

**THE RETREAT
OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BENSON, ARIZONA
HELD APRIL 23, 2009 AT 8:30 A.M.
AT COCHISE COLLEGE, 1025 S HWY 90, BENSON, ARIZONA**

**MAYOR FENN
OPENED THE MEETING AT 8:35A.M WITH
THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

**PRESENT WERE: MAYOR FENN, VICE-MAYOR KING,
COUNCILMEMBERS BONCQUET, LAMBERT, LODZINSKI, McGOFFIN and SACCO**

**ALSO PRESENT WERE STAFF: NICHOLS, VIVIAN, COX, HAMILTON, SPANGLER,
ROBERTS, BENAVIDEZ, KNOBLOCK, HINECKER**

Discussion throughout the retreat/meeting will include broad topic areas, such as: Council communication and leadership, City government goals, programs and priorities, the Capital Improvement Plan, Citizen Service programs, all aspects of the City's budget, all revenues and expenditures, City fees and taxes, the City Code, personnel and organizational structure, all City services, land use, planning and development, and other concerns and programs identified by Council.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Presentation on alternative funding sources for municipalities by Mark Reader, the Managing Director of Stone & Youngberg, Investment Bankers

Mayor Fenn stated that he had been in contact with Finance Director Jim Cox and asked what some alternative ways of getting money may be other than sales tax and shared revenues since State resources are becoming questionable. Mayor Fenn gave the example of Benson School District using bonding to obtain funds to complete projects. Mr. Cox introduced Mr. Reader and stated that currently we have most of the City's excess funds invested through Stone & Youngberg and that Mr. Reader is an expert in Municipal Financing. Mr. Reader presented alternative financing options using a power point presentation and passed out hard copies for everyone to view with the slide show. Mr. Reader started with the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Reader reconfirmed the 6 funds of the City and the sources in which those funds received revenues. Mr. Reader explained the CIP Financing Alternatives Summary, the City Debt Profile, and covered several types of alternative financing including Excise Tax Revenue Bonds, Utility Revenue Bonds, refinancing options with the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona (WIFA), Street and Highway User Revenue Bonds (HURF Bonds), General Obligation (GO Bonds), Greater Arizona Development Authority (GADA) Bonds, Improvement Districts (ID Bonds), Community Facilities Districts (CFD Bonds), as well as a bond market update.

2. Presentation by each Department of the City on Department status, goals and objectives

Glenn Nichols, Police Department: Continues to use the motto 'Continuous improvement'. Mr. Nichols gave a complete report on the needs and the progress of the Benson Police Department. A space needs study for a new Police Department was completed by Durrant Architecture and that Mr. Nichols stated that it has never been brought to Council due to economic situation, but is available if anyone wants to look at it. The Police Department was awarded approximately \$260,000.00 in grants with potential for another \$720,000.00 in applications. Training is a focus of the Department. Mr. Nichols states moral is pretty good right now.

Keith Spangler, Fire Department: Chief Spangler gave a brief overview of department starting with the strategic plan adopted in 2006. Goals were to provide a safe environment for the public.

The first goal of public safety was to establish a full time fire department by 2007. Chief Spangler stated we currently have a full time Fire Chief with 35 volunteers, there is currently 27 on the roster, with about half as active members. Two new volunteers are being trained and he is looking to go through another hiring process in May or June. He is seeing less time from volunteers during daytime hours due to employer and family demands. Chief Spangler states they have been purchasing equipment as funds become available. The fire apparatus are in good shape. Chief Spangler would like to see 1-2 firefighters hired a year, and a secretary for the office to take care of all of the clerical aspects. The CIP called for the purchase of new hoses and equipment which has been moved back due to the economy. This has made the Department work with equipment that is worn out and not cost effective to fix. Chief Spangler would like to see the CIP increased to purchase new equipment. He stated grant funding is very competitive and he will continue to search for grant funding. There are 2 vehicles that are overweight with not enough seating and no air conditioning which is not safe for those firefighters needing to cool off. Our lead engine is over 30 years old. The CIP called for purchasing of new apparatus but has been put on hold; Chief Spangler is asking that this money be put in reserve until the apparatus can be purchased. He is also asking for the possibility of a new Fire Department to be placed upon Highway 90 to better serve those residents. Chief Spangler also stated that a training line item in the budget needs to be looked at as more and more certification requirements are being put on Firefighters.

Brad Hamilton, Public Works Director: Mr. Hamilton in referring to the Strategic Plan on growth; doesn't believe growth will be enough to cause banks to lend money for improvement projects. He states right now we would need about 2,500 more homes before we would expand our current wastewater facility. Mr. Hamilton states that the ADEQ keeps an eye on things so that when 80% capacity is reached they can advise the City that no more permits may be issued and no more plats may be approved. Mr. Hamilton states all reclaimed water, supplemented with ground water, goes to the golf courses. Reclaimed water during the winter is stored in ponds as use is less. Solid waste is all contracted out. The County is providing a recycling program. Mr. Hamilton stated one of his frustrations when he first came here was that the utilities weren't mapped correctly, and now GIS is being built. GIS is a lot of busy work as every parcel has to be redrawn. Michelle Johnson is doing this. Mr. Hamilton would like to instate a GPS system to map every valve to correct all the guesswork that has been done. GPS has been put on hold for now. The City has been doing a rate study. The City has increased connections over the last year by about 100, and has noticed a big drop in water usage. Wastewater treatment plant is at about 38% right now. Mayor Fenn asked what the number one priority for utilities would be right now. Mr. Hamilton stated his number one priority to be addressed is the sewer system. The sewer system was built in 1948, and is able to be maintained using small fixes here and there; however it is not modern. The City water system is also using small fixes. The City is at about 50% in meter conversion. Mayor Fenn inquired about doing an in-house rate study. Vice Mayor King asked about using the results from the rate study to do an average for citizens, also asked if we could use the round up program to help out less fortunate citizens.

Vicki Hinecker, Library: Ms. Hinecker states the biggest thing from last year is growth of patrons and incoming traffic. As of March 2009 we currently have 8,674 registered cardholders. From the month of March 7,433 patrons entering as compared 5,961 patrons from March of last year. The Library would like to maintain the 7 computers they currently have. Two of those are down right now. The Library is looking to upgrade next year. Wi-Fi is being used daily and receives a lot of compliments. Several groups take advantage of the facilities and story time. There was recently a gate put in the patio area to meet fire restrictions. The Library is working on an upgrade on the circulation desk. The upgrade is looking to cost ranging from \$12,000 to \$15,000. There have been a lot of compliments on the artwork displayed in the back of the Library. The Library applied for a grant to help assist with making check in and check out of books faster. Average wait time to use a computer is 10-15 minutes.

Vicki Vivian, City Clerk: Ms. Vivian gave a brief history of her time with the City of Benson. The City Clerk is the Historian of the City and is responsible for preserving the City's legislative history. Ms. Vivian gave a list of City Clerk responsibilities and duties and elaborated on a few of those. Ms. Vivian gave details on how City Council meeting packets are processed from start to finish. Ms. Vivian explained that resolutions, ordinances and leases, contracts and agreements must be signed, scanned, indexed and filed. The records are being put into indexes so that all departments may have access to this information. The Clerk's Office also provides support for all Boards, Commissions and Subcommittees. The Clerk's Office helps post agendas, update the website, and keeps rosters. For the Economic Development Subcommittee the Clerk serves as the secretary and goes through the same process with packets for them as for City Council. The Fireman's Pension Board goes through the same process and also requires an annual report to be filed each year. The Clerk also serves as Deputy Secretary for the Municipal Property Corporation and processes meetings the same as City Council meetings. The City Clerk also works on the RFP process as the contact point and opens the bids. The City has just adopted a records retention schedule and the Clerk's Office is currently going through all the files and deciding what to keep and filling out reports of what is destroyed. The Clerk also works with the Tourism Department and the League of Arizona Cities. Elections are also the responsibility of the City Clerk. The City Clerk is also responsible for website updates. The City Clerk also provides the receptionist function for the administration office. Recent accomplishments start with the candidate forum for the elections, and ongoing records organization where records are being organized and scanned electronically. Ms. Vivian also served on the Attorney Selection Committee. The City Clerk is also responsible for reformatting the City Code which is in process. The Clerk's Office has also held Boards and Commissions training and Ms. Vivian would like to see this brought back in the future. Ms. Vivian has started a Council Resource Guide that is specific to Benson to help Council members who are new. Ms. Vivian has also started a City Clerk manual to assist any future clerks. Ms. Vivian would like to establish a voter outreach program to educate the public. Ms. Vivian also stated a local government outreach program is also one of her goals. Another goal is to provide training to the public on how the City works, and to provide a monitor in the Clerk's Office for public use in accessing information.

Jim Cox, Finance Director: Mr. Cox began by stating that there has been little progress regarding the Strategic Plan. Goal number one was to develop a long term plan for submitting long term debt obligations to voters to invest in capital improvements. First step to develop the plan was to develop the CIP which has been done, to build a credit rating which Mr. Cox has been working on and to become educated and to form key professional relationships. The second step is to develop a simplified budget monitoring process for Mayor and Council and voters. Mr. Cox stated he gives a financial presentation once a month. The third step was to identify potential new revenue sources that have little or no impact on current residence. To date he has not identified any new sources. The fourth goal was to use outside consultants where they are needed. Mr. Cox is in agreement with that. Mr. Cox is for developing our expertise in-house so the City doesn't have to use outside sources over and over. Another goal that was given to the Finance Director was to direct tourism based revenues in to promotion of the City of Benson. The City uses the Chamber of Commerce to assist with this. The City directly spends about \$200,000 a year on tourism. Benson is currently at the low end of Bed Tax collections with one of the lowest collection rates in Arizona. Finance Department is currently growing professionally at a tremendous rate. Mr. Cox is very happy with the Finance Department; however there is always room for improvement. Mr. Cox has everyone keyed into wanting to learn to increase their job performance. Finance Department is switching to the Clarity software system. Two employees have already been to training on this. The system will be installed in November, 2009.

Thomas Benavidez, City Attorney: The first points Mr. Benavidez has made to the City is streamlining and standardizing. Since the City is on a pay as you go system he has always

recommended standardizing forms. When the City goes out to bid for services it should send out a sample contract so the vendor knows what the City expects. The City now has a bank of standardized forms built. These will help streamline processes. Mr. Benavidez states Vicki Vivian has put together some really good Standard Operating Procedures. Resolutions do not need to be made for every contract. Mr. Benavidez stated he feels that the City has cut back on a lot of superfluous resolutions. He states official minutes are a resolution for those who ask to have one in most cases. Mr. Benavidez gave a list of items that the City needs to finish up starting with updated personnel policies, the acquisition of Sue Juan Water, Wal-Mart survey, San Pedro Partners Annexation, Whetstone Development Agreement, *Turken v. City of Phoenix*, and Butterfield which will soon be over. Mr. Benavidez recommends more standardizing and purchasing software for tracking, and to consider having the City Attorney sit in on Department Head Meetings.

Brad Hamilton, Public Works Director: Planning and Zoning. Mr. Hamilton stated that P&Z has slowed since October. Overall he has tried to move forward on many things. Mr. Hamilton has been using check sheets to monitor projects in all departments. He has tried to standardize things so that getting different answers from different departments will not happen. Mayor Fenn asked if with the next budget cycle we will look at filling the vacant positions. Mr. Hamilton states the building official vacancy is probably most needed. Mr. MacMillan of Brown and Associates has been very helpful. Mr. Hamilton states the need for a city planner will come with the economy picking back up. Mr. Hamilton states the better the plans, the easier it is to get grant funding because it is already laid out. Mr. Hamilton states the Building department is doing very well and they are working on tracking and being able to cross utilize personnel in getting information. Possibly purchasing tracking software, although costly, would be beneficial.

Judge Joe Knoblock, City Magistrate: Judge Knoblock gave an update on the Courts stating that under an IGA the JP courts and the Municipal courts are consolidated. This court is the second busiest in the County. DPS gives the most cases to court, then the City officers, then game and fish. The courts are getting busier all the time. Judge Knoblock does recommend looking at revising the City Code to revise some of the Class One misdemeanors. He stated there may be a need for more personnel down the road due to the work loads of the courts.

Jared Riker, IT: Mr. Riker states his job in a nutshell is to make sure employees get the information they need without viruses. His role in the Strategic Plan is to make sure the other departments can access all of the information they need to meet their goals. One of his big goals is to get the City up to speed in where they need to be, as far as technology. Mr. Riker has eliminated major issues at the Police Department, Library and City Hall. Mr. Riker found and fixed a lot of wiring problems, broken switches, and he configured the network to the personal computers. He also worked with the meter readers to make the system reliable. Mr. Riker is currently working on modernizing the Chambers and the Police Department. He has gone through all of the cell phone bills to see what packages and other streamlines he could work out to save the City money. Another goal is to take the City to a paperless environment. Mr. Riker is also working on more security for the City's computer system.

Ann Roberts, City Prosecutor: Ms. Roberts stated on a daily basis she generally deals with the public whether it is defendant, or defense council, or the officers, or victims or witnesses to crimes and is also doing legal research in preparation for pre-trials and trials. Ms. Roberts gave some statistics in regards to the types of cases being handled. Her office deals with the Benson Police Department, Animal Control, Planning and Zoning, Building Violations, County Sheriff, Cochise County Health Department, DPS, Arizona Registrar of Contractors and Game and Fish. In the fiscal year 2005-2006 in the Criminal division there were 633 pre-trials and 122 criminal trials, in the fiscal year 2006-2007 there were 1063 pre-trials and 212 criminal trials handled, in 2007-2008. Ms. Roberts stated that the laws are continually changing, especially in the DUI area so she has to continually update herself in that area. Continuing education is also a goal for Ms.

Roberts.

Brad Hamilton, City Engineer: Mr. Hamilton states that the Airport fund has been reduced dramatically as ADOT is trying to find resources. The City has submitted projects to the FAA. There is an RFP out for individual hangars. So far there is one response to the RFP. The State is not willing to give more land for airport extensions right now. The FBO is working out alright and is up for renewal. The environmental assessment is almost complete. Parks: Mr. Hamilton stated the master plan is moving slow because of money. Parks has been working on small maintenance improvements. Mr. Hamilton states that Parks is currently looking at the ramadas near the skate park. This project may turn out to be an in-house project.

Glenn Nichols, City Manager: Recreation Report: Diana Faulkner gave her report to Mr. Nichols. The City pool opened in May, 2008. The Recreation Department offered swim lessons, adult lap swimming, movie night, Concert in the Park, 30 different camps and classes during the summer. The City will offer similar events this summer. Right now the Recreation Department is working with the public school to hold these events, to hopefully spread the word and to avoid conflicts. The pool this year will open May 28th. They will hold family night swims and movies at the pool, Concert in the Park, and movies at the park. They are holding a City of Benson night at an Arizona Diamondbacks game. They are also going to hold gardening and fishing camps with the school.

The Arts Commission will continue to display art in the Chambers. They have applied for a 501c3 designation.

3. Discussion concerning Council members' individual goals and objectives

Councilmember Lodzinski asked when pavement to the College will be finished. Ms. Roberts stated it is supposed to be this weekend. Vice Mayor King stated that Diana and the ladies over at the Senior/Community Center have taken Parks and Recreation to an area where there is a lot to do for the kids. Vice-Mayor King states we do need another meeting to finish this up as it was useful. He agrees with Mr. Nichols in that we are a team and he appreciates the leadership. Mr. Nichols stated that all the Council people need to think about which part of the City they want to work on. He also asked Council members to take another look at the Strategic Plan and it will be discussed at the next meeting. Councilmember Lambert states he sat down with several people in the community and several people from Phoenix regarding a disc golf course. He is glad to see this in the Strategic Plan. He feels this plan will be good for the entire community to get them out and moving around. Mr. Lambert would also like to see some walkways in town.

4. Discussion and possible action in reviewing and updating the "City of Benson, Arizona, Strategic Plan for 2006 and beyond..." *

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Mayor King made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Councilmember Lodzinski. Motion passed 6-0. Mayor Fenn excused himself at 3:00p.m.

Mark M. Fenn, Mayor

ATTEST:

Vicki L. Vivian, City Clerk