

**TOWN OF PRESCOTT VALLEY
LEGISLATIVE WORK STUDY MEETING
MINUTES
December 12, 2013**

Library Auditorium
7401 E. Civic Circle
Prescott Valley, Arizona 86314

1. Call to Order

Mayor Skoog called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call and Welcoming of Legislators

Present: Council Member Whiting, Mayor Skoog, Council Member Marshall, Council Member Mallory, Vice Mayor Nye, Council Member Anderson, and Council Member Grossman.

Mayor Skoog welcomed State Senator Steve Pierce and Representative Karen Fann.

3. Legislative Preview - Opportunity for Senators and Representatives to discuss their individual focus and bills for 2014 session.

Senator Pierce began with some history from the last session, items that got through with Medicaid and things that will help our area. In the next session he believes there will be work on health care, education and infrastructure. Two recent subjects that will be discussed are the Child Protective Services situation and the Yarnell fire, which both take lots of time and money to resolve. Pierce also cautioned that electric rates will likely rise due to EPA regulations.

Representative Fann stated that she has sixteen bills in the hopper. One bill she continues to work on is the fireworks bill and she will fight until she gets it. She also wants to stop the HURF fund sweeps. Our state roads are showing wear due to lack of funds in the past ten years. Fann highlighted two more bills: one for texting/distracted driving laws especially for Class G-teenage drivers and a second bill concerns defining more clearly public records requests due to the problems that came up when the media wanted records from the 19 Hotshots at the county examiner's office.

Speaker Andy Tobin arrived while Representative Fann was speaking. He had just come from Phoenix. Tobin stated that the HURF shift of funds and the CPS situation are his present focus. HURF funds are a top priority for the next budget. He is meeting with the Governor's new committee on CPS on Monday. Overall they are cautiously optimistic with revenue forecasts. They are waiting the sequestration final costs as well. The state has been disproportionately hurt by the federal shut downs. Tobin is also meeting with fire districts tomorrow for talks about hotshot crews in the state regarding maintenance and liability issues.

Mayor Skoog appreciates the comments and updates from the legislators.

Vice Mayor Nye thanked all three of the legislators for the heart they put into looking after our communities, it is not just a job. She specifically thanked Senator Pierce for standing up for mental health care funding needs. Many people are now getting the medications and treatments they need.

Mayor Skoog invited the council members to comment on local issues.

Council member Grossman's concern is with the possible future government shutdowns and the drain they put on our citizens and local resources like food banks. Senator Pierce commented that it is a Federal issue but agrees that it affects us all.

Council member Anderson's concern is education funding. He knows that emergencies take funds as with CPS. We cannot afford to let education slide. Speaker Tobin responded that education funds are less available due to areas of declining enrollments. About half of recent bond issues passed and the others failed. Education cuts are the lowest and they are slowly trying to add more funds back. About half of the jobs lost have come back and that helps replenish the coffers. We are still 150,000 jobs short but the efforts need to continue and another sequestration could hurt again.

Council member Mallory expressed her thanks and appreciation to the legislators. She likes that they are so easy to contact at any time. She understands their priorities and knows that they will work diligently.

Council member Whiting appreciates the priorities of capital investment and education funding. We have a new normal and hopes they focus on education. Whiting also expressed concern about traffic safety. Arizona is number one in red light runners. He wants to find some solutions. Senator Pierce commented about a family that lost three in an accident out in Chino Valley. He sees erratic driving all the time but he doesn't want to see Arizona become a "nanny state" like California with driving laws. Pierce added going back to talk about education that we don't forget about charter schools. They add a significant amount of education to the system they fill a void.

Council member Marshall thanked the legislators for coming. He really wants to talk about CPS. He has seen cases of shaken baby syndrome and the parents get the kids back without prosecution. The goal of CPS is to "Keep children safe within their own families" but Marshall feels that goal cannot always be the right thing. Senator Pierce said that he has a son who is a case worker in Tucson and knows the overload each one carries. They are supposed to have 25 cases but some have 60 to 70 cases. We already put \$70 million dollars into the system but something has obviously gone wrong. Fann added that the world has changed, no one knows their neighbors. Her "Pollyanna" side wants to see more community involvement instead of relying on government to solve their problems. How much can we keep paying? Tobin commented that is a constant battle with the CPS issues and resources are what they are. Throwing money at it doesn't fix it. That was before they knew about the 6,000 unreported cases.

Council member Whiting added that we don't want to forget our resources from the local non-profits that can aid with the CPS related issues. The Yavapai Family Advocacy Center is one of those resources. Things can be done locally instead of relying on the federal government.

Vice Mayor Nye had two more points. As the regional council Headstart Chairperson she saw the sequestration take nearly \$800,000 from Headstart with the loss of all-day kindergarten and some pre-K. They cannot take another hit of even half that amount. Nye's other issue is water. We can reach safe yield but there is a catch in that we have to import the water from the Big Chino. Don't let anything happen to stop that.

Tobin commented that he "gets it" with education. Our 17 trillion dollar national debt is not sustainable. It will never be like it was again but our children and grandchildren will pay for it. He agrees that sequestration has hurt our state more than others.

Pierce added that First Things First has over \$400 million that could help but it is taking time. Nye added that they did get \$250,000 from First Things First that saved the Headstart program in Chino Valley.

Mayor Skoog gave statistics that 79 percent of the state population lives in cities and towns with 83 percent of the work force and 90 percent of revenue generated. Mayor added he would like comments about safeguarding our shared revenue, leaving decision making up to locals, gerrymandering of districts, exempting HURF sweeps, protecting second amendment rights and issues with public unions.

4. Importance of State Shared Revenue - Presented by Town Manager Larry Tarkowski

Town Manager Larry Tarkowski welcomed and thanked "Steve, Karen and Andy" for coming. He noted that they have been in office during a very bad economy and have navigated through shark infested waters. They've made decisions that have gotten our heads above water. "Thank you for all the hard work." So now all the special interest groups that have gone without in the past 6 or 7 years will be knocking on their door. Please don't make the same mistakes of the past before they were in office. "And keep your pea-pickin paws off our money". Please don't allow things to be passed to negatively impact our cities and towns. DPS needs to get onto using the General Fund instead of HURF. Tarkowski added we are doing an expensive development impact fee study to be in compliance with state law. Overall they are doing a great job and he thanked them very much.

Fann responded that you know where she stands, she always has our backs. Cities and towns need to work together to not make them have to pass new regulations. An example is development impact fees that are not always used as they are intended and the legislators have to intervene.

Tobin commended Prescott Valley for their survival through the recession. The state is paying \$360 million a year in interest on debt alone and it hurts.

Pierce said “ditto”. He is proud of what they have accomplished. The three of them want to hear from Prescott Valley and do their best to keep our interests at heart.

No action was taken.

5. *"HOME" funding and Housing Trust Fund - Presented by Community Development Director Richard Parker*

Community Development Director Richard Parker said he respects the time the legislators take to come listen to us. Parker distributed a summary of Prescott Valley’s Owner Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program and funding issues. Over the years since 2009 Prescott Valley has used about 1 million dollars that have improved housing and provided jobs to the contractors. HOME funds are also used to build senior housing. Parker has learned that federal and state funds could be going away it. He asked that the housing trust funds be re-established.

Tobin was not aware that state dollars are not coming. Parker was at a presentation that suggested that the 2016 budget could see changes. He will get more information to Tobin.

No action was taken.

6. *Heritage Fund - Presented by Parks and Recreation Director Brian Witty*

Parks and Recreation Director Brian Witty presented the Heritage Fund. In November 1990 voters approved the Heritage Initiative also known as Proposition 200. The Heritage Fund was established to protect and preserve our natural and cultural heritage. Up to \$20 million per year of Arizona Lottery funds were to be split between Arizona Department of Conservation (Game and Fish) and Arizona State Parks. From 1991 to 2008 towns and cities benefited from Heritage funds. Witty highlighted the expenditures of over 1 million dollars that have come to Prescott Valley from Heritage fund grants including Mountain Valley Park improvements, athletic field lighting and Fain Park.

In 2009 the Heritage fund grants were swept and in 2010 the Heritage fund was eliminated. The Town of Prescott Valley is slated to grow by 20,000 people by 2025. Witty asked the legislators to ask the governor to reinstate the State Park Heritage Fund. It is a quality of life issue not just a funding issue.

Fann commented that she, Tobin and Pierce have worked on major restructuring with park funding. Revenues are coming in but we are still 4 billion dollars in the hole and part of it is the money borrowed from the Heritage Fund.

Tarkowski added that you are not going to be completely out of the water until you pay off the debt that you used as a bridge to make the last six years work.

Mallory added that as a country we are at extreme debt is at every level. The federal government is out of control. It is hurting the whole country.

Pierce commented that it is all about leadership and it starts at the top. He agrees that we are going to suffer and our kids and grandkids are going to suffer.

No action was taken.

7. HURF Funding - Presented by Public Works Director Norm Davis

Public Works Director Norm Davis stated that the HURF funds have been used by DPS to keep us safe. The HURF funds used to be used for infrastructure. Now we use what we have for maintenance and we use all we get. HURF swap was eliminated and he would like to see it brought back. CYMPO plans to lobby hard for HURF funding.

Tobin commented that he recalls the HURF swap and shift and would like to see it return.

No action was taken.

Mayor Skoog invited Police Chief Bryan Jarrell to come forward to say hello. Jarrell is impressed with what he has seen so far in the leadership of Prescott Valley and Arizona.

8. Adjournment

Mayor Skoog thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Diane Russell, Town Clerk

Harvey Skoog, Mayor

STATE OF ARIZONA)
COUNTY OF YAVAPAI) ss:
TOWN OF PRESCOTT VALLEY)

CERTIFICATE OF COUNCIL MINUTES

I, June Catanzarite, Deputy Town Clerk of the Town of Prescott Valley, Arizona, hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Legislative Work Study Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Prescott Valley, held on Thursday, December 12, 2013.

I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

| Dated this 27th day of December 2013

June Catanzarite, Deputy Town Clerk