auditor will report to an Audit Committee; however, it can be setup in multiple ways. The City's internal auditor position can be fine-tuned, and she is willing to have the position report to her until further research is conducted.

3. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

A presentation and update regarding the all-employee engagement survey conducted from February 23, 2022 through March 9, 2022 will be provided to the City Council. This item was for discussion only.

Andrea Dumbrell, Human Resources Director, discussed the results of the great resignation of employees from the job marketplace. Due to low unemployment rates and job availability, employees are leaving jobs to pursue better options with other employers. The survey process began as a request by City Council at its January 2022 budget retreat. City Managers and the HR Departments partnered to create an anonymous employee engagement survey, consisting of 11 questions, which was distributed to all employees electronically on February 23rd. There was a two-week response window. Multiple reminders were issued via email and department meetings. There was a 65 percent response rate, with 469 employees out of 725 submitting completed surveys.

In response to a question of what activities or programs should be the City's focus to increase employee connection to the organization and each other, the highest ranked responses were: Internal training/team building and employee recognition programs. Employees expressed interest in all City-hosted activities and events.

The majority of responses to the question of whether their position has been available for remote work replied that this option was not available. This is not a surprise, as this correlates with the high response rate from operational departments, including Public

Safety and Public Works. These departments have limited remote work possibilities, due to the nature of their positions.

Employees were asked to rank specific items in order of importance. Pay and benefits topped the list. In response to this item and to ensure competitiveness in the market, the City Manager's Office and HR Department will be working with the Finance Department to get a class and compensation study completed as soon as possible.

In regard to a question on whether the employee understands what is expected of them in their role with the City, the response was overwhelmingly positive, with the majority of employees selecting a yes or mostly yes response. There was also an overwhelmingly positive response to the question of whether the employee has the equipment, materials and resources necessary to succeed in their job. A similar response resulted from the question of whether the employee has the necessary training to complete their job well.

In response to the question of whether an employee feels their opinion matters to their supervisor and/or department, results were generally positive, indicating room for improvement in the way that employees perceive the impacts of their opinions on the decisions made by their supervisors and/or departments. Roughly 66 percent of staff believe their feedback matters to their supervisor and/or department.

A similar question asked whether employees feel their feedback matters to City Management and City Council. The response was generally positive, but marginally lower than responses that received an overwhelmingly positive response. Approximately 48 percent responded that their feedback matters, with the majority responding that their feedback "sometimes" matters. In response to this feedback, the Acting City Manager and Assistant City Manager have joined department meetings to ensure more opportunities for employees to be heard. City Council has also been holding department-specific appreciation events during workdays to ensure employees have the opportunity to interact with City Council members.

A majority of respondents (66 percent) selected yes or mostly yes to the question of whether they have the opportunity for professional development and training.

Responses to the question of whether Avondale employees believe there are opportunities for internal promotion were generally positive, but marginally lower than responses to questions which received an overwhelming positive response. This indicates that this an area that has room for improvement in the way that employees perceive their opportunities for internal promotion within the City.

In response to a question from Mayor Weise, Ms. Penilla stated that the last survey was conducted approximately three years ago, prior to the pandemic. The results of the current survey were more positive than the previous survey. Mayor Weise requested that the previous survey results be provided to Council for comparison.

Council Member Conde asked about the intended roles and responsibilities of the proposed organizational developmental training manager position. Ms. Dumbrell stated that the position will address the need and goal for training opportunities for employees, including face-to-face training. Ms. Penilla added that considering the City's recent growth period and recruitments under the purview of human resources, an additional position is needed specifically for the training element. The City currently has 700 employees and has the potential to see that number increase to 800 in the next fiscal year.

Council Member Kilgore stated that it is comforting to see that a survey was sent out and that the City is looking to better itself and enhance areas. He noted that he is not as enthused into the current survey as changes are being implemented and more coming with a new City Manager. He is particularly interested in future surveys that will reflect whether the changes being made are effective.

Council Member Nielson commented that he would like the surveys to include more opportunities for feedback from employees and supervisors. Ms. Dumbrell stated that it is also important to keep the responses anonymous, in order to encourage participation and reduce the fear of retaliation.

Council Member Pineda noted that with the growth of the City and its staff, some employees may be good at their jobs; however, this does not always mean they have the leadership skills to advance to supervisory roles. Appropriate training should be considered and offered where possible.

Council Member Solorio asked why the survey was not conducted by a third party, as there may have been increased participation with an unbiased coordinator. Ms. Penilla noted that the prior survey was conducted by a third party and resulted in a lukewarm response rate. There was some urgency in conducting the current survey in a timely manner; utilizing a third party would have required additional time. The responses are anonymous and there is no way to identify employees who submitted responses. Council Member Solorio inquired about the membership on the Morale Booster Advisory (MBA) Committee. Ms. Penilla said that each department has a member on the committee on a voluntary basis. Currently, the Deputy City Clerk oversees the MBA Committee.

Vice Mayor Malone suggested that another survey be conducted in six months and be administered by a third party and have more opportunities to comment on specific issues.

In closing, Mayor Weise explained the City Council wants to build a better city for future Councils and employees. He suggested another survey be conducted to have the ability to get more answers and feedback from employees.

4. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE CITY MANAGER'S PROPOSED BUDGET

City Council was to receive a general overview of the City Manager's proposed budget for fiscal year 2023 (FY2023).

At the request of Mayor Weise, this item was not presented and will be presented as part of the next City Council meeting.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, Council Member Nielson moved to adjourn the Work Session meeting; Council Member Pineda seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Council Member Conde	Aye
Council Member Kilgore	Aye
Council Member Nielson	Aye
Council Member Pineda	Aye
Council Member Solorio	Aye
Vice Mayor Malone	Aye
Mayor Weise	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

KWeise
Kenn Weise (May 17, 2022 15:07 PDT)

Kenn Weise, Mayor

CERTIFICATION AND ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Meeting, Regular Meeting, and Work Session of the Council of the City of Avondale held on the 4th day of April 2022. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.

mcarrillo

Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk

05/16/2022

Date Approved by City Council