

Minutes of the Special Meeting held February 24, 2014 at 6:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Lopez Rogers and Council Members

Frank Scott, Vice Mayor
Stephanie Karlin
Jim McDonald
Charles Vierhout
Ken Weise

ALSO PRESENT

David Fitzhugh, Acting City Manager
Gina Montes, Assistant City Manager
Andrew McGuire, City Attorney
Carmen Martinez, City Clerk

1 ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK

2 INTERVIEW OF APPLICANTS FOR UPCOMING VACANCY IN THE CITY COUNCIL

City Council interviewed the individuals who submitted letters of interest to fill the vacant City Council seat.

Jonathan Beretta

- *If you were selected to fill the vacant seat, would you run for the seat in the upcoming election?*

Mr. Beretta said he has not decided yet, but would use the experience to determine whether he would want to run for City Council in the future.

- *If you could only choose one capital improvement project in Avondale to fund, what would it be and why?*

By offering residents more recreational opportunities, people will come and spend money in the city, which will bring in more revenue and help with Avondale's branding effort. He would also support developing areas that could host activities such as farmers' markets that help keep the community together.

- *What community involvement or volunteer activities have you participated over the last two years?*

Mr. Beretta has served on the Personnel Board, and is the current Chair of the Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Commission. He also volunteers at St. Vincent de Paul, and with dog rescue groups.

- *What is your opinion on the pending annexation of Wigwam Creek South that will come before City Council shortly?*

He said he would want to learn as much as possible about the deal before making a decision, but annexation seems like the best option in this situation.

- *What assets do you bring to the City Council?*

Mr. Beretta explained that his legal background gives him familiarity with laws and regulations. He has worked for large and small corporations, municipalities, school districts and government agencies, and excels in finding affordable ways to retain good employees so that those organizations can remain competitive.

- *What are your two top concerns that Avondale should focus on in the future?*

Besides parks and recreation projects, Avondale needs to attract businesses to the community that will allow citizens to get everything they need without leaving. This will reduce pollution and revitalize neighborhoods.

- *If you only had nine months to make a difference, what would that look like by the end of the year?*

City Council has done a great job of maintaining fiscal stability. Avondale can generate more revenue by attracting fiscally stable residents to fill currently vacant homes.

- *What one decision has Council made in the past few months that you disagree with?*

Mr. Beretta stated that there is a considerable risk and liability involved with medical marijuana dispensaries. He would have voted against a recently granted land division that allows them.

- *What are your ideas to limit the number of false alarms that police must respond to?*

He felt penalties should be much more strictly enforced, and repeated violators should be fined more severely each time. Alarm companies should be subject to set standards that limit the number of false alarms, and they should make several attempts to contact owners before calling emergency.

Mr. Beretta reiterated his prior experience in creating with budgets for large corporations. He said he is proficient in process improvement initiatives that can be applied to City practices.

Richard Childress

- *If you were selected to fill the vacant seat, would you run for the seat in the upcoming election?*

Mr. Childress indicated he has not decided yet.

- *If you could only choose one capital improvement project in Avondale to fund, what would it be and why?*

The top priority is the Friendship Park renovations.

- *What community involvement or volunteer activities have you participated in over the last two years?*

Mr. Childress said he has attended City Council work sessions, regular meetings, and numerous public hearings. He likes to hear what other citizens have to say.

- *What is your opinion on the pending annexation of Wigwam Creek South that will come before City Council shortly?*

He did not want to comment on it without knowing more about the issue.

- *What assets do you bring to the City Council?*

Mr. Childress said he has spent many hours familiarizing himself with the issues the City faces. City government has become very sophisticated, and citizens should be more involved in government beyond just voting.

- *What are your two top concerns that Avondale should focus on in the future?*

Avondale needs a decent restaurant. City Council must help promote the city as much as possible in order to attract better businesses.

- *If you only had nine months to make a difference, what would that look like by the end of the year?*

The most important issues facing Avondale are to reach an agreement with the Police Association, to find a new City Manager, and to determine the annual budget.

- *What one decision has Council made in the past few months that you disagree with?*

He felt the decision to allow a Quik Trip in City Center was wrong. The area deserves something better.

- *What are your ideas to limit the number of false alarms the police must respond to?*

Mr. Childress said he would like to see a report detailing the problem locales, and would solicit the Police Department's ideas on how to resolve the issue.

Mr. Childress concluded by stating that his interest in City Council comes from a desire to get a better understanding of how the City runs, and to provide his input.

David Iwanski

- *If you were selected to fill the vacant seat, would you run for the seat in the upcoming election?*

Mr. Iwanski said he would not run in the upcoming election, but would still consider running in a subsequent one.

- *If you could only choose one capital improvement project in Avondale to fund, what would it be and why?*

Any human or economic development relies on a safe, reliable and affordable water supply. This is critical, and has to be a priority.

- *What community involvement or volunteer activities have you participated in over the last two years?*

Mr. Iwanski indicated he has served five years on the Planning Commission, the last two as Chair. He currently serves on the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Fire and Police Retirement Boards. Mr. Iwanski cited his expertise in water, wastewater and environmental compliance. He served on the Westmarc Board for 20 years, two as Chair, as well as 10 years on the Water and Energy Committee. Leaders from both political parties, and business leaders from throughout the state have appointed him to a number of positions of leadership and responsibility. He likes to make a difference every day.

- *What is your opinion on the pending annexation of Wigwam Creek South that will come before City Council shortly?*

Annexations always come with a price tag. The City must consider the benefit and the cost of the related infrastructure needs. The 69 square mile annexation in Goodyear looked like a good idea before the economic downturn, but in hindsight it has caused some significant challenges. He would proceed with caution and consider any annexation decisions with care.

- *What assets do you bring to the City Council?*

Mr. Iwanski indicated he is an attorney. He has spent four years on active duty with the U.S. Army, and has worked for the Department of Defense at the Pentagon. As an Appropriations Committee staffer for an Arizona Congressman, he became very familiar with the federal appropriations and authorizations process. He was the City of Glendale's first Water Resources Director, the Executive Vice President of the Agribusiness Council of Arizona, which includes all of the state's irrigation and electrical districts, and has federal, state, and local lobbying experience. As the Water Resources Manager for the City of Goodyear he worked with Avondale to help protect its water supply from contamination from the Superfund site. Currently, he works as a consultant for municipalities in Maricopa and Pinal counties.

- *What are your two top concerns that Avondale should focus on in the future?*

Energy costs are an immediate concern. People take energy availability for granted, but as costs for energy increase dramatically, the concern is genuine. He said the City Council has managed to make Avondale a vibrant place, and should be working to attract companies who want to leave California. Business recruitment is as important as business retention.

- *If you only had nine months to make a difference, what would that look like by the end of the year?*

Mr. Iwanski would focus on water resources, energy resources, and environmental compliance. It is important for the City to help people understand the importance of utility related infrastructure costs. Job creation is a top priority. He said he brings a complementary skill set to City Council.

Council Member Weise inquired whether Mr. Iwanski's consulting work would conflict with his desire to serve on City Council. Mr. Iwanski explained that his work with the City of Youngtown is coming to a close. He is helping the City of Casa Grande with their redesignation of assured water supply. He promised to drop any client that presented an actual or apparent conflict of interest. Avondale is his home and that is where his loyalties are.

In closing, Mr. Iwanski reiterated his background, skill set, and enthusiasm, and restated his belief in Avondale.

Bryan Kilgore

- *If you were selected to fill the vacant seat, would you run for the seat in the upcoming election?*

Mr. Kilgore said he intends to run again in the upcoming election.

- *If you could only choose one capital improvement project in Avondale to fund, what would it be and why?*

He would make sure the water and sewer funds were well prepared for future infrastructure costs.

- *What community involvement or volunteer activities have you participated in over the last two years?*

He teamed up with the Maricopa County Library District to promote literacy. His company Kilgore Studios 75 works with libraries to teach literacy and art. Mr. Kilgore has volunteered for many city boards and commissions, including the Municipal Art Committee, Neighborhood and Family Services Committee, and the CIP Committee. He has helped create an arts scholarship for graduating seniors, and has participated in ride alongs with

the Fire and Police departments. He helped promote the budget overrides for Avondale's school districts.

- *What is your opinion on the pending annexation of Wigwam Creek South that will come before City Council shortly?*

Mr. Kilgore said he said he understands the mixed feelings about the issue. The annexed area will require additional City resources and could change voting patterns. Before making a decision, he would want to study the ramifications in greater depth.

- *What assets do you bring to the City Council?*

Mr. Kilgore said he would bring to the job a great work ethic, dependability, commitment, dedication, and adaptability. He cares about others, and is open to learning new things from those with more experience. He can work as part of a team, but also operate independently if needed.

- *What are your two top concerns that Avondale should focus on in the future?*

One top concern is the need to work out an agreement with the Police Association that works for the city as a whole. The next immediate concern is choosing a new City Manager to replace Charlie McClendon.

- *If you only had nine months to make a difference, what would that look like by the end of the year?*

Mr. Kilgore said he would provide more activities for youth and teens. Friendship Park would be improved. He would want to see more trees and trails. Dysart Road south of I-10 would be transformed. Historic Avondale would have more mural projects and be made into an arts district. He supports promotion of Avondale to attract business development. Collaboration with neighboring cities would be encouraged.

Council Member Weise asked Mr. Kilgore to share the lessons he learned from his unsuccessful run for the state legislature. Mr. Kilgore explained that the endeavor taught him much about himself and his desire to make a difference in the community. He found a willingness to make sacrifices in order to leave a positive legacy.

Mr. Kilgore said he is committed to Avondale. He has sat on the South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team, the Branding Committee, and was asked to provide input on the selection of Avondale's Police Chief. Mr. Kilgore said any person appointed by the City Council will have an advantage regardless of whether they run in 2014 or not. He believes his actions speak louder than words.

Jack Marslender

- *If you were selected to fill the vacant seat, would you run for the seat in the upcoming election?*

Mr. Marslender said he has not decided yet, and would use the time to determine whether he was a good fit for the City Council.

- *If you could only choose one capital improvement project in Avondale to fund, what would it be and why?*

Mr. Marslender said the southwest Valley needs more services for the homeless and he would like Avondale to partner with a non-profit agency to help them.

- *What community involvement or volunteer activities have you participated in over the last two years?*

He said most of his volunteer activity is done through the Southern Baptist Church of Avondale, which runs a low-cost basketball league, and offers free medical care services. Mr. Marslender also serves on the Mayor's Faith Council, and works for Habitat for Humanity.

- *What is your opinion on the pending annexation of Wigwam Creek South that will come before City Council shortly?*

He has not studied that issue specifically, but would like the area to become part of the City of Avondale if the details can be worked out.

- *What assets do you bring to the City Council?*

Mr. Marslender described his extensive work with non-profit organizations. Since he works with people from many different faiths and backgrounds, he has become a good builder of consensus and understands different points of view.

- *What are your two top concerns that Avondale should focus on in the future?*

Avondale needs more retail businesses. Historic Avondale has many problems that need to be corrected.

- *If you only had nine months to make a difference, what would that look like by the end of the year?*

The first month would be spent learning how the City Council operates, and understanding its finances. He would like the City to work with non-profits to help meet the needs of people in need.

Council Member Weise requested ideas for improving Historic Avondale. Mr. Marslender said his church's basketball league has helped to establish contact with families in the area. Most are not aware of the social services that are available. Outreach can help residents address substandard housing and drug abuse issues.

Mr. Marslender said he loves Avondale and enjoys living here. He is familiar with both affluent and poor areas of the city, has worked with schools, and would love to help make Avondale the best place possible.

Lorenzo Sierra

- *If you were selected to fill the vacant seat, would you run for the seat in the upcoming election?*

Mr. Sierra said he does not like the process of running for office, but intends to do so in the next election.

- *If you could only choose one capital improvement project in Avondale to fund, what would it be and why?*

The Van Buren Drainage Channel and Recreation Corridor would help define what Avondale is all about. It will be a great addition to City Center and provide a gathering place for citizens.

- *What community involvement or volunteer activities have you participated in over the last two years?*

Mr. Sierra said he sits on the Avondale Board of Adjustments, the Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee, and the Capital Improvement Projects Committee, as well as the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism. He has gone through the Avondale Citizens Academy.

- *What is your opinion on the pending annexation of Wigwam Creek South that will come before City Council shortly?*

Mr. Sierra said the residents from Wigwam Creek South that he has spoken to are in favor of the annexation. In general, he would support it himself, but would want to explore the issue in depth first to ascertain whether it will be of mutual benefit to the neighborhood and the City. Resources should not be stretched too thin.

- *What assets do you bring to the City Council?*

His work on a variety of statewide and regional boards has taught him how to provide unique perspectives to collaborative endeavors. He understands how to contribute to the success of the boards he has served on.

- *What are your two top concerns that Avondale should focus on in the future?*

In the short term, Avondale must hire a new City Manager, an Intergovernmental Affairs Director, and City Judge. Making the right personnel decisions will be key to guiding future growth. The other priority is to make sure that Avondale's economic goals are achieved.

- *If you only had nine months to make a difference, what would that look like by the end of the year?*

Much needs to be done in the next nine months. Besides personnel hires, the top issues facing Avondale are the Lakin Ranch project, the branding campaign, and the next two budgets. He would like to see Avondale win a big economic development project.

- *What one decision has Council made in the past few months that you disagree with?*

Mr. Sierra said he likes the recent decision to use subsidies to attract development to Avondale, but would have preferred that the cost of doing so were lower.

Mr. Sierra stated that Avondale is his home, and he wants to make a difference.

Lillian Caravona Thornton

- *If you were selected to fill the vacant seat, would you run for the seat in the upcoming election?*

Ms. Thornton stated that she would run in the next election.

- *If you could only choose one capital improvement project in Avondale to fund, what would it be and why?*

Ms. Thornton said she would propose using capital funds for road improvement. Cities with poorly maintained roads make bad impressions. This is especially important as Avondale is trying to attract economic development.

- *What community involvement or volunteer activities have you participated in over the last two years?*

She has attended the Leadership Academy. Her volunteer activities were limited recently due to family matters, but now she wishes to serve on the Library Commission.

- *What is your opinion on the pending annexation of Wigwam Creek South that will come before City Council shortly?*

Ms. Thornton said her knowledge of the issue is limited.

- *What assets do you bring to the City Council?*

Having worked for the Arizona Association of Industries for many years, she helped to boost their membership and sponsorship dollars. Membership doubled through monthly plant tours of various manufacturers. Her strengths are negotiating, planning, communicating, and decision making.

- *What are your two top concerns that Avondale should focus on in the future?*

Ms. Thornton said she would like to encourage economic development at City Center, and more manufacturing jobs. Beautification is another top issue. High schools should offer community service and leadership as credit courses.

- *If you only had nine months to make a difference, what would that look like by the end of the year?*

She would attend as many meetings as possible, and meet with citizens to get their ideas. She has time and energy to dedicate to the effort and is resourceful.

Ms. Thornton stated that she would like to see the Parks and Recreation program offerings be expanded to bring the community together. The City is doing a marvelous job.

Joseph Mosca

- *If you were selected to fill the vacant seat, would you run for the seat in the upcoming election?*

Mr. Mosca said he would not run in the upcoming election if selected.

- *If you could only choose one capital improvement project in Avondale to fund, what would it be and why?*

The park north of Friendship Park should be developed, since it will be a draw to the community and serve as an ecological asset.

- *What community involvement or volunteer activities have you participated in over the last two years?*

In the last two years, Mr. Mosca has served as Vice Chair of the Board of Adjustment, and on the Chair of the Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources Commission. He is involved with projects that increase the quality of life in his neighborhood, and frequently provides input on community issues.

- *What is your opinion on the pending annexation of Wigwam Creek South that will come before City Council shortly?*

Mr. Mosca said he would welcome the growth and the expanded tax base, so long as density will not be a problem.

- *What assets do you bring to the City Council?*

Mr. Mosca said he has an engineering degree from Columbia, over 30 years of experience in real estate management, and has participated in many commissions. He wants to improve Avondale because it is his home.

- *What are your two top concerns that Avondale should focus on in the future?*

The top two priorities are to reduce crime and to grow the economy. Economic growth will be hindered by a high crime rate. Steps must be taken to make Avondale an attractive place to live and work.

- *If you only had nine months to make a difference, what would that look like by the end of the year?*

He said he would like to finalize the plans for the park north of Friendship Park, and make sure that financial decisions made by City Council reflect good judgment in how taxpayer money is spent. Aesthetic improvements should be made throughout the city.

Council Member Weise asked Mr. Mosca to share his viewpoints on water reclamation in Avondale. Mr. Mosca said reclaimed water is tested, chlorinated and disinfected. He has no issue with using wastewater in irrigation in the city, but its use should be posted and care taken so that children do not drink it. Garden Lakes intends to use untreated water directly from the lake, which poses a health risk to the community.

Mr. Mosca said he would be honored to join the City Council for the next nine months.

3 EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. The Council may hold an executive session pursuant to (i) Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 38-431.03 (A)(7) for discussion regarding the interview process for appointing a person to fill the council vacancy.

Council Member Weise moved to adjourn into executive session. Council Member Vierhout seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE AS FOLLOWS:

Council Member Vierhout	Aye
Council Member McDonald	Aye
Council Member Weise	Aye
Mayor Rogers	Aye
Vice Mayor Scott	Aye
Council Member Karlin	Aye

Motion carried unanimously

4 APPOINTMENT OF CANDIDATE TO FILL VACANCY IN THE CITY COUNCIL

Council Member Weise noted that he went through the same process several years ago, and described it as one of the hardest things he has ever done. Every applicant was qualified to serve, but the two who stood out to him were David Iwanski for his experience, and Bryan Kilgore for his youthful passion. Council Member Vierhout concurred with these choices. He noted that while both candidates will be running for City Council in the future, Mr. Kilgore has stated his intent to run in the next election.

Council Member Karlin said it was difficult to narrow down the candidates, but Bryan Kilgore is very involved in the community and best represents the future of the city. Vice Mayor Scott said Bryan Kilgore would be a good choice for City Council, but he preferred not giving any one candidate an advantage in the next election. Mr. Iwanski has a strong background and is not running in the next election.

Council Member McDonald suggested that a social event would have helped City Council get to know the applicants a little better before the interviews. Most applicants have volunteer experience that directly relates to Avondale. He agreed that Mr. Iwanski and Mr. Kilgore were the top two candidates.

Mayor Rogers called for a motion.

Council Member Karlin moved to appoint Bryan Kilgore to the open City Council seat. Council Member Weise seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE AS FOLLOWS:

Council Member Vierhout	Aye
Council Member McDonald	Nay
Council Member Weise	Aye
Mayor Rogers	Aye
Vice Mayor Scott	Nay
Council Member Karlin	Aye

Motion carried by a four to two vote.

5 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, Council Member Weise moved to adjourn the regular meeting into executive session. Council Member Vierhout seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

City Council meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.


Mayor Lopez Rogers


Carmen Martinez, CMC
City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council of the City of Avondale held on the 24th day of February. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that the quorum was present.


City Clerk