


Citizen Bond Committee

01/14/2025

Meeting Date

02/11/2025

Date Minutes Were Approved



Natasha Edmonds (Feb 18, 2025 16:41 MST)

Chair

CERTIFICATION AND ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the accompanying document is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the aforementioned meeting. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.



Nayeli Carranza (Feb 18, 2025 16:26 MST)

Staff Liaison



3. PRESENTATION ON PARKS AND RECREATION PROJECTS.

Parks and Recreation Department staff presented on recent project successes, their proposed Parks Master Plan, funded capital projects, and potential bond-funded projects.

Katie Gregory, Assistant City Manager recapped the December 10, 2024, meeting where the financial forecast was presented and discussed. The key points being the City of Avondale has a balanced financial forecast, fully funded reserves, and strong bond ratings. Similarly, the City had one time revenue over the past five years also known as the “Dorito Chip” to fund projects and growth. Unfortunately, inflation, a flattening economy, and a reduction in revenues have changed the “big picture”.

We are here today to provide context around the General Obligation Bond (GOB) question that would go to the voters in November. To include a review and discussion of potential projects that would use the GOB funds.

Ms. Gregory reviewed the three things needed to issue debt.

1. Legal capacity – this sets the limit of how much debt can be issued and is based on assessed valuation.
2. Secondary Property Tax – Used to pay the debt service and Avondale already has one in place.
3. Voter Authorization – for check and balance purpose voter permission is required to issue debt for projects and spend the debt issued on identified projects.

The Bond Committee’s duty is to assist in understanding what the best project(s) is to bring forward to the voters for authorization. Some of the completed projects will be shared this evening to assist you in understanding how the City has addressed community needs and what has been identified as further needs of the community.

The role of the committee was reviewed, noting the project should be reasonable, justifiable, and address needs

- ▶ Project Evaluators
- ▶ Community Advocates
- ▶ Financial Reviewers
- ▶ Strategic Advisors
- ▶ Accountability Partners

Committee members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions. In response to questions Ms. Gregory explained the \$120 million proposal at the last meeting comes from debt that is retiring and maintains a stable property tax rate. Based on citizen feedback, surveys, and master plans there is at least \$120 million in projects the community needs completed. Anything above that amount would be asking the residents to increase their secondary tax rate. It was suggested to increase the amount to \$160 million. A discussion ensued including property taxes and values. Mr. Corbin noted the plan was to present a flat rate back to elected leaders and all

funding sources are contemplated when reviewing projects to complete. Mr. Baer noted the city collects 99.9% of their property tax it levies, and the City only equates for 11% of the overall property tax.

Robert Baer, Budget Manager, provided a financial overview that explained the difference between the General Fund, and One-time and ongoing Revenues and Expenses. A decrease is shown in the ongoing revenues due to the State restricting the ability to charge residential rental sales tax, which equates to approximately \$5 million annually. However, the City remains structurally balanced with the ongoing revenues and expenses equaling each other. Unfortunately, this does not leave much capacity for additional services beyond what is provided today and is important for capital projects and operating new infrastructure.

One-time revenues are “cyclical” and depend on the health of the economy, when the economy is doing well the revenues increase and vice versa. These revenues cannot be relied on and are not used for salaries and are best to reinvest in the community. Fund Stabilization projections show the City is in good shape and is forecasted to remain above the stabilization and capital reserve amount out to FY2030.

Mr. Baer reviewed property tax projections, noting per the financial policies Avondale’s combined property tax must remain below \$2 / \$100 of assessed valuation. This has been maintained at approximately \$1.45 / \$100 of assessed valuation and is projected to continue through FY 2034 even with the \$120 million voter authorized GOB.

Committee members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions. Mr. Baer explained there are many projects currently funded with CIP funds, along with asset replacement programs that provide significant investment into City infrastructure. This question to voters is beyond these projects. How impact fees are received and what they can be used on was discussed. Ms. Gregory clarified a multifamily dwelling does pay property tax on the building and assets like a single-family home.

Corey Larriva, Director of Park, Recreation, and Libraires and Stacy Swainston, Assistant Director of Park, Recreation, and Libraries each provided a brief introduction.

Mr. Larriva reviewed and discussed recent project success including funding sources.

1. Festival Fields Community Park Expansion, completed in 2019
2. Alamar Community Park, Completed in 2022
3. Avondale Aquatic Center, Completed in 2024
4. Donnie Hale Neighborhood Park, Completed in 2023
5. Mountain View Park Expansion, completed in 2024
6. Mountain View Community Center, Completed in 2023
7. Sand Volleyball Complex at the BLVD, completed in 2024
8. Sam Garcia Library and A.B. Sernas Plaza Improvements, completed in 2025

Committee members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions. Mr. Larriva discussed the daily attendance for the Aquatic Center was between 800-1300 Avondale residents. The types of services offered and associated fees were reviewed.

Mr. Larriva reviewed and discussed planned projects that are part of the current CIP plan and budget. These projects are also supported by planning documents.

1. DeConcini Park Enhancements – located in the Old Town Avondale area, incorporates existing land and structures, and is currently under construction. Utilizes ARPA funds, Grant funds, and General Fund.
2. Civic Center Park – incorporates 4.5 acres of land, uses impact fees and general fund, and is currently under construction.
3. Friendship Park Renovations – four specific upgrades that will use general funds. The first being LED lighting upgrade, improve dog park conditions, install new pickleball amenities, and renovate ballfield #3, which will be constructed next year.
4. Donatela Park – a 4.5-acre parcel that was given to the City, currently in the design stage. Will utilize general fund and impact fees.
5. Old Town Avondale Pocket Park – located at the southwest corner of Dysart Road and Western Avenue, will be a dedicated plaza park space, and is in the design stage. Anticipated to use General Funds.

Committee members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions. Mr. Larriva explained the why recommended location near Madison Heights is not a feasible location for neighborhood park; however, noted the smart park idea was amazing. Ms. Gregory expanded on the challenges with the recommended parcel. Further praising the sustainability idea and noted free Wi-Fi is offered at most of the parks. Mr. Larriva explained the projects do not include anything outside of the park's limits, such as roadways. Ms. Gregory noted the street and roadway design will be addressed for safety by another department and budget.

Mr. Larriva reviewed and discussed the planning and research conducted to better understand what residents are seeking, industry standards, and what his happening across the country. The City of Avondale has developed many plans that help guide the decisions which were reviewed, such as the General Plan, Active Transportation Plan, Sustainability Plan, and the Parks, Recreation, and Libraries Master Plan.

The Parks, Recreation, and Libraries 10-year Master Plan was developed with consultants Berry Dunn and is set to be adopted in February 2025. It was developed by working with the community to better assess their needs, determine standards, assess how the city is doing, and design outcomes to better serve the community. It was decided to focus on four areas, one being community engagement. The extensive process included hosting a website that had over 1,900 comment cards submitted and making sure all voices were heard. Top priorities came in as trails and connectivity

throughout the community, indoor pools, art, history, & cultural spaces, acquire parkland, and library enhancements.

Mr. Larriva reviewed and discussed the proposed bond projects beginning with filling in gaps within the trail system, taking advantage of river corridors within the City and providing more connectivity within the community and outside networks. This would create a quality of life for economic development. The asks of \$40 million would not solve all the gaps but focus on the strategic areas of public safety by getting people off the roadways.

Committee members were given an opportunity to comment and ask questions. Ms. Gregory explained mile markers, respite areas, trail heads, and other concepts are part of building a good trail system. However, it will cost more than proposed and that is why we are looking to fill in the gaps and put in some trailheads. Mr. Larriva explained how the current trails that end will be expanded either through development or this bond process. The proposed projects were chosen using the TAP which prioritizes where trails would be most impactful and current development. Ms. Gregory explained the \$40 million was developed through a needs analysis for construction trails and does not take into consideration potential obstacles.

Mr. Larriva provided an overview of the top four unfunded projects identified during the Master Plan development, that will take the Parks, Recreation, and Libraries from good to great.

- ▶ Multi-Modal Trail and Open Space, \$40 million
- ▶ Pedestrian Bridge to Friendship Park, \$8 million
- ▶ Park Shade Expansions, \$15 million
- ▶ Renovation of Civic Center Library, \$5 million

Committee members were given an opportunity to discuss the projects. It was recommended to be more specific as it relates to the trail project. Prepare information to show what an additional ask would look like and how it would affect the tax rate. Have a visual presentation of the proposed changes. Potentially too much focus on the trail system.

4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Public Safety Projects
- Development of Questions
- Recommendation of Questions to Council

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, Committee Member Arellano moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting; Committee Member List seconded the motion.

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

Chair Edmonds	Aye
Vice Chair Schuh	Aye
Committee Member Ruoti	Aye
Committee Member De La Riva	Aye
Committee Member Lopez-Davey	Aye
Committee Member Arellano	Aye
Committee Member List	Aye
Committee Member Sapata	Non-Voting Member
Committee Member Duncan-Billiman	Non-Voting Member

Meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.