

Meeting Minutes

City Council Special Joint Meeting

April 7, 2023 | 9:00 a.m.

City Hall, 2nd Floor Training Rooms A & B
175 S. Arizona Ave., Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kevin Hartke at 9:14 a.m.

Roll Call

Council Attendance

Mayor Kevin Hartke
Vice Mayor Matt Orlando
*Councilmember OD Harris
Councilmember Mark Stewart
Councilmember Christine Ellis
Councilmember Jane Poston
Councilmember Angel Encinas

Appointee Attendance

Josh Wright, City Manager
Kelly Schwab, City Attorney
Dana DeLong, City Clerk

*Councilmember Harris attended remotely by WebEx

Staff Attendance

Dawn Lang, Deputy City Manager / CFO
Andy Bass, Deputy City Manager
Ryan Peters, Strategic Initiatives Director
Alexis Apodaca, Government Relations Senior Program Manager

Others in Attendance

Senator Mitzi Epstein, LD-12
Representative Patty Contreras, LD-12
Representative Stacey Travers, LD-12
Representative Jennifer Pawlik, LD-13

Representative J. D. Mesnard, LD-17

Representative Liz Harris, LD-17

Welcome and Introductions – Mayor Kevin Hartke

MAYOR HARTKE welcomed guests and staff.

Discussion

1. 2023 State Legislative Update

MAYOR HARTKE asked each legislator for their perspective on what is happening at the capitol this session, and something unexpected happening this year.

SENATOR EPSTEIN shared that something unexpected was a bill to end the death penalty in Arizona was read. Housing, schools, and water are in focus this session.

MAYOR HARTKE said that he and Representative Pawlik have visited Community Schooling in Chandler. He is impressed and looking forward to seeing more. It is all about helping kids in school.

REPRESENTATIVE MESNARD shared that it was unexpected there was a push to set a budget very early in the session. The budget for this year is in the spotlight. There are more one-time funds than ongoing funds.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO thanked both legislators for protecting our land in concerns to developments and housing financing. The key is working together.

MAYOR HARTKE added that economic corridors have brought a lot of value to Chandler. There must be a balance between residential areas and these economic developments. We are working on zoning improvements.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said it is great to share ideas. Councilmember Ellis asked what Council can do to support the legislators at their level.

REPRESENTATIVE PAWLIK shared that one unexpected thing was that House Democrats and Republicans have been working closely together. There are 16 new members. The pace of this session has been slower than normal. Representative Pawlik commented that having an open door with government affairs representatives and local leadership has been valuable.

REPRESENTATIVE TRAVERS said it is important to keep lines of communication open. It is important to delegate info to the correct people.

REPRESENTATIVE CONTRERAS shared that coming in as a new member it was unexpected how much information there is. There are a lot of great ideas from new members. Transportation is a topic in the spotlight lately.

REPRESENTATIVE HARRIS said that we need to analyze housing investments and rentals. It is difficult to control large entities that own multiple rental homes. Looking at water through a real estate lens is one way to go about it.

REPRESENTATIVE TRAVERS added that a surprise is having good relationship with many representatives, while still facing pressure from parties. Seeing the reality of politics is different than anticipated.

MAYOR HARTKE asked how we as a City or Councilmembers make your work easier.

SENATOR EPSTEIN thanked staff for the constant updates. Senator Epstein said it would be a good idea to address how Chandler addresses water and housing, perhaps in a symposium.

MAYOR HARTKE said the Chamber put on a great presentation. Chandler holds its water as a point of pride.

SENATOR EPSTEIN suggested a field trip to the water treatment center.

REPRESENTATIVE TRAVERS said that keeping lines of communication open is valuable. Problems arise from lack of communication.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS asked to have information provided beforehand.

REPRESENTATIVE TRAVERS said that at this level changes happen quickly.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said that staff should be able to help address this.

SENATOR EPSTEIN said that in the house, each representative has 1¾ person of staff who is responsible for everything. It is a challenge in time management.

REPRESENTATIVE PAWLIK said the time we have to work with is very short.

MAYOR HARTKE added that if they have ideas for future presentations, please reach out. The Chamber puts on a lot of events and would welcome the resource.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said that zoning is all about supply and demand. Our growing community is facing challenges in housing.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO said that one of the topics discussed at the National League of Cities and Towns Conference is states usurping local authority. Whatever we do with water, other states will keep in mind, so we must think of the bigger picture in water management.

REPRESENTATIVE TRAVERS said that there is one person responsible for water bills in the house in this committee. The dynamic is locked into place.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO said we have to look bigger picture.

REPRESENTATIVE MESNARD brought up the Ocotillo Landings development.

MAYOR HARTKE said that this is still in conversation. There is a need for housing, and we will continue to expand our housing inventory.

REPRESENTATIVE MESNARD asked for an assessment of the project.

MAYOR HARTKE thought that the county is not going to move forward with the opposition received. Messages from the supervisors have this attitude.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO commented that there is still a water issue there.

MAYOR HARTKE continued that Chandler allocates water based on predicted use for the 100-year supply. Shifting zoning use increases the amount of water consumption for the property.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said that the group did buy the parcel.

VICE MAYOR ORLANDO said another development backed out at different location.

MAYOR HARTKE shared that at the League Conference there was a similar narrative of cities changing zoning.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said there is money at the federal level for this.

2. Chandler Updates

SENATOR EPSTEIN asked what the Council wants them to know about Chandler.

MAYOR HARTKE said there is a lot going on in Chandler. There is a new strategic plan in the works to set our priorities. There are new economic developments – Edwards Vacuum, Scheels. We are watching the continued Intel development. Our initial budget is in the works, and we want to pay

down PSPRS unfunded liability. We turn our one-time dollars into ongoing funds and savings in conservation for water and lighting.

COUNCILMEMBER ELLIS said that Council is unified in our priorities. The people are the priority.

REPRESENTATIVE CONTRERAS said that education for legislators is helpful to get local understanding. The process for local decisions like water and zoning at each city is important to understand. Having the background is helpful.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART said staff can distribute information. Councilmember Stewart asked how these bills are going.

REPRESENTATIVE MESNARD said that these bills are not moving. We are aware that the process takes a long time. We can speed up the process but not at the expense of public input. There is generally agreement to advance the process.

COUNCILMEMBER STEWART asked if there is any legislation to move development to start within a certain time.

REPRESENTATIVE MESNARD said it is voter protected. There is a lot of pressure on legislators to fix the issue. Educating legislators that on what projects are ready and what is in the works is good to know. It is important to share the context on why things are happening.

SENATOR EPSTEIN said that many of the issues with stopped development is not zoning, but outside factors like workforce and supply.

REPRESENTATIVE TRAVERS said that there is a lack of thoughtfulness at the legislature, there is a lot of pressure to rush through bills. It is better to have well written and thoughtful bills rather than poor quality rushed bills.

REPRESENTATIVE MESNARD said the process helps refine bills in work. Stakeholder input is as important as constituent input.

REPRESENTATIVE TRAVERS said the last steps should not be pass or fail, there should be work done to improve bills in the works.

MAYOR HARTKE said open communication and collaboration can help avoid problems in the future. Mayor Hartke thanked everyone for their attendance.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 a.m.

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

Mayor

Approval Date of Minutes: May 11, 2023

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Meeting of the City Council of Chandler, Arizona, held on the 7th day of April 2023. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DATED this _____ day of May, 2023.

City Clerk