

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CHINO VALLEY**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 2022
12:00 P.M.**

**GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
2010 S. STATE ROUTE 89, CHINO VALLEY, AZ**

Present: Mayor Jack Miller; Vice-Mayor Annie Perkins remote; Councilmember Tom Armstrong; Councilmember Eric Granillo remote (left at 2:51); Councilmember Cloyce Kelly (arrived at 12:48); Councilmember John McCafferty; Councilmember Lon Turner

Staff Present: Cindy Blackmore, Town Manager; Terri Denemy, Assistant to the Town Manager; Maggie Tidaback, Economic Development Project Manager; Laurie Lineberry, Development Services Director; Joe Duffy, Administrative Services Director; Laura Kyriakakis, Human Resources Director; Chuck Wynn, Police Chief; Cyndi Thomas, Community Services Manager; Scott Bruner, Community Services Director; Frank Marbury, Public Works Director/Town Engineer; Katy Smith, Senior Administrative Technician; Ronda Apolinar, Court Administrator; Erin N. Deskins, Town Clerk

Attendees: Nicole Lance, Lance Strategies, Presenter/Facilitator

1) CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL

Mayor Miller called the meeting to order at 12:23 p.m.

2) Town Council will engage in strategic planning activities and discussion to determine priorities which will guide the 2022/23 budget process.

Town Manager Blackmore presented the following:

- Introduced Nicole Lance of Lance Strategies, the event presenter and facilitator.
- This was the opportunity for everyone to get together and discuss the future and provide guidance and priorities for the budget process and work throughout the year.

Nicole Lance presented the following:

Introduction and Process Overview:

- Gave a brief history of her background: She worked 15-years in local government with an additional 5-years working with local government and elected officials. She currently did strategy sessions and team training.
- It was difficult for municipal government to plan with factors changing constantly.

- Key word for planning from 2020 through 2022: Uncertainty.
- The uncertainty impacted the brain and how people reacted to issues.
- An overview of the meeting process was provided to attendees.
- Authentic connection: Members answered five questions about themselves in order to connect as a group.
- The meeting would be facilitated by using polarities:
 - Efficient pace and conversation and diverse perspectives
 - Wisdom of experience and fresh ideas
 - Ensuring clarity and tolerating ambiguity
 - Concrete work output and background in theory
 - Large group discussion and individual processing time
- The participants were experts in the community; she was an expert in her job. Using both together would make a better process.
- Members agreed to the process that was outlined.

Structure and Goals:

- An overview of the structure of the Council/Manager form of government as defined by ICCMA (International City and County Management Association):
 - Council was elected by the public and was the governing body. Primary duties included policy, budget, and setting the tax rates.
 - The Manager was the chief administrator that was appointed by the Council. The main duties were preparation of the budget and personnel management.
 - The Mayor facilitated communication between elected and appointed officials.
 - Elected officials were the legislative body and the community policymakers that focused on the community's big picture goals, which was the point of the meeting. As a group they would align the Town's information including prepared plans, budget, ideas, and citizen requests to formulate a plan.
 - Council/manager form strategically limited undue political influence in the operation and administration of government, while strengthening the power of elected body.
 - This was the most common form of government in Arizona.
 - The elected body had the ultimate authority to adopt policy and establish outcomes. It was the manager's job to carry those out.
 - The manager had the ultimate authority to determine how the government operated in order to achieve the outcomes.
 - The manager had to have the authority to determine how to operate government so they were held accountable for the outcome.
- They would respect and follow this structure during the meeting process.
- Residents guided their community through their involvement on boards and commission and through their input. Local government actively engaged and involved the community.
- This was how the strength of the Council was maximized and enabled staff to do the day-to-day work.
- Cooperation and teamwork between elected officials, management, and staff would make the process successful. There needed to be clarity and effectiveness.
- Clear expectations for the manager so that goals were well-defined.
- Thorough communication. A clear understanding between the desired outcome and actual expectations and requests. The strategy session would minimize the gap between the two.
- Respecting the roles of participants: Council – Policy, direction, managing the Manager; Manager – manages staff.
- Council's job was to translate the needs of the community. Staff translates council direction into action.
- Members did a group word interpretation exercise. Words included: often, always, sometimes, never, rarely, etc. The exercise highlighted miscommunication and diversity of thought.

- Productive dialogue: controlling mouth and brains would ensure better communication.
- Four goals to better influence a conversation:
 - Willing to learn something
 - Try to find the truth or best path forward – set aside perception, focus on reality
 - Produce results – this is often the goal of dialogue that has gotten lost
 - Strengthen relationships – show up in a way to strengthen relationships
- Strategy process for different outcomes and results: Start with results, which drives the goals, goals drive projects, projects drive resources needed.

Answer the question (Individual Processing):

What are all the things large or small that would make Chino Valley a better place?

- The answers could be organizational or within the community.
- Participants wrote their individual answers then paired with another participant to share answers and come out with the top seven items.
- Participants shared their answers out loud. The goal was not for consensus, agreement, or affirmation, but to ensure that their ideas were clearly understood.
 - Increased recreational events and venues
 - Acceleration plan for road maintenance
 - General Plan/Master Plan Updates
 - Sell off Old Home Manor (OHM) for new business (sell to business owners)
 - OHM business development & retail
 - Attainable housing for working people/police/teachers
 - Acquire additional water providers (purchase water providers in area)
 - Expansion of infrastructure – water, sewer, sewer plant expansion
 - Visual appeal on Hwy 89 (highway running through Town not looking run down – enforcement and intentional appeal for tourism.)
 - New Town Hall complex
 - Reach the silent majority (ensure that they hear and support the whole population – not just the small percentage that was regularly vocal – find ways to hear and support them)
 - Increase tourism
 - RV park somewhere
 - Get projects done (if approved and funding available)
 - Expand IT system/increase use of technology (records, inspections, new software)
 - Increased maintenance activities (overall – more planning and maintenance)
 - Communication with residents (general outreach on Town projects, awareness of upcoming opportunities and development projects, getting the information out, and provide opportunities for two-way conversations)

Members discussed categories and issue placement. Exchanging ideas and moving topics as necessary.

Grouping Like Topics (alignment):

- Group One:
 - Communication
 - Expand IT
 - Increase use of technology
 - Communication with residents
 - Reach silent majority
- Group Two:
 - Get projects done
 - Infrastructure

- Roads maintenance
- Water & Sewer expansion
- Additional water providers
- Maintenance activities
- General Plan/Master Plan
- Attainable Housing
- Group Three:
 - New Town Hall complex
 - Additional water providers
- Group Four:
 - Tourism
 - Increase recreational events and venues
 - Visual appeal
- Group Five:
 - Business growth
 - Sell OHM for new business (sell to business owners)
 - OHM business development & retail
 - RV Park

The next step was to narrow the groups down to larger focus areas.

Grouping Like Topics (alignment):

- Group One :
 - New Town Hall complex
 - IT system
 - Technology
 - Communication
 - Silent Majority
 - Getting projects done
 - General Plan/Master Plan
 - Attainable Housing for working people
 - Maintenance activities
 - Infrastructure
 - Water providers
- Group Two:
 - Increasing tourism
 - Recreational events and venues
 - Visual appeal
 - RV park
- Group Three:
 - Economic development at OHM
 - Additional retail
- Members did not think that attainable housing fit into a category because it was not something they could spend tax dollars on, and it was not something they were currently focused on. There was an extreme shortage of affordable rentals for people, and it was getting worse. Rental homes were being sold, leaving people without a place to live.
- Members discussed the idea that growing the Town's infrastructure and being a driving force behind economic development could help produce more affordable housing versus just high-end home developments.
- Members discussed the difficulty of bringing in affordable housing to the area that was heavily favored by retirees that had the money to spend on property and high-end homes.
- Members thought that having a Plan that would designate areas of development and impact

- zoning could help with affordable housing in the future.
- Affordable housing was pulled to the side as something to keep an eye on, but it would have no specific action taken.
- Members were 90% okay with the list and named each category. It gave the Town the opportunity to narrow the priority list and would help guide the Town if other opportunities came up.
- Economic Development
 - Economic development at OHM
 - Additional retail
 - Infrastructure
 - Planning for the future
 - Maintenance activities
 - General Plan/Master Plan
 - Communication (infrastructure)
 - Members discussed the difference between long range goals and projects and current projects that were currently happening. Issues like the sewer expansion and roads needed to be dealt with now and not put off to a future date. Planning & Infrastructure
 - New Town Hall complex
 - General Plan/Master Plan (the document would set the priorities of the Town)
- Members had narrowed their ideas to two main lists, but they needed to establish a clear definition of Planning and Infrastructure and Economic Development.
- Members split into two groups to determine a clear one sentence definition for both topics. Each group shared their definitions with the group as a whole.

Planning & Infrastructure: Taking care of existing infrastructure while creating policy and providing resources to facilitate positive development and growth.

- Members wanted the importance of maintaining the Town’s rural atmosphere within the definition of economic development.

Economic Development: To increase the quality of life for residents by focusing on beautification, tourism and events, and business retention and attraction while maintaining our rural feel.

The Results (Council consensus and alignment):

Members broke into groups to discuss the results they wanted to see over the next 12 to 18 months that were realistic to achieve. Since some items would not be completed in that timeframe, groups would make a “year, two-plus” category. Members needed to be realistic about staffing resources, finite financial resources, and political capital.

- Focus needed to be on Council consensus and alignment and staff needed to provide input on workloads, capacity concerns, and what was needed to make something happen.
- Economic Development Results: visual appeal, RV Park, increasing tourism, OHM development.
 - Larger pieces of OHM needed to be sold off in order for it to be developed in a planned and thoughtful manner. This would require voter approval. This would happen proactively.
 - Beautification, business retention and attraction: There needed to be wayfinding signs to help people get around once they are in Town for tourism. Signs would be the start of this process, including changing the Town’s sign ordinance. Within 18 months the Town could have the ordinance revised, the design approved, funding approved, and the bid process completed.

- Beautification would require the development and support of code enforcement through policy and practices. Code updates and expansion would be required. Within 12 to 18 months, the review could be completed, recommendations provided to Council, and the code amendments completed.
- Members discussed if staff was having trouble enforcing the policies that were already in place. Staff would need to develop policies that were completely supported by Council so that the lack of support for enforcement that took place in the past, was not repeated. It looked bad for staff and Council. Code needed to be developed in a way that didn't allow for repeat offenses with no consequences for the offender. The code needed to be fine-tuned.
 - Tourism and events would need Town encouragement and support for an event-friendly environment. This could be done by making it easy for people to go to Town and have events. The Town did not currently have a special event application in place. The Town could do a better job of coordination and providing clear guidance for event planners. The Town needed policies and procedures in place to make it happen. This could be achieved within 12 to 18 months.
- Members discussed keeping parts of OHM to encourage the recreational activity and to facilitate Town events. The OHM pieces that would be sold would be in the area of the industrial development park.
- Members discussed the difference between municipal signs and wayfinding signs. Wayfinding signs were offsite directional signs.
- The wayfinding signs were often under purview of ADOT, so the Town would need to participate in negotiations and research. It would add challenges to the wayfinding sign process.
- Planning & Infrastructure Results: General Plan rewrite, maintaining and upgrading existing infrastructure (establishing and funding a pavement management program), begin design on water/sewer plant expansion.
 - This list was for things that had to be completed.
 - The Town would be in the design stage for the sewer treatment plant expansion this year. It was nearing the capacity that would require that project to be put in place and move forward with it.
 - The Town was very far behind on their road work. They needed to get a real dollar amount for maintaining the roads. A million dollars a year was not a real number, but they needed to come up with a number, and then figure out how the Town would come up with the funds in order to rebuild and maintain the roads in the community.
 - The General Plan rewrite was in progress and would begin within the next two months and be completed within 18 months, through Council adoption. It still would have to go through a community vote.
- Participants liked how economic development and infrastructure were intertwined.
- Members discussed the need to educate and communicate with the population that not all taxes were bad. The items that were being discussed were not luxury items, it was maintaining what they already had. The Town only had 130-miles of road, with approximately 100 miles of those being paved roads. The last proposition to raise property taxes to maintain the roads failed most likely to communication failure.
- The hope was that the public participation plan that came out of the General Plan was something that could be used as a whole or pieces of it could be applied to the Town for their own communication program.
- Having the right technology in place would help in completing many of the projects. All the Town's basic technology programs needed to be looked at and taken care of. No one would properly maintain an Excel worksheet if it were used. Technology would make the process more effective and efficient. The deliverables that Council wanted to see could drive the technology programs. Staff would present a plan to Council.

- The road management plan and the cost could happen right away. Members thought the term “fund” should be updated to “funding needs.”
- Hiring an outside firm to educate the public on high priority issues had been successful for other communities. Members discussed that an outside firm would be brought in to work the General Plan’s outreach program, which could then be used as part of the Town’s own outreach program.

Commitment to tasks and challenges to tasks:

- The key focuses beyond day-to-day operations were economic development and planning and infrastructure.
- When challenges arose, Council and staff typically discussed the issues and made a decision. Council had study sessions that could work well for possible challenging issues. The Town’s current system had worked and been functional.
- Opportunities often arose when developers wanted to invest in infrastructure, and staff questioned how it tied into the priorities and entering into an agreement with developers. It could take financial and staff resources. If a plan was in place with the developer, members thought it could be brought to a study session for consideration.

Next Steps:

- The notes from the meeting would be given to the Town Manager in a report.
- Staff explained the items that belonged in their department became goals for them in their evaluation. The manager tracked those, and if they were not met, they would not get paid for performance. It would be best if items were specifically assigned to a department head and not left hanging and not getting completed.
- The Town’s topics were similar to other communities. Town had been realistic about what could be done and in what order. They were also very realistic in what needed to happen with economic development.
- The lists did not lock the Town into anything, but it gave a clear path forward. Other things could be added in, or items could be completed.

Final Comments:

- Participants thanked Ms. Lance and staff was able to get a clear vision on what the Council wanted and expected.
- Members were hopeful that they could stay on track to achieve their goals.
- Members thought there was good communication and were happy to be on the same page as staff.
- Members thought it was good to set a broad plan so they could move forward to meet the needs and goals of the Town.
- Members did not think they would have trouble staying on task and thought a monthly meeting with staff and department heads to review their progress would be beneficial in helping them stay on course.
- Members thanked Ms. Lance and staff.
- Ms. Lance thanked Council and staff for the things they did.

3) **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jack W. Miller".

Jack W. Miller, Mayor

ATTEST:

Erin Deskins

Erin N. Deskins, Town Clerk

CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Chino Valley, Arizona held on the 29th day of March, 2022. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 26th day of April, 2022.

Erin Deskins

Erin N. Deskins, Town Clerk