

**SPECIAL MEETING
AIRWAY HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL**

Monday, July 27, 2015

4:00 p.m.

**Community Center – Council Chambers
13120 W. 13TH Avenue, Second Floor
(Please power down or silence your cell phones for meeting)**

CALL TO ORDER: by Deputy Mayor Richey at 4:20 PM

ROLL CALL:

Mayor Patrick Rushing	A
Deputy Mayor Kevin Richey	P
Steve Lawrence	A
Jack Collins	A
Tanya Dashiell	P
Doyle Inman	P
Dave Malet	P

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Albert Tripp, Police Chief Lee Bennett, Fire Chief Mitch Metzger, Public Works Director Ross Dunfee, Clerk Treasurer Amy Wiedrich, Executive Assistant Daneka Keith, Officer Jake Keith, Officer Dennis Bachman and Cpl. Leland Varain.

Motion by Councilmember Malet to excuse the absence of Councilmembers not present, seconded by Councilmember Dashiell. Motion approved unanimously, 4-0.

AGENDA APPROVAL: Motion by Deputy Mayor Richey to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilmember Collins. Motion approved unanimously, 4-0.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: None

STAFF COMMENTS: Mr. Tripp opened the staff comments with welcoming any staff who were present to feel free to express to council how they have been affected by the recent Facebook comments by the Mayor. This time is to allow staff to communicate their concerns, thoughts and input to council.

Officer Keith thanked council for the way they are handling the situation. It has been an embarrassment and does affect their jobs. He was on a call and there were comments made about the Mayor because the citizen that called didn't get the outcome they wanted from AHPD. He is certain this wasn't the first and won't be the last reference to the Mayor and the embarrassment he's brought to the city. Chief Metzger spoke on behalf on AHFD because Nate is on vacation, Don is off on Mondays and Doug had another meeting to attend. The Fire Department has also heard comments about the Mayor when they have been on scene for fire/medic calls. They are also in the midst of recruiting and questions have been asked about the Mayor and his conduct. Chief Metzger provided a briefing as to the actions council has taken. Mr. Tripp spoke to council of the city staff meeting that occurred last week, Thursday, July 23, where 25-30 staff were present and some spoke of the impact the situation has had and is having on their daily work. They expressed embarrassment and shame

regarding the Mayor's comments and stand behind City Council's decision to sanction the Mayor for his behavior. Staff also thanked city council for their leadership through a difficult situation. Council members thanks the Police Guild and 270A for the letters of support. Public Works Director Ross Dunfee spoke of how controversy shines a light on the city and staff. He had another resignation today and one 2 weeks ago. Elected officials choose the spotlight, employees do not. The current circumstances have been disruptive to an already disrupted work environment. He does not know all of what is being said, but knows there are many side conversations occurring with staff. Mr. Braaten asked if a letter to the citizens is still happening. Ms. Keith indicated the letter is in draft form and Mr. Tripp will have copies available at study session. Ms. Keith indicated she has been monitoring social media accounts and there are many comments that are inflammatory and inappropriate to the city and to the Mayor. All comments, good or bad, have been hidden and are not viewable on the social media platforms. This is an ongoing effort. Cpl. Varain said he is very disappointed in the mayors' comments and subsequent behavior. Mr. Tripp indicated that the "silver lining" was that the city has pulled together as a team.

Deputy Mayor Richey responded and hopes that this may also spark more interest in local government, politics and community involvement. Councilmember Malet indicated this wasn't the first time that council as had questions about the mayors' conduct. Councilmember Dashiell commented that the council has spoken to the mayor on several occasions, tactfully, asking his to discuss things with them ahead of time, prior to representing the city in meetings, on local, regional, statewide boards and committees. Councilmember Inman asked what the next step is. Council will review his duties and reassign tasks to other councilmembers. Council will also appoint replacement board/commission representatives. Council may review and amend the Council Rules of Procedure. They cannot remove his pay, the Mayor would have to willingly give that up. The community may also proceed with a recall process.

ADJOURN: at 4:57 PM

APPROVED:



Patrick D. Rushing, Mayor
KEVIN RICHEY

ATTEST:



Amy Wiedrich, Clerk-Treasurer

Note: Unless otherwise noted above, there will be no public comments at Council Study Sessions. However, Council always reserves the right to request information from the public and staff as appropriate. During meetings held by the City of Airway Heights Council, the Council reserves the right to take "action" on any item listed or subsequently added to the agenda. The term "action" means to deliberate, discuss, review, consider, evaluate, or make a collective positive or negative decision.

Notice: Individuals planning to attend the meeting who require special assistance to accommodate physical, hearing, or other impairments, please contact the Clerk-Treasurer at (509) 244-5578 as soon as possible so that arrangements may be made.

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