

**THE JOINT WORKSESSION  
OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BENSON, ARIZONA  
AND THE BENSON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON JULY 13, 2015 AT 6:00 P.M.,  
AT CITY HALL, 120 W. 6TH STREET, BENSON, ARIZONA**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor King called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present were: Mayor Toney D. King, Councilmembers Pat Boyle, Jeff Cook, Joe Konrad, David Lambert and Chris Moncada. Absent was: Vice Mayor Lori McGoffin.

Also present were: Benson Economic Development Committee Chairperson Mike Berryhill and Benson Economic Development Committee Members Councilmember Pat Boyle, Annette Buechel, Mindi Flores and Jennifer Swindle. Absent were: Benson Economic Development Committee Members John Comaduran and Debra Crafts.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Discussion with the Benson Economic Development Committee regarding economic development in the Benson community and surrounding areas. Discussion may include, but not be limited to: existing and potential economic development opportunities; and projects being sought and completed; developing projects**

City Manager William Stephens addressed Council stating this worksession and agenda item were requested by Councilmembers Boyle and Lambert. Mayor King asked for comments from Councilmembers.

Councilmember Lambert stated he was approached by the Benson Economic Development Committee (BEDC) Chairman Berryhill to discuss various projects the BEDC had been working on and that a worksession would be the best place to discuss this and the Council could then give the BEDC direction so they could move forward with their projects. Councilmember Boyle stated that the previous Economic Development Subcommittee was un-ceremoniously released from their duties and because of this, there are still some ill feelings which are being directed towards the current committee. Councilmember Boyle then stated he would like to get past all of that and work toward projects that benefit the City. Mayor King stated everyone needs to start working together and start trusting each other and that the City Council is here to support the BEDC.

Mayor King invited BEDC Chairman Berryhill to speak. Mr Berryhill stated the BEDC would like to see the start of a working relationship with the City Council and City Staff be the result of this meeting as well as addressing important issues to allow for economic growth and also to have clear and understandable guidelines, direction and priorities, adding the BEDC would also want to have simple respect and courtesy for one another.

Mayor King asked if Council had any comments. Councilmember Konrad stated the BEDC and City Council need to work together. Councilmember Boyle stated he is also a member of the Chamber of Commerce, as a liaison and has asked the Chamber of Commerce for a list of ideas for the BEDC to work on. Mayor King stated there are a lot of different departments in the City that BEDC needs to work together with; especially the Parks and Recreation Department to bring in more events, no matter the size of the event. Councilmember Cook and Councilmember Lambert both stated they would like to know what projects the BEDC is working on. Councilmember Moncada stated he would like the BEDC to work on a "Welcome to Benson" packet that can be handed out to new businesses, new residents and visitors and then at some point expanding to include RV parks. Councilmember Moncada also stated that the City should only advertise businesses that have a valid business

license. Councilmember Boyle stated the BEDC has no budget to work with and asked if funding could be allocated to the committee. Councilmember Moncada stated the committee would need to speak to the City Manager. Mr. Berryhill stated the committee has been working on that project and will update the Council with its progress. Mr. Berryhill then stated that Tucson does a lot to attract events, adding obviously Benson does not have the same resources as Tucson, but Benson can try and mirror Tucson on a smaller scale. Mr. Berryhill then stated the BEDC has two projects to present to Council.

Ms. Flores approached Council and handed out a proposal for scoreboards for the baseball fields at Lions Park; the handout will be retained with the Council packet. Ms. Flores stated the BEDC is hoping to have this project completed by early 2016, adding the BEDC is looking for available grants and they are also looking to work with the Benson Junior School on this project. Ms. Flores stated the BEDC will also be approaching the business community for donations of sponsorship. Ms. Flores stated there is a meeting scheduled to meet with Ms. Parkin of the City of Benson Recreation Department on August 15, 2015. Ms. Flores then stated the size of the scoreboards will be 4' x 8' and will cost approximately \$3,500 to \$5,000 per scoreboard, adding the long-term goal of the BEDC is to eventually have scoreboards for all of the ballfields at Lions Park. Mr. Berryhill reiterated that this will be funded through sponsorships and grants and will be at no cost to the City of Benson.

Mr. Berryhill stated that another event the BEDC is looking at is The Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) and then invited Ms. Guthrie to present to Council. Ms. Guthrie gave Council a handout regarding the SCA organization that she is a member of; the handout will be retained with the Council packet. Ms. Guthrie then proceeded with her presentation outlining the benefits the City would get from having this event in Benson. Ms. Guthrie stated the SCA was looking to hold this event in Benson in November of 2016. Ms. Guthrie then showed Council a short promotional video of the SCA. Ms. Guthrie stated the SCA would work with all the local businesses that would be impacted by this event so they can prepare for the upturn in business. Ms. Guthrie then stated the City of Benson would get \$1,500 just on the rental of Lions Park.

Councilmember Boyle asked who would take care of the amenities and what kind of livestock would be at the event. Councilmember Lambert stated he thought the event was a great idea and asked if there would be hand to hand combat and archery. Councilmember Moncada stated the SCA is looking to hold the event in Benson in November, 2016 and asked why it wouldn't be sooner. Councilmember Moncada also asked who would take care of the amenities and what time the event would finish in the evening. Councilmember Boyle asked what the community would get out of this event. Councilmember Cook asked if the people participating would be staying at the park and if there was enough parking for those attending. Ms. Guthrie addressed these questions stating there would be horses and dogs at the event and they would be taken care of by the owners and the event staff. Ms. Guthrie then stated the amenities would also be taken care of by the SCA who has a lot of experience in putting on this event so there would be ample portable toilets and showering facilities available. Ms. Guthrie stated there would be hand to hand combat and emphasized that the people taking part are very experienced in this so the risk of injury is minimal; that archery is part of the event and if there is an issue with having this at Lions Park, they would look for a more suitable location but they would work closely with the City on this. Ms. Guthrie then stated the community would benefit financially from this event due to the large number of people attending and participating and that the event is booked to be held in Tucson for 2015 so the earliest they could hold it in Benson would be November of 2016. Ms. Guthrie then stated there would be some singing and dancing in the evenings but they do have their own security to manage any excessive noise or disturbance and as part of their program, they work closely with the local schools and plan to have educational tours of the event for children. Ms. Guthrie then stated the event participants would be staying overnight at the park, however, their families would make use of the local hotels and RV parks. Ms. Guthrie then stated the SCA estimates that parking would be needed for approximately 700 people, adding she has visited Lions Park and is confident there will be ample parking.

Mayor King stated the City should look into and support this event, adding it's important to look at insurance and have the City Attorneys look into the legal side, but he feels this would be a great event and is a good idea. Mr. Berryhill stated the SCA doesn't advertise but the BEDC should look at promoting the event. Mayor King stated the BEDC and the City need to communicate and work together on this event and to set up appointments with the relevant City departments. Mr. Berryhill stated there is a year to get this sorted out. Mayor King stated the

BEDC should work on it and to liaise with the City Manager. Mr. Berryhill stated once Ms. Guthrie has the site provisionally booked, the BEDC will approach the group and work with them to move it forward. Mayor King asked that the BEDC come back to Council later this year with a progress report. Councilmember Lambert stated the BEDC needed to meet with Ms. Parkin about grants as he does not want the BEDC applying for any grants that the City is considering applying for. Mr. Berryhill asked if he could have Mayor King's phone number; Mayor King gave Mr. Berryhill his phone number. Mr. Berryhill stated the long-term goal of the BEDC is to bring in light industry. Mayor King then thanked the BEDC for attending the worksession.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor King moved to adjourn at 6:55 p.m. Seconded by Councilmember Moncada. Motion passed 6-0.

ATTEST:

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Toney D. King, Sr., Mayor

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Vicki L. Vivian, CMC, City Clerk