



## MINUTES OF WORK SESSION OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF YOUNGTOWN, AZ

THURSDAY, October 6, 2011, TOWN CLUBHOUSE, 12033 CLUBHOUSE SQUARE

1. **Call to Order** Mayor LeVault called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call** Council present: Mayor Michael LeVault, Vice Mayor Jacob Duran, Councilmembers Margaret Chittenden, Dorena Mello, Shirley Oglesby-Gustafson, and Susan MacKay.  
Council excused: Judy Johnson.  
Staff present: Town Manager Lloyce Robinson, Town Attorney Michelle Swann, Police Chief Terry McDonald, Finance Officer Jackie Hoffman, Public Works Manager Jim Fox, Programs Projects Grants Manager Mark Hannah, and Town Clerk/Treasurer Letty Goldberg.
3. **Business**
  - A. **Discussion Re: Changing election procedures to eliminate in-person ballot casting and employing only mail-in ballots for future Town elections. (GOLDBERG)**

Town Clerk Goldberg

    - We had an interesting election experience this year. After analyzing the results and costs of the Primary and General Elections I would ask Council to consider going to all-mail ballot elections forgoing "ground" elections. Nine municipalities in Maricopa County use the all-mail ballot process. Some have used the all-mail ballot process since the early 1990's all with some degree of increase in voter participation. Litchfield Park, one of the longest users, is the Gold Standard with returned ballots in the 50 to 60 percent range. Goodyear used it for the first time and the participation rate increased from 5% to 29%.
    - More than 40% of Youngtown's registered voters are already on the permanent early voting list. These voters are able to vote at their convenience in the comfort of their own homes. Eighty percent of the ballots voted in the Primary Election in March of this year were early ballots for a total turnout rate of about 18% of registered voters. We paid MCED (Maricopa County Elections Department) a fee per registered voter (for a ground election) plus a fee per early voting ballot request.

Mayor LeVault

    - There are those voters who like to go the polls on Election Day. All-mail elections change the dynamics of an election. Most early ballot voters mark their ballot within the first week after they received it. What if something between then and Election Day and they wanted to change their vote?

Councilmember Chittenden

    - I have always enjoyed going to the polls to vote, but in recent years I have appreciated the convenience of receiving an early ballot and voting on my schedule.

Town Clerk Goldberg

    - Going to an all-mail ballot election might not save much in election costs but most communities who have tried it get a higher participation.

Mayor LeVault

    - Council has time to think about this. We ask the Town Clerk to find out the deadline for Council making a decision on all-mail ballots prior to the Spring 2013 election cycle.
  - B. **Discussion Re: Proposal to re-zone Parcel 142-67-056, located at 10617 North 114<sup>th</sup> Drive and used as the former Public Works facility, from the current R-3 Residential District zoning to Open Space District or whether to keep Parcel currently zoned as R-3 Residential District and designate the Parcel a recreational area pursuant to Town's parks rules and regulations. (HANNAH)**

PPG Manager Hannah

    - At the last meeting Council approved the use of Town property for a Community Garden at the former Public Works yard. This property is currently zoned R-3 Single-Family Dwelling District. The question is whether to re-zone this parcel to Open Space for park designation. The Town is not

bound by its own zoning ordinances. Also there is not a pressing need to re-zone, although R-3 does not include parks. It is reasonable for the Town to follow its own zoning ordinances. If the Town re-zones the property to Open Space and later wanted to sell the property, they could always re-zone it back to R-3. I have spoken with our insurance carrier and they will cover the Town's liability to our limits regardless of how the parcel is zoned. We are requesting a consensus of what you would like staff to do.

**Mayor LeVault**

- Ms. Swan, is it customary for a Town not to abide by its own rules?

**Town Attorney Swann**

- For the past 20 years the thinking has been that if we expect others to abide by the rules, then the Town should abide by the rules.

**Councilmember Mello**

- I think the parcel should be zoned as Open Space/park.

**Councilmember Chittenden**

- This parcel is in the middle of R-3 zoning. Will surrounding property owners be notified of the request to re-zone?

**Town Attorney Swann**

- This parcel would go through the Planning and Zoning Process. In addition to legal notices, property owners surrounding the property would be notified of the request to re-zone. There would be three hearings: 1) a Citizen Review, 2) a Planning & Zoning Hearing conducted by the Zoning Hearing Officer, and 3) a hearing before the Council. These hearings would take place before Council made a decision on whether to re-zone the parcel.

**Councilmember Chittenden**

- This wouldn't affect the starting of the Community Garden? I know they have a timeline for their first season.

**Mayor LeVault**

- Consensus of Council is to proceed with the Planning & Zoning process.

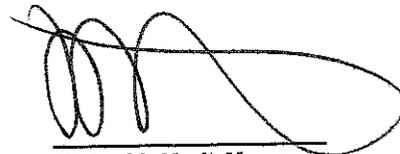
**Regular Council Meeting:** Thursday, October 6, 2011 immediately following Work Session.

**Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn – Councilmember Mello**

**Second – Vice Mayor Duran**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.**



**Michael LeVault, Mayor**

**Attest:**



**Letty Goldberg, Town Clerk**

**Minutes approved at the October 20, 2011 Regular Meeting.**