

## Ward 6 Staff



**Steve Kozachik**  
Council Member



**Ann Charles**



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# Ward 6 – Newsletter

## A Message from Steve

JULY 7, 2011

What should have been a good news, one day media story was turned into a three week, wholly unnecessary dispute over whether or not the Ward 6 residents would benefit from unspent Ward Office money in the same fashion as other Council Offices have in the recent past. Claims that we have adopted a new policy of “pooling” our excess Ward funds at the end of the fiscal year do not reflect a policy change, but simply a reaction for FY’09 and FY’10 in which the City swept money at the end of those fiscal years because it was suffering a significant budget deficit. Had the Council advocated a policy of “from him according to his means; to him according to his needs,” I would have opposed it.

But let’s be clear – in 2008 other Council Members used excess Ward Office money to fund non-profits and other activities in their Wards. In the mean time, the City has gone for nearly three years performing a minimalist road maintenance effort. The result is that it will take in excess of \$15M just to catch up to where we should be in terms of road repair.

With that in mind, I attempted to follow the precedent set by other Council Members and use excess Ward funds to serve constituent needs; i.e. to fix potholes. With the \$75K I had set aside from our budget it is estimated that we can repair between 2,600 and 3,000 potholes in Ward 6. Given that our Ward lies in the middle of the City it is my belief that using the money in that fashion is serving the greater good of the community. Other Council Members initially stopped my attempt, but at Wednesday’s Council meeting they finally relented and agreed to let the money be invested in your roads.

I began prodding staff and the rest of M&C in January of 2010 to get serious about the conditions of our roads. It was not until I tried to use the \$75K of Ward Office money to handle a small part of the problem that sufficient interest was generated to cause them to join me in asking staff to find other funding sources. We have now directed staff to meet with each of us to discuss the Back to Basics projects we each have in a holding pattern, to look at surplus City property to possibly sell in an effort to support the effort, and to open every cupboard and identify all possible funding sources to address this problem.

We at the Ward 6 office will immediately engage with TDOT and our neighborhood associations to identify the most troublesome areas and begin to address this long



### 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

over-due issue. The longer we wait, the more costly it will become to tackle. The monsoon season will give us time to put together a game plan for which areas we'll ask TDOT to focus on. It will also give TDOT time to look at other possible funding sources and put in place a plan to do the more expensive ( and more permanent ) solution – chip sealing. But in the meantime, we have immediate problems with huge holes pock-marking our residential roadways. We'll deal with those using the Ward Office money and will join the rest of Council to identify areas of greatest need on a City-wide basis for the chip seal program – once funds are identified.

It's nice to have that gamesmanship behind us. It was a distraction and if anything good came of it, it was the fact that we finally came together and made progress in urging staff to put a priority on fixing Tucson's roadways.

Those of you who have lived in Tucson for a while remember the TCE water contamination issue that this community suffered through together. Many families are still living with the effects. Tucson Water's process for treating our water supply to decontaminate it from a TCE standpoint was shown to be ineffective in cleansing it from another pollutant; 1, 4 Dioxane. There is little dispute over the source of the pollutant, but while attorney's haggle over "capping obligations," Tucson residents are being served a product that the EPA has recently said needs to be cleaned. The Mayor and Council left no question that we want Tucson Water to immediately pursue the design and building of a new treatment facility that will effectively deal with the 1,4 Dioxane. Allowing the finger pointing and bureaucratic maneuvering to play itself out before beginning that work is unacceptable.

The cost of the treatment plant is in the \$10M range and the annual cost to operate it will be \$250K. Tucson Water rate payers should not have to pay a penny of those costs. We will build the plant but Federal money must be the ultimate funding source as it is a Federal agency that is most likely the source of the pollution. Further, it is a Federal agency that is changing acceptable ppb standards in our water supply that is the catalyst for us having to take more stringent cleansing measures. When bureaucrats circle the wagons and drop into a defensive posture in circumstances in which time is of the essence, the interests of the greater good force leadership to take over. We did that on Wednesday in directing that the treatment plant must be started. We're looking for a similar display of leadership by the Feds in repaying Tucson Water for their costs – it is they who should have led this charge several years ago.

Along the same line of seeking the greater good, on Wednesday I asked M&C to consider whether or not City residents are getting their money's worth out of County Bond packages. When the County sells General Obligation Bonds to fund region-wide projects, the funding source is your secondary property taxes. If Tucson property taxes are paying for some of the bonds, those bonds should be going to fund projects that lie within the City limits.

My concern over this issue began last May when Andrea Kelly wrote an Arizona Daily Star article related to underfunded, delayed or cancelled Bond projects.



### Important Phone Numbers

Just for example, from the 1997 Bond package, 21 of the originally funded 55 road projects have still not been done. That's 14 years after the fact and since then yet another Bond package was put to the voters in 2004. We keep adding debt and yet language in some of the Bond boilerplate agreements gives the County the unilateral right to shift funds from project to project. In other parts of Bond agreements the County is given the unilateral right to terminate projects for insufficient funding.

Let me be very clear – I am not insinuating that the County is playing fast and loose with our tax dollars. My only point is that if we are going to ask the Tucson residents to support Bond packages at the ballot box, we had better have done our due diligence and be in a position to insure them that their tax money is paying for Tucson projects and not being shifted to fund work in other jurisdictions. So yesterday I asked staff to take a hard look at recent Bond approved projects, track the dollars, and report back to us on September 7<sup>th</sup> to let us know what they found. You'll recall that I am equally concerned over how RTA tax dollars either do, or do not, accurately reflect projects that still follow what the voters approved, and that we're not allowing our tax dollars to be shifted out of our community. I look forward to what staff brings back to us.

Fully funding Public Safety is a regular theme of this newsletter that also speaks to how the M&C do our part in providing for the greater good of the community. I have written before on my concerns over the 9-1-1 dispatch center being under-staffed and under-funded. A part of the reason for that is State excise tax dollars that were swept to the State General Fund to pay their bills. That nearly \$35M over the last three fiscal years would have funded an upgrade to the previous I.T. platform in use at the Dispatch Center and made a recent switch to a new system less urgent. The more deliberate one is in implementing a new system, the fewer should be the growing pains experienced during the change-over. I'm looking into how that change is going for our 9-1-1 call center.

Also related to Public Safety and funding is the proposed Alarm Fee that we considered on Wednesday. Here is where a different sort of "greater good" comes into play. That is, regardless of the validity of the need for increasing funds for Police and Fire, you don't chip away at that need by implementing bad policy.

The proposed Alarm Fee would be a flat \$20 per year for everybody who buys an alarm system. There would also be fines attached to what TPD is calling "false alarms." There are two problems with that policy. First, we have reduced funding to TPD. That means we should be embracing members of the public who take the initiative in "hardening their own targets" in the form of installing home and business alarm systems. They expand our public safety eyes and ears. Basic economics – if you want less of something, charge more for it. If we want people to buy fewer alarm systems, we should charge them a fee for buying one. That's what is being proposed.

The putative reason for the change is to capture costs associated with TPD responding to "false alarms." The trouble is in defining what constitutes a "false alarm." The Police define it as their having responded to an alarm and upon arriving find no evidence of criminal activity. Fair enough, but where the alarm was initiated by an attempted break-in and by the time the Police arrive, the perpetrator has fled the scene. One might say that the system worked just as it was designed to. That's not a false alarm – that's TPD arriving on the scene too late.

Senator John  
McCain (R)  
520-670-6334

Senator Jon Kyl (R)  
520-575-8633

Congresswoman  
Gabrielle Giffords  
(D)  
(8<sup>th</sup> District)  
520-881-3588

Congressman  
Raul Grijalva (D)  
(7<sup>th</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 Bob Walkup  
791-4201

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

The fees charged for operator error caused false alarms are justifiable, but that is not what we had in front of us on Wednesday. So we sent TPD back to try to work out a mutually acceptable deal with some of the local alarm companies. If it includes a flat fee for purchasing a system, forcing people to buy more expensive systems, or fails to strictly define what constitutes a “false alarm”, I won’t be supporting it, despite my full support of TPD. The Chief’s a great guy and I will fight as hard as any other Council member for recouping full funding for Police and Fire, but this is one in which he and I will disagree, unless they come back with some of those flaws fixed.

Let me finish on a job creation theme. According to a recent study done by *American Cities Business Journals*, Tucson ranked 47<sup>th</sup> out of the 65 largest metropolitan areas in terms of opportunities for young people to start their careers. In a recent poll done by the Metropolitan Pima Alliance (MPA), only 18% felt that it was easy to navigate our City bureaucracy when starting a business, 25% felt our fees were reasonable, and only 8% felt the Council is in synch with the needs of the development community. Those data point to the need for us, as a governing body, to continue to push hard for regulatory, fee and bureaucratic changes that alter those perceptions. I’ll be meeting with the Chamber of Commerce along with Councilman Cunningham to continue a dialogue that we both have already initiated with their new Director. And I look forward to our next M&C meeting on August 9<sup>th</sup> when we will discuss specific fee reductions and incentives we can offer to businesses, all in an effort to walk the talk of being “business friendly.”

Sincerely,



Steve Kozachik  
Council Member, Ward 6  
[www.tucsonaz.gov/ward6](http://www.tucsonaz.gov/ward6)



### Fan Drive – Hundred Palms Tucson

Now through the end of August, Hundred Palms Independent and Assisted Living Community, located at 102 S. Sherwood Village Drive, is accepting and offering fans to Tucson seniors who are in need. These are new fans that are either 14-inch (or larger) oscillating fans or 20-inch box fans. For more information, please call 298-9242.

### Family Fun Time at UA Science: Flandrau July 7

Thursday nights and Sunday afternoons are a special occasion for the entire family. UA Science: Flandrau hosts a fun filled event with lots of kid-friendly activities. The event includes demonstrations, an explanation of the constellations and their stories, and a laser show featuring current popular music. The show begins at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday and 1:00 p.m. on Sunday. Please visit <http://www.flandrau.org/programs/family-night/> or call (520) 621-4516 for more information on pricing and to purchase tickets.

## **FREECYCLE™ Back to School Swap at Pima County Public Library**

Got blue jeans that are two inches too short? Three backpacks with lots of holding power, but no appeal to your now teen scholars? Bring your items to the Back to School Swap taking place at three Pima County Public Library locations. The Library, along with FREECYCLE™ hold the events during various times of the year. Back to School swaps will take place on **Saturday, August. 6** from 10 a.m. to noon at the following libraries:

Joel D. Valdez Main Library  
101 N. Stone Ave., One hour  
free parking in the parking ga-

Valencia Branch Library  
202 W. Valencia Road

Eckstrom-Columbus Branch  
Library  
4350 E. 22 St.

The swaps are an easy “green” way to recycle perfectly good items, and a great way to prevent clutter or prevent these items from needlessly ending up in landfills. Items left over will be donated to local thrift stores or organizations. A complete listing of other Library events can be found at [www.library.pima.gov](http://www.library.pima.gov).



## **2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays Downtown**

Please visit 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays Downtown this Saturday, July 9, 2011 for a free and family-friendly event. The event runs from 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m and features music from a variety of bands and specials for local businesses. Please visit <http://www.2ndsaturdaysdowntown.com> for more information.

## **Kids Need School Shoes**

During the month of July, drop off school appropriate shoes in good condition and ALL sizes at Educational Enrichment Foundation (EEF) offices in central Tucson during regular business hours (M-F, 8:30am to 4:30pm) Location: Second Street side of St. Mark's Church (Second Street between Dodge and Alvernon, just south of Speedway) Questions? Call EEF at 325-8688

**Cinema La Placita Outdoor Film  
Series presents “Singing in the Rain”  
on Thursday, July 7 at 7:30 p.m.**

To view full schedule visit:  
<http://www.cinemataplacita.com/>

