

**THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BENSON, ARIZONA
HELD FEBRUARY 10, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.
AT THE BENSON COMMUNITY CENTER, 705 W. UNION STREET, BENSON, ARIZONA**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor King called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present were: Mayor Toney D. King, Sr., Vice Mayor Joe Konrad, Councilmembers: Pat Boyle, Lupe Diaz, Barbara Nunn and Nick Maldonado. Absent was: Councilmember Larry Dempster, who was excused by the Mayor.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION: None.

PROCLAMATION: None.

PUBLIC HEARING:

The Mayor and Council will be available to receive comments from the public regarding a change in the transit schedule and a project for which financial assistance is being sought from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Grant funds will be used to provide general public transit to the residents and visitors of the City of Benson and the surrounding communities.

City Manager Vicki Vivian announced to the Mayor and Council that no one had signed up to speak at the Public Hearing.

Mayor King opened the public hearing at 7:03 p.m., then addressed the room asking if anyone present wished to speak.

Vice Mayor Konrad asked if the transit schedule changes mentioned in the notification would be posted so people would be aware of the changes. Transit Specialist Kathe Williams stated the schedule changes were part of the upcoming grant application and then noted schedule changes would not take place until next year after all the grant planning takes place. Vice Mayor Konrad asked if the changes were known at this time with Ms. Williams stating the changes will be decided after receiving input from ADOT and FTA. Vice Mayor Konrad then thanked Ms. Williams for the information.

Ed Harris from the audience raised his hand to speak and stated he was a Michigan resident and used the public transportation system in Benson and both he and his wife felt this was a very beneficial and helpful program. Mr. Harris further stated the drivers went out of their way to help customers and were very punctual. Mayor King stated he was appreciative of the positive feedback and thanked Mr. Harris for his comments.

Mayor King asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak; after receiving no responses, he closed the Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m.

CITY MANAGER REPORT:

City Manager Vicki Vivian announced the following:

Monday, February 24, 2020 – City Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Community Center

- Thursday, February 13, 2020 – Library Guest Speaker Bob Nilson
10:30 a.m., City Library
“Old Apache Dynamite Factory Tour”
Come with us on a virtual tour of the Apache Dynamite Factory, before it was torn down.
- Friday, February 14, 2020 – Benson City Grille at the San Pedro Golf Course
“Valentine’s Day Dinner from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and add your dinner choices to your reservation and receive six chocolate covered strawberries”; Reservations Recommended.
- Saturday, February 15, 2020 – Historic Preservation Commission will be holding a meeting at 9 a.m. at the Long Realty Office
- Monday, February 17, 2020 – Presidents’ Day, City Offices Closed
- Thursday, February 20, 2020 – Library Guest Speaker Cosmo Baraona
10:30 a.m., City Library
“Space Station Power System”
See photos of the assembly sequence, power, module, and the people who helped to engineer the space station.
- Thursday, February 27, 2020 – Library Guest Speaker Eric Kaldahl
10:30 a.m., City Library
“Indigenous Arts and Communities”
Our region is home to many different indigenous communities. Learn about the arts and crafts produced by Native artists of the Southwest US and northern Mexico.

Councilmember Nunn addressed Mr. Judd and stated she felt it was a travesty the City was losing an employee of Mr. Judd’s caliber. Councilmember Nunn then stated Mr. Judd has done a terrific job and employees love working both with him and for him and because of the superb job he has done for the City, it will make him a hard act to follow. Councilmember Nunn explained that she hoped and prayed Mr. Judd was not leaving because of the stupid things said at the last Council meeting about employees having to pay for their own insurance and she hoped employees realized she would fight to the death over that one for employees. Councilmember Nunn then stated Mr. Judd is young man with two young daughters and she realizes insurance is a huge part of his benefit package, adding health insurance means a lot to all staff, and insurance benefits would never be taken away if she had anything to do with it. Councilmember Nunn then stated she hoped the City had offered to meet whatever employment package offer he had received and that we tried to keep him because he would be hard to follow. Councilmember Nunn then thanked Mr. Judd for the job he has done for the City. Mr. Judd thanked Councilmember Nunn stating he appreciated her comments.

Mayor King remarked on a lighter note, most everyone out there has a significant other, and this Friday was February 14, Valentine’s Day, reminding everyone to not forget as he didn’t want to see anyone getting in trouble.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Discussion and possible action on the Consent Agenda**

- 1a. Minutes of the December 9, 2019 Worksession
- 1b. Invoices processed for the period from January 16, 2020 through February 3, 2020

Vice Mayor Konrad moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Diaz.

Vice Mayor Konrad thanked Staff for keeping the Council minutes up to date, adding he appreciated their efforts. Mayor King stated he agreed that Staff works very hard on the minutes and he thanked them for their efforts.

Motion passed 6-0.

2. **Discussion and possible action regarding Resolution 5-2020 of the Mayor and Council of the City of Benson, Arizona, authorizing the City Manager to apply for Arizona Department of Transportation Section 5311 Funds to operate a Rural Public Transit System – Bradley J. Hamilton, P.E./City Engineer, Public Works Director**

Transit Specialist Kathe Williams stated the City of Benson, upon Council approval, would be applying for a 5311 Federal Grant administered by Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) which was the main funding for the City's rural transit system, and the funding the City would be requesting was roughly the same as the last grant in effect from October 1, 2020 to September of 2022. Ms. Williams explained the new items the City would be requesting on the grant was the planning she mentioned during the public hearing related to the schedule. Ms. Williams then stated ridership was down overall from the previous year by 10 percent; however, over the last six months ridership numbers went up compared to the same month of the previous year. Ms. Williams explained that Dial-a-Ride over the years went from 30 percent of the total ridership to last month's number of 55 percent of total ridership. Ms. Williams stated she intended to request planning funds to help find an efficient and economical way to serve the aging population and to ask for new vehicles; one to replace the Dial-a-Ride bus that would have over 150,000 miles on it by the time it came up in the grant cycle, and another bus replacing the backup Dial-a-Ride bus with 180,000 miles on it, explaining that although it is strictly used as backup right now, as Dial-a-Ride services increase, a second bus would be used on busy days.

Mayor King stated he appreciated what everyone has done to keep the transit program going and he knows the Dial-a-Ride bus gets used a lot and is vital to our community. Mayor King stated he felt Dial-a-Ride should remain in place as long as possible; then shared his appreciation of Ms. William's efforts. Mayor King then stated he knows a lot of people use the City's transit system, including friends and it means a lot to our community. Vice Mayor Konrad stated there are probably no ways to quantify resident versus non-resident use of the system but the gentleman from Michigan brought up an interesting point that we should reach out to our visitors to make certain they are aware of the City's transit system, which would help increase ridership. Ms. Williams explained that yes, in fact, advertising was encouraged by ADOT to market our system and was something she hopes to address in the planning stage because she could use assistance in that area with getting the word out to residents and visitors. Ms. Williams then stated there is a connection with Greyhound, as they will also be filing for the 5311 Federal Grant for our rural area and the goal is to have a route between Benson, to Tombstone, and to Sierra Vista and back, which will hopefully connect with the Cochise Connection route running down into Bisbee and Douglas. Mayor King stated he had heard about the connection with Greyhound and all of this is very important, especially to our elderly and people with special needs.

Councilmember Diaz stated he used to be on the Transit Advisory Committee which was a very good experience and the services the City provided are very helpful, needed, and a very good service to have and maintain. Councilmember Diaz then stated during his time at the City, transit has cost very little to run and Ms. Williams' work on the grant applications has reduced the City's contribution, noting Ms. Williams is doing a really good job, expressing his appreciation. Mayor King stated in his mind, even if it does cost the City a little bit, it is okay because we are taking care of our people, adding he would not have an issue with putting some funding into it.

Vice Mayor Konrad moved to approve Resolution 5-2020. Seconded by Councilmember Nunn. Motion passed 6-0.

3. **Discussion and possible action regarding Resolution 6-2020 of the Mayor and Council of the City of Benson, Arizona to accept the State of Arizona Department of Transportation Aeronautics Division Grant for improvements at the Benson Municipal Airport (E0M2A) – Bradley J. Hamilton, P.E. / City Engineer, Public Works Director**

Public Works Director Brad Hamilton explained this is a housekeeping item for a project that has already been completed. Mr. Hamilton then explained this is the ADOT grant which cut the City's costs in half for the perimeter fence at the airport.

Councilmember Boyle moved to approve Resolution 6-2020. Seconded by Councilmember Maldonado. Motion passed 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Diaz moved to adjourn at 7:16 p.m. Seconded by Councilmember Maldonado. Motion passed 6-0.

ATTEST:

Toney D. King, Sr., Mayor

Vicki L. Vivian, CMC, City Clerk