

## Ward 6 Staff



Steve Kozachik



Ann Charles



Diana Amado



Molly Thrasher



Amy Stabler



Evelyn Romero



# Ward 6 - Newsletter

TUCSON FIRST

May 21, 2014

## Caption Contest

I've done this contest a few times – this is County Administrator Chuck Huckelberry and me at the recent Women in Government celebration. For the winning entry (unless it's Chuck) I'll spring for a \$20 gift certificate at Falora Restaurant on Broadway, in Broadway Village. Send your entry to [ward6@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:ward6@tucsonaz.gov). We'll announce the winner in the next newsletter. If my staff thinks Chuck's entry is the winner, he buys the Ward 6 staff dinner at Falora. We'll be fair in how we judge.



## Tangled Pension Web



In May of last year, Craig Harris was reporting in The Republic up in Phoenix about the Phoenix public safety pension issue. This was before the Goldwater Institute had filed their lawsuit against the City of Phoenix over the issue of pension spiking with sick leave dollars. At the time the Pension Board system administrator, Jared Smout indicated that the City could avoid a legal judgment by voluntarily agreeing to change its policy. They didn't and they're being sued.



### 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

Planning and  
Development  
Services 791-5550

Southwest Gas

889-1888

Gas Emergency/  
Gas Leaks

889-1888

West Nile Virus

Hotline

243-7999

Environment

Service

791-3171

Graffiti Removal

792-2489

AZ Game & Fish

628-5376

## Continued: A Message From Steve

As I noted last week, we're changing our policy to stop allowing unused sick leave to count as pensionable income. As I also mentioned, it's my contention that we need to further protect ourselves from any claims, and protect the solvency of the public safety pension system by clawing back the money that has been used to spike employee pension benefits – for those workers who have not yet started collecting the benefits. We have the information – we need to disaggregate the unused sick leave dollars from the legitimate base pay.

I'm being told that we can't do that, for two reasons. First, it's the Pension Board who calculates the pensions. Second, the higher pension calculation formed the basis for the employee and employer contributions.

To the first point I'd simply say that it's us who provides the Pension Board the data. We can correct it. To the second point, everybody knows that pensioners will collect far more than they paid into the system. And if necessary, correct the overpayment by adjusting what they're paying now, before they retire, or do it in their pension checks after they start collecting.

Jared Smout had suggested something similar last year as it related to recouping money that was improperly paid to the Phoenix police. It was his contention at the time that if Phoenix lost their lawsuit, the Pension Board would have to "figure out what their pension should have been, and any overpayment, and collect that. The way we typically collect is by reducing pensions." He went on to say that "this potentially would affect a large amount of people."

I think Smout's wrong when he suggests that they reduce the pension payments to people who are already out receiving the benefits. That's spilled milk. But for those not yet off the payroll and collecting benefits, we should absolutely correct the record and make sure what they eventually receive reflects what is allowed by State law. State law says "unused sick leave, payment in lieu of vacation, payment for unused compensatory time or payment for any fringe benefits" cannot be used as compensation to compute retirement benefits.

State law also says that only "base salary, overtime pay, shift differential pay, military differential wage pay, compensatory time used by an employee in lieu of overtime not otherwise paid by an employer and holiday pay" may be used to calculate pension benefits. That's pretty clear. We have the data. We need to claw back money improperly credited as pensionable.

This is a budget issue, and it's an issue that addresses the long term health of the Pension system. If the current police and firefighters wanted to do their part in ensuring the viability of the PSPRS, they wouldn't be pushing back against me as hard as they have been over fixing this. We should all be in this with a long term perspective, not just the here and now, and today's all that matters.



### Important Phone Numbers

Senator John  
McCain (R)  
520-670-6334

Senator Jeff  
Flake (R)  
520-575-8633

Congressman  
Ron Barber (D)  
(2<sup>nd</sup> District)  
520-881-3588

Congressman  
Raul Grijalva (D)  
(3<sup>rd</sup> District)  
520-622-6788

Governor Janice  
Brewer (R)  
Governor of Arizona  
602-542-4331

Toll free:  
1-800-253-0883

#### State Legislators

Toll Free  
Telephone:  
1-800-352-8404  
Internet:  
[www.azleg.gov](http://www.azleg.gov)

Mayor Jonathan  
Rothschild  
791-4201

City Infoguide  
[http://  
cms3.tucsonaz.gov/  
infoguide](http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/infoguide)

## Camp Fury

Before I get more deeply into the budget I need to correct the record from last week's newsletter – and toss a bit of positive news aimed at our public safety workers on the heels of the pension item.



First of all, that does not look fun. But it does look like a serious rush.

Last week I congratulated the ladies from TFD for winning an award at the Women in Government ceremony. I have since learned that Camp Fury is much more than just our female firefighters. It's a partnership that exists between several law enforcement and fire personnel, the Southern Arizona Girl Scouts and many young women from throughout the community.

In addition to the TFD participants, Camp Fury includes women from Northwest Fire, the Department of Homeland Security, the Oro Valley Police Department and our own TPD. Presently they have about 25 girls in the program that'll run from May 27<sup>th</sup> through the end of the month. They'll share a 5 day/4 night experience during which they'll receive training in search/rescue skills, self-defense, health and fitness and even some crime scene investigation techniques. It's a lot of hands-on activities through which the young women involved will be learning how to break down false barriers in terms of entry into non-traditional career paths.

My thanks to Asst. Police Chief Kathleen Robinson for bringing the mistake to my attention. All of the women in each agency that supports Camp Fury deserve to be acknowledged.

## Alliance of Construction Trades



One more item before I dig a little into the budget. This is arguably budget related because of the impact the construction industry has on our local economy.

If you're a homeowner who's looking for remodeling ideas using the latest new materials and products, or if you're a business owner needing a specialty contractor to take care of some unique tenant improvements, or if you're in the construction industry and simply want to stay up to speed on materials, equipment and available technology, this trade show has something for you.

The Hotel Tucson will host the Alliance of Construction Trades event on May 21<sup>st</sup> from 11am until 6pm. It's free and open to the public. I'd highly recommend it as a one-stop-shop for anybody who is even thinking of a construction related activity around your home or business. Hotel Tucson is at the corner of St. Mary's and Granada.

No 'full disclosure' statement needed here. I'm only bringing this out because we're close to vacation time and many of you might be thinking of summer projects – the timing of this trade show might be a ticket you'd like to stamp.

### **Budget**

Ok, now for the budget update. Yes, I don't support what is on the table. For 5 consecutive fiscal years since I've been on the council we have not put together a budget that a business or homeowner could live with. We take on more debt, use our reserves, fail to add revenues when we have the chance, and reduce our contingency. Laid off workers mean fewer services to you. Despite several attempts to demonstrate to staff that we didn't need to lose as many workers in Parks as they proposed, they're counting to 4 votes to cut the jobs. Your events and your projects will therefore not be as well staffed as you have grown accustomed to seeing.

We are taking on \$13M in debt to pay for the streetcar. The debt service is coming out of the General Fund. Some of that debt could be absorbed if we had rolled back some of the pay increases, raised bus fares incrementally, or adjusted bus routes as was proposed in our Comprehensive Operational Analysis of the bus system. We punted on all of those options. The combination of fare and route options was worth up to \$4.8M, depending on which options were selected. That means services you won't receive.

We are reducing our rainy day fund by around \$3M. We're told that staff will find that money before June 30<sup>th</sup> so we really won't have to take the money from the fund. That's 6 weeks away. As for specifics – they don't quite know yet.

We gave pay raises on top of reducing the pension payments employees were making – and we are doing nothing about the sick leave sell back policy that's costing the General Fund over \$2M annually.

That's a broad brush description of what will likely be adopted at the end of June. If it isn't changed in some significant ways, they'll have to find their 4 votes from among 6 people. I won't be voting in favor of continuing down the same path as we have been on since I was first elected.

And for the record, Fitch Bond Ratings were issued as follows:

*THE RAITING OUTLOOK IS NEGATIVE.*

#### *KEY RATING DRIVERS*

*ONGOING FINANCIAL CHALLENGES: A structural budgetary imbalance persists, driven primarily by increasing outlays for employee benefits and a recent drop in economically sensitive revenues. Preliminary fiscal 2014 operating results are positive, but are boosted by one-time measures.*

*MANAGEABLE DEBT, WEAK PENSION FUNDING: Debt levels remain affordable and the pace of GO and COP debt repayment is well above average. All three pension plans for Tucson employees are underfunded, and contributions for the state-sponsored police and fire plans are very high.*



Each year the Bond agencies cry wolf about those same things.

Maybe there is no wolf in the form of actually lowering our bond rating. But they sure seem to be focused on the decisions we keep making in our budget. On Tuesday the council voted to set a cap on how much we can spend this fiscal year. There's still time to change how those dollars are being allocated.

## Firefighter Payout

### Terminology

Various leave programs and terms have been commingled in recent discussions and correspondence. In an effort to eliminate ambiguities, the following descriptions are provided.

- **Sick Leave Sell Back (SLSB)** is a program where tenured public safety employees may sell back unused accrued sick leave on an annual basis.
- **Sick and Vacation Leave Payouts** are payments of accrued leaves made upon separation from employment.
- **Sick Leave Incentive Days** are days earned by employees who do not exceed sick leave usage thresholds during designated 4-month periods throughout the year. Public Safety employees may bank up to 3 days; however, there is no payout made upon separation.
- **Factor Rates** are utilized in the payroll system to account for the difference in annual hours of employees who work 2080 hours or 80 hours a pay period, and fire suppression employees who work 2912 hours or an average of 112 hours a pay period. 2912 hours divided by 2080 hours equals 1.4; just as 112 hours (per pay period) divided by 80 hours (per pay period) equals 1.4. Accordingly, the factor rate for fire suppression employees is 1.4. This factor rate is currently utilized to correctly pay our fire suppression employees each pay period.

In the past couple of weeks there has been a flurry of email activity from people concerned that we're unilaterally reducing pay and benefits to public safety. Specifically to firefighters. The best I can say about how we got to this place is that it's a mess. Here's a very streamlined description.

We're talking about two different classes of fire employees; one who engages in fire suppression, and one who does not. Fire suppression employees work an average of 112 hours per pay period (2912 hours per year) and non-suppression employees work 80 (2080 hours per year.) Since 1995 the suppression workers have been paid their hourly rate x an adjustment factor of 1.4 so they end up at the same level as their non-suppression co-workers.

Here's an outline that shows the arithmetic:

<b>Non-suppression</b>		<b>Suppression</b>
<b>Fire Inspector</b>	=	<b>Fire Engineer</b>
<b>Day = 8 hours</b>	=	<b>Day = 12 hours</b>
<b>80 hours</b>	=	<b>112 hours</b>
<b>X 26 pay periods</b>		<b>X 26 pay periods</b>
<b>2,080 hours</b>		<b>2,912 hours</b>
<b>\$27.29 hr rate</b>	=	<b>\$19.49 hr rate</b>
<b>X 2080 annual hours</b>		<b>X 2912 annual hours</b>
<b>\$56,763.20</b>		<b>\$56,754.88</b>

**The official hourly rate of pay is \$27.29; this figure is the base for all calculations.**

**\$27.29 X 2080 / 2912 = Suppression hourly rate of \$19.49**

**Suppression hourly rate of \$19.49 X 1.4 = \$27.29**

**112 ÷ 80 = 1.4      &      2912 ÷ 2080 = 1.4**

So far, so good as far as everybody agreeing on an hourly factor to equalize the workers to the same official hourly rate of pay. The mess occurs when applying that factor to cashing out sick leave at retirement, and collecting it through the annual sick leave sell back program that I've written about.

Here's the dispute – for a while the City was applying a 1.5 factor to both cash out and SLSB. That 'factor' is arithmetically incorrect. But there are several issues that go beyond the rate itself. First, is the 1.5/1.4 factor a part of the compensation plan M&C vote to approve annually? If it is, what's the process for us changing it to correct an error? If it isn't, what's the process for staff to correct it administratively – or must any changes go back through the meet/confer process with labor? The basis for the current dispute is that the factor was changed to the mathematically right number, but the manner in which it was changed is what is being challenged.

There are two goals I want to see achieved; first, get to the correct math in how we credit workers for cashing out unused sick leave at retirement, and for collecting annual unused sick leave, and second, get to that correct level through an appropriate and good faith process. I think we know the right 'factor rate,' but what isn't so clear is whether we started applying it through a process that reflects good faith with our workers. We might have, but like I said earlier – this is a mess and we're still sorting it out.

A couple of weeks ago I wrote about a process called Civic Openness in Negotiations (COIN.) It's the system used in Costa Mesa that uses a neutral third party to facilitate contract talks, and it puts out into the public each item being discussed and places a price tag onto each one. If we had been using that process while this issue was being discussed, we'd have a clear record of what each sides expectations were at the time, and what the agreed upon deal points were.

I'm encouraging both the City Manager and our union representation to give this process, or some hybrid strong consideration. I believe the process would benefit, we would avoid charges of bad faith, and the numbers would be vetted in a public forum so all parties, including taxpayers would see the process unfold.

### **Diana Lopez**



This is another personnel issue and so I'll just be brief. One of our TPD command staff was demoted a while back for having posted some racy pictures on social media that later were passed onto others by a co-worker. I'm certain she regrets the indiscretion. The question is what rules were in place to prohibit the actions. The court found that there was insufficient reason for her to be disciplined and so sent the case back to the civil service commission for a reconsideration. On Tuesday we could have appealed that decision to appellate court, but on a 4-3 vote we supported Ms. Lopez.

Everybody in the agency, from the Chief on down, has to be held to the same standard for how they use social media.

My vote on Tuesday was for fairness in TPD. That is, one set of rules for all. I'll just leave it at that and wish Ms. Lopez a long and successful career with our police force.

### Mission Strong

A group has formed whose expressed interest is in the long term preservation of DMAFB – and more broadly, all Southern Arizona military installations. The group is called Mission Strong, and I fully support their goal. DM is an important community asset and if it weren't for the gutless Federal sequestration the whole discussion of eliminating the A-10 likely wouldn't be in the news. And by extension the concerns over reducing the scope of what DM does wouldn't be in the news, either.

Here's a partial list of the signatories to Mission Strong:

- 162<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Wing Air National Guard Air Guardians
- DM50
- Fort Huachuca 50
- International Association of Machinists
- Metropolitan Pima Alliance
- Pima County
- Southern Arizona Business Coalition
- Southern Arizona Home Builders Association
- Southern Arizona Leadership Council
- Strongpoint Marketing/LP&G/Zimmerman Public Affairs
- Town of Marana
- Town of Oro Valley
- Town of Sahuarita
- Tucson Electric Power
- Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Tucson Metro Chamber
- Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities
- Tucson Association of Realtors
- Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- VisitTucson
- Yuma Chamber of Commerce

The City of Tucson has also signed onto the Mission Strong platform. As I understand it, it was by virtue of our Resolution in support of DM that our name was added. As a general point of agreement in supporting DM, I'm fine with that. The problem is that when you read the Mission Strong website, this statement appears:

*Mission Strong's goal is to rally the community across our region to send a loud and clear message to Washington that this community is fully behind all its military assets and supports any future missions the Department of Defense deems best suited for all Southern Arizona military installations.*

When we voted our Resolution in support of DM I made the statement that my vote was in support of all current missions, and that I'd expect the base to engage with the community as new missions were being discussed. I'm certain that there are military missions that are not conducive to being located at a base that is already suffering from residential encroachment. For that reason, I'll have to separate myself from that blanket statement of support for "any future missions" and reiterate my hope that the community and its unique characteris-

tics are considered when the DOD is moving mission assignments around. There's the Air Ops Center, Unmanned, the Boneyard, F16, A10 and others.

We all want DM to be a vibrant community asset – and an engaged community partner. In that I fully join the Mission Strong effort. But I have to wonder how many of the groups signing onto their mission statement would really agree to accepting without comment anything the DOD sent in their direction – or more likely whether they're aware that that statement is a part of what they're agreeing to by being signatory.

### **Rogue Theater / Arizona Theater Company**

I'm gonna give a plug here to two of our local theater gems / I consider them to be complimentary, not competitors.

Both Rogue and ATC are starting their '14/'15 season ticket campaigns. They offer up a slightly different flavor of shows – each with its own unique character. Here's what's coming next season at both places:

Rogue – Awake and Sing (Clifford Odets,) Jerusalem (Jez Butterworth,) Waiting for Godot (Samuel Beckett,) The Lady in the Looking Glass (Virginia Woolf,) and The Merchant of Venice (Shakespeare.) This is their 10<sup>th</sup> season – first show is in September. The contact # is 551.2053.

ATC – Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike (Christopher Durang,) Wait until Dark (Frederick Knott,) Murder for Two (Scott Schwartz,) Five Presidents (Rick Cleveland,) Romeo and Juliet (Shakespeare,) and A Weekend with Pablo Picasso (Herbert Siguenza.) These shows also start in September. The contact # for ATC is 622.2823.

These are both local non-profits who serve special parts of the community. And if you follow this newsletter you'll know to keep reading after the newsy part is done. I include an events section at the end of each of these.

### **Impact Fees**

A few weeks ago I reported that the City was going to miss its deadline on getting our new Impact Fee policy in place. I also suggested at the time that we'd have a window during which we'll be unable to collect those fees and that the Planning folks might want to beef up staffing on the days immediately after the deadline. Why? Because it would make sense for developers to come in to pull permits for projects when they can save money by side stepping those fees.

Last week a local Real Estate group sent out a mass email to clients suggesting that they do just that. They referred to a “one-time window during which they (the City) will not be able to collect impact fees.” After describing the process we'll be engaging to put our new policy into place, they close the email by reiterating “from the August deadline until it is official in December (?) the City will not be allowed to collect any impact fees!”

I again suggest that our Planning Dept staff the permit windows on August 2<sup>nd</sup> like it's the dinner rush at Denny's. Unfortunately, being busy is where the metaphor ends. We'll be losing money, not getting extra tips from the people standing in line at the windows. Bad planning – bad result for our ability to collect offsets to the impact on our infrastructure in the form of fees.

### **Urban Agriculture**

Last week about 100 people squeezed into the Sentinel Bldg meeting room to participate

in the Urban Ag forum hosted by the Office of Integrated Planning. Nearly without exception the crowd was advocating for relaxed standards when it comes to the ability to grow food at home, grow in community gardens, build structures to house small farm animals and the ability to own and raise small farm animals within the City limits. Although they weren't present and vocal at that meeting, I'm aware of the concerns raised by people on the 'take it slowly' side of the issue. Those concerns generally relate to sanitation, attracting natural predators into residential areas and the care and treatment of the animals being raised (see next item in this newsletter.)

Since the meeting I've learned of some other, possibly more significant areas about which you should be concerned when it comes to raising small animals in your backyard. They're contained in this short confessional video:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ll187f27Pvg>

Thank you, Pam for bringing this series of very serious concerns forward to me. I'll be sure to get them to Nicole and the OIP folks for their consideration.

Another public forum is being scheduled to review and incorporate the input picked up by staff on this topic. You need to make sure your voice is heard. Engaging the discussion is how you protect your interests, and it's how you share your views with the wider community.

The bulk of the discussion centers around the keeping of small farm animals. Here's a side by side comparison of what's permitted now, and the current state of what's being proposed:

	<b>Current Regulations</b>	<b>Proposed Regulations</b>
<b>Permitted zones</b>	Not specified	Permitted as accessory use to: 1) permitted residential uses in residential and nonresidential zones; 2) community gardens; and 3) urban farms.
<b>Procedure to Establish</b>	Zoning compliance review (for shelter)	No Change
<b>Is a permit required?</b>	No	No

***Procedure to***

**request modifications**

Design Development Option for shelter setback. Number of animals cannot be modified.

DDO for both shelter setback and # of animals

**Type of Animals:**

Permitted

Fowl, small potbelly pigs

Small farm animal (miniature goats, rabbits, rodents, fowl, and other similar animals)

Prohibited

Male fowl or guinea fowl

Same, plus uncastrated miniature goats over 5 months

**Number of animals permitted**

24 fowl. Others not specified.

1. In residential zones and community gardens and urban farms in residential, and non residential zones, the maximum number of small farm animals permitted is three (3). On lots 20,000 square feet or more, one (1) additional farm animal is permitted for each 5,000 square feet of lot area in excess of 20,000 square feet.
2. In nonresidential zones, the maximum number of small farm animals permitted is three (3) with the exception of community gardens and urban farms in accordance with Section 6.6.5.F.5.a above.
3. In residential and nonresidential zones, eight (8) domestic fowl are permitted in addition to the number of small farm animals permitted. Community gardens or urban farms on lots of 10,000 square feet or more are permitted to have one additional domestic fowl for each 1,000 square feet of lot area over 10,000 square feet.

Property owners may request a Design Development Option to increase the permitted number of small farm animals.

<b>Max. shelter height</b>	12'	12'
<b>Perimeter Yard:</b>		
From property line, except when...	Varies, depends on zone. Ex: 6' in R-1	Same
Exception: No perimeter yard or less screened from prop. Line required when shelter is...	5' or less in height, 10 sf area or less	6' or less in height, 16 sf in area and
<b>Set back from adjacent residence</b>	50'	20'
(Note, our current requirement prevents most people from legally keeping chickens since the lots are too narrow to accommodate a 50' setback. The proposed 20' is consistent with other cities evaluated for best practices.)		
<b>Other shelter location requirements</b>	Permitted in the side and rear yards	Same
	Prohibited in the front yard	

As you can see, some of the areas are more restrictive, and some are less.

The next public meeting on this is Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 until 8pm. It'll be at the Sentinel Bldg again (320 N. Commerce Park Loop.) Rebecca and the gang will provide chocolate chip cookies. If you want to bring home grown hard boiled eggs, that's on you.

**Pima Animal Care Center**

Last week I was tough on PACC. This week they deserve kudos for having jumped on and addressed a case of neglect that I brought to their attention.

At a mid-town neighborhood, these were the condition in which a mom and her pups were being maintained –



The wood on the fence is where the mother dug under, got loose and fought with a neighbors dog. The 'kennel' in which they're being kept is clearly unsanitary and the amount of shade and cover is inadequate.

To their credit, the same day I brought this to their attention, Kim Janes and his folks at PACC were engaged and dealing with the case. I appreciate their responsiveness.

These are the sorts of conditions many back-yard breeders allow to exist while they over-breed their females and sell off the litters to local pet stores as commodities. Our puppy mill ordinance is still awaiting the lawsuit that was brought against the City of Phoenix over an Ordinance similar to ours to work its way through the court system. Until we have that closure, these sorts of abuses will be enabled by the profit motive that is allowed to exist in our City.

### **Good Work TPD**

In October, 2013, TPD was tipped off to a Tucson residence at which it was alleged the occupant was buying stolen property. That included jewelry and guns. Following an investigation it was found that the suspect was in the process of buying large amounts of stolen gold and silver jewelry. He'd melt down the objects, reshape the melted down metal into bars and sell them to precious metal dealers. On February 27<sup>th</sup>, the guy was busted and arrested without incident. He had gold and silver jewelry and coins that were valued at approximately a quarter of a million dollars.



The guy has been booked into Pima County Jail and is facing at least 3 counts of trafficking in stolen goods. On June 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 9am, TPD Detectives will be hosting a public viewing of the recovered property. The viewing will be held at the TPD evidence facility that's located at 945 E. Ohio Street. In addition to the jewelry, you'll be able to search to lay claim to collectable coins and collectable paper currency. At the viewing they'll also display a small amount of pocket watches and silver dishware.

This isn't a free-for-all. You'll need to have a case report number related to the types of stolen items in order to be allowed entry. Best of luck in your hunt to try to reclaim your lost property.

### **Hunger in Tucson**

About a year ago I was happy to promote a local program called One Can a Week. It's the brainchild of Peter Norback – a local guy who is collecting food on a weekly basis and distributing it through the Community Food Bank. Peter works through neighborhood associations, Ben's Bells and pretty much any others who have a heart for helping to feed the needy in our community. Molly Thrasher from the Ward 6 office put together this 10 minute documentary video that highlights the program:

### One Can A Week Documentary Video



Written and produced by Molly Thrasher of TryFreedomStories.org, this 10 minute video is the story of One Can A Week in the words of the folks who participate every week and who helped build this highly successful community service program. (Click on the photo link to view the video)

Molly's the founder of Try Freedom Stories – a video campaign that is dedicated to solutions based programs related to hunger in Tucson. Their present effort is to fund three more videos to help kick start other similar programs in our community. I'm sure many of you are familiar with what Peter is doing – in no small measure due to the Try Freedom Stories

work. If you'd like to check out the TFS work, click on this link and you'll see how to get more deeply involved with their video work.

<https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/solving-hunger-growing-roots/x/7139070>

### Marist College

Finally, last spring City staff and others met with the leadership of the Diocese of Tucson to discuss the options for preserving, developing or taking down the Marist College building. It's owned by the Diocese, and at the time the message back to the City and developers was pretty much that the church didn't have the funds needed for preservation. Following an unsuccessful Request for Proposals, the church has decided to engage a private consulting firm with the intent of polling some of their congregants as well as community leaders, both locally and around the State to see if a capital campaign would be successful. Evidently they've got some rough architectural options and now need to see if a fund raising effort would be fruitful.

They're giving themselves until late in the summer to decide what direction to go with the property. Here's a summary of the direction the church is headed:

Our vision is to create a place of beauty that will serve as a center of activity while enriching downtown. We understand the time has come to make some thoughtful yet imminent decisions regarding these buildings and I wanted to keep you informed. As always, I appreciate your continued support and we will continue to keep you abreast of our progress.

I know this is a sensitive building and wanted to keep you informed as to the planning going on for its use. The Diocese deserves high marks for taking this extra step in weighing its options related to the future of the site.

Sincerely,

Steve Kozachik  
Council Member, Ward 6  
[ward6@tucsonaz.gov](mailto:ward6@tucsonaz.gov)