



Minutes
Special Meeting and Executive Session
Queen Creek Town Council
Queen Creek Town Hall, 22350 S. Ellsworth Rd., Queen Creek, AZ
Council Chambers
October 23, 2007
6:00pm

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm.

2. Roll Call

Council Members present: Coletto-Cohen; Mortensen; Valenzuela; Wootten and Mayor Sanders. Council Member Hildebrandt and Vice Mayor Barney were out of town.

3. Motion to adjourn to Executive Session for the following purposes:

A. Discussion and consultation with the Town Attorneys for legal advice and in order to consider the Town's position and instruct its attorneys regarding contracts that are the subject of negotiations: fire service (A.R.S. §38-431.03(A)(3) & (4).

Motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 6:09pm (Valenzuela/Coletto-Cohen/Unanimous)

The Special Meeting reconvened at 6:25 pm.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND FINAL ACTION: If you wish to speak to the Council on an item listed as a Public Hearing or Action, please complete a Request to Speak Card and turn it in to the Town Clerk. Speakers will be called upon in the order in which their cards are received. Speakers are limited to three (3) minutes each.

4. Discussion and possible action on the approval of a Memorandum of Understanding pertaining to fire service for the Town of Queen Creek.

Town Manager John Kross said there is citizen/community support for fire and EMS services and that approval of a Memorandum of Understanding would direct staff to finalize an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Town of Gilbert to provide fire service. Mr. Kross stated that Rural Metro has been instrumental in assisting the Town with fire and EMS services since the 1970's, well before incorporation. Mr. Kross gave a brief recap of the Council approved Master Plan for Fire/EMS Services which included recommendations for funding services. Mr. Kross also said that the Fire/EMS Service Committee also approved the master plan.

Mr. Kross explained that negotiations with Rural Metro began in July 2007 and in August the Town began negotiations for mutual aid agreements with surrounding communities. The negotiations for mutual aid were unsuccessful so the Buracker report was looked at again to consider other recommendations. One of the recommendations was to contract with another

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jurisdiction. Mr. Kross said that Gilbert has the equipment and personnel for a 12-month period and participates in the automatic mutual aid program. Mr. Kross added that this proposal would allow the Town to implement its own fire department sooner. Mr. Kross said that a transition plan similar to what Scottsdale used would most likely be implemented.

The Mayor and Council acknowledged and thanked Rural Metro for all the services provided to the residents over the years.

Gary Morris, Rural Metro Chief, discussed the commitment of Rural Metro over the years and participation in two fire/EMS committees and attendance at Council meetings. Mr. Morris said that Rural Metro had plans for six additional stations throughout the Queen Creek area. He also said that there had been only one request for mutual aid in the past 22 months and believes the community should be involved in a decision of who provides fire service.

Bryan Jeffries, V.P. of Professional Firefighters of Arizona and Mesa Firefighters, spoke on behalf of Rural Metro employees. He asked that as part of the transition plan to consider future employment of existing Rural Metro firefighters. He also said that the associations would like to provide assistance during the transition period.

Steven Springborn, of the United Maricopa Firefighters, commended Rural Metro for serving the area. He said he is a former Rural Metro firefighter and transitioned to the Scottsdale Fire Department. He said the transition period was very important to the citizens and went smoothly. Mr. Springborn said that the union supported the property tax and would like to offer assistance to the Town during the transition period.

Harry Luge Sr., Queen Creek (Pinal County resident), stated the community didn't know about the special meeting and is concerned that Gilbert can't provide the fire/EMS services.

Council discussed the importance of mutual aid and the residents of the Town expect the highest level of service possible. Council again commended Rural Metro for participating in the many meetings and discussions regarding fire service.

Motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding pertaining to fire service with the Town of Gilbert (Wooten/Mortensen/Unanimous)

5. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:56pm (Mortensen/Valenzuela/Unanimous)

TOWN OF QUEEN CREEK

Arthur M. Sanders, Mayor

Attest:

Jennifer F. Robinson, CMC

I, Jennifer F. Robinson, do hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the foregoing Minutes are a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the October 23, 2007 Special Session of the Queen Creek Town Council. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and that a quorum was present

Jennifer F. Robinson, CMC

Passed and approved on November 7, 2007.