

Ward 6 Staff



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Council Member



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Ward 6 —Newsletter

OCTOBER 08, 2010

A Message From Steve

At last Tuesday's Mayor and Council study session we spent a considerable amount of time discussing the seemingly endless budget issue, and also other items that have a direct impact on the City's fiscal health and our quality of life. Those issues are intertwined.

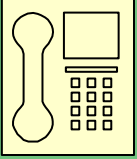
The City faces a severe budget shortfall as we enter into Fiscal Year 2012. The estimates are in the \$51M range. With that as a target, the council earlier in the year passed a measure that will place a "Core Tax" on the November ballot; a ½-cent increase in our ability to impose a sales tax above the current 2% that the City now charges. The City Manager estimates that that will yield \$40M annually and get us to within \$11M of being in balance in FY'12.

In the course of the budget talks, I have proposed a series of cuts to both core and non-core services that exceeds \$30M. My intention has been to demonstrate to the voters that the City has made significant cuts ahead of the election, and to open the door for the Council to drop the proposed ½-cent sales tax back to 1/4 cent and meet the City Manager's target of \$51M. My proposal was defeated for lack of a 2nd to my motion.

At last week's study session the council made cuts and revenue enhancing plans that, when combined with other budget measures already adopted will bump \$12M in savings and/or revenue. The measure includes the potential sale of some land, increased sales tax collection efforts by the finance department, cuts to non-core services and reduction of two department head positions. The measure passed on a 5-1 vote.

I voted against the measure. I did so because I do not believe the cuts we have made go far enough to convince voters that we have done our part in tackling this problem before taking our request to their kitchen table.

Included in the package passed was a modest increase in the licensing fee for businesses. The dollar amount was not as significant to me as was the fact that we are simply adding yet another disincentive to business development in Tucson. Early in the year we increased development service permitting fees. The combined income to the City is exceeded by the disparate impact, in a negative manner to the business community. We're sending the wrong message to those among us who create jobs. And most troublesome is the fact that it is not the large chains who will be most harmed by the increases. It is the small, local en-



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

trepreneurs who are struggling simply to keep their doors open—our neighbors who are the lifeblood of the community, and revenue-generators of the City budget through the sales tax they collect.

If/when the sales tax fails at the polls, the City will have backed itself into the corner of having to make severe cuts that will impact services at all levels. My proposals have been an effort to be ahead of that result, make cuts now, before department budgets are spent down at mid-year, offer voters a lower tax hike and in that manner work to gain their trust that we will use their personal income efficiently when it arrives in our coffers in the form of sales tax receipts.

This week we will be looking at the City Manager's recommendations related to core service budgets, aimed at the 2012 fiscal year. The Manager stated that he will not recommend any more cuts to core service areas (police, fire, parks, and transportation) this fiscal year. The problem I see with that is that we have not balanced the Fiscal Year 2011 budget yet, and, to my earlier point, I don't believe the cuts we have made will convince voters to adopt a tax on themselves in November.

And yet, if the rest of the Mayor and Council wish to roll the dice on the ballot measure, I'll continue to urge that at the very least we include, with the tax, a commitment to maintain current budget levels in the core services throughout the duration of the tax, include language mandating that all new revenue goes into those four core service departments, and establish a sunset provision for the tax that is tied to an economic metric that doesn't leave us with a budget hole when the tax expires (current language calls for it to expire in 5 years).

Without those commitments having been made, we are asking the taxpayers to take a leap of faith in us that I'm not sure reflects the reality of where we stand in terms of having earned their trust. While I couldn't get the rest to join me in what I felt were the necessary significant cuts ahead of the election, I remain hopeful that some will see the need to include these provisions as a part of our budget discussions on which we'll vote before the election. Whether or not it's too little, too late in the taxpayers' eyes will be seen in November.

On my weekly Rio Nuevo agenda item I asked for an update on the audit, a discussion of the projects the District has put on hold, a review of the invoices that the District has refused to pay and some general discussion on the terms we need to insist upon in forming a new Intergovernmental Agreement with Rio Nuevo.

The audit will be out just ahead of the election. Depending on the findings, the audit results may not bode well for the "trust" issue with which I'm concerned as it relates to the sales tax measure.

The projects put on hold by Rio Nuevo appear in an \$80M bond package offered by the District in 2008, again on their Fiscal Year 2011 Budget, and are named as "previously authorized projects" in that same document. Based on that, I have been urging that the District release TIF revenues sufficient to complete the work.

In addition, the District has refused to pay several invoices related to District projects. However, it is only the City that is named on the invoices, not the District. With that, the city has been using General Fund money (close to \$1M) to keep work moving and to ensure that the vendors/contractors are paid for the work they've done. These invoices, and the questions surrounding the project funding, must be addressed in the new IGA being negotiated between the two parties.

It is coming to closure on that agreement that needs to be given full focus by the District and the City; per the Rio Nuevo District Board's actions yesterday, which put the entire burden of risk squarely on the City's shoulders, we should terminate any further consideration of the convention hotel project.

These two bodies need to interact in a professional and open manner that is in the best long-term interests of the community. We have yet to sit together and discuss any of these important issues in a joint meeting. Our relationship is attorney-to-attorney, and across the pages of the press. That's no way to build trust. It's no way to build a relationship. One of the budget items I offered was to move Mayor and Council meetings to bi-weekly. This will save staff a ton of preparation time. What I am going to also propose is that we use one of those newly-freed dates each month to meet with the District Board in joint session, open to the public so that we can take steps towards establishing the level of working relationship that the community deserves from us. There is simply too much economic potential represented by the TIF dollars we are receiving to allow the two bodies to continue to drift apart and the relationship to be adversarial in nature.

Finally, I've been meeting with an ad hoc group lately to discuss issues related to the process of businesses obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy. The exchanges have been enlightening. While there are still holes to plug in the process that will protect the interests of small business operators trying to get themselves established, a couple of points are clear: Before you sign a lease to open a new business in an existing building, make sure the previous user had been issued a Certificate of Occupancy. And secondly, "caveat emptor" - buyer beware. Do a walk-through with the folks at Development Services before agreeing to take on any debt for your new business. They will take you through the process and advise you on the specific building you're considering so when you sign on the dotted line, you'll have done your homework and know what, if any added costs might be ahead of you before you're allowed to open for business.

Sincerely,



Steve Kozachik
Council Member, Ward 6
<http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/ward6>



Mobile Meals of Tucson, 40th Birthday!

Date: October 24
Location: St. Philip’s Plaza (Campbell @ River) Food, Silent Auction, Raffle –Fund Raiser for Mobile Meals, A Tucson Signature Program that for 40 years have provided meals for the homebound in our community.
<http://www.mobilemealsoftucson.org>

Tucson Museum of Art

Date: Tuesday, October 26 at 4:30 p.m., Free
Location: 140 N. Main Avenue
 “The Journey of Lewis and Clark”, “Judy Miller, Imaginary Dioramas”, “Alfenique, The Sugar Sculptures of Guanajuato, Mexico”, and “DIA De Los Muertos” for other times, visit their website:
<http://www.TucsonMuseumofArt.org/>



SAHBA



Home and Garden Show

Dates: October 8 & 9, 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.
 Sunday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Location: Tucson Convention Center
 \$2.00 off coupon on their website:
<http://www.sahbahomeshow.com>



Tucson Girls Chorus is hosting a Pumpkin Patch

Join the Tucson Girls Chorus as the kick off their Pumpkin Patch! Opening night is Friday October 15. Hot chocolate will be served and The Girls of TGC will be performing

Dates and Times: October 15 to October 31

- Monday - Thursday 12pm to 8pm
- Friday and Saturday 10am to 9pm
- Sunday 12pm to 7pm



Location: El Con Mall South Parking Lot off Broadway between Chick-fil-A and Starbucks. For more information, visit <http://www.tucsongirlschorus.org/>

Email us at: ward6@tucsonaz.gov

Ward 6 City Council Closure Due to Furlough Day Monday, October 11,

Ward 6 Council Office will be closed due to the nine unpaid furlough days prior to June 30, 2011. The next closure will be Monday, October 11. We will be closed for business on the following days:

Monday, October 11, 2010

Friday, November 26, 2010

Friday, February 18, 2011

Friday, March 18, 2011

Friday, April 15, 2011

Friday, May 27, 2011

Chick-fil-A at El Con will be donating proceeds to help Winterhaven!

A percentage of all sales from 6:30am-11pm on Friday, October 15th, will go to Winterhaven Festival of Lights. Additionally, Winterhaven board members will be collecting donations and selling "paper Christmas light bulbs" where you can write your name showing you helped support Winterhaven. These bulbs will be displayed all over the walls of the Chick-fil-A El Con store. Winterhaven members will also be selling the 2011 Cow Calendar (think cows in Reality TV) with \$30 in free food coupons for \$6.50 (same price as will be sold in store in November). They will keep 50% or \$3.25 of each calendar sold October 15.



Come visit us online at www.tucsonaz.gov/ward6