

City of Sedona  
City Council and Senior Citizens Outreach Meeting  
Sedona Community Center  
2615 Melody Lane, Sedona, AZ  
May 8, 2014

Attendance: Mayor Adams, Vice Mayor DiNunzio, Councilor Litrell, Councilor McIlroy, Councilor Ward and Councilor Williamson. Councilor Martinez was absent and excused.

Staff Present: City Manager Tim Ernster, Assistant City Manager Karen Daines, Assistant to City Manager Nick Gioello, Communications and Public Affairs Manager Ginger Graham, City Manager Intern Ariel Chanko, and Deputy City Clerk Sherri O'Connor.

Community Present: There were 15 citizens in attendance.

Mayor Adams welcomed and thanked everyone for coming. Council and staff introduced themselves and Mayor Adams recognized Ginger Graham for her work on the outreach program and for putting the meeting together.

Mayor Adams stated that as we all are aware that we did go through a recession that started in 2008 and he acknowledged Council and staff for the great job they've done managing the budget during those difficult times. In 2008 we had a debt of 72 million dollars and we have reduced that debt to 50 million dollars today. We have a sustainable debt reduction plan that retires about 5 million dollars a year. Our annual budget in 2008 was 60.5 million dollars and today it is slightly over 36 million dollars which is a reduction over 40 percent. We not only balanced our budget but have reserves in our operating fund. We have also upgraded our parks and in early 2015 we should complete the Barbara Antonsen Memorial Park, an outdoor community venue. The City has purchased 3 acres off of Brewer Road and would like to develop it into a community meeting space. We built 27 acres of wetlands with the primary intent to help dispose some of the effluent which in return, created a new City park which has become a birding habitat and that also creates revenue for the City. Councilor Ward stated that we constantly look at our debt services and review bonds as interest rates change and currently saving over half a million dollars and seem to always find savings. Councilor Litrell stated one of the key things Council has done in the last year was increased citizen participation in government. We eliminated the Commissions and instituted a Citizens Engagement program which is designed to involve more people in shorter periods of time on specific projects that are interests to them. Encouraged people to go on our City website and review the list of projects and get involved. Our Citizens Engagement Program is very innovative and one of a kind. Vice Mayor DiNunzio stated that we are here to represent you and the best way to do that is by hearing from you and talking with you. Within the last couple of years we installed cameras in the Council Chambers and we are on video on our website or live on cable Channel 4. These are saved and you can look at past Council meetings if you wanted to. We want to engage with you and have the dialogue because your voice matters. Councilor McIlroy stated that last summer Council wrote a letter to opt out as a City for smart meters. Council also requested that

the Arizona Commission reduce the opt out fees but there has not been a ruling on that yet. The health concern report should be completed by either September or the end of the year. At that time the Arizona Commission will do their ruling on opting out and the fees. Councilor Williamson stated that Council passed an ordinance for Civil Unions. We also have a plan at the wastewater plant to redirect effluent irrigation and free up land to be used for other purposes. Mayor Adams advised that we have upgraded the effluent that we produce from a B+ to an A+ and that allows us to utilize the land to benefit the community. We are now a bicycle friendly community and created over 20 miles of bicycle lanes in past six years. We recently received a provisional Dark Sky friendly designation and the majority of the City is dark Sky compliant. Highway 179 has been redone with landscaping, relighting and bicycle lanes. During the last six years the things Council has done has made us more of a sustainable City.

The citizens present at the meeting brought up the following concerns:

- Sid Clopton asked what have we learned about the lighting issue along 89A.
  - Councilor Litrell answered that we would have to clarify that it is not an emotional situation but a rational situation because it was based on information. The lights have not made a difference on the safety of 89A if you look at the statistics. Vice Mayor DiNunzio advised that the overall numbers on safety have not changed because traffic counts have increased. Reason the lights were a solution was because drivers were not able to see pedestrians at night so lights were put in to improve drivers' vision at night. We could do it differently in the future if money is available.
  
- Mariana Hartsong advised that her quality of life has drastically changed because of the installation of smart meters. She brought in eggs to show the difference in eggs that were affected by smart meters. She asked if there is anyone who has any power to get them out of Sedona.
  - Tim Ernster advised that APS has made a motion to have our complaint dismissed which has not been ruled on yet. They are finishing up the installations of smart meters for the ones who haven't opted out. Based on City's research, the City doesn't have regulatory authority over APS and the Arizona Corporation Commission regulates all utilities in Arizona. Mayor Adams added the City did try and opt out as a whole City but wasn't successful. Mariana Hartsong asked for a creative solution. Councilor McIlroy advised as a lawyer we would need to possibly do a class action lawsuit against APS and the smart meters as individuals. Councilor Litrell advised that there is nothing else the City can do as a body but individuals can. She advised of the Sedona Smart Meters Awareness Group and individuals should submit their symptoms to them and a case could be built.
  
- Dorothy Marsh advised that asbestos is harmful but it was many years before the harmfulness was discovered. It may be too soon to prove that there is something wrong with smart meters.
  - Councilor Litrell advised that it has been studied since 1932 and not voluntary and everything else has been voluntarily.
  
- Iona Altman advised that she found at night when she turns off the electricity to her house, she is getting 8 hours of sleep a night and this could be a temporary solution.

- Mayor Adams advised that we voted to opt out but it didn't happen. The problem is that as a Council there isn't anything we can do legislatively. It is very frustrating but again there isn't anything we can do.
- Nancy Baer asked if there was anyway City Council could recommend to the citizens to opt out or if that would be illegal.
  - Tim Ernster advised that we need to ask our Legal department if that is something we can do. Mayor Adams advised that we did a press release to inform the community what was going on and what citizens' options were.
- Sid Clopton asked if anyone has been successful on getting the analogue meter back on their home.
  - Mayor Adams advised that the citizens did a smart thing by creating a coalition because as a group may put the pressure on APS and get heard rather than one person. Mariana Hartsong advised that APS told her that if you call APS, they will remove the smart meter but it has to be done by the person's name on the bill. Councilor McIlroy advised that the health report should be completed in September. Councilor Litrell advised she does not have confidence in the report but they hope they will go in the right direction and make an effort to look at the right information and be honest.
- Sid Clopton asked about getting embedded lights in crosswalks.
  - Mayor Adams advised the problem is the highways are owned by the state and not by the city and ADOT will not put them in. There is a possibility to talk with ADOT again about this and maybe splitting costs in the future. Vice Mayor DiNunzio advised that they may be willing to work with us if we offer to split the costs. Councilor Williamson advised that as a community we voted not to own the highways so it is up to ADOT what they can do with their budgets. Maybe we can develop plans in the coming months.
- Dorothy Marsh asked about getting walking paths along the creek and create a creek walk.
  - Councilor Ward advised that we looked at this about five or six years ago but it is a private property issue and the cost of being ADA compliance. Mayor Adams advised the direction Council is going is looking is they are actively looking for a creek front property site and that may be our solution to by the land and create a creek walk owned by the City.
- A citizen asked what is going to be developed at the Wastewater Plant.
  - Mayor Adams advised that they will put a land planning committee together involving citizens to look at possibilities. Mayor Adams advised her to talk with the City Manager to get more information to be on the committee.
- Iona Altman advised that she is looking for volunteers to go door to door and help people who haven't yet opt out of the installation of smart meters.
- Dorothy Marsh asked if we could get a traffic light at the Sedona Medical Center intersection.
- Sid Clopton asked if fees for senior citizens who are on low income could be waived at facilities that charge fees.

- David Warr thanked Council for opting out on smart meters. He advised the City should form a committee of volunteers to work on the smart meter issue and put it information on our City website. He would like Council to write a letter to APS advising them of the committee and give them notice of the possibility of a class action law suit.
- Nancy Baer advised she has a problem with getting her trash out to the street for pick up and wanted to know about a volunteer program or if anything could be arranged to help her. She is also concerned about the fees of the service because she only needs it picked up once a month.
- A citizen asked about any type of volunteer program for seniors to help with repairs around the house. She stated that we could create a group to help each other.
  - Natalia Molina, Operations Manager of Verde Valley Care Givers Coalition advised of their services such as to and from medical appointments, friendly visits, light handy person help and referrals. She advised that they are in need of volunteers as well so if interested she would pass out her card.
- Robert O'Donnell advised his concern is putting a sidewalk in on Andante. He advised people use that area for parking their cars and this could be an issue. Consider putting sidewalk in on Harmony or making the streets one way. He advised on the light at the Medical Center, that the Medical Center could give out instructions on how to get to the light by the high school so they don't have to wait to cross traffic. On the smart meter issue, we could look into the possibility of APS using dual meters instead.
- Nancy Baer asked about having an academy for children to educate them because they are next round of voters. We need to start engaging our children.

Mayor Adams stated that the Council enjoys the public outreach because they get to hear directly from citizens and Council has the opportunity to respond. We appreciate what everyone had to say today. You will be responded to and if you are not, please contact the City and we will follow up.

Sid Clopton advised that there could be an improvement on communicating to public on outreach meetings.

- Ginger Graham advised that she sends news releases to Red Rock news, Sedona.biz, Sedona Eye, Yavapai Broadcasting, and NAU news station. We did print advertising to Kudos, Verde Independent and an ad in the Sedona RedRock News. We advertise on our facebook and twitter. It was on Channel 4 slide show and did announcements at various public meetings and other organizations.

Council Litrell advised that the election cycle has changed for electing members of the City Council. Normally there would be a primary in March and the general election in May but now the primary is August 26<sup>th</sup> and general election will be November 8<sup>th</sup>. We have four seats this August up for election; Mayor Adams, Councilor Ward, Councilor McIlroy and her seat are up for election. She just wanted everyone to be aware of the change. She encouraged everyone to vote so their voices could be heard. Councilor McIlroy encouraged everyone to also attend the Council meetings.

Mayor Adams adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.