

MINUTES OF THE AVONDALE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF AVONDALE, ARIZONA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
November 7, 2022

A **Special Meeting** of the City Council of the City of Avondale, Arizona was convened at 11465 West Civic Center Drive in open and public session at 5:31 p.m.

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

Members Absent (Excused Absence): Council Member Curtis Nielson.

Other Municipal Officials Present: Cherlene Penilla, Acting City Manager; Nicholle Harris, City Attorney; Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk; Liz Barker Alvarez, Intergovernmental Affairs Administrator; Kirk Beaty, Public Works Director; Margaret Carey, Deputy City Clerk; Ken Chapa, Economic Development Services Director; Memo Espinoza, Police Chief; Joel Evans, Facilities Director; Ted Flores, Human Resources Assistant Director, Craig Jennings, Judge; Corey Larriva, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director; Chris Lopez, Neighborhood and Family Services Director; Dale Nannenga, Public Safety Chief; Jodie Novak, Development Services Director; Abril Ruiz-Ortega, Court Administrator; Larry Rooney, Acting Fire Chief; Pier Simeri, Marketing and Public Relations Director; Aric Stewart, Engineering Director; Michael Wallace, IT Desktop Technician III; and Renee Weatherless, Finance and Budget Director.

**Andrea Dumbrell, Human Resources Director, attended the meeting virtually.*

Audience: Approximately ten members of the public were present.

1. ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK

2. EMPLOYEE INTRODUCTIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS (DISCUSSION ONLY)

The following employee introductions and announcements were presented.

Court - Employee Announcements

- Yadira Lara, Court Clerk II - Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Finance and Budget Department - Employee Introductions

- Deborah Carreon, Accountant
- Stephanie Cooper, Procurement Buyer

Human Resources Department - Employee Introductions

- Janet Dayer, Sr. HR Analyst
- Liana Bell, Organizational Development/Training Manager

City Manager's Office - Employee Introductions

- Liz Barker Alvarez, Intergovernmental Affairs Administrator

3. RECOGNITION OF JULIE GIESE, PRESIDENT OF PHOENIX RACEWAY

City Council recognized Julie Giese, President of Phoenix Raceway, for her efforts in a successful partnership between the City of Avondale and Phoenix Raceway. This item was for discussion only.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, Council Member Pineda moved to adjourn the Special Meeting; Council Member Solorio seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 6 to 0.

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

A **Regular Meeting** of the City Council of the City of Avondale, Arizona was convened at 11465 West Civic Center Drive in open and public session at 6:01 p.m.

Mayor Kenn Weise led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silent reflection.

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

Members Absent (Excused Absence): Council Member Curtis Nielson.

Other Municipal Officials Present: Cherlene Penilla, Acting City Manager; Nicholle Harris, City Attorney; Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk; Liz Barker Alvarez, Intergovernmental Affairs Administrator; Kirk Beaty, Public Works Director; Margaret Carey, Deputy City Clerk; Ken Chapa, Economic Development Services Director; Memo Espinoza, Police Chief; Joel Evans, Facilities Director; Ted Flores, Human Resources Assistant Director, Corey Larriva, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director; Chris Lopez, Neighborhood and Family Services Director; Dale Nannenga, Public Safety Chief; Jodie Novak, Development Services Director; Larry Rooney, Acting Fire Chief; Pier Simeri, Marketing and Public Relations Director; Aric Stewart, Engineering Director; Michael Wallace, IT Desktop Technician III; and Renee Weatherless, Finance and Budget Director.

**Andrea Dumbrell, Human Resources Director, attended the meeting virtually.*

Audience: Approximately ten members of the public were present.

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

2. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Allyson Cooke discussed the artwork she has done for the City with subjects including the Raceway, metal statues, sports complex, the Estrella Mountains and local geese. She donated a painting to Council Member Solorio.

Chiquita Johnson spoke about assisting Avondale youth with volunteer work in the community. She provided comments regarding the homeless population in the vicinity of Western. Ms. Johnson was provided with the contact information of City personnel to assist her.

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 Conde, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 6 to 0.

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

a. MINUTES

City Council approved the October 3, 2022 and October 17, 2022 City Council meeting minutes.

b. LIQUOR LICENSE - SERIES 6 (BAR) - CLUB SANTA FE - CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

City Council recommended approval to the Arizona Department of Liquor License and Control of an application for a Series 6 (Bar) liquor license submitted by Jeffrey Craig

Miller for the sale of alcohol at Club Santa Fe, located at 10907 West Buckeye Road in Avondale and authorized the City Clerk to execute the necessary documents.

c. RESOLUTION 1075-1122 – DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH MCDONALD'S REAL ESTATE COMPANY

City Council adopted Resolution 1075-1122 authorizing approval of a Development Agreement with McDonald's Real Estate Company towards the reimbursement of costs associated with the construction of an on-site underground retention basin and authorized the Mayor, the City Manager, the City Clerk and the City Attorney to execute the necessary documents.

d. ASCEND AVONDALE - FINAL PLAT APPLICATION PL-22-0187

City Council approved a request by Ted Luther with Hilgart Wilson LLC, approving a Final Plat; the proposed Final Plat subdivides the property into five (5) parcels of varying sizes with required public right-of-way, public utility easements, temporary drainage easements, and access easements for a total platted area of 39.56 net acres, located at the southeast corner of Dysart and Indian School roads.

e. AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED WITH ANNEXATION – STONECREEK – APPLICATION PL-22-0234

City Council approved a request by Clayton Corwin, StoneCreek Company, (on behalf of the property owner Stead Family PVHCMF Charitable Remainder Unitrust) to begin the annexation process of 18.9 acres of land located approximately 1,280 feet west of the southwest corner of 107th Avenue and McDowell Road.

4. REGULAR AGENDA

a. PUBLIC HEARING – THREE RIVERS RANCH ANNEXATION – APPLICATION PL-22-0111

City Council held a public hearing regarding a request by Mr. Alex Hayes, Withey Morris PLC, to begin the annexation process of approximately 196.89 acres located west of the intersection of Broadway Road and Dysart. This item was a public hearing and for discussion only.

Jani Wertin, Planner, presented the following:

Ms. Wertin provided an overview of the site location (consisting of three parcels and a portion of Dysart right-of-way), attributes and surrounding uses. Two properties are involved with the request, including Three River Ranch, LLC (109.02 acres) and Lakin Estrella Limited Ranch Partnership (3.5 acres). A 2.91 acre strip of adjoining Dysart Road right-of-way is included. Current county zoning is Rural (RU-43) and Avondale's equivalent zoning is Rural Residential (RR-43). There are two concurrent requests with the annexation, including a Major General Plan Amendment, which would amend the land use designation from Mixed Use and Estate Low Density Residential to Medium Density Residential and Medium High Density Residential. There is also a rezone request to rezone from RR-3 to Three Rivers Ranch Planned Area Development. All notifications have been completed and no public comments have been received.

Mayor Weise opened the public hearing and did not receive any requests to speak. Mayor Weise closed the public hearing and received no further comments from Council.

b. ESTABLISH NEW PAY STEP/RANGE FOR POLICE RECRUITS, POLICE OFFICERS, POLICE SERGEANT, AND POLICE LIEUTENANT

City Council received an update from staff regarding the state of the economy and considered the following: a request to approve changes discussed in the October 3rd, 2022 Council Meeting to the Avondale Police Officers' Pay Scale with an effective date of January 9, 2023; and the approval of authorizing staff to execute the necessary documents.

Police Chief, Memo Espinoza, discussed that the new structure will address concerns previously identified, including: Established steps are not within industry norms and existence of overlap between top out and starting pay for sergeants and lieutenants.

Proposed solutions include:

- Reduce police officer steps from 16 to 9
- Reduce sergeant steps from 10 to 6
- Eliminate training step
- Increase steps to 5 percent
- Maintain existing police top out rate
- Maintain existing sergeant step 1 rate
- Increase lieutenant starting pay

Rene Weatherless, Finance and Budget Director, provided an overview on the financial forecast, which has been updated to balance ongoing revenue and expenses.

The City Manager's recommended budget adjustments to cover \$1.3 million cost of the new step and pay structure include:

- Position eliminations, resulting in \$924,000 budget savings:
 - Deputy City Manager
 - Development & Engineering Service Director
 - Revitalization Manager
 - Business Development Manager
 - Management Associate
- Reduction to Economic Opportunities Fund: \$400,000

Recommendations for approval include:

- Proposed changes to the Police Department's Officer, Sergeant and Lieutenant pay step/range system
- Effective date of January 9, 2023, which is the first pay period of 2023 to implement pay changes

- Budget transfers required to offset additional costs

Mayor Weise noted that he had previously requested to have this item pulled and postponed from the agenda, due to a lack of clarity on specific items. He also preferred to have the new City Manager have a say in the process. Also, given the pending state elections, there may be impacts on rental and food taxes. The City recently provided a cost of living raise to most or all employees during a time where inflation is active and not slowing down. He asked how a potential additional cost of living raise, necessitated by rising inflation, would impact the proposed new step and salary structure. Ms. Weatherless acknowledged that there was a mid-year adjustment at the end of Fiscal Year 2022, going into 2023. The five percent for Fiscal Year 2023 was a two-part structure, with 2.5 merit and 2.5 cost of living. When looking at the forecast on an annual basis, staff is factoring in a cost of living adjustment of five percent on payroll.

Council Member Kilgore thanked staff for listening to and addressing Council's concerns. He supports the new structure and the message of appreciation and recognition that it conveys to the department staff.

Council Member Pineda thanked staff for the presentation, particularly in terms of the financial details relevant to the decision-making process.

Council Member Conde thanked staff for providing the economic data necessary to account for the proposed step and rate adjustments. She inquired about making the changes effective in December, rather than January, 2023.

Cherlene Penilla, Acting City Manager, stated that changing the date would result in a cost increase of approximately \$100,000. The funding would have to come from the Economic Opportunity Fund. She stressed the importance of maintaining the January 9, 2023 implementation date, which is the first pay period in 2023. Otherwise, she will need to identify another existing position(s) that can be eliminated from the budget in order to meet the shortfall required for earlier implementation of the new structure. Council Member Conde noted that Police Department staff have been very patient and reiterated the need for implementation as soon as possible.

Vice Mayor Malone asked for the salary savings for the currently open positions for sworn officers/police officers. Chief Espinoza said there are currently 14.5 sworn officer vacancies and 10.5 nonsworn vacancies. Vice Mayor Malone asked Ms. Weatherless to provide a total amount of salary savings for the vacancies, noting that this will likely cover the \$100,000 required to implement the changes in December. Ms. Weatherless acknowledged that the savings in budget from the vacancies would exceed the amount required to have the changes go into effect this year.

Council Member Solorio thanked police department staff who were present at the meeting. She agreed with a December implementation timeline. Vice Mayor Malone also thanked department staff for their service to the community.

Mayor Weise asked for the date of original proposal for reducing the steps. Chief Espinoza estimated a time frame of June, 2022.

William Penny, President of the Avondale Police Association, commented that the Association did not ask for the proposal this year. They had previously requested the changes several years ago. The current proposal originates with the Chiefs and with City management. This proposal will help Avondale meet the national standards. Most national and state departments have eight or nine step pay scales.

Mayor Weise commented that there is a push to eliminate rental tax and food tax from city budgets. This would result in \$10 million loss for Avondale's budget. Depending on the results of the pending election, he will request a partnership with the Association to ensure that City revenues are protected and that public safety is a number one priority.

Ms. Penilla commented that the City prefers to make pay rate changes at the beginning of a pay period, which simplifies the budget and payroll process. As such, for an effective beginning time in December, she suggested that the changes be effective on the pay period beginning November 28, 2022.

Council Member Conde moved to approve the proposed changes to the Avondale Police Officers' Pay Scale to be effective November 28, 2022 and authorize staff to execute the necessary documents; Council Member Solorio seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 6 to 0.

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

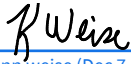
5. ADJOURNMENT

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

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 6 to 0.

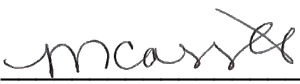
Council Member Conde	Aye
Council Member Kilgore	Aye
Council Member Pineda	Aye
Council Member Solorio	Aye
Vice Mayor Malone	Aye
Mayor Weise	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.


kenn weise (Dec 7, 2022 10:46 MST)
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 and Regular Meeting of the Council of the City of Avondale held on the 7th day of November. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.


Marcella Carrillo, City Clerk

December 5, 2022
Date Approved by City Council