

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M., IN THE FLORENCE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, LOCATED AT 775 N. MAIN STREET, FLORENCE, ARIZONA.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Walter called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Tara Walter, Johnie Mendoza, Michelle Cordes, Arthur Neal, Nicole Buccellato, Jose Maldonado

Absent: Kristen Larsen

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Walter called for a Moment of Silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Walter led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Call to the Public for public comment on issues within the jurisdiction of the Town Council. Council rules limit public comments to three minutes. Individual Councilmembers may respond to criticism made by those commenting, may ask staff to review a matter raised or may ask that a matter be put on a future agenda. However, members of the Council shall not discuss or act on any matter during an open call to the public unless the matters are properly noticed for discussion and legal action.

Kathy Leaman, Florence resident, stated that the Community Services Advisory Board and staff have put together a Public Art Program and requested that Council allocate a minimum of \$10,000 for the program.

Courtney Ramirez, Florence resident, expressed her frustration with proposed increases to water and wastewater fees, citing economic struggles as a reason to vote no on the increase. She thanked Council and staff for placing her request to have work sessions broadcast via Zoom on the agenda and suggested that they allow for a Call to the Public at the start of work sessions. She noted that the agenda contains an item for Well #6 in Territory Square and inquired if anything has been done to alleviate the floodplain that Territory Square is in.

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing to accept public comments on Land Use Assumptions (ILUA) and Infrastructure Improvement Plan (IIP) for Development Impact Fees. (Becki Jimenez)

Becki Jimenez, Finance Director, stated that a draft Infrastructure Improvement Plan and Land Use was given to Council for review, and that this version of the plan has been updated with new adjustments and that if Council feels more adjustments are needed, they can be made.

Carson Bise, President of Tischler Bise, stated that both the Land Use Assumptions and Infrastructure Improvement Plans give a 10-year view and must be approved by elected officials, and that once approved, the Development Fee Report can be created. He stated that the public was notified of this hearing on November 7, 2023, and that Council has until February 20, 2024, to approve the Land Use Assumptions and Infrastructure Improvement Plan in order to keep with the timeline of adopting the Development Impact Fees by August 1, 2024. He stated that questions have been received from developers regarding the proposed Development Impact Fees and that Tischler Bise is in the process of responding to those questions. He stated that the Land Use Assumption predicts a population increase of 22,027 year-round residents and 7,029 seasonal residents with an estimated 11,480 new single-family units and 1,124 new multifamily units built. He stated that an estimated \$18 million in growth-related expenditures is predicted over the next 10 years for the Community Services Department, \$15.1 million for the Police Department, \$29 million for the Fire & Medical Department, \$4.8 million for water transmission lines, \$5.4 million for Territory Square water infrastructure, \$9.4 million for wastewater collection lines, \$4 million for Territory Square wastewater collection lines, and \$28.5 million for road improvements.

Ms. Jimenez stated that the Infrastructure Improvement Plan will be approved/disapproved at the February 20, 2024 meeting, with a public notice going out on February 21, 2024 for a public hearing on April 1, 2024. She stated the Development Fee Report will come before Council for approval/disapproval on May 6, 2024, and if approved, the Development Fees will have an effective date of August 1, 2024.

Mayor Walter opened the Public Hearing. There being no comments, Mayor Walter closed the Public Hearing.

Mayor Walter read Resolution No. 1890-24 by title only.

Public Hearing to accept public comment on recommended intention to increase water and wastewater rates and fees and possible adoption of Resolution No. 1890-24: A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE, PINAL COUNTY ARIZONA, ADOPTING AND AMENDING THE FEE SCHEDULE OF TERMS, RATES, FEES AND CHARGES FOR TOWN-OWNED WATER AND WASTEWATER UTILITIES EFFECTIVE MARCH 1, 2024. (Becki Jimenez)

Mayor Walter opened the Public Hearing.

Ms. Ramirez requested that Council disapprove the proposed rate increases.

Councilmember Buccellato thanked staff for their work and stated that a slight increase of fees now saves a large increase later.

Councilmember Neal stated that he did not want to vote for any tax or rate increases as a Councilmember, but raising rates is needed to keep the service functioning.

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Councilmember Maldonado stated that it's not easy to see the pipes that these fees help pay for and maintain and that this helps with the preventative maintenance of those pipes.

Mayor Walter closed the Public Hearing.

On motion of Councilmember Maldonado, seconded by Councilmember Cordes and carried (6-0) to adopt Resolution No. 1890-24: A Resolution of the Town of Florence, Pinal County, Arizona, adopting and amending the fee schedule of terms, rates, fees and charges for Town-owned water and wastewater utilities effective March 1, 2024.

Recognition and special thanks to Waste Management for being a 2023 Make a Difference Day sponsor. (Erasmio Mendivil)

Erasmio Mendivil, Recreation Coordinator, thanked Waste Management for providing four roll-off dumpsters for Make a Difference Day.

Rick Davies, Senior District Manager at Waste Management, stated it was a privilege to serve the community.

Recognition and special thanks to Florence Copper for being a 2023 Make a Difference Day sponsor. (Erasmio Mendivil)

Mr. Mendivil thanked Florence Copper for providing tee shirts to every volunteer at Make a Difference Day.

Sophie Dessart, Public Affairs & Communications Manager at Florence Copper, stated that Florence Copper was honored to receive recognition and was thrilled to participate in Make a Difference Day.

Presentation of the 2023 Junior Parada Parade winners. (Erasmio Mendivil)

Mr. Mendivil thanked the Historic Florence Foundation for recruiting rodeo participants into the parade and the Judges Advisory Board for judging the parade. He recognized the following winners from the 2023 Junior Parada Parade:

- Shriners Phoenix – Posie Foster Award (Overall Winner)
- Lost Dutchman Royalty – Best Equestrian
- Camp Encouragement – Best Western Authentic Vehicle
- Florence K-8 NJHS -- Best Civic
- Florence Copper "FloCo Riders" -- Best Commercial
- Box O Ranch Beef is Going Up – Best Motorized
- Florence High School Marching Band – Best Marching

Presentation of the 2023 Hometown Holiday Parade winners. (Erasmio Mendivil)

Mr. Mendivil recognized the following winners from the 2023 Hometown Holiday Parade:

- Carla Ruth – Peoples Champ Award (Public Vote)
- American Legion Riders Post #9 – Mayors Choice
- Eloy Fire Department – Biggest and Brightest
- San Tan Skies Girl Scout Service Team – Most Festive
- Florence Police Department -- Best Public Safety
- Florence High School Marching Band – Best Marching

Presentation on the 2023 Junior Parada Rodeo by the Historic Florence Foundation. (Paul King)

Bill Foster, Historic Florence Foundation, stated that approximately 220 contestants participated in the 2023 Junior Parada Rodeo, with 25 contestants participating in the Junior Parada Parade. He stated that multiple food and merchandise vendors attended the rodeo along with 1500 spectators. He stated that 10 of the contestants are local Florence youth.

Mr. Foster played a video showcasing the events from the rodeo.

Councilmember Buccellato thanked the Historic Florence Foundation for holding the Junior Parada Rodeo and everything they do for the community.

Councilmember Cordes thanked the Historic Florence Foundation and stated that partnerships like the one between the Town and the Historic Florence Foundation help the Town to grow.

CONSENT AGENDA

Acceptance of the public improvements/infrastructure into the warranty period for National Way Phase 2 and Unit 30A-1 in Anthem at Merrill Ranch starting January 16, 2024. (Chris Salas)

Approval of Amendment three to the On-Call Engineering Services Agreement with Hazen and Sawyer, dated January 21, 2020. (Chris Salas)

Approval of Amendment two to the On-Call Engineering Services Agreement with Sunrise Engineering, dated January 21, 2020. (Chris Salas)

Approval of Amendment three to the On-Call Engineering Services agreement with Westland Resources, dated January 21, 2020.

Discussion/Approval/Disapproval of the Warrant Register of Demands ending December 31, 2023, in the amount of \$4,653,032. (Becki Jimenez)

On motion of Councilmember Cordes, seconded by Vice-Mayor Mendoza and carried (6-0) to approve the Consent Agenda as written.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion/Approval/Disapproval to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Matrix New World Engineering for the development of the well siting, well drilling, site engineering and well equipment documents necessary for the construction of Well 6 utilizing the City of Buckeye Cooperate On-Call Engineering & Architectural Services contract #2022003 in an amount not to exceed \$456,160.55. (Chris Salas)

Chris Salas, Public Works Director/Town Engineer, stated that the Territory Square area is need of additional infrastructure in order to meet industry standards for storage capacity, well capacity, and booster capacity.

Councilmember Buccellato inquired about the contract total being lower than the amount budgeted.

Mr. Salas stated that there are contingencies for potential studies that may need to be conducted.

Councilmember Cordes requested Mr. Salas address the floodplain concerns raised during the Call to the Public.

Mr. Salas stated that Well #6 and the floodplain are largely unrelated as there has been no determination made on where the well will be placed, and that there is a Conditional Letter of Map Revision that is pending regarding the floodplain. He stated that the lead time for constructing a Well can be three years, and with the Multi-Generational Center, it is prudent to have items such as well constructions approved and ready to go.

On motion of Vice-Mayor Mendoza, seconded by Councilmember Cordes and carried (6-0) to approve entering into a Professional Services Agreement with Matrix New World Engineering for the development of the well siting, well drilling, site engineering and well equipment documents necessary for the construction of Well 6 utilizing the City of Buckeye Cooperate On-Call Engineering & Architectural Services contract #2022003 in an amount not to exceed \$456,160.55.

Discussion/Approval/Disapproval to adopt Resolution No. 1892-24; A Resolution of the Town of Florence, Pinal County, Arizona, amending the Florence Town Council Rules of Procedure, effective February 16, 2024. (Lisa Garcia)

Councilmember Buccellato stated that it would be good to have a Call to the Public at the beginning of a Council work session to hear the public's opinion.

Councilmember Cordes expressed her agreement with Councilmember Buccellato and questioned why work sessions as well as Boards & Commissions meetings do not get broadcast the same as Council meetings and that the recordings of meetings should be available on the Town's website.

Councilmember Neal agreed with one Call to the Public, citing the potential to force overtime to staff in the work session.

Mayor Walter summarized that the desired changes include allowing the public to submit comments via email prior to the meeting, allow for a Call to the Public at the beginning of work sessions, and that the work session will be broadcast via Zoom and Florence Channel 11 and recordings available on the Town's website.

Councilmember Cordes stated that a cut-off time for submitted public questions should be given to provide staff with enough time to research the questions.

Councilmember Buccellato suggested one business day prior to the meeting as the cut-off for questions.

On motion of Councilmember Buccellato, seconded by Vice-Mayor Mendoza and carried (6-0) to adopt Resolution No. 1892-24; a Resolution of the Town of Florence, Pinal County, Arizona, amending the Florence Town Council Rules of Procedure with Option #3 with one Call to the Public at the beginning of the Work Session, effective February 16, 2024.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Ms. Ramirez thanked Council for agendaizing and discussing Resolution No. 1892-24. She requested that the presentations be placed at the end of the agenda to allow for business be conducted first, citing the 30 minutes of presentations during the meeting. She encouraged the public to attend Council meetings.

Sherri Bedford, Florence resident, expressed her pleasure with the meeting and encouraged the public to attend meetings and voice their opinion.

CALL TO THE COUNCIL – CURRENT EVENTS ONLY

Councilmember Neal stated that the presentations are a part of Florence and that it would be unkind to make presenters from Phoenix or further have to sit through a meeting before presenting.

Councilmember Buccellato encouraged everyone to look into the Gilbert Goons case and be cautious when going to Queen Creek. She thanked staff for lighting Town Hall orange in support of Preston Lord.

Councilmember Cordes expressed her agreement with Councilmember Buccellato's statement. She stated that on January 20, 2024 a food drive will be held at Heritage Park and encourage everyone to attend. She stated that the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce has multiple upcoming events and encouraged everyone to check their website and attend the events.

Councilmember Maldonado expressed his condolences to the family of Joan Baker and the families of those affected by the Eloy hot air balloon crash. He stated that he will be attending a transportation meeting in Phoenix in the coming week and requested that any transportation questions be emailed to him.

Vice-Mayor Mendoza stated he attended a meeting regarding the proposed North-South Corridor and that the name SR 505 has been given to the project, with progress hopefully coming over the next few years.

Mayor Walter stated that she attended the First Things First Families With Justice System Involvement Advisory Committee meeting and that the committee's aim is to help those reentering the community following incarceration. She stated that the Florence Teen Council met and discussed ways to engage with youth, including the fact that the Viney Jones Library closes at 6pm and that most teens cannot utilize that space. She stated that the Teen Council discussed conducting a survey of their peers assessing youth needs. She expressed her thanks to everyone who participated in Make a Difference Day.

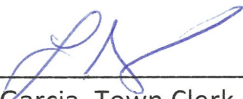
ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Vice-Mayor Mendoza, seconded by Councilmember Maldonado and carried (6-0) to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 pm.



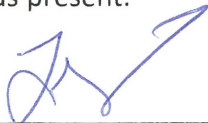
Tara Walter, Mayor

ATTEST:



Lisa Garcia, Town Clerk

I certify that the following is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Florence Town Council meeting held on January 16, 2024, and that the meeting was duly called to order and that a quorum was present.



Lisa Garcia, Town Clerk

