

PRESCOTT CITY COUNCIL
CAUCUS
TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2013
PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

MINUTES OF THE CAUCUS OF THE PRESCOTT CITY COUNCIL HELD ON APRIL 16, 2013, in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS located at CITY HALL, 201 SOUTH CORTEZ STREET, Prescott, Arizona.

◆ **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Kuykendall called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

◆ **ROLL CALL**

Present:

Absent:

Mayor Kuykendall
Councilman Arnold
Councilman Blair
Councilman Carlow
Councilman Kuknyo
Councilman Lamerson
Councilman Scamardo

None

Councilman Lamerson recognized Yavapai County Supervisors Rowle Simmons and Craig Brown and Kendall Jaspers, Director of the Prescott Downtown Partnership, and Dave Mauer, from the Chamber who were invited guest speakers.

I. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Downtown Issues

Councilman Kuknyo introduced the first item and said, having a healthy and safe downtown is for the residents as well as the tourists.

Mr. Jaspers asked "What is our identity?" and how do we go about defining what downtown is. It is a center of government, employment, wide streets, and is a good representation of our community. There is more pressure to have events downtown. Our downtown needs to stay healthy and stay diverse.

Councilman Kuknyo brought up the downtown Post Office which he has heard rumored as possibly closing. A suggestion was made to contact our representatives and encourage them to keep the Post Office open. Supervisor Brown said it is important to keep the Post Office.

1. Identification of downtown area

Councilman Arnold listed the different downtown areas and asked how do we define the downtown area? Zoning Code defines it as Marina to Summit and Carlton/Goodwin to Sheldon. Do we want to move events to areas other than the Courthouse Plaza?

Councilman Arnold said Council needs to determine what the downtown area is. This could impact special events and where events take place.

Councilman Scamardo said the downtown business district determines the zoning district and addresses parking and setbacks.

2. Update on what has already occurred

Councilman Arnold reported, as a result of recent Caucus meetings, the following has occurred:

- Opened new dialog with downtown groups and individuals
- Revamped the Aggressive Solicitation Ordinance
- Staff has established a cleaning program
- Parking garage entry has been modified
- Police have increased Community Policing activities

3. Signage

Councilman Kuknyo reported that the merchants complain that shoppers cannot find Whiskey Row and the parking garage. A suggestion was made to rename the parking garage "Whiskey Row Parking Garage".

Dennis Gallagher, Prescott citizen, was invited to come forward to present a plan related to signage, which he has already presented to the Chamber and PDP and has received endorsements for the concept. The proposed banners would help make the tourists aware of our assets. We need to promote the banners this summer and continue through 2014. The eligibility has to be based on bed tax revenue, regional and national recognition and a proven benefit to Prescott tourism. The banners would replace "Everybody's Hometown" banners. The plan is to phase this in, beginning with downtown. The organizations would pay for the banners. He suggested the City pay for banners related to City signature events.

Councilman Lamerson said we are looking at rewriting Code so this should be discussed.

Councilman Kuknyo pointed out the proposed banners include a Quick Read Code, allowing tourists to scan the code with a smart phone, which takes them to the specific website for additional information.

Councilman Arnold said he would like to see a small group put together to research and discuss this. He is concerned that someone driving into Prescott does not know where to go to find Lynx Lake, or the parking garage for example.

Councilman Blair said he is opposed to having too many signs. He would like to see an entry way sign or something, such as a kiosk, where people can stop and get information. Don't wait until they get downtown have the information as they drive into town. Travelers don't want to wait until they are in the core of the City.

Mr. Mauer said it would not be easy to get volunteers to man a kiosk at the four (4) entrances into the City.

Council agreed that increased signage at the entrances to the City is important. Councilman Arnold related two instances where people stopped him to ask where downtown is.

Councilman Arnold called attention to a suggestion that the white lights along the top of the buildings on Whiskey Row remain on all year.

Mr. Gallagher said the lights were funded by the Prescott Western Heritage Foundation and Chamber of Commerce. He would like to pursue having them up year round. He showed a Sesquicentennial Banner sample.

4. Circulation

Councilman Arnold said currently there is no pass through available to pedestrians from the parking garage to the sidewalk on Whiskey Row. We would like to know if there is an opportunity to put in a temporary passageway between the parking garage and the plaza. Supervisor Simmons said he thought there was going to be a breezeway. Yes, Councilman Kuknyo said, but not for a year. In the meantime can we open up a section for a passageway? Councilman Arnold said any pass through will cost money. This Council will have to decide if we want to be a part of that. Ultimately there will be a permanent breezeway.

Taxi Cab Parking:

Councilman Arnold called attention to the parking space at the Sam Stieger crosswalk, which is a taxi only parking space. Maybe on a Saturday night it is used, but the rest of the time it precludes anyone else from using it. He has heard many complaints from tourists (a) they don't know where to find a taxi (b) taxi's tend to pile up in front of two bars on Whiskey Row, taking up a majority of parking spaces. Councilman Arnold asked if this is something Council wants to have a conversation with the cab companies about? Parking for taxis should be made more efficient and safer. Councilman Lamerson said he has the same problem with delivery trucks. There are times when the delivery truck is parked in the cross walk. Lt. Rich Gill spoke up and said this is hard to enforce.

Councilman Kuknyo said we need to do something with the crosswalk. There should be a buffer zone. Councilman Arnold said he has heard multiple complaints. Councilman Scamardo said in his 25 years downtown he never heard a complaint.

Council discussed the timing of the left turn arrow, pedestrian crossings, deliveries, taxi cab parking and J-turns for visitor parking.

5. Promotion, events, attractions

Councilman Arnold said most people visit Prescott for the events held downtown and is what Prescott is known for. This is a topic worth discussing.

Councilman Kuknyo said some signature events are getting really big. For example, the Whiskey Off Road entrants has increased to 2,000. The Rodeo Street Dance is being moved from Albertsons parking lot to the end of Iron Springs Road. Is this something we want on the Courthouse square? Are road closures causing problems for the County?

Councilman Blair said some events should not be downtown. One is the Blue Grass Festival. Why not have that at Watson Lake Park, he asked. That is another place for the Street Dance. The Downtown association needs to decide what they want downtown. It was pointed out that the downtown merchants are split on the subject; half want events downtown and half don't want events downtown.

Mr. Jaspers said for 26 years we have been having this same conversation. You will never get consensus. The number of events on the square is very static and doesn't change much. What has changed, are the street closures. These are frustrating to the merchants and to local residents. Let's make sure people are not afraid to come downtown in May and June. There is potential to move some events and there are other venues we should think about. Gateway Mall would pay to get the crowds we get.

Councilman Blair said the Mile High Football field is close and suggested having conversations with the school district. Councilman Kuknyo reminded Council that no alcohol is allowed on school property.

Councilman Arnold asked about installing a traffic signal at the intersection of Granite and Goodwin where there are traffic problems. During events when there are street closures this would be helpful; either a temporary light or traffic control.

What are the signature events and do they need a space to grow? If they are held downtown we need to talk to the County Board of Supervisors. 4th of July, Whiskey Off-Road are two, but what are the other big events?

George Karsa was invited to speak. He has lived in the City 18 years and said it is getting out of control with the motorcycle noise. We have a noise ordinance and it is not being considered. Take the sign down or enforce. The noise does not contribute to the ambiance of the town.

Councilman Kuknyo suggested giving the Phoenix media an invitation for the opportunity to do live coverage for our events. All Councilmember's agreed.

Supervisor Simmons said there is a big impact on the grass at the Courthouse Square. 3-day events cause havoc on the lawn. Events starting after 5:00 PM create no problems per Judge Mackey and his constituents. Allowing the beer garden to take place on the lawn is a one year trial. Depending on how it goes will determine if it is allowed again.

Councilman Kuknyo asked how can we communicate better? Mr. Jaspers said (using the Whiskey Off Road as an example) they walked door to door about the proposed street closures. There was an opportunity for a marketing coop deal. The PDP has a newsletter but so many people refused delivery of the email. The City does not have a

mechanism for a list of all business owners. Door to door is the only sure way. Councilman Kuknyo said he would like staff to put together a data base of contacts.

Dogs in the Court Plaza:

Supervisor Simmons said despite what some are saying, the Plaza is not turning into a dog park. He reported the County Health Department is coming up with some new parameters. His assistant has been working with a woman who has had some problems with dogs at the plaza. The Security people have been contacted to be aware of the problems. He said the County is trying to be pro active. The community is split on this issue. They are trying to enforce courtesy. The park is well taken care of and is very clean. In most cases people take care of their pets. Councilman Blair said he is more worried about the grandchild crawling in the grass and coming up with something left behind by a dog.

6. Smoking Issues

Councilman Arnold said you can't walk down Whiskey Row without walking through a plume of smoke. We need to look at the enforcement of the smoking laws. The PDP put ash containers in several places on the sidewalk for cigarette butts, but, the gutters are full of butts on the weekends. Education would be helpful, Councilman Arnold said.

7. Cleanliness

Councilman Arnold called attention to the alley behind Whiskey Row and the overall cleanliness downtown. We want people to come downtown and they park in our parking garage and then have to walk through a dirty alley to get to Whiskey Row. We need to be concerned with the overall cleanliness of the downtown area. How do we make sure we are prioritizing the downtown district enough that we are giving staff clear enough direction and support? How do we ensure this in the budget process? What priority do we have as a Council to ensure the downtown area stays as clean as possible. Supervisor Brown said the worst alley is behind Bashford Court. It is not in good shape and needs repair.

Discussion about trash cans:

- Size
- Recycling
- Number of containers
- Potential purchase of solar compacting trashcans

Supervisor Simmons said he is meeting with County Utilities in the morning and will address this issue.

Councilman Arnold said he would like to see something in the budget to help keep the crown jewel of the City (downtown) clean.

8. Special Events

Attractions:

Councilman Kuknyo asked if we want to encourage the private sector to come up with some kind of western show? Councilman Lamerson said the downtown businessmen should be contacted first. We close off downtown a lot. There may be other alternatives to what is trying to be accomplished. We need to pick and choose what events we might want to eliminate. We might want to let the private sector take over. Councilman Lamerson said he agreed that some events could be in other areas and not always downtown where streets would have to be closed. He said the Rodeo Grounds are underutilized.

Supervisor Simmons said the County does limit the number of events. The Whiskey Off Road is an exception this year. We are trying to be sensitive to the merchants, he said. He is in favor of maintaining that limit.

Councilman Kuknyo said he wished we had a conference center downtown. He is looking for ideas to make downtown live.

Supervisor Brown said Watson Lake and the Rodeo Grounds are underused. Why don't we have musical events at the Rodeo Grounds in the summer? Councilman Blair said we need to market better.

The Blue Grass festival was moved from Watson Lake back downtown because it wasn't as well attended at the park. Discussion ensued.

9. Parking

Councilman Kuknyo talked about the parking garage signage, fees, maintenance, and suggested giving two hour warnings for out of state license plates.

Councilman Arnold asked if we can give warnings. Lt. Rich Gill said the parking official solely issues citations and gives no warnings. Councilman Arnold asked if we should discuss this and change code. Lt. Gill said it would be very time consuming to check out each vehicle. We do not have the technology to do things differently.

Councilman Arnold asked the City Manager what it would take to get the capability to do this somewhat differently and more efficiently.

Councilman Kuknyo asked about creating a permanent sticker for a car window, to identify an employee or business owner working downtown, that allows them to enter at no charge on a payday? They would limited to the parking garage and could not park downtown in other spaces. Is there something we can do to encourage parking in the parking garage? The top level of the parking garage is completely empty.

Mic Fenech, Facilities Manager, said there are thirteen spaces leased in the parking garage. There are no reserved spaces for the County use and there are 2-4 assigned spaces on the 3rd floor for City use.

Councilman Blair suggested to go out for an RFQ for shuttling people back and forth in a Club Car. Have we done it? If not, why not? What is the cost? For example: an employee of Murphy's parks in the garage and then hops in the Club Car to be brought to Murphy's. This would keep cars out of the parking spaces. If we don't want to do

that, how can the City better move people from the parking garage? Councilman Scamardo asked why don't the business owners require their employers to park in the parking garage to free up space on the streets for customer parking.

A woman speaker, no name given, listed her concerns with downtown parking availability and complaints about motorcycle parking, the 2 hour parking limit, and the parking garage being too far to walk to shops in the rain.

10. Sanitation

No comments or discussion.

11. Activities disturbing the peace/disorderly conduct

No comments or discussion.

Mr. Mauer closed the discussion and reported that the comments he hears in the chamber from the visitors are all positive.

B. Council Meetings

No discussion.

II. REPORTS

A. Legislative Update

Alison Zelms gave a brief report.

III. IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE CAUCUS MEETINGS

A. Council Identified Items

No items were identified.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be discussed, the Prescott City Council Caucus of April 16, 2013, adjourned at 5:14 P.M.

MARLIN D. KUYKENDALL, Mayor

ATTEST:

LYNN MULHALL, City Clerk