MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF YOUNGTOWN, AZ

THURSDAY, October 7, 2010, TOWN CLUBHOUSE, 12033 CLUBHOUSE SQUARE

1. **Call to Order** Mayor Michael LeVault called the meeting to order at 8:13 p.m.

2. **Roll Call** Council present: Mayor Michael LeVault, Vice Mayor Jacob Duran, Councilmembers Margaret Chittenden, Dorena Mello, Shirley Oglesby, Susan MacKay, and Judy Johnson.
   Staff present: Town Manager Lloyce Robinson, Town Attorney Michelle Swann, Police Chief Terry McDonald, Public Works Manager Mark Hannah, Code Coordinator Lora Isaacs, and Deputy Town Clerk Diane Cordova.

3. **Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation** Pledge led by Councilmember Oglesby. Invocation offered by Chaplain Charles Ring.

4. **Communications:**
   A. Communications from Council

   Mayor Levault
   - There was great controversy in the Town of Litchfield Park regarding conducting a moment of silence during a council meeting.
   - The GAIN event is this Saturday October 9, 2010, 5 – 8 pm. in Greer Park. Sun City Fire Department has constructed a furnished building for a live fire demonstration to begin at 6:30 pm. Free Hot Dogs, drinks are at a cost.
   - Paradise Valley, known as one of the top ten affluent communities, is fighting a blight condition. Every community is dealing with blight and vacant conditions, not just Youngtown. I had a meeting with Town Manager Lloyce Robinson, Code Compliance Coordinator Lora Isaacs, and Councilmember Chittenden last week regarding these conditions. Councilmember Chittenden pointed out an abandon house that looked worse than a ghetto. Lora Isaacs has estimated that Youngtown has 200 vacant homes and about two dozen of the 200 vacant homes have these same conditions. There are houses that are abandoned and no indication of who owns them. There is a limbo period between the time when an owner vacates and the time when the bank takes title and sells the house. During that period of time, who is responsible for the condition of the house? We, as a Town, cannot allow this to exist. The longer we allow a house with a broken window to sit there the more broken windows it will have. It's like a magnet, blight attracts blight. The Homeowners Association in Agua Fria Ranch is dealing with the same concerns. They've taken steps to get their money back by placing a lien on the property right when the bank takes over. I'd like to see each Councilmember express their feelings on this issue with the Town Manager. We do have a plan on how to deal with this. This problem will not go away quickly. We are looking at a record number of foreclosures. There are thousands upon thousands of vacant homes in the valley and a small portion of those are in Youngtown. This is a critical issue.
   - I'm not saying anything negative about staff, our staff is working hard. We are working with limited resources and our staff is wearing multiple hats. I would like for staff to report back to Council thru internal mail on the plans and steps that are being taken. Let's not wait until the next Council meeting.
   - Three council seats up for election in March 2011. Packets can be picked up at Town Hall November 8, 2010.

   Councilmember Johnson
   - I've taken this week to drive every street and alley. Councilmember Chittenden and I drove around this past Saturday. My main concern about these empty houses are that three or four of these houses have been identified as unsecured with doors wide open, and/or doors missing, and you can see people in there. My hope is to have these houses boarded up expeditiously because it is a cause for vagrancy. I would hate for something terrible to happen to a child that was dragged in.
   - I am very proud that we have a plan. We did adopt the International Property Maintenance Code. It is very clear on how to take care of the problem. We need to spend a little money to make our Town safer. I do know of residents that want to volunteer to help Lora and her team to paint boards and board up these homes.

   Vice Mayor Duran
   - We do not need to make racial remarks about certain people, whether they are white, brown, black, red or yellow. We as leaders and Councilmembers need to be very careful that we don't place categories on people. Just because we see a home all messed up, right away it's stated that it was a bunch of Mexicans or White

trash. I'm not saying this just because I'm Mexican, Chicano, or Latino. I am married to a White woman. People struggle regardless of their nationality or race. We have the rich and the poor in all areas.

Mayor LeVault

- Maricopa Association of Government (MAG) was informed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of a decision made on a PM-10 standard rating (10 microns in diameter or less) of dust particulates in the air. MAG will hold a meeting on Monday to look at ways to bring PM-10 into compliance. The EPA can sanction billions of dollars of federal highway funding which can become a future drain on our present economy.

Councilmember Mello

- My first official Community Development Advisory Council (CDAC) meeting will be next Wednesday, October 13, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.
- The City of Buckeye has started a community garden. They've enlisted their Fire and Police Departments. I'm waiting for a call from the the CEO of Tiger Mountain, He is interested in partnering with the Town in regards to a community garden. I am also looking at other components that put together the Buckeye community garden. Hoping to hear what the people have to say about this.
- I will not be present at the G.A.I.N. event. I will be attending a conference.

Councilmember Chittenden

- I am coming up with a priority list of homes to present to staff. A blight condition does exist here in Youngtown. These homes are a hazard. Along with my fellow Councilmembers, we want to make our community safe and a good place for all of us to live. Anytime a Police Officer has to enter any of these vacant homes, it is a hazard. I am first a citizen of Youngtown and then a Councilmember. To my knowledge I would never personally do anything that would jeopardize our Police Officers and/or Staff's safety. I was very upset last week and I inadvertently made some comments which were not directed to anyone personally.

B. Communications from Staff

Town Manager's Report

Town Manager Robinson

- We do have a virtual list of 171 vacant properties, 91 are in north Youngtown and 80 in Agua Fria Ranch. Chief McDonald, Code Coordinator Isaacs and I will be meeting tomorrow morning. It is imperative that the Police and Code Enforcement Officers understand the precautions and no one should be entering a vacant house. First, it is unlawful to enter without permission, and second, it's a liability. Every house is a case by case with different situations. One situation, an owner died and the State took over control. How do we get the State to be responsible? We don't have the budget line item in Code Enforcement. An action plan is being set and staff will take care of it in a manner that will be legally sound so that the Town will not incur any liability. I do appreciate the enthusiasm and volunteers. It might be that we will call upon Council and volunteers to assist. There are companies out there that will board up these houses. The boarding is done from the inside of a home not from outside. Before boarding, we better make sure we are not damaging property.
- Council, we need your information back for the Arizona League of Cities and Towns annual directory.
- I received a call from Nick Surak of Englewood, that they were unable to receive housing credits from the Arizona Department of Housing. They will reapply again in the spring. Mr. Surak is sending out an invitation to all Council to visit a Grand Opening in Guadalupe. The project is similar to the one that will be built on 113th Avenue.
- Grand Avenue and 111th Avenue will be closed for reconstruction this next week.
- I met with El Mirage Interim City Manager Rick Flaaen. El Mirage Council will be having a public hearing on October 14, 2010 regarding the annexation petition on the property west of Agua Fria Ranch know as the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community land. El Mirage have expressed that they would like Youngtown to be at the table. El Mirage is looking at possible joint revenue with Youngtown.
- October 21, 2010 staff will be giving Council a presentation regarding "How Secure is the Town's Future." October 23, 2010 will be the Mayor's Town Hall Meeting at 9:00 a.m.
- Our Library Manager, Nancy Lewis, received $1,400 in merchandise for the children's section in our Library.

Chief McDonald

- Police Department will present a report on October 21, 2010.
- Reminding everyone to attend the G.A.I.N event this Saturday.

Public Works Manager Hannah

- We were able to obtain Apache Pipeline Company, which gave us a decent quote, to repair the buckling of the road on Connecticut Avenue. No evidences of a pipe break. It was caused by heat stress. Project is to be completed by middle of next week.
- The Town has received an award from Tohono O'odham Nation in the amount of $37,500.for an Emergency Operation Center in our Police Department.

5. **Consent**
   A. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of September 16, 2010 Regular Meeting

   Motion to approve Consent Agenda – Councilmember Mello
   Second – Councilmember Oglesby
   Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

6. **Business**
   A. **Public Hearing Re: Request for public comments on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2011-2012 Project Selection based on Town's Priorities in the 5-year CDBG Plan FY 2011-2015 (HANNAH)**
   Public Works Manager Hannah
   - **Every year we go through the process of applying for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds through the County Community Development through Maricopa County. One of the requirements is to hold a public hearing to allow members of the public to come forward and discuss with Council and make suggestions and let Council know their priorities for the use of the funding.**
   - **We are in year two for the Five-Year Consolidated Plan. In your Council book you will see the three priorities that Council approved last year.**

   A. **Hearing open.**
   No comments

   B. **Hearing closed.**

7. **Call for Executive Session**
   None needed.

8. **Citizens Comments/Appearances from the floor:**
   Ken Rice, Sun City Fire Marshal
   - **Sun City Fire Department has a team of eight inspectors that can jump on board to help tag and flag these vacant blight homes. Our team wears uniforms and is well trained.**

Announcement of next Work Session and Regular Meeting: Thursday, October 21, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment.
Motion to adjourn – Vice Mayor Duran
Second – Councilmember Johnson
Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Michael LeVault, Mayor

Attest:

Diane Cordova, Deputy Town Clerk

Minutes approved at the October 21, 2010 Regular Meeting.