

Ward 6 Staff



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Council Member



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Ward 6 —Update

OCTOBER 29, 2010

A Message From Steve

On Tuesday, the Mayor and Council finally put to a vote the issue of whether or not we as a governing body were going to ask the taxpayers to back a bond package of over \$260 million in support of a downtown convention center hotel. As you know, I have been rather vocally opposed to the project, not because I don't want to see a new and vibrant downtown area, but because of the financial package that was being presented to us. I have shared that package several times in this space. The highlights are simply that none of the developers were taking any of the risk - the taxpayers were taking all of it. I applaud the rest of the council for showing their concern for our fiscal vulnerability and voting along with me to advise the Rio Nuevo Board that the city will not backstop those bonds. Wrong project - wrong package - wrong time. I thank my colleagues for their votes.

Since we voted, the question has been asked by several media outlets - "What's next?" The answer is simple. This distraction has been front of both the city and the Rio Nuevo Board for months. Now that it has effectively been set aside, we must focus on finalizing the terms of an operational Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the District. That agreement needs to set in place the sorts of clearly delineated roles, responsibilities, obligations, fiscal controls and 'rules of engagement' that have been lacking in our relationship. Without those, the record shows that projects have been funded without adequate pre-planning, project management, or even whether projects being funded fit in with the statutory mandate by which the District was formed. Much of my campaign for office addressed this exact point - we have wasted millions of dollars of taxpayer money and have little to show for it. That must stop. The State Legislature appointed a new Rio Nuevo Board. We must now negotiate an IGA with that Board that sets in place a set of best management practices so that together we can decide on how to move forward with projects that we can afford, and projects that are authorized as proper use of TIF dollars. If we achieve that agreement, and implement it effectively, we will have sent a huge message to the private sector that this jurisdiction can be trusted to manage taxpayer dollars, and with that I predict it will serve as a catalyst to the investment of more private dollars into our community. The hotel distraction is out of the way. Now it is essential that we look forward and get that IGA done - and begin working with the District Board in a productive fashion.



Important Phone Numbers

Tucson Police Department

911 or 791-4444
nonemergency

Mayor & Council Comment Line

791-4700

Neighborhood Resources

791-4605

Park Wise

791-5071

Water Issues

791-3242

Pima County Animal Control

243-5900

Street Maintenance

791-3154

Development Services

791-4505

Southwest Gas

889-1888

Gas Emergency/ Gas Leaks

889-1888

West Nile Virus Hotline

243-7999

Environment Service

791-3171

Graffiti Removal

792-2489

Continued: A Message From Steve

In addition to having taken action on the hotel, we also invited several representatives from the Rio Nuevo Board to join us and share their thoughts relative to two projects for which they have suspended funding. I appreciate the Board members' having taken that time from their schedules. With respect to the reasoning behind the suspensions, it is unfortunate that the answer is caught in the middle of some legal interpretations related to how TIF money can and should be spent. In cases where lawyers disagree, it is usual and customary for a third party to give insight. In this case, it might prove to be fortuitous that the Rio Nuevo Audit is due to be released within days. It is likely that the answer as to which interpretation is correct will be found in that audit. What we need is closure to the issue so we can eliminate yet another stumbling block to our developing a working relationship with the Board. I am hopeful that the audit will inform us on that question and with that third party answer in hand we can move forward together with the District Board in accordance with the results.

In other action, we approved the framework for forming budgets, and how projects will be managed with respect to RTA roadwork. The voters approved several such projects nearly 5 years ago and we are just now adopting some "best management" practices to govern how we spend RTA tax dollars. That should have been done long ago. It wasn't - now it has been. As with the Rio Nuevo money that the audit will address, we needed to get this document in place so we can say to those who fund these projects that we are not handling their hard earned dollars any less effectively and efficiently than we handle the money with which we run our own households. As with the Rio Nuevo IGA, the overarching message from Tuesday is that we as Mayor and Council must correct what has been a tangled web of fiscal mismanagement in the past and put in place the ground rules by which we manage taxpayer money in transparent and verifiable documents with both the Rio Nuevo Board and the RTA. Through Proposition 400 we are asking voters to adopt a self-imposed sales tax. Without assurances that we are using their money wisely, voters have no reason to approve the tax hike.

One of the Propositions on which we did not take action is Proposition 203 - Medical Marijuana. If the measure passes next Tuesday, we will need to proactively put in place Land Use Code changes by which marijuana dispensaries and grow facilities are controlled in our community. Other jurisdictions have not been proactive in setting in place guidelines and are suffering some unfortunate fallout from not having done so. We will keep an eye on the vote next week and are prepared to discuss Ordinance changes on November 9th if it passes.

I wish each of you a safe Halloween weekend. If you're out partying, use a designated driver. With the great weather being predicted, we can anticipate large numbers of trick-or-treaters out in the neighborhoods. Stay alert.



Sincerely,

Steve Kozachik
Council Member, Ward 6

Palo Verde Neighborhood Association

COMMUNITY YARD SALE – a great way to highlight your business, make some extra holiday cash...and get rid of *stuff* - is being held on Saturday, November 6th from 8AM-1PM at Catalina Magnet High School located at 3645 E Pima. There are still spots available. Please check out the information on line at: <http://www.paloverdena.org/home>
For more information contact Tamar at 270-3956 or: social@paloverde.org



Did You Know?

November is National Adoption Awareness Month

Each year, November is recognized as National Adoption Awareness Month. While all adoption-related issues are important, the particular focus of this month is the adoption of children currently in foster care. Activities and celebrations are kicked off with a Presidential Proclamation, and while efforts made at the national level certainly help build awareness of adoption, participation in local programs, events, and activities by those of us with a direct connection to adoption can often be the most effective way to promote positive perceptions, debunk the myths, and draw attention to the tens of thousands of children in foster care who wait and hope for permanent families. To learn more about adoption and ways to spread the word, visit <http://national-adoption-month.adoption.com/>



Cops and Rodders Car, Truck and Motorcycle Show

When: Sat., Oct. 30, 8 a.m.

Where: Hi Corbett Field Park, 22nd Street and Country Club Road

Cost: Free

The fourth annual Cops and Rodders Car, Truck and Motorcycle Show features Halloween activities, a costume contest, trick-or-treating, a haunted house, pedal-car races and more. Call 343-0437 or visit: <http://www.copsandrodderstucson.org/index.html> for more information.



You can email us at ward6@tucsonaz.gov

Pima County On Aging

2011 25th Annual Medicare Update Conference

For more information & a schedule of dates and locations visit: <http://www.pcoa.org/what-s-new/>

Armory Park Medicare Health Fair

Learn about Medicare changes for 2011. Counselors & representatives from PCOA, Social Security, AHCCCS, Medicare Advantage Health Plans, and the stand-alone Prescription Drug Plans will be available to assist you. 546-2011 or <http://www.pcoa.org/armory-park-medicare-health-fair/>