

Minutes of the Study Session of the Mayor and Council of the City of South Tucson, Arizona, held Wednesday, July 3, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. at the City of South Tucson Council Chambers, 1601 South 6th Avenue, South Tucson, Arizona.

Council Present: Paul Diaz
Mary Soltero
Ildefonso Green
Vanessa Mendoza
Oscar Patino
Anita Romero
Miguel Rojas

Staff Present: Luis Gonzales, Interim City Manager
Ruben Villa, Finance Director
Veronica Moreno, City Clerk
Marilyn Chico, Housing Director
Mick Jensen, Planner
Larry Anderson, Fire Chief
William Lackey, Police Chief
Jeff Inorio, Police Dept.
Dennis Rankin, Police Dept.
Patrick Moran, City Attorney

All members of the Council were present.

Topics covered in the Study Session were salaries, benefits, staffing levels, and vacant positions. Mr. Villa presented to Council copies of the salary budget and cost allocation sheets.

Mr. Villa reviewed with the Council the salary budget which lists 101 positions: Public Safety, 63 positions; Administration, 15 positions; Housing, 8 positions; elected officials, 7; Public Works, 8 positions.

Mr. Villa reviewed, in detail, all vacant positions in each department. Councilman Green asked whether Wes Hand's position as Commander in the Police Department is an Administrative position and how the position relates to RICO funds. Chief Lackey stated Mr. Hand one of three people with DEA. Mr. Gonzales explained line items and employee positions within the police department. In reviewing the salary and benefit budget, Mr. Villa explained the most expensive part of the benefit side in the police and fire department is Public Safety Retirement. He stated almost 41% of the total budget goes to police department. Mr. Villa stated the budget includes estimated costs for police department overtime. He provided details on retirement and health benefit costs. Of the 3.7 million for salaries, 1.2 million is for benefits.

Mr. Villa provided a financial explanation of the benefits of utilizing reserves in the fire department in order to avoid overtime for full-time fire department personnel. Discussion followed regarding management of schedules, and the Finance Director was asked to do an analysis of hiring three full-time firefighters. Mr. Villa answered questions from Council regarding pay rates for reserves.

Grants and employee positions they pay for were discussed. A 5% increase for all employees was discussed, along with merit increases. Mr. Gonzales explained that wage increases would be given to employees based on merit. There is a merit system in the policy manual but it has not been implemented since 2009. He stated employees have not had any increase in the last four years, and some even longer than that. Once the merit policy is re-implemented, at the employee's anniversary date the supervisor will determine what increase will be given, from the 3%, based on merit. Discussion included re-instituting the sick leave policy in a different manner.

Mr. Villa reviewed salary funding codes and allocations, and answered questions regarding salary wage increases and sick leave policies. Mr. Villa informed the Council this is the time to request a review of a particular position, salary or department. Mr. Gonzales stated his recommendation is that the Council accept the budget, with a 5% increase in salary set aside. At the next study session, the 5% within departments will be discussed. Mr. Gonzales stated he does not want to wait until the last day to force a vote due to a deadline, and would rather have the Council make changes at each study session between now and the first part of August.

The Council asked about the City Attorney's salary and Mr. Villa responded it is a contract, and included under contracts in the budget.

Discussion followed regarding police department overtime and the grants, including Stone Garden, that assist in paying for overtime. Councilman Green asked if there could be an account established for the Explorers. Mr. Villa explained they have never been restricted. The funds are accounted for, and controlled by, and audited by the City, in accordance with State law. The officer in charge of the funds has access to the funds and there is a process that needs to be followed as part of the accountability which is maintained over any funds collected on behalf of the City.

Mr. Villa reminded the Council there needs to be a balanced budget by the 15th and the City has until August 5th to finalize the budget.

The study session adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Paul Diaz, Mayor

ATTEST:

Veronica Moreno, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of South Tucson, Arizona, held on the 3rd day of July, 2013. I further certify the Study Session was duly called and a quorum was present.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2013.

Veronica Moreno, City Clerk