

City Council Policy Session

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

2:30 PM

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CALL TO ORDER

The Phoenix City Council convened in Policy Session on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 2:32 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Present: 9 - Councilman Sal DiCiccio, Councilmember Carlos Garcia, Councilwoman Betty Guardado, Councilman Michael Nowakowski, Councilwoman Laura Pastor, Councilwoman Debra Stark, Councilman Jim Waring, Vice Mayor Thelda Williams and Mayor Kate Gallego

Note: Councilman DiCiccio joined the meeting at 3:09 p.m. by telephone.

COUNCIL INFORMATION AND FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS

Councilwoman Stark announced the State of Arizona lowered the age eligibility to 55 for COVID-19 vaccines and urged the State to revisit essential worker eligibility criteria. She acknowledged Housing Director Cindy Stotler's work during her tenure with the City and congratulated her on her upcoming retirement.

Councilwoman Guardado expressed concerns regarding recent news of a City of Phoenix 911 Dispatcher, Pamela Cooper. She noted Ms. Cooper's health condition and encouraged everyone to keep her in their thoughts.

Councilwoman Guardado urged the City to ensure all working conditions were up to code and followed COVID-19 protocols and that all employees are given adequate leave time. She asked the City to hire more 911 Dispatchers and questioned when the plexiglass shields were installed and if 911 Dispatchers had to ration sanitizing wipes.

Councilwoman Pastor recognized and thanked Cindy Stotler for her work.

Vice Mayor Williams thanked Cindy Stotler for her dedication and hard work.

Councilman Nowakowski thanked all employees who responded to the fire at the 7th Street bridge and recognized their commitment to ensure continued safety. He reminded residents of opportunities to get COVID-19 tested for free and encouraged everyone to continue wearing masks and social distancing. He thanked Cindy Stotler for her hard work and leadership.

Councilmember Garcia recognized and thanked Cindy Stotler for her work and requested she leave behind a list of items to assist with the Affordable Housing Plan. He thanked the first responders at the 7th Street bridge and noted the bridge will be closed until further notice.

Mayor Gallego announced the City's 140-year anniversary was on Feb. 25 and recognized Cindy Stotler and all her work throughout her career, noting the Affordable Housing Plan and her legacy. She shared she spent the 140-year anniversary at a senior housing vaccine event with Ms. Stotler. Mayor Gallego encouraged the State to include more City workers in the essential worker category for COVID-19 vaccines. She thanked staff for their work at the 7th Street bridge fire. She announced March is women's history month and noted the upcoming elections on March 9. She concluded by sharing March 2 was Read Across America Day and thanked all staff and departments promoting literacy.

CONSENT ACTION

This item is scheduled to allow the City Council to act on the Mayor's recommendations on the Consent Agenda. There was no Consent Agenda for this meeting.

CALL FOR AN EXECUTIVE SESSION

A vote may be held to call an Executive Session for a future date.

REPORTS AND BUDGET UPDATES BY THE CITY MANAGER

City Manager Ed Zuercher expressed thoughts and prayers for 911 Dispatcher Pamela Cooper. He stated a report addressing Councilwoman Guardado's requests regarding the 911 Dispatcher concerns would be provided to the Council after review by the Human Resources Director. He stated Dispatcher entry-level pay would be raised beginning March 8 and the Dispatcher

Classification study assessing the overall 911 Dispatcher salary structure was near completion and would be given to the City Council for approval in April or May. He recognized and thanked Cindy Stotler for her service and noted the City of Phoenix was a better place due to her hard work. He concluded with a budget update and stated the City Manager's trial budget would be presented to the Council on March 16, leading into virtual budget hearings from April 2-21 and encouraged residents to utilize the FundPHX tool on phoenix.gov.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION (ITEM 1)

1 Comprehensive Roadway Safety Overview

Discussion

Mayor Gallego introduced the Comprehensive Roadway Safety item and highlighted the efforts that went into creating the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan. She welcomed Town of Gilbert's Vice Mayor and founder of Y2K Engineering Yung Koprowski.

Deputy City Manager Mario Paniagua introduced Street Transportation Director Kini Knudson and Ms. Koprowski for the planned presentation. Mr. Paniagua acknowledged the need and importance to improve roadway safety.

Mr. Knudson gave an overview of the presentation and provided data and statistics, including roadway safety and hotspot analysis, total fatalities, national trends, and contributing factors to collisions data from 2015-2019, namely failure to yield and speeding.

Mr. Knudson went over Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) Roadway Safety Assessment Program data, which highlighted the top 100 intersections ranked by crash risk from 2015-2019 crash data. He stated data from City of Phoenix and MAG were used to develop the Roadway Safety Assessment (RSA) for the intersections.

Ms. Koprowski gave an overview of short-, mid-, and long-term improvements, as well as safety planning and evaluation, cost benefit analysis, infrastructure improvements, and RSAs for various intersections around the City.

Mr. Knudson discussed safety improvements with demonstrated crash reduction outcomes by implementing High Intensity Activated crossWalk (HAWK) pedestrian signals, narrowed travel lanes and buffers for protection, and street lighting.

Mr. Knudsen highlighted various educational campaigns and programs to increase awareness and alertness in the community and schools on roadway safety.

Mr. Knudson covered enforcement efforts in coordination with the Police Department by expanding the traffic units.

Councilman DiCiccio joined the meeting telephonically.

Mr. Knudson discussed current efforts underway including pedestrian safety, left-turn arrows, signal installation, and traffic mitigation. He highlighted various funding sources and grants that could be used to provide safety improvements throughout the City.

Ms. Koprowski discussed the next steps to implement systemic safety plans including a safety evaluation, cost benefit analysis, and infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Knudson highlighted several locations around the City for safety improvements and noted the importance of engaging with the community on the Roadway Safety Action Plan. He requested the Council approve \$3 million in Streets T2050 funds, \$3 million in General Funds over five years, and five full-time City staff positions funded through Arizona Highway User Revenue funds.

Mayor Gallego acknowledged Councilwoman Stark and Vice Mayor Williams on their efforts regarding the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan.

Councilwoman Stark thanked Vice Mayor Williams and the Transportation Infrastructure and Innovation Subcommittee for their hard work and expressed concern about the high amount of roadway safety issues. She made a motion to approve staff's recommendation. Vice Mayor Williams

seconded the motion.

Councilman Waring asked for clarification on the meaning of failure to yield and if barriers in the line of sight when making left-hand turns could be further addressed.

Mr. Knudson clarified that failure to yield is when someone turns in front of somebody or does not grant the right of way to someone who has the right of way in the street.

Councilman Waring asked what the Street Transportation Department could do about extreme speeding and the location of bus stop pick-up locations, notably on the 44th Street and Indian School Road corner.

Mr. Knudson highlighted the importance of identifying areas that present safety issues and addressing the areas in the short-term. He addressed the 44th Street and Indian School Road corner and noted the complexity of planning. He stated regulations and planning related to accessibility such as driveways that have changed over the years and noted the importance of working through the existing conditions to make the roadways safer.

Councilmember Garcia thanked staff and expressed support of the proposed plan. He acknowledged the work conducted to create the plan and the importance of utilizing different solutions in each district to make roads safer.

Councilwoman Guardado thanked Mr. Knudson and staff for their work and expressed support for the ongoing and proposed plans.

Vice Mayor Williams expressed appreciation for staff and fellow Councilmembers' work. She asked how plans could slow traffic down in neighborhoods and noted the need to slow traffic throughout the City.

Mr. Knudson stated the Roadway Safety Plan will include educational components throughout the City and noted the Council will be included in future discussions.

Councilman Nowakowski thanked staff for their work and asked if there was data on the new Arizona hands-free law and if staff had seen improvements regarding accidents. He asked if bus bays that allow buses to pull off the road were included in the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan and asked for an update on fatalities since the red-light cameras were deactivated.

Mr. Knudson stated the data for texting and driving was kept with the Police Department and noted the law had only been enforceable for two months. He stated there could be funds through T2050 to address locations to install bus bays. He said staff could look at data from the red-light cameras since they were deactivated and assess trends and provide the Council with reports.

Councilwoman Pastor thanked staff and expressed support for the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan. She echoed the need for a citywide plan to solve roadway issues and noted her recent involvement on the National League of Cities Transportation Committee.

Mayor Gallego congratulated Councilwoman Pastor on her new appointment.

Councilman DiCiccio expressed concern about congestion as COVID-19 restrictions lighten and as an influx of residents move to Arizona. He noted the environmental and economic impacts of traffic congestion and the perception people interested in moving to Arizona would have when deciding to move to the State.

Mayor Gallego thanked staff and expressed support for the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan.

Mayor Gallego opened the floor for public comment.

Katrina Heineking expressed support of strategic planning and the Phoenix Roadway Safety Plan.

Margaret Herrera expressed support to have the City work collaboratively on the MAG Regional Transportation Plan and the development of the

Phoenix Roadway Safety Plan.

John Hamby expressed support for the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan.

Ceci Maes spoke in support of the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan.

Jeff Boles expressed support for the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan.

Robert Pizorno expressed support for the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan.

Mark Rodriguez expressed support for the Comprehensive Roadway Safety Plan and expressed concern about street racing.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Stark, seconded by Vice Mayor Williams, that this item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Councilman DiCiccio, Councilmember Garcia, Councilwoman Guardado, Councilman Nowakowski, Councilwoman Pastor, Councilwoman Stark, Councilman Waring, Vice Mayor Williams and Mayor Gallego

No: 0

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gallego declared the meeting adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

For further information, please call the Management Intern, City Manager's Office, at 602-262-4449.