



“The mission of the City of Safford is to make Safford
a great place to live, work, and visit”

**CITY OF SAFFORD - REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, October 8, 2012 @ 6:00 PM
PHELPS DODGE ROOM - LIBRARY**

PRESENT: Wyn “Chris” Gibbs, Mayor; Mary Bingham, Vice Mayor; Council Member’s Ken Malloque, Gene Seale, James D. Howes, and Arnold A. Lopez.

ABSENT: Richard Ortega, Councilman

STAFF PRESENT: David Kincaid, City Manager; Sandra Findley, Executive Secretary; Christine Fisher, Personnel Director; John Griffin, Police Chief; Don Knight, Director Management & Budget; Ann Waite, Finance Director; Randy Petty, City Engineer; Eric Buckley, Utilities Director; Jan Elliott, Library Director; Jenny Howard, Projects Management Specialist; Dustin Welker, Planner/Downtown Manager; Kim Larkey, Information Processing Supervisor; Clark Bingham, Fire Chief; and Georgia Luster, City Clerk. Sam Napier, Lead IT Specialist and Dale Clark, IT Assistant assisted with the audio/video recording of the meeting.

OTHERS PRESENT: Patrick Anderson, Valerie Buckley, Kenny McKinney, and Jeffrey Hitchcock. A representative with Van Shaar Productions, video recorded the meeting.

1. **WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Gibbs called the meeting to order at 6:01:12 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL:** A quorum of the Council was present (6-1).
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:** Mayor Gibbs led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
4. **OPENING PRAYER:** Councilman Seale offered the Opening Prayer.
5. **CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:** NONE
6. **CONSENT ITEMS:** The Mayor and City Council may wish to consider approving Items 1 through 11 as Consent Agenda Items.
 1. September 10, 2012 Council Minutes, September 24, 2012 Joint Planning & Zoning/Council Work Session and September 24, 2012 Council Work Session Minutes.
 2. Police Report
 3. Building Inspection Report
 4. Public Works Report

5. Business License Report
6. Library Report
7. Utilities Consumption Report
8. Summary of Projects Planning and Grants Administration
9. Airport Report
10. Prosecution Report
11. Expense Report over \$5,000

It was moved by Councilman Malloque, seconded by Councilman Howes and carried unanimously to approve Consent Agenda Items 1 through 11 as published. **MOTION ADOPTED**

7. **PURCHASING CARD REPORT:** It is recommended that the City Council approve the Purchasing Card Report ending July 2012. Councilman Malloque inquired about the number of company credit card errors listed at the end of the report. Transaction dates go back to January. City Manager Kincaid said he would provide an explanation of the credit card errors.

It was moved by Vice Mary Bingham, seconded by Councilman Lopez and carried unanimously to approve the Purchasing Card Report as published.

MOTION ADOPTED

8. **SALARY COMPETITIVENESS POLICY:** It is recommended that the City Council approve the amended Salary Competitiveness Policy. City Manager Kincaid explained that the Salary Competitiveness Policy was discussed in a previous work session. Councilman Seale recommended less definitive language (replace shall with may) throughout the Policy. Those revisions are being presented for final consideration. The Salary Schedule and Employee Evaluation forms are attached as requested because the Policy references each. Councilman Seale's intent for less definitive language throughout the Policy gives Council and Staff a little more leeway.

Councilman Lopez questioned the COLA salary adjustment. He stated that he understands that the COLA salary adjustment is based on percentage. But, he would like any raise consideration to have the latitude to either be a monetary amount, a bonus, or the percentage amount.

City Manager Kincaid stated he raised this issue on the behalf of Councilman Lopez during the last work session. It was discussed. He recollects the discussion regarding the COLA salary adjustment based on percentage. Additionally, there are areas within the Policy allow a flat rate increase. He noted a flat rate increase would not be a COLA.

Councilman Lopez emphasized that he would like the Council to have more flexibility when giving any consideration, whether it's COLA, Longevity, Merit, etc. "It's been difficult to get raises out to the employees. He **doesn't** want any barriers to come up when raises are discussed." He believes longevity salary adjustments be maintained in

steps like they are because keeping employees is the most valuable. He supports salary adjustments for longevity because it gives the employee something to look forward to every five years.

City Manager Kincaid noted that salary adjustments for longevity were maintained even through the difficult times.

Councilman Lopez discussed the process and structure of merit salary adjustments. He believes the merit evaluation was developed to ensure fairness to both the city and the employee. He wants the checks and balances there.

City Manager Kincaid explained the process of conducting an employee evaluation. He pointed out that there is both objectivity and subjectivity in the merit system. Merit systems are not fool proof or one-hundred percent fair. A merit increase is given for exceptional service and not competent service. The performance evaluation explains the performance of the employee. The City Manager and H.R. Director review all evaluations. The evaluation makes our workforce better in an attempt to maximize strengths and minimize weaknesses.

Councilman Malloque inquired about when a salary survey will be conducted. (A survey will be conducted this year.

Councilman Howes opposed the revision of shall to may in the Policy of the salary adjustments for longevity.

It was moved by Councilman Seale, seconded by Vice Mayor Bingham and carried 4-2 to approve the amended Salary Competitiveness Policy as presented. Councilman Lopez and Councilman Howes opposed.

MOTION ADOPTED

9. **SAFFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT:** Chief Bingham will present the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2011/2012 of the Safford Fire Department. City Manager Kincaid welcomed Clark Bingham, Fire Chief. He commended Fire Chief Bingham for doing a great job. He believes he is a tremendous advocate for the City and of the Fire Department.

Fire Chief, Clark Bingham reviewed the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2011/2012 of the Safford Fire Department. He noted that ISO will be here on October 15th to conduct a two-day annual evaluation.

10. **UTILITIES RATE STUDY & IMPACT FEE PROPOSAL:** The City of Safford accepted Proposals to conduct a Utilities Rate Study and Impact Fee Schedule for the City's water and wastewater systems. Four proposals were received. It is

recommended that the City Council consider awarding the contract to Tischler Bise to conduct a Water Rate Study and Wastewater Impact fee Study.

City Manager Kincaid noted that funding is included in this year's budget to conduct a Utilities Rate Study and Impact Fee Schedule. Four proposals were received. Staff reviewed the proposals and unanimously recommended awarding the contract to Tischler Bise to conduct a Water Rate Study and Wastewater Impact Fee Study. He noted the Town of Thatcher approves Tischler Bise. He pointed out that as part of the water development agreement with the Town of Thatcher, Thatcher must approve of the Company to conduct the study.

It was moved by Vice Mayor Bingham, seconded by Councilman Lopez and carried unanimously to award the contract to Tischler Bise to conduct a Water Rate Study and Wastewater Impact fee Study.

MOTION ADOPTED

11. MEETINGS/ACTIVITIES HELD BY COUNCIL OR CITY STAFF:

- Internal Service Fund Council Subcommittee met last week. Another meeting will be scheduled soon.
- Participate in Graham County Fair Events on Friday, October 12th. Mayor Bingham, Gene Seale, Jim Howes and Arnold Lopez will ride in the Parade in the old fire truck.
- Mayor Gibbs provided an update on the Salsa Fest Event held last weekend. Expressed appreciation to City staff assistance.
- Paperless agenda - Councilman Lopez inquired about.

12. COUNCIL OR STAFF REQUESTS FOR AGENDA ITEMS: NONE

13. CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: Jeffrey Hitchcock, 1207 West Drive, Safford, AZ: Mr. Hitchcock inquired about the following items:

- Levying of garbage collection fees on vacant properties.
- Electrical shutoff on property located at 1224 West Drive
- Broken electrical panel in sidewalk on north side of 7th by Ace Hardwar
- Recommended printing Water Restrictions on utility bills
- Rumor of zoning change on West Drive from residential to commercial

Mayor Gibbs assured Mr. Hitchcock that his concerns will be looked into.

14. ADJOURN: It was moved by Councilman Malloque, seconded by Councilman Howes, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:59:13 p.m. **MOTION ADOPTED**

