

Ward 6 Staff



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Council Member



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Ward 6 – Newsletter

A Message from Steve

AUGUST 23, 2011

Vote By Mail

The 2011 City of Tucson Elections will be conducted as a mail ballot election. This means that you will not see polling places in the traditional sense.

Every registered voter will receive a ballot by mail and may return their voted ballot in the postage-paid return envelope that is included with the ballot.

For the 2011 City Elections, it is not necessary to request a ballot. The City is conducting a vote-by-mail election whereby every active registered voter within the City limits will automatically be mailed a ballot.

Ballots will be mailed the week of August 8, 2011.

The portion of this notice that appears on the City Clerk web site that I have underlined and italicized is incorrect.

Every registered Independent must request a ballot from the City clerk. A few weeks ago I included the polling information - go to this link http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/sites/default/files/ward6/voting_sites.pdf and you'll see those locations and information as to what you can do at the polling places. But for the primary, if you are a registered Independent, you have to request the ballot. Contact information for the City Clerk is phone: 520-791-4213 or TTY: 520-791-2639

A few congratulatory remarks to open are in order. First, to the over 250 recent graduates from the Pima Medical Institute, way to go! Dale Berg and his staff of over 60 professionals that touch the medical industry in areas as different as veterinary, dental and medical administration have provided the training to this new crop of members of our community who will now enter the workforce in their respective fields. You should all be proud. Let's not forget how proud the caregivers at UMC made this community during and after the January 8th shootings. These new graduates enter into that important field in a variety of different ways.

Kudos to State Senator Paula Aboud for being the only elected official I have heard of to call for the redistricting committee to create more competitive Districts. Elected officials should be willing to run on their records, not rely on a gerrymandered District where they have free rein to play to a base, even where that might



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

constitute ignoring the greater good of the community. Paula's voice in this is a nice example for the rest.

And a special thumbs up to my bride of 32 years and her mother for winning their age groups in a recent 5K race held in Vail. I'm allowed to give neither their ages, nor the number of competitors in those age group categories - but hey, as I told the group at the Pima Medical Institute graduation ceremony last week, "You only fail if you don't start the race". And to all you married guys - I'm golden now for a couple of weeks. You understand.

"American Heroes: Looking Back, Moving Forward" - this is an evening that will be set aside on Saturday, September 10th to honor both the heroes of 9/11 as well as to honor those in our own community who continue to protect and to serve as public safety workers. We'll get to the continuing story of the 911 center later in this newsletter, but here it is appropriate to highlight this event as it points to first responders and the need to continue to recognize and assist them in their work. Remember, the City reduced the budget capacity for all departments under the public safety umbrella. To learn more about this event email heartsofgold@tucsonaz.gov

Let me quickly mention three items that involve the City budget: road repair, the Gem show and Parking citations.

Road Repair:

A huge thank you to TDOT staff and to all of the Ward 6 residents who came out on Monday evening to talk about allocation of Ward 6 funds for road repair. The process will be for the City to accumulate funding and identify specific areas that will be candidates for chip sealing, the more permanent repair method vs. filling pot holes. Once those areas are decided upon, the many areas suffering from pot holes that were shared by the group on Monday night will be considered. If a road is being chip sealed, that necessarily includes fixing the pot holes. So, it makes sense to identify the chip seal work first so we're not duplicating effort and wasting dollars.

Right now we have about \$800K for the city wide chip seal work. The City is still looking for more funding sources, shooting for a goal of between \$2M and \$3M. It'll take a little time, but the goal is to get to work on both the chip and pot hole jobs by mid fall. I'll of course keep you up to speed on the planning.

The Gem Show:

One of the huge drivers in our City budget is the annual Gem and Mineral Show(s). It is not too soon to start to think about getting ready to host it. Scattered throughout the City, and beyond, are over 45 individual shows. In the heart of the City, and using the Rio Nuevo owned and City leased TCC, are the AGTA and the TGMS shows.

A little about those two shows. Both have their roots in Tucson.

In Tucson, several years ago, a diverse group of people, many of whom were gemstone dealers were unhappy with the terms of participation in the local show and believed they



Important Phone Numbers

Senator John
McCain (R)
520-670-6334

Senator Jon Kyl (R)
520-575-8633

Congresswoman
Gabrielle Giffords
(D)
(8th District)
520-881-3588

Congressman
Raul Grijalva (D)
(7th 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

Mayor Bob Walkup
791-4201

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

needed an association to nurture the interests of member-dealers. It was this group that gave birth to the concept for the American Gem Trade Association.

In 2006, AGTA celebrated its 25th Anniversary. Since its inception in 1981, AGTA's Membership has grown to over 1,000 Members in the United States and Canada. For more information on members visit <http://agta.org/info/agta-source-directory-member-listing.html>

The Tucson Gem and Mineral Show is held every year on the second full weekend of February. The Tucson Gem and Mineral Society, Inc. is a non-profit organization, founded in 1946 by a small group interested in mineral collecting and lapidary.

These two shows (AGTA and TGMS,) both at some level home grown and nurtured, are already promoting their Tucson show on their web sites. They are the bookend shows at the TCC, and they're the reason the City and Rio Nuevo absolutely have got to find a way to get together on improving that facility. They've been patient through the dozen years of watching Rio Nuevo unfold and implode. And yet, no internal improvements have been made to that facility throughout that period.

We've got a nice east entry but we are still working through punch list items nearly two years after having started construction. We've got some improved chillers

We've also got a new Rio Board that was formed by the State Legislature. We've got an Auditor General's report that calls the TCC the "Primary Component" of the Rio Nuevo District. We've got valuable tenants who deserve to see us move ahead with some long awaited improvements. We've got the list of needed improvements. What we haven't had is the political will to set concrete goals and do the work. I'm still working on bridging the gap between our two governing bodies. Based on recent conversations with members of the Rio Board, I'm hopeful. Our budget needs, as well as the Rio Nuevo funding source both rely on this work being done.

Parking Citations:

One item that dovetails the City budget and the Legislature is parking and the associated fees. We recently adopted new parking regulations that will significantly ease those requirements for building on the interior of the City core. But not a week goes by that I don't hear from somebody who is aghast at the level of fines associated with parking tickets. I want to break down for you exactly where the fine money goes. You might be surprised to learn that the City is not pocketing the lion's share of what you pay.

Here are the different fine amounts - listed under the heading "Citation Total" in order they are: basic (meter), nuisance (permit parking), blocking wheel chair ramp, safety, & handicapped parking violations.

Citation Total	Base Fine	State Surcharge of 36%	Case Fee of 21%
62.00	26.66	22.32	13.02
85.00	36.55	30.60	17.85
136.00	58.48	48.96	28.56
188.00	80.84	67.68	39.48
565.00	242.95	203.40	118.65

The column called "Case Fee" is a City Court fee levied to cover processing applicable to both civil and criminal cases. The middle column is the combination of fees tacked on by the State Legislature. That's our "small government/low tax" State Legislature. I only point this out to clarify that the City is not making a windfall off of parking citations. Most of the money goes into the other pools. Those to assist the City Court are cost recovery. I have been working with my colleagues on the Council to reduce trips through the City Court - alternatives to incarceration. That should help to mitigate that portion of what are perceived to be parking fines. Those fines "surcharged" for the Legislature are hidden taxes that are being used for who knows what up there in Phoenix. Let 'em know if you'd like them to live up to their 'low tax' rhetoric. You can clearly see how much the fines would be reduced if the State eliminated it's "surcharges."

SB1334

While I've got the Legislature on my mind, SB1334 was adopted last session. It is the "critter bill" that opens up land for hunting "small game". The effect would be to force the City to allow hunting on property owned by Tucson Water out in Avra Valley. While that may seem innocuous, it needs to be understood that the City has leased much of that land for development of solar infrastructure, model aircraft flight, and the development of remotely-operate aircraft. It is also used as habitat preservation by the Tucson Audobon Society and has it being used by the City's Central and Southern Avra Valley Storage and Recovery Projects (water projects).

With Dove season beginning on September 1st, the State Legislature would have us also share those leased uses with hunters. The Arizona Game and Fish Department has stated that "The City of Tucson can post these properties to 'No Trespassing,' but that can only apply to people who are not hunting." Really? And that's safe?

I'd like to not hear another barrage from the crowd who took exception to my not wanting guns in our public parks. This is an issue of prudence. Hunt your small game where appropriate, but I support the City Attorney in his position that the City will not allow unauthorized entry onto Tucson Water owned property in Avra Valley for any reason, absent a court order to the contrary. If you can't find dove on land not being leased for other uses, you don't see well enough to be firing a rifle and you'd probably end up shooting down one of the remote aircraft by mistake.

Ok, Steve - duck and cover.

Speaking of Tucson Water, in last Sunday's Arizona Daily Star there was an article about the decision on whether or not to build a new treatment plant that will remove solids from the water supply. I was quoted in the article as opposing the plant because of the impact building it would have on Tucson water rate payers. While the comment was accurate, it fundamentally missed the context in which I said it. Here is the text of an email I sent to the reporter (one of three emails and two phone calls to make sure my position was clear but he still missed it) that explains what was left out of the article:

"The 2011-2015 Capital program for Tucson water includes \$290M, most of which is debt. The dept. works on a 70% +/- debt service that is funded by ratepayers. That Plan has nearly \$48M for main replacements/relocationas associated with road improvement projects, primarily those associated with the RTA. And to top it off, we're paying 'interest only' on the debt for the first 5 years. The taxpayers are paying a 1/2 cent sales tax to the RTA for road improvements. They're

paying inflated water rates for utility replacements/relocations that should be covered by the sales tax. They will argue that if we don't increase the water rates and take on that debt for the RTA then we'll get fewer road projects. The fact is that the RTA just approved going out for another \$152M in bonds themselves. They don't have to ask the taxpayers for that authority. It's a system built on accumulating more and more debt, shifting taxing authority around from the RTA to TW in the form of increased water rates and the public is not being told that it's happening. That's wrong - and that's the reason I voted against the water rate increases."

Note to the Star reporter: if you're going to buy ink by the barrel, use enough to accurately cover the comments of the people you interview for your stories.

9-1-1 Update:

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way - **in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.**" -The opening paragraph of "A Tale of Two Cities" by Charles Dickens

The bolded portion is mine - here's the point.

It was a failure to plan relative to the 9-1-1 Communications Center issue.

To date, there has been no accountability, only attempts to downplay the severity of the issue. What have we heard from the City Manager?

That the majority of the technical issues were dealt with in the first two weeks. But I have a list that contains 92 trouble logs since August 1st, 38 of which are listed as "pending resolution" and several others listed as "being reviewed."

That the remaining issues are largely operator and training issues. I have trouble logs that begin after the July 15 date of the City Manager's letter to the Arizona Daily Star in which he made the claim that lists dozens of technological issues, clearly unrelated to "operator error" or lack of training.

That the public safety was never placed at risk. That statement simply flies in the face of the fact that Qwest is still sorting through trouble logs and a lengthy punch list.

That the cut-over left in place a redundant process. When questioned about this "redundant system" it was finally admitted that it ultimately relies on use of cell phones if the Tucson PSAP is down. Pima County cannot dispatch to Tucson Fire/EMS

That dropped calls cannot be counted, but we know they're at "1-2 per day"...???

That our previous system ("non-ACD") was ideal for Fire/EMS dispatch, but we installed a different system without checking with Tucson Fire or the surrounding Fire Consortium members. None of them would have voiced support for the new system had they been asked.

And there's plenty more.

We now have seen management of the Communications Center handed over to TFD. That hand-over did not come with pre-planned budget capacity. Tucson Fire cannot absorb the costs within its own existing budget capacity without severe service reductions out on the street. The new Fire Chief was handed a system that will require addressing technical issues, employee morale, staffing and compensation, engaging 911 dispatchers in consultation and engaging the Northwest Fire Consortium in consultation. I have been raising these issues with the City Manager, in one form or another for months.

Example: Dating back to last fall, I first warned the City Manager that the budget cuts being suggested would cripple 9-1-1 staffing, and therefore their quality of service. We'll be digging out of that staffing hole for years.

Example: Dating back to early this year, I confronted the City Manager on a rumored reduction of from four to three TFD per truck staffing calls. That would have imposed a significant safety threat to the workers and would have constituted a significant reduction in the ability of the City to provide life safety services for which the taxpayers are paying

Example: Dating back to mid-summer when I first began to raise technical and morale issues that existed at the Communications Center with the City Manager. As recently as last week the City Manager went on the air and stated that "Well, the major technical issues - I think most of those have been resolved, or close to resolution. I think where people are at now is really some of the operational issues..." and on it goes with the same level of disconnect that has been the case all summer.

Re-read the bolded part of the Tale of Two Cities quote. The superlative is not factual.

Simply stated, I have lost confidence that the City Manager has his eye on the ball and has managed this issue in a responsible manner. The downward slide began last fall when he suggested an across the board cut for all departments of 15%. That was where the staffing problem for the 9-1-1 center began.

This 9-1-1 issue has become his Waterloo. Mike Stoops will not send his team onto the football field without a game plan. Mike Letcher has asked the new Fire Chief to do just that in the manner in which the hand-off to TFD was handled.

I respect Mr. Letcher as a person. I enjoy him personally. We have shared times of levity and times of serious conversation. And regardless of how this message is received, I will continue a professional relationship with him for as long as he is in whatever capacity he's working.

The City is about to transition to the leadership of a new Mayor. Perhaps it's time to consider other changes in leadership positions.

The 9-1-1 issue has consumed the community for far too long, it is still without resolution, and the seeming unwillingness to even concede the fact of its gravity has to stop. Accountability rises to the top.

Sincerely,



Steve Kozachik
Council Member, Ward 6
www.tucsonaz.gov/ward6

Congress Street Entertainment District Events

This week at the entertainment venues on and near Congress Street in Downtown Tucson . . .

Fox Theatre, 17 W. Congress St. www.FoxTucsonTheatre.org

Thursday, August 25, 7:30pm. Nils Lofgren in concert.

Friday, August 26, 7:30pm. Christopher Cross in concert.

Saturday, August 27, 7:30pm. "Jaws". 1975 film.

Rialto Theatre, 318 E. Congress St. www.RialtoTheatre.com

Friday, August 26, 9:00pm. Bass Monster Tour with Reid Speed, Cyberoptics, FS.

Saturday, August 27. Young Jeezy

Wednesday, August 31. The 2011 Tammies. All ages. Free Admission.

The Screening Room, 127 E. Congress St. <http://www.azmac.org/scroom/>

Saturday, August 27, 7:00pm.

- "One Armed Boxer"
- "Master of the Flying Guillotine"

Beowulf Alley Theatre Co., 11 S. 6th Ave. www.BeowulfAlley.org

No performances this week.