



City of Phoenix

Meeting Location:
City Council Chambers
200 W. Jefferson St.
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

Minutes

City Council Policy Session

Tuesday, September 26, 2023

2:30 PM

phoenix.gov

CALL TO ORDER

The Phoenix City Council convened in Policy Session on Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2023, at 2:37 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Present: 9 - Councilwoman Betty Guardado, Councilwoman Kesha Hodge Washington, Councilwoman Ann O'Brien, Councilwoman Laura Pastor, Councilman Kevin Robinson, Councilwoman Debra Stark, Councilman Jim Waring, Vice Mayor Yassamin Ansari and Mayor Kate Gallego

COUNCIL INFORMATION AND FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS

Vice Mayor Ansari acknowledged Hispanic Heritage Month and congratulated Councilwoman Guardado for the El Grito celebration she hosted. Vice Mayor Ansari also acknowledged the one year anniversary of the murder of Mahsa Amini in Iran and explained the mural of Ms. Amini located in downtown can now be viewed virtually on the City's website. Vice Mayor Ansari stressed that community safety is a top priority for her team and constituents, and she announced there are now quarterly meetings in Laveen and in downtown to address safety issues. She announced there will be free soccer classes at Smith Park as a result of requests from residents, and discussed upcoming events for the month of October including a Community Coffee event and the Phoenix Pride Parade.

Councilwoman O'Brien discussed the opportunity she had to visit Phoenix's Sister City Ennis, Ireland for the 35th Anniversary of this partnership. She stated there was a Celebration of Life during this trip for Mary Hill-Connor, who was the previous chair of Ennis Sister Cities. Councilwoman O'Brien announced the District 1 Community Breakfast at the DoubleTree at Metro Center on September 29. She also mentioned the Double 10-Day Celebration

will be on October 10 at Arizona State University (ASU) West with food, carnival games, fireworks, and more.

Councilman Waring joined the meeting at 2:44 p.m.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington discussed the number of constituent cases her office has worked on with 159 cases opened and 25 outstanding, and she emphasized her staff is working to close these cases in a timely manner. She announced she released a report on her first 100 days in office, available on her website. She discussed the Energize Eight community meetings held throughout the month of August and thanked the participating City departments who attended the meetings and encouraged residents to sign up for her newsletter to stay updated on related efforts. She discussed the Clean Energy Clear Lungs Press Conference she held to encourage awareness of pollution and related health impacts, she noted the South Mountain Fall Convocation she spoke at, and she attended the Congressional Black Caucus Conference and met with the Arizona Congressional Delegation to address the need for housing availability, homelessness, and economic development in District 8. She also announced the Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods (G.A.I.N.) Day on the 3rd Saturday in October.

Councilwoman Guardado discussed the Hispanic Heritage Event and the 2nd Annual El Grito event. She thanked the 12,000 attendees, partners, and staff for attending. She invited everyone to the 3rd Annual Mexican Baseball Fiesta at the American Family Fields. She thanked City staff and City Council for recognizing Indigenous People's Day on October 9 and acknowledged the O'odham and Piipaash people who lived and currently live in the Phoenix area. She announced she will attend G.A.I.N. Day as well.

Councilwoman Pastor announced she will host a Coffee Chat on October 4 at Coladaos Coffee and Crepes and a public meeting on the new light rail line where residents can provide their input on the suggested route. She acknowledged Hispanic Heritage Month and thanked Councilwoman Guardado for hosting El Grito. Councilwoman Pastor discussed the passing and legacy of Frank Barrios and announced that May 30 will be Frank Barrios Day. She asked residents to attend meetings on Proposition 400 if they are interested in the upcoming vote on the issue. She announced the upcoming National Voter Registration Day and encouraged residents to register. She also recapped the

Youth Job Fair the City recently hosted and she thanked City departments and employers for attending.

Mayor Gallego acknowledged the loss of Frank Barrios, and mentioned the loss of Darcy Renfro and John Hoopes. Mayor Gallego also asked residents to register to vote.

CONSENT ACTION

This item is scheduled to allow the City Council to act on the Mayor's recommendation on the Consent Agenda. There is 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

This item is scheduled to allow the City Manager to provide brief informational reports on topics of interest to the City Council. The City Council may discuss these reports but no action will be taken.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, AND FORMAL ACTION (ITEM 1)

Roll Call and City Clerk Reads 24-Hour Paragraph

- 1 Repeal Ordinance S-50010 Adopted on June 28, 2023 Firearms Transfer Agreement (Ordinance S-50192)

Discussion

Vice Mayor Ansari commented she continues to be disappointed with current State law as it does not allow Phoenix to make decisions to improve community safety. She stated gun violence was the leading cause of death among children in the United States and emphasized reselling guns does not provide safety to residents. She mentioned she was encouraged by the intention of President Biden to establish an Office of Gun Violence Prevention.

Councilwoman Stark remarked she will vote to appeal the ordinance due to the Attorney General's determination that the ordinance was not legal, but she was concerned guns provoke violence and the City must find a

better strategy to deal with this ongoing safety issue.

Mayor Gallego implored the State to pass meaningful legislation to reduce gun violence.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington commented the City should be given the opportunity to make decisions that were best for the residents. She stated she will vote to repeal the ordinance, but only because it was determined to be illegal.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Ansari, seconded by Councilwoman Stark, that City Council vote for this item to be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Councilwoman Guardado, Councilwoman Hodge Washington, Councilwoman O'Brien, Councilwoman Pastor, Councilman Robinson, Councilwoman Stark, Councilman Waring, Vice Mayor Ansari and Mayor Gallego

No: 0

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION (ITEM 2)

2 2022-23 Year-End General Fund Budget Results and 2024-25 Budget Calendar

Discussion

City Manager Jeffrey Barton thanked the Council for investing in City employees and announced the ending balance for last fiscal year's budget was \$18 million higher than anticipated. He recognized Budget and Research staff for their work. He also acknowledged the need for transparent discussions moving forward due to the ongoing budgetary challenges as the State takes actions that limit Phoenix's budget.

Budget and Research Director Amber Williamson provided a summary of the presentation. She mentioned that for Fiscal Year 2022-23, the City's General Fund ended the year with \$14.8 million more than estimated. She stated General Fund expenses for the past fiscal year were estimated at \$1.6 billion, but the year ended with \$4 million less than anticipated. She emphasized this resulted in a General Fund ending

balance of \$18.8 million more than anticipated, and this amount would remain in the General Fund balance for the next fiscal year. She listed challenges ahead including Senate Bill 1131 that eliminates residential rental sales tax and would take effect in January 2025. She also mentioned Senate Bill 1828 which reduced income tax rates, and the Joint Legislative Budget Committee's incorrect projections of State Shared income tax revenue. She provided details on how each of these challenges will negatively impact upcoming fiscal years. She then described other budget challenges including the costs of the recent Class and Compensation study, aging City facilities and equipment, requests for new services, increases in actuarial required contributions to City trust funds, new operating costs for the General Obligation (GO) Bond program, and potential cost impacts from the Department of Justice investigation into the Police Department. She discussed how Police and Fire pensions represent 25 percent of the City's operating costs and how this will increase over the next five years. She described next steps for Budget and Research staff in relation to these challenges.

Ms. Williamson described the 2024-25 Budget Calendar and provided details for each date with Final Budget Adoption scheduled for June 12, 2024.

Mayor Gallego added the potential federal government shutdown to the list of challenges that could put pressure on the City's economy, and she expressed appreciation to the Governor for working with the municipalities impacted by recent State action.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Ansari, seconded by Councilwoman O'Brien, that City Council approve the Budget Calendar. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Councilwoman Guardado, Councilwoman Hodge Washington, Councilwoman O'Brien, Councilwoman Pastor, Councilman Robinson, Councilwoman Stark, Councilman Waring, Vice Mayor Ansari and Mayor Gallego

No: 0

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, AND FORMAL ACTION (ITEM 3)**3** Redistricting Process Report and Recommended Plan**Discussion**

Mayor Gallego welcomed Deputy City Manager Ginger Spencer, former City Attorney Cris Meyer, City Clerk Denise Archibald, and consultants Priti Mathur and Sam Mathur to present on this item.

Ms. Spencer thanked all Councilmembers and all staff involved. She thanked all residents who participated and attended the redistricting meetings.

Ms. Archibald explained redistricting was required every 10 years to reflect changes in population, and she stated the current redistricting process was the traditional process the City had used for redrawing boundaries. She explained how ARCBridge was selected for consulting, and how redistricting information was shared with the public. She mentioned the potential maps developed were posted online for resident consideration. She explained the materials created for community meetings, the advertising for resident input opportunities, and how videos of the community meetings were posted online. She explained how all this information was presented and provided in English and in Spanish.

Mr. Meyer explained the two primary legal requirements for redistricting: the populations of each district should be approximately equal and the equal treatment of minorities to preserve minority voting rights. He also outlined additional guidelines including recognition of public preferences, geographic continuity, preservation of core districts, continuity of representation, and preservation of political subdivisions.

Ms. Mathur explained the first step was to process the 2010 Census data and compared it to current data to observe how the City of Phoenix has grown. She explained the 2010 target population for each district was 180,704 residents, but since the City's population is now 1.6 million residents, the new target district population was 201,017. She explained the concern for the deviation between the least and most populated districts and how this problem has worsened over time. She shared a

chart detailing the demographics of the populations of each Council District which illustrated the population deviations. She compared the current districts to the recommended plan using population statistics for each district. She provided another statistic table that detailed the majority population by district to provide a visual for how the City was meeting the requirement of preserving minority voting rights through the proposed changes. She then provided a district-by-district analysis. She provided specific maps at the street level for each district that would feature changes including four changes to District 2, seven changes to District 3, six changes to District 4, eight changes to District 5, three changes to District 6, eight changes to District 7, and four changes to District 8.

Mayor Gallego opened the floor for public comment.

Tim Knobbe spoke in support of the new map.

Eric Gorseigner addressed his concerns regarding how District 6 is divided, specifically the Barbell District, and stated he was neutral on this item.

Andre Williams spoke against this map and expressed his concerns regarding District 5 changes and the process.

Maribel Carillo expressed support for the proposed changes.

Councilman Waring asked if the consultants could assist with looking at possibly adding districts in the future.

Ms. Spencer answered adding districts would require changing the City Charter and approval by Phoenix voters. She added further discussions on this topic could start as early as January 2024.

Councilman Waring reiterated this was something to consider as he had heard from constituents this was a concern.

Vice Mayor Ansari thanked everyone involved in the process. She

mentioned she had heard feedback from residents regarding the size of the districts. She also emphasized she would be in support of adding council districts to serve residents better.

Councilwoman Pastor thanked everyone for their work during this process and acknowledged how this had been a challenging process. She also commented adding representatives for each district could be a solution for the concern about serving constituents effectively.

Councilwoman Stark thanked staff and consultants, and emphasized she would like to explore the possibility of creating more districts or additional councilmembers to appropriately represent the residents.

Councilwoman Guardado thanked the community for being actively involved in this process and assured everyone that all decisions were made carefully. She thanked staff and the consultants for their patience and efforts.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington expressed her thanks to staff and the consultants and their efforts to involve the community.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Ansari, seconded by Councilwoman O'Brien, that City Council approve staff's recommended plan. The following vote carried the motion:

Yes: 9 - Councilwoman Guardado, Councilwoman Hodge Washington, Councilwoman O'Brien, Councilwoman Pastor, Councilman Robinson, Councilwoman Stark, Councilman Waring, Vice Mayor Ansari and Mayor Gallego

No: 0

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gallego declared the meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.