MINUTES REGULAR WORKSESSION CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YUMA, ARIZONA CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - YUMA CITY HALL ONE CITY PLAZA, YUMA, ARIZONA June 20, 2017 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Nicholls called the Regular City Council Worksession to order at 6:01 p.m.

Councilmembers Present:	Shelton, Wright, Miller, Knight, Thomas, Craft, and Mayor Nicholls
Councilmembers Absent:	None
Staffmembers Present:	City Administrator, Gregory K. Wilkinson
	Assistant City Engineer, Andrew McGarvie
	Director of Community Development, Laurie Lineberry
	Senior Planner, Naomi Leeman
	Fire Chief, Steve Irr
	Purchasing & Contracts Manager, Robin Wilson
	Various department heads or their representatives
	City Attorney, Richard W. Files
	City Clerk, Lynda Bushong

I. STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

Wilkinson introduced two new staff members, Economic Development Administrator Jeffrey Burt and Assistant City Attorney Joseph Estes. Burt joints the City from Prescott and has prior experience in economic development in Phoenix. Estes has 15 years of experience in construction, bankruptcy, real estate, and other areas and was also a councilmember for the City of Maricopa.

I. STORMWATER REGULATIONS

McGarvie introduced Ibrahim Osman of Osman Engineering to explain the new requirements involved as part of the new Stormwater Management Program (SWMP).

Osman explained that the City was designated as a 'small municipality' or Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and became a regulated community for stormwater municipal operations in 2003. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) began in 1972 with the Clean Water Act and was amended in 1987 through the Water Quality Act. The NPDES is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) nationwide and by ADEQ in Arizona and addresses surface water such as oceans, lakes, rivers, streams, and irrigation canals.

The City is operating under the SWMP which sets forth Minimum Control Measures (MCMs) that each regulated community must take to remain in compliance with the program with the intent to prevent, to the maximum extent practicable, the introduction of pollutants from the stormwater systems

into surface water. The MCMs that the City must implement and maintain in order to remain in compliance are:

- 1. Public education and outreach
- 2. Public involvement and participation
- 3. Illicit discharge detection and elimination
- 4. Construction site runoff control
- 5. Post-construction site runoff control
- 6. Good housekeeping

New permit requirements introduced in 2016 include: 1) Enforcement Response Plan (ERP), 2) analytical monitoring of discharges to the Colorado River based on testing, 3) coordination with Yuma County, and 4) an emphasis on industrial facilities. The ERP is a background legal document that will provide more flexibility and a quicker response for the City to deal with violators and the Analytical Monitoring Plan is intended to prevent the discharge of the listed pollutants into the river. Since the City and Yuma County share a large portion of the stormwater conveyance system and have comingled runoff it is important that the two coordinate and discuss legal issues. The City has three stormwater ordinances that were enacted between 2005 and 2007 and will be reviewed and revised in accordance with the new permit requirements.

The main water issue that affects the community is the 'impaired' designation, by ADEQ, of the Colorado River from the Ocean To Ocean Bridge to the border of Mexico due to low dissolved oxygen and high selenium levels. Since this designation in 2008 the City has conducted visual monitoring based on the physical appearance of the water, odor, and opaqueness. On June 1, 2017, the City implemented a new measure called an Analytical Monitoring Plan where the City will take samples from five outfalls at the river when it rains and test them for dissolved oxygen and selenium. The plan has been submitted to ADEQ and is currently under review. The City has also been asked by ADEQ to implement a new control measure entitled Additional Control Measure No. 1 which will address how the City will prevent further impairment of the river's water quality.

Since 2003 the City has tailored its operations and completed inspections of all City facilities to ensure their compliance with this program. In 2004 the Utilities Department implemented a program aimed at cleaning all catch basins and stormwater manholes in a priority area located north of 8th Street and west of Avenue B which has improved water quality and hydraulic capacity in the City's stormwater system. There have been some issues with private development in the past, but now the City Engineering Department is asking all developers to provide documentation for inspections to ensure they are also in compliance with the program.

Craft asked what population the City needs to reach before it is reclassified from a small to a large municipality. **Osman** stated that the classification is based on the 2000 census, so even if the City exceeds the 100,000 population threshold for a medium municipality it will remain classified as a small municipality. **Craft** asked what the hazards are of low dissolved oxygen and high selenium and how those issues can be remedied. **Osman** explained that the main causes of low dissolved oxygen in Yuma is being downstream of many communities that discharge into the river, the slower speed of the river in its final stage before it reaches the Gulf of Mexico, as well as high temperatures that increase evaporation. ADEQ is in the process of removing dissolved oxygen from the list so the City should see selenium and another substance on that list within the next year or so.

Mayor Nicholls asked what causes the high selenium levels. Osman stated that selenium is naturally occurring in sediment and is further increased by the agriculture industry. Mayor Nicholls requested clarification on the reference to irrigation canals earlier in the presentation. Osman explained that they are designated as navigable waters, but that designation is now changing under the new administration. Mayor Nicholls asked what the estimated cost will be for the testing on the five outfalls. Osman stated that they are looking at taking 36 samples a year at a rate of \$50 to \$60 per sample. Mayor Nicholls noted that one of the five outfalls is actually owned by the Yuma County Flood Control District and asked if any of the outfalls are tied to irrigation drains or if they are all municipal runoff. **Osman** stated that the 17th Avenue outfall may be connected to one of the Bureau of Reclamation wells but he would need to confirm that. Mayor Nicholls stated that if testing on that outfall shows concerning levels the City needs to determine if the source upstream is municipal outfall or agricultural. Osman stated that is correct. He noted that the Pacific Avenue outfall is discharging into the river, but is not a City owned facility. Since it is located just 100-200 feet above the segment of the river designated as 'impaired' the City is not required by law to test it. Mayor Nicholls asked if the City is testing that outfall. **Osman** stated that it has been removed from the plan and is not being tested.

Mayor Nicholls asked if the main drain outfall is being tested. **Osman** stated that the Yuma Mesa Conduit that runs between Avenues B and C is a main drain that drains most of the valley area. It is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation and operated by the Yuma County Flood Control District. **Mayor Nicholls** stated his understanding is if that outfall is designated as noncompliant, the City could be responsible for mitigation because the City ties into it with stormwater connections, which is why it is important to understand whether or not the City is contributing to the low dissolved oxygen or high selenium levels. **Osman** stated that the City has multiple retention basins running parallel with pump stations of which the City will select three or four to test the runoff before it gets to the main drain to determine if the City is physically contributing to the stormwater degradation.

Wright asked how the City conducts public outreach regarding illegal dumping. **Osman** stated that illegal dumping is regulated by Ordinance O2005-015. The City has a hotline that receives complaints and dispatches the appropriate staff. Photos are taken, the area is cleaned, and the incident is documented and reported to ADEQ. **Wright** asked if the low dissolved oxygen and high selenium levels are characteristic of the river water before it reaches Yuma. **Osman** stated that it is, which is why it is the City's intent to measure above and below the City discharges to determine what value the City is contributing. It is not financially prudent to spend public dollars on testing if it is determined that the quality of the water is unaffected or actually improved after passing through Yuma.

Shelton requested a summary of the permit requirements before and after the changes that took place in 2016 to help City Council better understand the issues. He questioned whether the testing is appropriate for our area or if it might be an overreach. **Osman** stated that the City has suggested to ADEQ that if it can be proven that the City is not contributing to the impairment of the river for two consecutive years then it will remove the City from the testing requirement. **Mayor Nicholls** requested a simplified summary to distribute to City Council. He stated that he does not see anything that should set off alarm bells and the summary could clear up many of the uncertainties.

II. LANDSCAPING REGULATIONS

Lineberry introduced Naomi Leeman, who used her experience as a landscape architect to review and edit the draft document for this project, which had been started and stopped twice during the last 13 years. The resulting landscape ordinance is up to date, focused on xeriscape, and much more user friendly.

Leeman stated that the updated landscaping regulations were revamped to provide more guidance to designers, make sure that any required plants have a clear purpose, and reduce the future maintenance burden to Public Works. Placing the right plant in the right location encourages walkable and pedestrian friendly designs, and when the purpose of a regulation is clear there are fewer objections. The goal is to require a reasonable number of plants to achieve an aesthetic appearance while being mindful of the initial installation and long-term maintenance costs.

Key points:

- 1. Emphasize trees to provide shade, reduce energy consumption, absorb stormwater runoff, and improve air quality
- 2. Reduce water use by encouraging xeriscape, which is concurrent with General Plan goals
- 3. Improve the aesthetic appearance of the community
- 4. Treat landscape as an integral part of infrastructure

Timeline:

- 2005-2006: A consultant was hired and completed a draft landscape code update but it was never adopted
- 2014: Minor amendments adopted to address concerns about vegetative groundcover
- 2015: Update reinitiated
- 2016: Recommended Plant List published
- Present: Proposed text amendment to Landscape Regulations

Key Changes:

- Reorganized information to improve flow and align with landscape codes in other Arizona cities
- Introduce the Streetscape Zone which emphasizes street trees along public rights-of-way
- Introduce a flexible point system for retention basin design
- Add requirements for street trees on single-family lots
- Eliminate requirements for vegetative groundcover
- Include a detailed list of contents for landscape plans
- Add illustrations

The landscaping regulation focuses on trees and Yuma is a Tree City USA due to the number of environmental and economic benefits they bring. Trees reduce stormwater runoff and improve air quality, contribute to a sense of place, and improve psychological health. The presence of trees increases property values especially in residential neighborhoods, decrease utility costs by keeping buildings cool, and increase the life of pavement. In addition to lower utility bills and higher property values, trees in commercial areas increase customers by providing shade and increasing walkability.

The recommended plant list was developed in cooperation with Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and local landscape designers and arborists to be shared with landscape designers, developers, and property owners. It provides a list of plants that do well in Yuma and includes a photo as well as information on water use and recommended planting locations. It is an ever evolving list but the most updated version is available on the City's website. Developers for any properties that will be dedicated to the City are asked to use plants from the list because they are easier to maintain by Public Works.

In the process of developing the updated landscape regulations, meetings were held and input was received from the public. A meeting was held earlier today with members of the development community and several recommendations were made that the City will try to incorporate into the document, including offering an alternative to the tree requirement on single-family lots and allowing grading to take place before landscape plans are approved. Other concerns will require additional research or may not be written into the Yuma City Code (Code) but rather made a part of City policy.

Mayor Nicholls asked if the adoption of the text amendment will be postponed in order to make the changes resulting from today's meeting. Leeman confirmed it would. Mayor Nicholls asked if exceptions will be made for the tree requirement in situations where there are overhead power lines. Leeman stated that the City worked with Arizona Public Service and the Yuma County Water Users Association to identify plants that are approved for use not only near powerlines but also along irrigation canals. There is also a note that no trees shall be planted within 15 feet of power lines. Mayor Nicholls asked why this is a text amendment versus a replacement of the entire ordinance. **Lineberry** stated the whole section of the Code is being replaced, but it is called a zoning code text amendment. It is an entire rewrite rather than piecemeal changes. Mayor Nicholls asked if Improvement Districts would come into play if subdivisions wish to have more lush landscaping. Leeman stated that is correct. Mayor Nicholls asked what mechanism is in place to prevent extreme overplanting. Leeman stated that improvement districts will be encouraged going forward so the developer and the people who buy into such a subdivision will decide the level of service they would like for that community. If a higher service level is desired, the Improvement District will pay for the difference from what the Code requires. Mayor Nicholls expressed appreciation for the focus on trees rather than ground cover because trees will help fight the heat island affect caused by concrete and asphalt.

Craft asked why more trees are being required for parking lots when the goal of the landscaping regulations is actually to reduce vegetation. **Leeman** explained that the increase in trees is only for parking lots for the purpose of fighting the urban heat island affect. Public Works felt that their biggest maintenance burdens were trimming shrubs and mowing grass, while trees require significantly less frequent maintenance.

Wright expressed concern regarding water runoff due to its damaging affects to the structures of the City's streets and suggested that it be addressed in an ordinance. **Leeman** stated that this is why turf will not be allowed in parkways and street rights-of-way. However, this would not address residential subdivisions so it would have to be addressed through the subdivision code.

Thomas asked if the landscaping regulation takes into account bus stops throughout the City that often have no shade. **Leeman** stated that it does not, however it does focus on street trees, with a requirement of one tree per 35 feet, which should help with this issue.

Shelton suggested a provision in which the City will not cut down trees without an outstanding reason to do so. **Leeman** stated that the tree ordinance would probably be the best place to add that type of regulation. **Shelton** asked how the regulations are balanced against a property owner's freedom to do what they choose with their land. **Leeman** stated that the majority of the regulations are focused on areas within the City right-of-way and retention basins. Property owners have a lot of freedom in the other areas on their site. **Shelton** asked if the City is taking on a role of a general tree consultant under these provisions. **Leeman** stated that the City is only providing a list of plants and explaining how to use it. **Shelton** asked if the City has any veto power with regard to plant choices. **Leeman** stated that there are a few plants listed in the code as prohibited, but that only applies to areas within the City right-of-way. Private property owners are not required to follow that list.

Knight suggested that the requirement for landscaping after two years of vacancy is counterproductive as the City should not be making it more difficult to get vacant properties developed. Mayor Nicholls agreed that the two years is prohibitive and would like to see it possibly changed to five years. Lineberry stated that the time period used nationwide is one year, but the City changed it to two years in 2000. She explained that the City's main focus is parking lots and landscaping with an emphasis on trees. Working with the Department of Community Development to become conforming and obtain a variance if necessary could actually a benefit to the property owners, for example, in the event that they refinance the property. **Knight** stated that this might make sense if the use changes or there is an expansion, but it seems unnecessary for the exact same use. Lineberry pointed out that there can be significant degradation to a property after two years without maintenance, causing it to become an eyesore in the community. The City is flexible and works with the property owners at the same time that their plans are in review. Knight stated that nonetheless the property owner should have that choice. Lineberry stated that it could be stipulated in the Landscape Code, but would not have an impact on the Building Code or the Fire Code which both kick in regardless of the amount of time the building has been vacant. Mayor Nicholls stated that he would like to see an option on that as well, as it would help to encourage redevelopment within the City and discourage urban sprawl. **Lineberry** stated that suggested language would be brought forward to City Council. Knight noted that oleanders are not included on the prohibited plant list, but they block the view of everything when located in the right-of-way. Leeman stated that there are regulations that prohibit planting within the visibility triangle.

Thomas asked how this will affect the historical areas of the City. **Leeman** stated that the singlefamily lot tree requirement applies to all parts of the City, but otherwise these regulations would not have much impact unless new development is taking place.

Mayor Nicholls asked if shade structures in parking areas would eliminate any of the other shrub issues. **Leeman** stated that there is no longer a shrub requirement in parking areas. Inert groundcover is still required for landscaped areas.

III. AMBULANCE PROGRAM

Chief Irr provided City Council with an update on the Ambulance Program and specifically the ambulance rate increase going to the State. He explained that all ambulance rates and rate increases are determined by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) because ambulance service is regulated by the State of Arizona. The City's rate was initially set when the Yuma Fire Department

(YFD) began ambulance transport in 2012 at \$1,024 and automatic rate increases have taken place every year through 2016, bringing the current rate to \$1,093.

YFD has transported over 35,000 patients since February 2012. In 2016 over 7,500 patients were transported, an increase of 14% over 2015. Revenues have increased from \$3 million in 2014 to \$4 million in 2016 for a few reasons. The Affordable Care Act decreased the percent of uninsured patients transported from 15% to 5% with a correlated 10% increase to patients covered by Medicaid. The City has also worked with the third-party biller to address some issues such as the timeliness of billing and follow-up. Lastly ambulance personnel have been receiving ongoing training to ensure that current Medicare standards are being met to make sure that bills will be paid.

Revenues are used to cover the wages and benefits of 35 full-time employees, of which 30 are on the ambulances themselves and 5 are clerical and support staff. Revenues also cover the cost of all ambulances and equipment, a share of the facilities and maintenance costs for the fire stations used by the ambulance program, and a share of administrative costs. These administrative costs include staff that do not work with the ambulance program full-time but spend some of their time providing services including mechanics and administrative staff.

Although the current ambulance rate is \$1,093, the City collects on average only \$539 per transport. Medicare pays a fixed rate of \$407 per transport, while Medicaid pays 68% which currently comes to \$678 per transport. This is set by Federal and State regulations and there is not much that can be done to influence those amounts. Of the total that the City should be able to collect for ambulance services – taking into account the reduced rates for Medicare and Medicaid – 90% is actually collected. This is very high in the ambulance industry and the City has worked hard to get to this point.

The ambulance rate is determined by ADHS based on the ambulance program's financial information including all expenses and the payer mix – the combination of Medicare, Medicaid, commercial insurance, and uninsured patients – to determine what needs to be charged in order for the program to stay afloat. Since the City's initial rate determination there have been some changes including an increase in the number of personnel and increased supply costs. The new rate based on this information is expected to be \$1,295, just over the state average of \$1,182 but under Rural Metro's current rate of \$1,338.

When the ambulance program was established in 2012 the guidance from City Council was not to make a profit, but to prevent it from becoming a tax burden by having the users pay for the service. It is with that guidance in mind that the rate increase is being sought in order to maintain the service and keep up with expenses. In addition to the annual automatic rate increases the City should review the rate every four to five years to make sure the program is still on target and not becoming a burden to the general fund.

Having an ambulance services is a very economical use of resources due to personnel cross-training. Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and paramedics are also firefighters, hazmat technicians, and technical rescue technicians. They provide for the ambulance transport and also become extra manpower to respond to fires or large incidents. YFD was recently re-rated by the Insurance Service Office and was able to maintain their rating as a Class 2 fire department due in part to the additional benefits and manpower efforts that the ambulance program is able to provide the firefighters. **Mayor Nicholl** asked if all 35 personnel on the ambulance service are covered by the Public Safety Personnel Retirement System. **Irr** stated that the clerical staff that work with the ambulance billing are not.

Wright requested confirmation that the state average ambulance rate is \$1,182. **Irr** confirmed the rate but pointed out that some municipalities keep their rates low and absorb any losses into their general funds. **Wright** asked who would respond to a citizen that called a number other than 911 for ambulance service. **Irr** explained that they can call a seven digit number to contact Rural Metro which is a private ambulance service. They have a Certificate of Necessity (CON) that covers the City of Yuma and are obligated the same as YFD to respond when they get a call. He noted that the City has a great working relationship with Rural Metro. YFD does priority dispatching and sends Rural Metro to low acuity Basic Life Support (BLS) responses when needed. YFD was granted an Advanced Life Support (ALS) CON and responds to all ALS calls.

Wright asked what is driving the \$202 rate increase being requested. **Irr** pointed out the increased expenses that he listed earlier in the presentation. He explained that the only patients that will really be affected by the rate increase are the 15% that are covered by commercial insurance because Medicare pays a fixed rate and Medicaid patients are not billed for the balance owed. **Wright** asked if the third-party biller receives a percentage of each bill. **Irr** stated they receive approximately 5%. **Wright** asked if the \$202 increase will allow the ambulance service to break even without taking out of their budget to fund the service. **Irr** stated that with rising costs there will be an impact on the general fund if the rate is not increased. The service was always intended to pay for itself.

Thomas asked if the anticipated 116% premium increase will be taken into account with this rate increase. **Irr** stated that while any number of things could happen that might affect revenue, it is his job to keep an eye on the program's finances to make sure that revenues are sufficient to keep the ambulance service going without tapping into the general fund. **Thomas** asked if there has been an increase in the number of uninsured patients being transported. **Irr** stated that the rate has remained at 5% for the last two years.

Mayor Nicholls recessed the meeting at 7:53 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:10 with the abovenoted parties present.

IV. REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA OF JUNE 21, 2017

<u>Motion Consent Agenda Item B.3</u> – Request for Qualifications (RFQ): Professional Engineering Consultant Services on a Delivery Order Basis (negotiation and execution of a one-year contract with option to renew for four additional one-year periods)

Mayor Nicholls declared a potential conflict of interest with regard to Motion Consent Agenda Item B.3, turned the meeting over to Deputy Mayor Knight and exited the room.

Wright asked how many staff members were used on the selection committee. **Wilson** stated that there were four staff members on the committee and one citizen; however the citizen had to decline due to additional duties assigned to her by her employer. **Wright** asked if staff members are rotated so that the committee members vary. **Wilson** stated that each RFQ and RFP has different evaluators depending on the complexity of the project. **Wright** asked if there has always been a citizen on the

committee. **Wilson** stated that this is the first time that the City has included someone who is not an employee. **Wright** asked if those selected for the committee have engineering backgrounds. **Wilson** stated that some of them are professional engineers. **Wright** noted that the contract is for a term of one year with an option to renew for four additional years. He asked if the evaluation process will take place every year. **Wilkinson** stated that the evaluation process does not take place every year. The City has the option at the end of each one-year term to terminate the contract but the contract is typically kept in place for five years because it is a significant process not only for the City but for the contractors to put together their proposals.

Wright asked for clarification on how the contracts are executed. **Wilson** explained that after City Council approves the contracts the City will request a fee schedule from each consultant. Once all of the fee schedules are received they will be reviewed to ensure they are all in the same price range to ensure competitiveness and the contracts will be prepared and sent to the individual consultants. Once the contract is executed the delivery orders will be issued. **Wright** asked if the local engineering firms who were awarded a contract were the only local firms to submit a proposal. **Wilkinson** stated that every local firm who submitted a proposal made the top ten and were awarded a contract.

Thomas asked if the staff members are prohibited from sharing what happens on the selection committee. **Wilson** stated that each member receives a confidentiality statement detailing what they can and cannot do. Information is not allowed to be shared until the contract is fully executed. **Thomas** asked if a citizen participating on the selection committee will be bound by the same confidentiality statement. **Wilson** stated that they would.

Wright asked why a replacement was not found for the citizen who dropped out of the selection committee. **Wilson** stated that it is very difficult to find people who are able to participate because it is a long and time consuming process. There were 25 proposals submitted for this RFP and each evaluator has to go through every proposal. **Wright** asked if the names of those on the selection committee are confidential. **Wilson** stated that they are, but once the contract is executed it can become public record.

Mayor Nicholls returned to the dais.

<u>Motion Consent Agenda Item B.4</u> – Bid Award: Residential Commercial Solid Waste Collection and Roll Off Services (one-year contract with C&D Disposal with an option to renew for four additional one-year periods for an estimated annual cost of \$228,578.00 as needed)

Knight asked why City Council is being asked to approve City funds of \$228,578 when the spreadsheet shows the bid award went to C&D Disposal for \$29,998.47. **Wilson** explained that the budgeted amount of \$228,578 is from all of the departments and divisions across the City while the amount provided by C&D Disposal is per container each time it is emptied. The cost will vary from month to month because additional containers are installed in the fall to accommodate winter visitors and then removed in early spring. **Mayor Nicholls** noted that the low bidder has many zero dollar items and asked if it had been addressed with the bidder. **Wilson** stated that she would follow up to confirm.

<u>Resolution Consent Agenda R2017-014</u> – Designation of Infill Overlay (Incentive) District and Adoption of Infill Incentive Plan (designate a described area subject to the Infill Overlay District zoning code text amendment)

Knight pointed out that the last sentence on Exhibit B of the Infill Incentive Plan is incomplete and suggested that it be changed prior to City Council approval. **Mayor Nicholls** thanked Leeman and Lineberry for addressing his many questions and concerns. While there are a few outstanding issues the majority have been resolved. He asked if a timeframe had been decided on for the no build easements. **Leeman** stated they did not place a timeframe on that. **Mayor Nicholls** asked if it would then be in effect as long as the area is included in an active plan, whether it's the Regional Transportation Plan or the Capital Improvement Program Plan. **Leeman** confirmed that is correct. **Mayor Nicholls** asked for clarification on the utility fee waiver with regard to undeveloped lots established prior to 1977. **Leeman** explained that before 1977 developers were not required to pay a utility fee, so the thought is that if a residential lot was subdivided prior to 1977 and is only now being developed it will be given a 50% reduction. Those that were previously developed will receive a credit for prior use.

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There being no further business, **Mayor Nicholls** adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m. No Executive Session was held

Lynda L. Bushong, City Clerk

APPROVED:

Douglas J. Nicholls, Mayor