



MAYOR AND COUNCIL Study Session Minutes

Approved by Mayor and Council
on March 4, 2025.

Date of Meeting: October 8, 2024

The Mayor and Council of the City of Tucson met in study session in the Mayor and Council Chambers in City Hall, 255 West Alameda Street, Tucson, Arizona at 2:05 p.m., on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, all members having been notified of the time and place thereof.

OFFICIAL MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Mayor Regina Romero
Council Member Lane Santa Cruz (Ward 1)
Vice Mayor Kevin Dahl (Ward 3)
Council Member Nikki Lee (Ward 4)
Council Member Richard G. Fimbres (electronic attendance)
Council Member Karin Uhlich (Ward 6) (electronic attendance)

OFFICIAL MEMBERS

Council Member Paul Cunningham (Ward 2)

ABSENT:

STAFF:

Timothy M. Thomure, City Manager
Mike Rankin, City Attorney
Suzanne Mesich, City Clerk

Mayor Romero announced that Council Members Fimbres and Uhlich would be participating electronically through Microsoft TEAMS.

(NOTE: Minutes for Study Session are transcribed in verbatim format.)

Mayor Romero: What I'm going to do today, since we have guests with us today from Pima County, I'm going to start with Item 3. Then we're going to do item 4, which is State and National reports, and then go into executive session. So, we don't make anyone wait since we have a...a short study session today. So, with that, let's start with Item 3.

3. Discussion and Presentation from the County Recorder and County Elections Director Regarding Security Measures for the General Election on November 5, 2024 (City Wide) SS/OCT08-24-187

(This item was taken out of order.)

Introductory comments were made by Mayor Regina Romero.

Information and presentation were given by Constance Hargrove, Elections Director, Pima County, and Gabriella Cázares-Kelly, Recorder, Pima County, who fielded and answered questions on the various security measures, processes, and protocols in place for the upcoming General Election on November 5, 2024.

Discussion ensued, comments and questions were made by Mayor Romero, Vice Mayor Dahl, and Council Members Uhlich, Fimbres, Lee, and Santa Cruz.

No formal action was taken.

Mayor Romero: I've requested this time to discuss security measures and plays for the upcoming November 5th general election. With us today are the Pima County Recorder and Pima County elections director. I just want to make sure that we have our visitors here, hi...hi.

Gabrielle Cazares-Kelly, Pima County Recorder: Hi there.

Mayor Romero: How are you?

Ms. Cazares-Kelly: I'm doing wonderful. Thank you.

Mayor Romero: Excellent. So, the reason I wanted to have both of you here is because ballots will be mailed out to voters in the city of Tucson and Pima County and throughout the state starting tomorrow. I'm grateful to have you both our elections, Pima County Elections Director Constance Hargrove, the County Recorder, Gabriela Cazares-Kelly here to update us about our safe and secure election system. The right to be able to cast our vote is fundamental to maintaining our democratic with a small D democratic with a small D system of government. I encourage each registered voter to cast their ballot, and we wanted to make sure that we had a public conversation about how safe and insecure our election systems are in the city of Tucson and in Pima County. So, I look forward to this report and I don't know if you did a...a...a coin toss in terms of who's going to start first, but I believe it was elections Director Hargrove.

Constance Hargrove, Pima County Elections Director: Sure, I can start first. Hello, thank you for having me today. So, so election security, election safety I decided to call it election safety because inherently in election administration, security and safety of the election of the ballots of the process are actually built in. So, at a very high level, I'm just going to go through a few areas that I think are key and Jermaine to understanding how we keep elections safe and why they're safe. Next slide please. So of course, the first thing that the Elections Office does in preparation for the election is the programming and testing of the equipment. Yesterday, October the 7th, we had the Secretary of State here in our office and our equipment was tested, logic and accuracy test was conducted, and we passed it 100%.

However, before the Secretary of State even came to our office the equipment had been through two other tests. So, we do a in house, a logic and accuracy test which we ran about 13,000 ballots for this election through the tabulation machine. The tabulation equipment we printed ballots from our express vote ballot marking devices which are our accessible equipment. We also printed ballots from our ballot on demand printers to ensure that the equipment was programmed correctly and could read all of those ballots. From the different types of equipment and they all passed. We had a logic and accuracy test conducted by the political parties. So, the political parties were invited in to mark ballots, create their own test deck, and create the results that they were looking for and run the test just as we ran the other two tests. So, the equipment has been tested it has to be certified and tested before early voting starts before we can start tabulating ballots and before we can give the Recorder's office the accessible equipment that they use in the early voting sites. Then of course, we program the electronic poll books, and they also go through a series of tests.

Next slide, please. OK so as we are preparing for the election, we pack up all the equipment, all the supplies that are needed...needed for the vote centers and we deliver them in a secure steel cage that is locked so all of the equipment has seals on it, individual seals. We have a seal hog that goes along with that and it is in the cage. We lock the cage and we actually seal the lock on the cages as well. So inside that cage, you will have the ballad demand printers, the electronic poll books the ballot stock in the express vote ballot marking device in any other supplies that they need on Election Day, and then it's delivered in this cage and is locked and sealed.

Next slide please. OK so let's talk a little bit about facility security, next slide. So, the 1st place I wanna talk about is our county centers, our county center. So, our county center is where we process early ballots that we receive from the Recorder's Office in preparation for tabulation. It is also where we tabulate those ballots. It is also where the votes are found, where we store uncounted and counted ballots here in our office. So, the counting center is here we anticipate getting ballots beginning October the 14th. And at that time, we will bring in security guards into our office new for this election, we will have a metal detector in our public viewing hallway. So, we have a hallway that anytime we are processing ballots and we have ballots in the building, anyone from the public, they do not have to sign up. They do not have to represent any party, anyone from the public can come in and watch the process. However, we want to ensure that they're not bringing in any weapons because they're not allowed or anything that may disrupt the process of tabulating ballots and processing those ballots. So, for this election, we will have a metal detector in our public viewing hallway. In anytime ballots are present in our office and even for the logic and accuracy test, the political parties have observers here. So, the observers were here on yesterday when the Secretary of State's office conducted their logic and accuracy test and they will be here throughout the process whenever we have ballots that we are working with in our office.

Next slide please. Accounting center requires badge access, so you can only enter the accounting center using a badge. Now the public viewing hallway is in the accounting center, but it's in a secured area where they cannot access the interior of the office. They can exit out of the door and go outside, but if they need to come into the interior of the office for any reason, they have to be badged in. Of course, the ballots are stored in vaults and there's live camera fee for the tabulation room, the ballot processing room and the room where we actually do electronic adjudication and

write-ins, there are also additional cameras around the building, inside and outside of the building for security.

Next slide please. Now, on Election Day, to secure the polling place, we train our poll workers in situational awareness, so they are making sure they know what's going on around them, that they're watching the interactions of the voters as they come in. The Marshall is an inside and outside of the building, monitoring any activity and then they will notify us if there's anything wrong or they see something that they're concerned about. In addition to the situational awareness, the poll workers are trained in de-escalation techniques. Very often we get voters coming in, especially during this time who are upset their concern they're angry, they're confused, and they come in and they're challenging the poll workers on the process. And so the poll workers are trained to deescalate that situation, to speak directly to them to repeat what they're saying, to calm them down so that they can explain the process to them and then work through that process to be able to issue them a ballot. Ballots are always transported by two poll workers representing opposite parties, especially when they're bringing them back from the vote center on election night. Whether they're going to a receiving station or whether they're bringing them to central receiving, they're always two individuals of opposite parties with those ballots.

Next slide please. We have, of course, vote centers and cells in Ajo and outline areas that take a long time to pick up ballots. If there was someone going from location...location to do that so we hire sheriff's deputies to go out to those locations, pick up those ballots and transport them back to central receiving. The ballots are tabulated and then they're stored and prepared, waiting to be transferred to the treasurer after the election and that's actually a picture of the 850 tabulators.

Next slide please. On Election Day, we have 126 vote centers, so voters can vote anywhere in Pima County at a vote center. They do not have to worry about their address going to a specific location. A precinct they can vote at any of the 126 vote centers in Pima County. Pima.vote is our website that we are using it is our trusted source for election information. The vote it has a vote center map, it has several ballots and it also has a link to our lab ballot processing out there, and the map is interactive. You can put in your address and find the vote centers that are closest to you.

Next slide please. OK, so that is a very high-level overview of election security, if you will or what we do to keep election safe. But it's really a part of the administrative process that's it's built into the process, all these safeguards and it's not just for this election, because it's a presidential election. It is what we do for all elections and I'm happy to take any questions.

Mayor Romero: Thank you, Director Hargrove. Really appreciate you coming to do a presentation for all of us. What I'll do now is have our recorder, Recorder Cazares-Kelly do her presentation, and then if there's any questions from our Council then we'll...we'll go to questions.

Ms. Cazares-Kelly: Alright, well, Skeg tash everybody I am Gabriela Cazares-Kelly Pismo Gambian I'm the county recorder. Hello everybody.

Next slide, mine is going to be very, very fast. I was told I had about 5 minutes and I want to make sure that we hit all of the important, important topics. My office is responsible for voter

registration and early voting. We have around 643,000 registered voters and counting. And my staff is hard at work registering voters even now. Yesterday was the voter registration cutoff. We were open till 10:00 PM and we were accepting forms until then, as long as it is time stamped or in our system. By yesterday 10:00 PM or through our online portal from 11:59 PM, We're able to complete those voter registrations and that's what my team is working on.

So first of all, it's very important for people to know voting by mail is safe and secure. Especially because you can vote from the safety of your own home. We also, if people are concerned about safety and security in general, it is important for people to know that we have been working on our plans for the 2024 election all year and really many of the things that we have been doing started in 2021, right after the 2020 election was put in place after that wrapped up all of the things. That we have been working on have been impacted by that so it we process all ballots in a secure ballot processing facility, it is connected to the Elections Department's office. We actually share a doorway; they open up on their side and we open up on our side to pass ballots through. Everything that we do happens in bipartisan teams. That is, anytime we are handling ballot stock or if we are issuing a ballot or even just a round ballots, there is bipartisan teams. We have been part of cyber threat assessments, physical threat assessments, tabletop exercises we have government agencies monitoring our systems through Homeland Security, through the FBI, through the Arizona Counterterrorism Information Center, we have many, many partners and preparations with local law enforcement.

One of the things that I talk about very often, though, is the concern that people will feel intimidated at the voting locations. We do not have uniformed police officers stationed at our voting sites for early voting. We do, do we do let the local law enforcement know that we will be conducting elections in those areas, we do request increased patrols and recognizing that the...the addresses that we're at are a priority because we are in, we are facilitating elections. We also have additional security at our non-county locations. So many of our locations are actually in libraries which already have security details there or they might be in areas where there might be a police substation really close by.

And so, if there is a...a location like a church, that doesn't typically have uh law enforcement or any type of security will usually hire security just to do some parameter checks and...and that sort of thing. But we only have those at a couple of locations. Our Country Club facility and also our East Side location, which is one of our higher volume locations.

Next slide. So, the very first thing that is a lot of people forget about the very first line of defense for the security of your vote has actually to do with voter roll list maintenance. So, this is something that we're doing 365 days a year. We are updating voter registrations even during the even during the cut off periods where we're not able to register new people, we are still conducting address changes and name changes and things that are legally acceptable, and we are ensuring that if there is a reason for us to cancel a voter registration, that we have the appropriate documentation or we have followed the...the specific process. We have a list of, it's a three-page document this is kind of an image of...of that of how we keep up the voter roll list maintenance database and that is housed on our website. So, you can take a look at that information or we can send it to you upon request. I think it's online; it should be online next slide.

As I mentioned before, everything that we do is listed in bipartisan teams, literally you here's a photo of two of our staff members, and they're wrapping a seal around ballots as they pick them up. They literally it is actually easier to do this job when there are two hands holding each of the ballot affidavits and the packet that they're securing putting on a seal and that sort of thing. So, every anytime that we are interacting with ballots, ballots, stock or ballots, affidavits or ballots themselves, we have bipartisan teams and we do, we do hold each other accountable. It is, it is such a normal thing here in the office that we're constantly talking about.

Next slide. On our website we have this really helpful document, it's the life of an early ballot. This does show the very detail-oriented process of going through what happens once we receive your ballot back from the post office, or if you drop it off in person or you vote early in person. What happens to that ballot affidavit if you are voted by mail, more than 80% of Pima County voters participate in early voting in some form, and so the majority of ballots that are processed will go through this process and if we really go step by step to explain what happens and the signature verification process. And that is how we are ensuring that we have identified the folks who are participating in the election. We are signature verifying to prove their identity.

Next slide. Important election dates September 21st we mailed out ballots to our military and overseas voters. So, we have actually had Pima County voters voting for some time. We have a robust community and they actually have an additional federal protection where they can actually register up until Election Day Election Day at 7:00 PM. We recommend that they register and request a ballot before then, but we...we still need to process that. However, they do have the ability to go as late as November 5th. The last day to register to vote was yesterday. We had probably 500 people come in here and register to vote in person.

One really important thing that many people will be impacted by because of recent laws and judicial rulings. There has been a change in how we process forms, we used to be able to receive any form, either Arizona State form or a federal form and if somebody was missing documentation like proof of citizenship or proof of residency, we would just have to send them a letter and then they could send it to us at another time. What...what has recently changed is that we now have to reject forms if people don't submit those, depending on which form they send us. So there will be a lot of people who will be either expecting to be have been registered and be surprised to find that they not or a lot of people who expect to be a full ballot voter meaning to have every single race on their ballot, and will only be eligible to vote a federal only ballot which has just the President, Senate and Congress they still have time to fix that, but that is something that will be coming up a lot this election cycle.

Early voting, of course, begins tomorrow, October 9th. That means we will have three locations that are open for in person early voting. Our information about which locations are listed on our website, but those three locations will be our Country Club facility on Valencia and...and Country Club are downtown location on 240 N Stone and Fellowship Bible Church on the east side of town on Broadway and Country Club. The last day to request a mail ballot a lot of people think that you have to be only on the act of early voting list, but you can actually request a ballot at any time. Let's say that you are suddenly sent out of town or you, you know, there's some reason that you're not going to be able to vote on Election Day. Every single person in Pima County is eligible to request a ballot. All they have to do is fill out our online ballot request or

give us a call and we can provide that for them. And of course, the recommended deadline to mail back your ballot is October 29th. We ask for it a full week before the election. Lot of people kind of panic if they're in city of Tucson and they're like, oh, no, normally this only takes 2 days why does it say 7? That's because we are mailing ballots to temporary addresses all over the country, and we're also, you know, a very big county and there's a lot of rural areas that do require seven days for their ballot to get here. If you're in the Tucson area, this is not typically going to impact you, however, we do recommend you get your ballot back to us as soon as possible. And those states can be found on our website.

Next slide. We are collaborating with the Elections Department and the Pima County. Pardon me, the Pima County Communications Department with Pima.vote. Many people do not understand the differences between the Recorder's office and the elections department and so we don't need them to understand the difference. We just, we just want them to find the information and so we collaborate together to ensure that we have one central location where they can find the appropriate links either to...to the to the Recorder's Office for their registration questions, or early voting questions, or to the Elections Department for Election Day voting and...and anything else that they may ask, especially having to do with results and tabulation. Think I have just one more slide and yeah, thank you. So, I will open it up for questions if there are any questions, I'm happy to answer anything.

Mayor Romero: Thank you so much to our county recorder. Like I said, is Kelly and our elections director Constance Hargrove. I did before we go into questions, I also invited Chief Kasmar because, you know, we want to make sure that everyone feels that it is safe and secure to vote and I know that TPD always works in partnership for Safe, Safe and secure elections. So, Chief, I don't know if you wanted to come up and just comment on your preparations to make sure that people feel safe going to drop off their ballots or going on Election Day to vote.

Chad Kasmar, Chief of Police: Thank you, Mayor, Honorable Mayor, Members of Council, as...as you heard from our county partners, planning for this year's election over November 5th, started the day after last year's election. So, we've been busy collaborating. I also want to highlight in my 24 years of public safety service, I've not seen the level of interest from the federal government, local, state and federal level, including the Department of Homeland Security Office for State and local law Enforcement, who's also been providing regional law enforcement resources best practices to make sure that we have safe venues and not anymore just thinking about physically safe venues, but also the use of swatting, artificial intelligence, spamming. We've all been receiving a lot of text we don't normally receive, so I would just remind our Community from the metropolitan area be careful responding to text messages that you're receiving it's not just about safety voting day, but everything leading up to from today to voting day. We've been hard at work

I'm very confident in the plan that assistant Chief been putting together with her team in patrol. We have a 5 tier response unified command structure so when we say unified command, that means public safety, emergency communications, fire and police all being in lockstep that day to make sure that we're co-located down at emergency communications and we have an incident command structure put in place that means no matter what the emergency that. Potentially might pop up that we had a we have a unified response. As you also heard, we'll be in contact with

Pima County Sheriff's Department and their 911 emergency system as well. So again, we have a 5 tier response that tier one will start with our patrol resources being augmented by our Community response team and our detectives who will all be uniform support and just increasing visibility again, as you heard not to hover at voting locations, but recognizing that folks want to be able to freely come in and out, but just making sure traffic's flowing that 75 foot walls are being respected for different opinions. And making sure that we have the safest environment possible to date, we...we have no local state or federal intelligence beyond what I've already discussed with you, our concerns. But it's something that we're monitoring daily and I will be sure to give Mayor and Council an update in city leadership if any of that changes.

Mayor Romero: Thank you, chief and I do want to open it up for questions from my colleagues and I do see Council Member Uhlich and then Council Member Fimbres and then Council Member Santa Cruz.

Council Member Uhlich: Thank you, Mayor and thank you, chief. I...I really wanna thank our recorder and elections director. I personally believe we could not be in better hands and recognize as well that there are tremendous pressures and scrutiny and I think the professionalism and the openness that you bring to your jobs is just invaluable. So, thank you for your service. I did want to ask representing Ward 6, I know that there were some discussion with the university and students to make sure that students have absolute and full and fair access to their right to vote and just wanted to ask if you could touch on briefly how you believe that's resolved and...and again appreciate you engaging in that conversation.

Ms. Cazares-Kelly: You want me to go first? Council member Uhlich, Mayor, so we have resolved a request from the University of Arizona to extend the early voting site. We actually just had a conversation this morning, we are in the middle of contract renegotiations here to submit the paperwork, but we were requested by the university. We had originally planned on being on early voting site for one week. And we had a request to be an early voting site for two weeks.

College students in particular are most likely to encounter a situation where they are listed as federal only ballot voters. That is something that they can resolve by October 31st if they bring in the appropriate documentation, which in that case could be a passport or a birth certificate, could be a tribal ID number or US citizenship documentation. And then also residency, which is something that has their name tying them to their address in some type of official document that could be a utility bill, a bank statement, a lease agreement, something like that. Because college students are much more likely to encounter this, I did agree that they are more vulnerable. The deadline for them to resolve this is October 31st after that if they are a federal only voter, they're a federal only voter, and that's there's nothing that I can do that that is state that is state law.

We're unable to change it after the...the Thursday before the election, which again happens to be Halloween. So, we...we did do that to provide more opportunity. What...what typically happens is college students will come up and they'll say, Oh my gosh, I didn't know how to, I...I didn't know this I don't have my drivers, I don't have my birth certificate with me, I don't have a passport, but I can ask my mom and it sometimes takes them a few days for their parents to get back to them. Usually those students don't carry those documents with them. They're...they're

not bringing them here in their dorms, but they are living here for nine months out of the year for four years in a row, which means they're living here and so we did we did resolve that.

We also met even this morning me, the elections director. There's really, there's not a great solution for University of Arizona. There are drawbacks to my early voting location, and there are drawbacks to Director Hargrove's location it there's no real good solution that we found at this time and...and maybe in the future we can talk about finding a better location. But for our ...my early voting site. The challenges that we have are you know, in order to set that site up we have to drive underground. We have to use the service elevators. It's kind of a maze to get through into that location and then parking for the general public is extremely difficult they would have to pay for parking. It is not something where the public can simply drive up and...and just park there and...and vote really quick. It's also located on the third floor of the student union so it's very convenient for students and for faculty and staff who are on campus all...all day, every day but for others it is more of a challenge and so. I recognize that absolutely, but we are responding by extending that early voting period.

Council Member Fimbres: Mayor, I have a question.

Council Member Uhlich: Thank you

Council Member Fimbres: Coworkers.

Mayor Romero: Hold on. Hold on. Council Member, I don't know if Council Member Uhlich was done with her questions.

Council Member Uhlich: And it looked like director Hargrove may have wanted to chime in.

Council Member Fimbres: Sorry, go ahead.

Ms. Hargrove: Yes, thank you. So, mayor, Council Woman Uhlich. So, the...the vote center location has been a part of conversation for over a year and we did identify a location that we...we thought was convenient to the general public as well as students because we cannot make voters pay. So we would have to pay for parking somehow and just kind of block off a section in the parking deck for them to park, so we did find a location, but they pulled out because of understandable reasons before the primary election and things are still going on in Israel. So, we're...we're not we didn't go back there for this general election, but we did meet this morning and we're working with the university on signage.

They've been sending out lots of communication via e-mail. We have little palm cards that the students can have they can scan the QR code and it gives them a Google map and they can get walking directions. Our driving directions to the vote center and we just have some fun stuff planned for them to get there and we're just really working really hard to get the information out to them to help them understand that there's two ways to vote early voting and then there's Election Day voting. And so while they can converge and they can drop off early ballots at the vote center, we want to make sure that they understand that if they...they can vote early and get it done or you know, come to the vote center on Election Day. So, we're hoping that I think we

have a good plan I it sounded like we had a good plan and Adriana sounded very pleased with the plan this morning. So, we're moving forward with that and ensuring that the students can find where they need to vote. And one of the things that was proposed and we have to get it approved by the university is that for Election Day, we would put down little paw prints leading to the vote center so they could follow the paw prints and get there. So, I hope that answers your question.

Council Member Uhlich: It does so thank you both for the that extraordinary additional engagement and it...it hadn't occurred to me initially that all locations need to be equally accessible to all members of the public. And so, I think your explanation is very, very helpful. And thank you again for those added efforts.

Mayor Romero: Alrighty Council Member Fimbres

Council Member Fimbres: You remember poll workers. What kind of training do they go through and how do you become a poll worker?

Mayor Romero: What kind of training for poll workers.

Ms. Hargrove: Yes, I think that question is probably for me if we're talking about Election Day poll workers. So, poll workers, the inspectors and marshals are always required to attend training in person, and then our judges normally attend training in person too. We have multiple types of training, so the inspectors and marshals the regular poll workers, the clerks and the judges. We have equipment specialists, which is a position that I added in 2022, when I got here and we have a 2 1/2 hour training for each one of them and we've added what we call a simulation training, which is kind of an interactive training where Coworkers actually go through the process as though they're checking in voters and the poll workers are role-playing and all the equipment is there and they go through that. We also have an online training that they can take if they've already taken training twice this year in person, then we recommend they take the online training if they're not an inspector or a Marshall. Does that answer your question?

Council Member Fimbres: Yeah. Thank you so much Constance. How many pole workers are going to be at each site 2? 1R and 1D or what is it?

Ms. Hargrove: Yes, Sir. So, there's a minimum of eight poll workers at any location up to about 14 or 16. The judge and the...the judges have to be of opposite parties. So, the judges are definitely Democrats and Republicans. If we are having an inspector that's of one of the parties then the Marshall has to be of the opposite party. So typically, you will have minimum two of each Republican Democrats in the votes in the vote center. Clerks can be of any party, so they...they do not have to be of a party. We did get legal advice letting us know that we can have an inspector that is not a Democrat or Republican. So, we do have one person who's requested to be an inspector. That person is on our standby list because we do not need any inspectors right now, we've already filled those positions. That person is on the standby list, so if something happens to one of our inspectors for this election, that person can step up and be an inspector.

Council Member Fimbres: Do appreciate the information.

Ms. Hargrove: Welcome.

Mayor Romero: Thank you, Council Member Santa Cruz and then the Vice Mayor, right?

Council Member Santa Cruz: Thank you, mayor, for this very bringing this important issue and education for...for us to be aware, I'm curious cause, there's so much that goes, you know, into all of it and there's so many different steps and safety measures I'm curious about how...how? We're combating misinformation or disinformation regarding the election? Is there a campaign around that to make sure that folks not only feel encouraged to to vote, but know that their...their vote is safe once they cast their ballot?

Ms. Cazares-Kelly: I guess like I can start off with this one. Council Member Santa Cruz, mayor and council, we this is an ongoing effort and concern. This is something that really was brought to our attention obviously through the 2020 election and afterwards we've spent the past nearly four years trying to figure out and...and...and taking active steps to combat the misinformation and not just misinformation, we we've really even broken it down much more than that. Misinformation is something that is accidental, but there's also disinformation, which is intentional, intentionally meant to be confusing and misinformation that could be something as...as sneaky as the use of artificial intelligence to communicate something false intentionally, especially malicious, and so we have been working with the Secretary of State's office for multiple trainings, learning how to spot this. We have been, you know, doing all of that kind of thing already and...and learning more about it because this is new language, new territory for elections officers as...as it has already been mentioned, you know the...the interest in elections is has been transformed over the past 4-5 years and so we have spent a lot of time in our office building up a communications team to communicate what is what is real and becoming a source of truth for the community.

We do this by demystifying our processes and making things easy to understand, ensuring that we're using plain language within our communications. That's why you see things like the changes on the ballot affidavits, all of those design changes were meant to make it so that it's easier for people to just understand the basic gist of what they need so that they can feel confident in the system also outreach. Director Hargrove and I, we have we have been on tour, we have gone, and we have presented the life of the ballot. And you know what happens to a ballot on the elections side of the house? To we've...we've done that in churches, we've done that in schools. Even us being here is part of our outreach efforts to reassure the public that we are maintaining a high level of...of...of care for your ballot. It is something that we are very dedicated to. We handle your ballots like they're our own, we want to make sure that people feel comfortable you know, saying yes to as many media outlets as possible. We even opened up for tours we've had multiple tours of our ballot processing facility and...and the elections department, we've...we've cohosted several groups and had conversations with legislators. We have spent a lot of time really increasing the transparency and...and explaining the process to people and by far the majority of people who hear and understand the legal reasons we do the things that we do or the policies and the procedures that are in place and the protections they feel confident. They feel like they that that we're doing everything we can to ensure that their vote is going to be counted. Every legal vote is going to be counted and so we've been spending a lot of

time on those efforts for the past four years, not just...not just this election, but consistently during this entire time. So, thank you for that question.

Council Member Santa Cruz: Thank you both for all your work. Much appreciated.

Mayor Romero: Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Dahl: Thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Director Hargrove and Recorder Cazares-Kelly. I am completely convinced that in Pima County it's going to be a fair, transparent, accountable election and that people's votes will be recorded the...the way they...they cast them. I've done this for many years, I've worked elections as a poll worker. I worked for the Maricopa County Elections Department, taking votes for several months from people who were unable walk to the polls back before we had vote by mail. I do have some recommendations, vote by mail, vote early. That makes it easier for everybody, and it's not going to take you any much longer to figure out, even though it's a long ballot, if you find yourself going to a poll and there's something bad happening, call 911, we have people who will help with that. The poll workers are trained to help, too, if it's something that's just nagging at you, talk to a poll worker if you see something, say something. I am outraged by the number of candidates who are challenging the quality, the integrity of our election system that is so undemocratic, small D and it's leading to fascism. I am so confident in our county workers on this and on the people that they've hired to run the polls and on the US mail system. So, vote, vote early, don't vote often, just vote one and thank you for all you're doing.

Mayor Romero: And on that note, I usually enjoy my husband and I enjoy voting at home. So, when we receive our ballot by mail, we sit down with our children with, well, they're no longer children, they're teenagers, and one of them actually can vote now and explain to them what this is, what we're doing. These are the races that are there that are happening this year and but there are people that still love to go to the poll on Election Day. And so, what is the recommendation that you two would have in terms of how to find your polling location, where to go and how to prepare to...to cast your ballot on Election Day?

Ms. Hargrove: Thank you for that question, that's an excellent question. I'm gonna start with the early ballot though, because you mentioned something that a lot of people do and that sit down together at the table and mark their ballot. It is critically important to make sure that you keep your ballot together and put that in the affidavit envelope to send back if you accidentally get your husband's page one or card one and put it in with your card one and we receive it here once we receive it. You have voted that that is it. So that means that those would be rejected because we cannot accept two card ones. So, you want to make sure that you put your card one and card into...in your envelope. Advise your friends, do not mix up the ballots.

Make sure you're getting at least one card, one and one card, two in there. Because if there are two of the same in an envelope, we will have to reject it. So that's my first disclaimer there for Election Day Pima go vote is what we're pushing. It has an interactive map out there with the 126 vote center locations. You can actually start with the early voting locations, but it has 126 vote center locations. You put in your address you can find the vote center that's nearest you. Vote Center within three-mile radius, five-mile radius. However, you want to look at it they're all

out there for individuals to find anyone who is going to vote on Election Day will also receive a list of vote centers in their sample ballot that they get in the mail.

So, any household will receive a sample ballot if there's an individual in the house that is not on the active early voting list. Sample ballots will be going out October the 18th has a list of the vote centers there. We will and we have sent posters to the library's they will be posting in the libraries a list of those vote centers and in our Latino community, Hispanic, Hispanic, Latino community. I forget the...the end of the group they volunteer to also put posters up in grocery stores and in different places, with the vote center locations there. So hopefully with all of this information, individuals will be able to find a vote center that's close to them that they can vote at.

Mayor Romero: Alrighty, any others hearing none? I do wanna thank both of you for the incredible work that you're doing for our community. It is important that our Community feel and know that our elections are secure and safe, and that there really is a big network of people, including both the Recorder's office, the Elections Department. As well as a sheriff and Tucson Police Department that are working to make sure that. Not just the ballots are safe, but the people voting are safe. So, thank you all for your presentation. Thank you for coming and appreciate everything that you do for our democracy. Thank you, thank you, chief. Alrighty. So, we're gonna move on to Item 4 and then after Item 4, we're moving into executive session.

**4. Updates on State and National Legislation and Regional Committees (City Wide)
SS/OCT08-24-18**

(This item was taken out of order.)

Introductory comments and information were made by Mayor Regina Romero.

Information and presentation were provided by Andres Cano, Intergovernmental Relations Manager, who fielded and answered questions.

No formal action was taken.

Mayor Romero: Time has been set aside for mayor and council to receive an update on state and national legislation and regional committees. Before I have, I hand this over to...to Andres, I just wanted to reiterate that early ballots will be mailed out tomorrow to all registered voters that have signed up for vote by mail. Keep an eye on your mailbox so that you as soon as you receive it, you vote on it and mail it back. Not sure where if you registered visit www.recorder.pima.gov/voter info to check your voter registration. This year's ballot is going to be a long one it's 2 pages front and back, so that's 4 pages that you need to fill out. Make sure to vote in each and every office for each of the propositions. It's long, but definitely worth paying attention to and spending some time making sure you vote on all of it. Once you have completed your entire ballot, mail it back as soon as possible and every vote counts. Your participation makes a difference.

Last week I had the honor and privilege of joining the official U.S. presidential delegation to Mexico City, led by first Lady Dr. Jill Biden to witness the historic inauguration of Mexico's new president, Claudia Sheinbaum. It was an honor to also represent every Tucson in my parents were born in Mexico and migrated to the United States. Even though we've been Sonoran Desert dwellers and living in this desert for at least seven generations. It was beautiful to bear witness to a historic occasion for the people of Mexico. Our...our relationship with Mexico is very important not just for Arizona, but for Tucson. It's our trait you know, we share so much, right? We share the beautiful Borderlands. We share desert, but we also share familial ties we share our economies, we depend on each other and we share our environment over 3.6 million Mexican tourists visit Arizona each year contributing \$2.5 billion to our economy and supporting more than 30,000 jobs across our state.

So, I look forward to being able to continue building a strong relationship with President Sheinbaum and my congratulations as she begins her presidency. It was an incredible experience and I was so proud to represent Tucsonans in that special occasion. Also this past Friday, I had the privilege of hosting Senior White House Advisor to President Biden here in Tucson, Tom Perez, we had an opportunity to spotlight Tucson Meet yourself and he was so happy to eat some Dominican empanadas at Tucson Meet yourself it was delicious as we all know, but I we also talked about the rich culture and heritage that we have here in Tucson.

It was hard to believe that one year ago we launched our Somos Uno planning effort at Tucson Meet yourself and since then, over 2000 Tucsonans have participated through surveys and workshops, public meetings and focus groups. It was great to share this work with Tom Perez. Then we took him out on a tour on our electric bus. For a variety of affordable housing projects in Tucson that have been supported with federal funds coming from the Biden Harris administration, in addition to other city and state funding sources. We shared our affordable housing strategy for Tucson as well as a Tucson resilient together, our climate action and adaptation plan. We visited the Milagro and Oracle project, which is nearing completion, this project has 63 affordable housing units for seniors in Ward 3.

We were greeted with over 25 infants, children, moms, seniors and staff at the Wildcat Inn. This low barrier shelter is an important part of the collaborative efforts across our community to house unsheltered individuals and help them to permanent housing, and this particular location we purchased with American rescue plan dollars. Our next stop was 29th St. Thrive Zone we were able to hear from two persons who are helping to engage residents in our planning process as well as a local developer who is about to be ground on low income housing project in the thrive 29th St. Thrive zone. That includes a number of units set aside for unsheltered seniors. Also, we celebrated that the City of Tucson competed successfully for 1/2 a million Dollar Choice Neighborhoods planning grant to advance our work in the 20 nineth St. Thrive Zone.

As you may recall, this is the same planning grant that we receive for the Thrive in the 05 that led us to successfully compete for the \$50 million Choice neighborhood grant from HUD. So, I just wanted to thank Tom Perez for visiting the City of Tucson and Biden Harris administration for providing access to compete for federal dollars. It was very successful event and I was very happy to be able to talk to Mr. Perez about all of the successful programs that we have that didn't

exist 4 years ago. So very excited about everything that's happening and getting ready for more. So, with that Andres, it's your, it's your floor.

Andres Cano, Intergovernmental Relations Manager: Thank you so much, Honorable Mayor and Members of the Council. It's a pleasure to be here with you again today. Those were incredible federal visits and I want to thank our mayor for being our ambassador at both of those events. We're going to do a quick summary in the material that's been provided already by the recorder, the elections Department and now me about the important election dates that are about to proceed. Early voting begins tomorrow, October 9th.

As the recorder mentioned, all registered voters on the active early voting list will receive their ballots by mail. The last day to request a ballot by mail is October 25th. Early ballot should be returned by October 29th and Election Day is Tuesday, November 5th. As was mentioned, Pima.vote is the best source of online information from both the recorder and the election director on all questions related to ballots and polling locations, and also want to ensure that folks remember that this is going to be a long ballot. It's 2 pages double sided so total of 4 pages on the ballot, you'll see the federal races, state races, local races, a judicial branch.

And I wanted to talk to you a bit more about the 13 ballot propositions. 11 of them were referred by the legislature directly to the ballot, two of them are citizen driven you'll see I've noted them in the screen before you Proposition 139, abortion access and Proposition 140. Those were initiatives that required citizens themselves to ask for the public support to put those on the ballot. So, I just wanted to ensure that you had all that information for your constituents, Honorable Mayor and Members of the Council.

There is a comprehensive general election publicity pamphlet that has been mailed to all households with a registered voter, it includes arguments for and against. Each proposition also includes an analysis by Legislative Council and that online digital version can be found at Arizona.vote. It is a document that is produced by the Arizona Secretary of State. We're going to move quickly to updates from Washington Congress has had a session until after the November election, but critical federal actions are still taking place.

A summary of these actions were sent to your offices I wanted to highlight two specifically this week, the United States Environmental Protection Agency announced a new proposed rule that adds 16 PFOS substances in PFOS categories to the Toxic Release Inventory. This means that these chemicals will now be designated as chemicals of special concern, subject to stricter reporting requirements. The EPA emphasized that this rule would help the agency collect crucial data on how PFAS are released into the environment which will help communities like ours better understand the risks and management of these substances this is a proposed rule. The public comment period will be open for 60 days after its publication in the Federal Register, and we of course, will be monitoring those developments. Additionally, the president signed a new executive order last week to address the emerging threats of gun violence this order establishes an interagency task force to combat the proliferation of firearms without. Serial numbers like 3D printed guns and machine gun conversion devices. The executive order also directs federal agencies to create improved age appropriate resources for school based active shooter drills, ensuring communication strategies are trauma informed and accessible to all students, including

those with disabilities or language needs. These actions must be taken within 110 days. Last but not least, on the state side the joint Legislative Budget Committee release its report of the August Financial General Fund collections and the some of the data is in front of you now. General Fund collections in August hit 1.12 billion. That's a 13.8 increase from last year sales tax collections rose 8.4%, reflecting strong consumer spending and Arizona's unemployment rate held steady at 3.4% it's the lowest it's second lowest it's been since the 1970s. 66,000 jobs were added over the past over this period, a 2.1% increase, however, and this is the most important part for your information, honorable mayor and members of the Council. Individual income tax revenues were \$14 million below forecast.

The reason why this is important is because as you know, when individual income tax revenues are down, state shared revenue for cities and towns like Tucson also goes down. As you'll recall, we've seen this particular line item go down. Since the passage of the 2.5% flat tax by Governor Ducey in 2022 this still means that Tucson is bracing for a near \$30 million reduction in state shared revenue in the current fiscal year. This, of course will impact our ability to fund core services, maintain infrastructure and invest in Tucson. We'll continue to pay attention to all of these economic trends the JLBC data that we receive, honorable mayor, members of the Council is really the indicator for what kind of resources the legislature is going to be having to negotiate and work with come January when the session starts and of course, with the budget adoption, usually in May very important data. Sometimes it's confusing, but it's super critical for us to be paying attention to all of this and with that, thank you. And I'm available for any questions.

Mayor Romero: Council Woman Lee let me know if you anyone else wants to jump in.

Council Member Lee: Thank you, mayor I just have a question for you. I remember when the legislature was in session, there was talk of other legislative or the legislature putting ballot initiatives forward around abortion. Do we just have one abortion related initiative that people have to vote on this time or is there gonna be confusing initiatives on the ballot, right?

Mr. Cano: Thank you, Honorable Mayor, Council Member Lee and Members of the Council. The full list that was provided to the 13 ballot propositions, or the only ballot propositions that made it in time with the Secretary of State's office. So to answer your question specifically, I don't believe there will be a competing. Measure. Let me clarify, there will not be a competing.

Mayor Romero: Any others? Already hearing none. Thank you so much Andres. Really appreciate your update. Thanks. Alrighty. So, what we're gonna do now we're gonna go back into item one, which is going to be an executive session, is gonna take us about 30-40 minutes, and then we'll be out to finish the study session. That good? All righty we will see we need a motion, OK? Let's go back to let's go back to the Item 1. Ms. Clerk.

1. Executive Session – Acuna v. City of Tucson, Pima County Superior Court Case No. C20235028 (City Wide) SS/OCT08-24-185

It was moved by Council Member Fimbres, duly seconded, and carried by a voice vote of 6 to 0 (Council Member Cunningham absent/excused), to enter into Executive Session as noticed in the agenda for Item 1.

Clerk: The executive session is noticed as Item 1, Acuna v. City of Tucson. Pima County Superior Court case number C 20235028 and is being held pursuant to ARS Section 38-431.03(A)(S) and (A)(4).

Mayor Romero: May I have a motion please?

Council Member Fimbres: So, moved.

Council Member Santa Cruz: Second.

Mayor Romero: There is a motion and a second, all those in favor please signify by saying aye.

All: Aye.

Mayor Romero: Any against motion carries. We'll see everyone else back in 30 minutes.

RECESS: 4:12 p.m.

RECONVENE: 4:27p.m.

MAYOR & COUNCIL: All present

STAFF: All present

Executive Session was held from 4:15 p.m. to 4:26 p.m.

It was moved by Council Member Santa Cruz, duly seconded, and carried by a voice vote of 6 to 0 (Council Member Cunningham absent/excused) to return to open session.

Mayor Romero: I need a motion to return to study session.

Council Member Santa Cruz: So, moved.

Council Member Fimbres: Second.

Mayor Romero: I have a motion and a second, any discussion hearing none. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

All: Aye.

Mayor Romero: Any against motion passes. What is the Council's pleasure for item 2?

Mike Rankin, City Attorney: Honorable Mayor, Members of the Council, I'd ask for a motion that the Mayor and Council authorize and direct the city attorney to proceed as discussed in executive session and to settle this lawsuit for the amount of \$240,000.

Council Member Fimbres: So, moved.

Council Member Santa Cruz: Second.

Mayor Romero: Thank you for the motion. There's a motion in a second. Any further discussion on this motion, hearing none all those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

All: Aye.

Mayor Romero: Any against motion carries. Now we move on to item 5.

5. Mayor and Council Discussion of Regular Agenda (City Wide) SS/OCT08-24-183

Vice Mayor Dahl requested Consent Agenda Item i be considered separately for the City Attorney to read corrections into the record.

Item No. 7i - Resolution: Supporting the Designation of the Santa Cruz River Urban National Wildlife Refuge by the United States Secretary of Interior (City Wide) OCT08-24-293

Mayor Romero: Does anyone have any items to remove from the consent agenda, Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Dahl: Yes. What's the number? I...I...I from the consent agenda, yes, there's some scrivener corrections that need to be made.

Mike Rankin, City Attorney: Yes, I messed up the resolution and so accidentally dropped off several of the Whereas clauses. So, I just need to read those into the record and it's long enough so that it makes more sense to pull it off consent and just do it separately. Thank you.

Mayor Romero: So, Item i, any others? Hearing none, we move on to item 6.

6. Mayor and Council Discussion of Future Agendas (City Wide) SS/OCT08-24-184

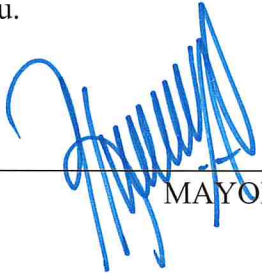
No items were identified for future agendas.

Mayor Romero: Does anyone have any future agenda items to add? Hearing none study session is adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT – 4:29 p.m..

AUDIO RECORDING AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST FROM THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE FOR TEN YEARS FROM THE DATE OF THIS MEETING AND IS AVAILABLE AT <https://www.tucsonaz.gov/gov/meeting-schedules-and-agendas>

Mayor Romero: The regular session starts. Let me just make sure we have the correct time. Regular session starts at 5:30 p.m. The next study session will be Tuesday, October 22nd, 2024. Thank you all. We'll see you in about an hour. Thank you.



MAYOR

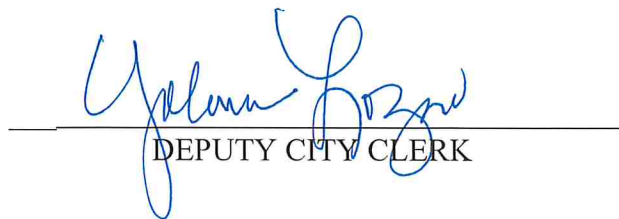
ATTEST:



CITY CLERK

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY

I, the undersigned, have read the foregoing transcript of the study session meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Tucson, Arizona, held on the 8th day of October 2024, and do hereby certify that it is an accurate transcription.



DEPUTY CITY CLERK

SM:RJ:yl