

Sierra Vista City Council
Work Session Minutes
March 21, 2023

1. Call to Order

Mayor McCaa called the March 21, 2023, City Council Work Session to order at 3:00 p.m., Council Chambers, City Hall, 1011 N. Coronado Drive, Sierra Vista, Arizona.

Mayor Clea McCaa – present
Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn Umphrey – present
Council Member William Benning – present
Council Member Gregory Johnson – present
Council Member Angelica Landry – present
Council Member Marta Messmer - present
Council Member Mark Rodriguez – present

Others Present:

Chuck Potucek, City Manager
Victoria Yarbrough, Assistant City Manager
Adam Thrasher, Police Chief
Brian Jones, Fire Chief
Laura Wilson, Leisure, Parks, and Library Director
Sharon Flissar, Public Works Director
Gabriel Squires, Public Works Internal Operations Manager
Matt McLachlan, Community Development Director
David Felix, Chief Financial Officer
Jill Adams, City Clerk
Judy Hector, Marketing and Communications Manager
Adam Curtis, PIO
Tony Boone, Economic Development Manager
Dianna Cameron, Management Analyst
John Healey, Sports and Aquatics Supervisor
Barbara Fleming, Human Resources Chief Officer

1. Presentation and Discussion:

A. March 23, 2023 Council Meeting Agenda Items ([agenda attached](#))

Mayor McCaa stated that on the agenda for March 21, 2023, is the call to order, roll call, invocation by Reverend Donna Smith, Graceful Passages for Vets, the Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Johnson followed by presentation of the Fire Department Employees of the Year.

In response to Mayor McCaa, Mr. Potucek stated that he will be attending a SEACOM JPA Board meeting prior to the Council Meeting; therefore, he will report on that as there are number of items to discuss including next year's SEACOM budget. He added that he will also provide an update on projects.

Consent Agenda Item 2.1 Discussion and Possible Action of the City Council Work Session

Minutes of March 7, 2023 – there was no response.

Consent Agenda Item 2.2 Discussion and Possible Action of the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of March 9, 2023 – there was no response.

Item 3 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-013, Donation of Surplus Field Lights, Light Bars, and Switch Boxes to the Sierra Vista Unified School District – Ms. Yarbrough stated that this item dates to about 2019, when the City replaced all its halogen sports field lights with updated LED equipment. At that time, the School District expressed some potential interest in requesting a donation of those items, depending on what they wanted to do in the future with their practice fields at their facilities. The items have been wrapped up and set aside at the Pete Castro Yard awaiting to see if they would like them. Recently, the School District did express interest in moving forward with this project and asked if Council would consider a donation to them at this time. There are 11 light bar assemblies, 78 light head fixtures with bulbs, three switch boxes, some loose bulbs, and 33 power boxes. Ms. Downing, Chief Procurement Officer, estimates this equipment would be worth approximately \$62,500; although, the items in question have not been offered at an auction yet because surplus staff does not feel like there would be much interest and it would greatly benefit the City's community partner, the School District. Based on that long history of partnership and excellent relationship with the School District, staff is recommending that Council consider this donation to the School District at this time.

Council Member asked if there is a running tally of goods and services that the City has donated. Ms. Yarbrough stated that they do not typically keep a running total, but staff can get one. The most recent donation was the dispatcher consoles to Cananea, Sonora Mexico. She further stated that outright donations like this are not usually done. As far as the value of goods and services exchanged, the City has an intergovernmental agreement with the School District to trade back and forth on things that would be of use to both, i.e., fields, rooms, etcetera. She is not sure, if that is tracked, but staff could probably come up with something for Council.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that he thought the donation had already been done and stated that it is good that the School District still wants them, they obviously need them. He noted that he cannot believe that the School District has not done this until now. It's unfortunate, but good and hopefully they can have soft baseball fields with lights, other than having them restricted to daytime because it is important for the youth to have that opportunity. They are so limited right now, not having the lights out there.

Council Member Messmer asked if the City is obligated to help them set them up. Ms. Yarbrough stated that the City is just donating the equipment. They will handle the cost of the installation, all the maintenance and so on. The City ends with the donation and the lights that the City installed in consideration of the City's Dark Skies Ordinances and concerns, the City will work with the School District to ask them to shield the lights so that there is not a lot of light pollution.

Mayor McCaa stated that during practices in the wintertime it gets dark early, and those lights are going to be very beneficial to the football team as well as the baseball team because right now they do not have lights on their field. Therefore, it will be beneficial for those athletes.

Item 4 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-014, Directing the City Manager to negotiate a draft Memorandum of Understanding for City Council consideration with the Professional Fire Fighters of Sierra Vista, IAFF L4492 – Mr. Potucek This item authorizes the

City Manager to enter negotiations with the local Sierra Vista Firefighters Association to develop a Memorandum of Understanding, which then the Council could approve, leading to Meet and Confer. After that process is completed, he foresees several ordinances that will either need to be altered or adopted, and then the Council can take those up at that point in time, which will allow for some public input that has not been afforded on this topic to date. He also stated that he does not recommend approval of this resolution.

Council Member Johnson asked if this is a public comment resolution. Mr. Potucek stated that this is a resolution authorizing him to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding. The actual concept of Meet and Confer would probably need to be in an ordinance form, but he will check that out with the City's attorneys and opportunity to discuss that, at which point generally ordinances are opened for public input.

Council Member Benning stated that he wants to make sure on what Council is voting on, which is just authorization for Mr. Potucek to discuss it Mr. Klassen from the Firefighters Association to bring to Council to further look at. This will give Council some time and then there can be a public comment period.

Council Member Messmer stated that the Employee Council was brought up before and she wanted everyone to know that she was one of the members of the Council to ask for the Employee Council to be brought back, which was before she even knew what Meet and Confer was.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that she is glad that Council Member Messmer mentioned that because it did come up. It was the timing, and although, it did not look good, that is true. This was something that Council wanted to see revitalized and more effort put into. She asked if the drafts that were given to Council what they can expect if they enter in an MOU.

Mr. Potucek state that the draft resolution and MOU was provided by the President of the Association to staff and distributed as an attachment; therefore, if Council chose to discuss that during the work session or at the Council Meeting, Council would be able to do so. He added that he assumes that this is the starting point which the Association would start from. There are several issues with that and that conflict with the City Code of Ordinances.

Council Member Rodriguez asked for more clarification because he was not tracking that there would be a need for a public comment timeline. He then asked how long this would take because they have kicked this can enough and it is time for Council to talk about it and do what they are going to do. He added that from talking to people in the public and read the MOU, it pretty much covers a lot that most people might have hesitations or concerns about. Earlier in the day in a different meeting, somebody was unsure about what this means and the keyword here was that strikes, work stoppages, slowdowns, employee lockouts are strictly prohibited by the MOU, which is available to the public. The MOU is very similar to other Meet and Confers that are out there from other cities in Arizona and there is nothing tricky about it. It is a good understanding of how city employees are city employees, but they are not because there are 40-hour work weeks and then there are 56-hour work week employees. They are not the same. This brings some light to some differences when it comes to the City's employees because Council loves all the City's employees the same. He added that he does, but there are some differences when it comes to things that are mentioned in the MOU, i.e., leave, trading shifts, etc. Lastly, he stated that it is nothing new in the State of Arizona, and there is list of online of the cities and towns in Arizona that do Meet and Confer already.

Council Member Benning asked if there is a cost breakdown of what it cost if the Council implemented this. Mr. Potucek stated that it is difficult to say. If Council goes through the document that was provided, there are provisions for people to represent the union on a full-time basis at cost to the City. Of course, there would be positions that would need to be backfilled when that occurs. However, with regards to potential mediation, dispute resolution, and those types of things, it is hard to speculate what that might be.

Mayor McCaa stated that he read the MOU and there is no cost to the City. Mr. Potucek stated that it is not accurate based on the document received.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that in looking at the documentation, the payroll deduction part is like taking the gym membership that they do already. The City already does that for the employees. In reading through the document, the only part that says it would cost the City money is if it came down to something where something was to go to arbitration, and they should split the cost. He then asked if anyone has talked to other cities and towns, which he recommends. He added that if the City takes care of its people, that is not going to be an issue; but when it comes to money, he could not find anything in the MOU that looked super expensive and out of the ordinary.

Council Member Benning stated that he had a meeting with Ms. Fleming in HR on that because he thought the same thing about some of the costs and fees and the manpower on what it is going to take to implement something like this. He noted that he would appreciate it if Ms. Fleming could be present at the Council Meeting so that Council can ask her questions.

Mr. Potucek stated that he thinks what that comes down to, is that Council would be generating a separate set of personnel rules and regulations for an individual department, which could proliferate to other association recognition in the future. The HR staff would then be asked to administer those properly, which could involve more staff requirements in the HR area to make sure that the City is following rules properly.

Mayor McCaa stated that if Council went through with this, the City Council would have the last say. Council Member Benning stated that this action is just so Mr. Potucek can talk with them. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey noted that it would be for Mr. Potucek to talk and draft the MOU. She stated that she has a lot of questions and asked if Council is allowed to address Mr. Klassen. She stated that she emailed him, but he has not gotten back to her. Ms. Adams asked if they are questions out of the items that are in Council's packet. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that they are.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that she can see costs involved, specifically in the draft MOU where there is the possibility of the local chapter president, Mr. Klassen, being released from his duties instead of doing the Fire Department's activities. He would then be doing activities on behalf of this organization and the City would still be paying him full time. The MOU states that the local chapter president may be assigned solely to the employee organization and that he would be released from his or her duties by the Fire Chief. There is also an option for someone else at the local chapter president's discretion with the Fire Chief's permission to also do that. She added that she noticed that there is a way for Chief Jones to assign those duties, but there is no mention of how to unassign him. Therefore, it sounds like it is indefinite. It does not state the number of hours or if it is capped on hours. It does not say who the local chapter president would report to, who the supervisor is, and who he is accountable to. Mr. Klassen stated that the accountability part is through Chief Jones. If they were to have some discussion with the Labor Group and the Fire admin or City admin, he would be the one that ultimately would say yes.

However, when it is off duty, it is on his own time and dime. If Fire Chief Jones needs him at a meeting, he would be in the meeting; but if operationally, it cannot happen when he is on duty, he would not be at the meeting, off the fire truck. He would have someone that is off duty, that he designates, attend the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey asked if this would just be for meetings because the MOU does not specify that. Mr. Klassen explained that this refers to being taken off the fire engine and he would not stay in an administrative role, but as far as being the representative for the Professional Firefighters for Sierra Vista that secures his wages and benefits while he is on duty to attend those meetings.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey noted it does not say that it is just for meetings. Mr. Klassen stated that it would be for whatever the need may become, i.e., training, or educational that is authorized by Fire Chief Jones.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that this is important because if this passes then the Council does not have a say on how this language could pan out. Mr. Potucek stated that clearly there is some language and that kind of thing that needs to be looked at with regards to an MOU and that is why you know this process is designed this way so we could go in there. He also would expect that based on what is in there, he would come back to Council in an executive session to get the parameters from the Council and what you would like to see in an MOU, or what Council may not like to see in an MOU. He added that he does not want to brush this off lightly. There are major conflicts with the City Code as it currently stands and the MOU the draft MOU that was presented.

Council Member Rodriguez asked if there is any difference in what they currently do to what is written in the MOU if they come talk to somebody in City Hall. Mr. Klassen stated that not that he could see because it is ultimately going to be up to Fire Chief Jones if he is working or whoever the designee may be to attend that meeting. The operation is the utmost.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that he read the MOU a few times and the time that this would happen is if there is a Meet and Confer issue. He then asked what the timeline would look like regarding work versus the union. Mr. Klassen stated that it would depend on if it is operation possible for him to leave. If not, he would have to schedule another time, or he could find one of their elected officials that is on the Meet and Confer Committee to stand in for him that is on their off-duty time.

Council Member Rodriguez noted that he read in the MOU that he would need to give the City no less than three days notification. A lot of the language seems like policies that the City should already be doing, compensation, benefits, services. Mr. Potucek stated that those are already provided in the personnel rules and regulations. City Council already provides for all of us.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that it would not be that big of a change. There is nothing new that is being created and if one looks at the City's policies that are somewhat there. Mr. Potucek stated that they are there. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey asked Mr. Klassen why he feels that they cannot communicate and collaborate with the way things are currently at the City. Mr. Klassen stated that it is interesting that she mentioned communication. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that it is the word that he used. Mr. Klassen pointed out that he was never officially, or the group/organization, invited to the work session to communicate. He had word that maybe Meet and Confer would be discussed and it is important for himself and some of his

folks to show up to talk about it. They were not invited by the City to be present for this part, and it would have been huge to get an actual invitation. Luckily, Mayor McCaa invited them. Therefore, when talking about communication, that is what Meet and Confer is, communication. There was a little stumble there just to prove how important this is to communicate with Council in drafting an MOU so that they could be a part of the discussion.

Council Member Benning stated that after they talked last time, he took the list that was provided of all the cities that are participating in Meet and Confer. He called all the cities that were not on the list because last time he checked, when one gives out references, one wants to talk to the non-references. He added that he can go either way on this Meet and Confer, for or against. He hates the "union" word, he is from the East Coast, and he has seen what it does to cities, companies, and organizations. Everyone in the State is in a right to work State which technically does not recognize unions. One, everyone needs to stop using the "union" word or it is a no across the board. A key takes away he got from the chief that came out from Vail was that when he took over there was a big disconnect. He then called someone else, and that chief told him that when he took over there was a big disconnect meaning from the organization and the city. This was a way to bring that disconnect back together. Therefore, he has been trying to figure out where this big disconnect is because he does not see it. However, he is not on the front lines working like they do, nor is he riding in the truck, nor putting his life in danger, but from the top, looking down, there is communication, a Council that if the firefighters need something, the Council is going to get it for them. However, someone brought to his attention that if the pro Fire Department and Police Department Council leaves and they get someone else those can change, and he understands that aspect too. In closing, he stated that he is just trying to wrap his head around this disconnect in the City of Sierra Vista, and this push. Four years ago, he sat through the same thing. He was not able to attend the executive session, but this has been lingering the whole time and he would like to know why they want to change something that is going just for change. He understands validation, people having a voice and its importance, but he does not think anyone in the City could say that they cannot talk to anyone on Council and includes staff.

Mr. Klassen that that there does not have to be a disconnect to have this in place. He has asked for a couple things from former Council Members via e-mail to get some information and he was stopped because apparently, they may be dabbling in operational questions. He was told that he could not get that information to them, which he could not believe and to have a singular place to be able to bring ideas or whatever it may be to Council is very strong. He added that he is not going to say that there is a disconnect or some problems, they would just like to shore things up and have this in place so that when he is gone, Council is gone. the city manager, Fire Chief, whoever it may be is gone. He is aware of things being taken away and stuff that they would like, but it is all about communication and conversation. That is as simple as it is, there is not a problem. They would just like to shore things up and have something in place for the future.

Council Member Benning asked Mr. Klassen if he does not think that the Employee Council could do the same, if the Mayor and Council made sure that the Employee Council was implemented, was used, met monthly with the representatives by percentage of each department in the City. Mr. Klassen stated that the Employee Council could not, he has been there and done that. He watched it stumble on itself for years.

Mayor McCaa stated that the Employee Council has a representative for the Fire Department and asked Mr. Matthew Brown to address Council. Mr. Brown stated that he is glad that the Employee Council is back, but the way he sees the Employee Council, it is not to bog the

Employee Council down with Fire Department related issues. They are a separate entity. Whereas in the Employee Council, he made it very clear that the Fire Department is not on there to bog it down with union issues or things that they have. It is to look at City-issues department wide and they discussed in their first meeting issues that were department wide, constant things that are seen between all departments. There were a few things that were department specific that the members gave ideas for them to go back and maybe look at, but the Employee Council should be for things that affect the entire 400 plus employees, not to bog them down with PD related issues, Fire related issues, Parks and Rec related issues. If there is a major one that is not being pushed, absolutely the Employee Council can do that. There was kind of a consensus that they needed to look broader than that. Meet and Confer would allow the fire guys to worry about fire issues. It also allows them to have a seat at table. He shared that he was anti Meet and Confer at his old organization when they first got it. He did not understand it, but he talked to all the guys in the Valley who have it, and to one of his best friends, Mesa's representative for 20 years, and Meet and Confer showed him that it made everybody have a buy-in piece. It is not one side being able to negotiate or dictate something and it allows everyone to sit in there and have a conversation to figure out what is best for the fire department, what is best for the organization, which would be the city, what is best for all the employees as well. All sides must come to an agreement. There is not one side that can dictate it or run it. They had people who sat on promotionals, made sure there was fairness across the board there, people that were looking over budgets to make sure that their guys were staying on top of their budgets, and staying within the budgetary means. They had a lot of things. Coming from a district is just fire related. They did not have to deal with all the other departments and agencies as well. Meet and Confer means that everybody is going to have a voice and everybody in the room is eventually not going to work for the City of Sierra Vista. This will have long lasting implications for the town, for the Fire Department and for all the members that if something was to change and they do end up with anti-fire or anti police or anti whatever department, they now have a group that can come in and say that it is not OK. Things can change, everyone has seen good people in power and bad people in power. There are no guarantees for tomorrow.

Council Member Benning asked what the difference is between the way things are currently and establishing Meet and Confer so that they can discuss what they want, possibly even arbitrate, and the City says that it is not happening every time they meet and confer. Mr. Brown stated that there is a give and take and they must go back to the table and discuss it. They have a choice to either come back or look at the budget. They can either push, look back and accept that they are not right, and that Council is 100 percent right. This offers 100 percent transparency and forces the lowest member to go and look and help figure out where they can buy it.

Council Member Messmer asked Mr. Brown stated that a lot of their stuff is managed by upper management captains and battalion chiefs. They do have councils that work on them, and it is dependent on which council dictates that. There are a lot of moving pieces to a fire department. He added that Fire Chief Jones has offered them counsel, committees, and stuff that they do to help push through some things, but at the end of the day everything still falls on all the battalion chiefs, Chief Jones, Chief Deaver and all the officers' shoulders. Meet and Confer allows everybody to come in and take some pieces of those away and start working on things and have a consensus, almost like a triangle of everybody working together.

Council Member Messmer stated that she does not understand this because that is their job. They get paid to do that. Mr. Brown stated that it is his job, but it is also his job to do what he can. However, if he does not have the means to do all of that, it is kind of hard.

Council Member Messmer stated that she agrees with Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, and she does not understand why the firefighters cannot speak freely. Mr. Brown stated that they are currently blessed to have a fire chief that allows them to do that. There is nothing to say that tomorrow they get a fire chief that will not allow them to do that. That shuts the door on everybody. He added that he has worked for fire chiefs like that, and it is not a good thing. This is not saying that they have a problem within the Fire Department. The command staff does a wonderful job in taking care of them. This is to help set up the future of the Fire Department and the City.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that hypothetically if he does not let them talk to him. They can come to anyone on the dais or go directly to Mr. Potucek or Ms. Yarbrough because they have that right. Mr. Brown stated that they do not fear closed-door policies at all and that has never been an issue. He further stated that he has been with the City for three years as a firefighter, off and on for 25 years as a volunteer, Parks and Recreation Sports, has seen councils come and go, and he appreciates everything that that everybody does in the room. This allows the firefighters' labor group, which is different than most of the City's employees to just bring the firefighters' concerns to Council instead of bogging it down with a 40-hour employee, who looks at them and ask why they get a certain amount of accrual? Why do they get this benefit? It is not fair to them to have to try and negotiate on the firefighters' behalf because they do not understand a lot of what the firefighters do.

Council Member Benning stated that if this passes, they are going to be right where the firefighters are currently at. Mr. Brown stated that he does not see that as a bad thing because that opens the transparency for another guy. If the refuse workers want to start diving in to see what they can do, this is not necessarily a bad thing to have employees engaged in the City. That gives everybody a buy-in and an understanding, which then when decisions are made, there are a lot of people that can sit at the kitchen table and understand why certain things are done.

Council Member Benning stated that a good point was made, employees delving in. He then asked who is in this employee group, and who makes that ultimate final decision in the association? Do they vote on it and is it ultimately someone weighing out way to someone else or is it an equal vote? Mr. Klassen stated that they have a group, committee of captains, engineers, firefighters, and the whole membership and they bring forward their ideas, topics, or what they would like to see within this MOU. They evaluate them, what can be done, what cannot be done, then they prioritize them, then bring them back to the membership with what they are ready to pursue during the year. This is throughout the whole group. Once they are done, they meet with Chief Jones, City Manager and Council to present their proposal.

Council Member Benning asked what happens if they all say no and keep saying no? Mr. Klassen stated that then it is a no, and they will keep trying.

Council Member Benning stated that he is aware that he is hard and crazy questions, but if this item comes back before Council with the MOU and proposal, this is something huge that Council is going to vote on for Sierra Vista. Maybe it is past due, but maybe it is not. Therefore, he wants to make sure that Council is dotting the I's and crossing the T's. He also wants to make sure that people in the in the City understand because if it costs the City a dollar more, it is important for the City to understand what Council is doing. Lastly, he stated that this is the reason why he is asking, and he believes that this is why everyone is asking. He has been on the dais a while, watching in and looking in and honestly, he has seen the City Manager not

approve or recommend something. Therefore, this is a red flag to him. He does not believe that anyone in the Fire Department thinks that the Council does not support them.

Mr. Klassen asked Council Member Benning when it was the last time that the firefighters came to him and asked for something like this. Council Member Benning stated that he agrees, and he knows how important this is. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey noted that it was in 2018.

Mr. Klassen stated that it never got to a vote. This is a huge accomplishment for the firefighters to have a vote, possibly on Thursday, March 23, 2023.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that she has some questions that she would like to have answered because she emailed Mr. Klassen, but maybe he has not gotten to them. Mr. Klassen stated that he does not have all the information yet.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey asked if there is a recording or minutes taken of what transpires when they have a meet and confer. Mr. Klassen stated that preferably yes and they are made available to the public. Council Member Rodriguez stated that other cities post their meet and confer on YouTube so that everybody can watch, for transparency.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Mr. Klassen stated that the dues for the 48 members is \$25 a paycheck and the benefits include an emergency fund committee that can be used by any of the members or their family if they were to go to the hospital, to help fund their stay in a hotel, feed them, etc. They also have representation if they are in a situation with Human Resources. He added that a lot of the dues go to the State and National levels, which further on in the political arena at the State level like presumptive cancer at the federal level, or safer grants, AFG grants, and how the fire engines are built and what the firefighters would like to see in them, bunker gear (where some of the money goes in). Locally they try and keep it for a rainy day. He noted that he would e-mail the list of what the dues are used for.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that Council understands that Fire is different than PD and different than HR, but the Fire Department operates because all these other departments are operating, and they all benefit from working with each other. No one is working in a silo in Sierra Vista. The departments all work together. She noted that a couple of weeks ago, Council heard about Community Development Block Grants paying for hydrants that Public Works will probably install, Finance is the one sending out the billing for the ambulance fees, and Procurement is getting those fire trucks mentioned. It seems to her that it does not seem right to put the Fire Department above, maybe not even above because there is an employee structure, seen all over the building and in the Strategic Plan. There are voters/taxpayers, Mayor and Council, Mr. Potucek, the department heads, managers, and all the way down; but this association seems to operate outside of all that, bypassing that whole structure. Lastly, she stated that she is trying to make sense of how that would seem fair to anyone because to her it does not seem fair at all. Mr. Klassen stated that the firefighters are trying to talk about their stuff in the Fire Department and he does not know about going around management because they are going to operate with Chief Jones within their Fire administration.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that the draft says to negotiate things like wages, hours, and benefits. She noted that in Council's Strategic Plan, Council wants to not just fully fund the department, they want to make sure that they are paid well. The last time when Council had an opportunity, it was presented to increase pay and Council stated that it was not enough, and they doubled it at that time. Council wants to make sure that they are all paid well but to standards set by the market, not by a negotiation. She then voiced her concerns with Mr.

Klassen being in those negotiations, but he lives in Pima County, and he would be helping dictate policy and affecting the City's budget when he is not from Sierra Vista or an elected representative of Sierra Vista that makes this messy. Mr. Klassen stated that he works for the City and does not understand that.

Council Member Benning stated that this is hard, 22 years in the Army, the key words learned are three bags full of moving on/moving out, Yes, Sir, and No, ma'am. He added that he did not have a say in anything; therefore, he gets it and knows where they are all coming from and what they are trying to do. It is a lot to wrap one's mind around. He listened to Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey and in general, it is a lot. It is a big movement, and a big change.

Captain Mott stated that he has been with the Fire Department for 15 years and he has made the rank of Captain. He is also Mr. Klassen's Co Chair on the Meet and Confer Committee, is fully invested into this process, and he read a lot on what it is and what it is not. He further stated that he thinks that at times this is being overcomplicated in these discussions. Mr. Jeffries's presentation simplified the process. There is no disconnect with the Fire Chief. This is just a proven better way of doing business, proven over the last 50 years in Arizona through dozens of jurisdictions, not just fire departments. The way that this process would happen is that the Meet and Confer Committee would meet with their membership, discuss with them the big priorities, and problems seen riding on the fire truck every day. They would give ideas and the Committee would then go to their fire admin, fire chiefs and relay what they identify as a challenge, a problem, or something to really work on. Chief Jones and his admin would then say to the Committee, we can, we cannot do this, we can accomplish this, we cannot do that, we do not want that to be a priority next year, we want to wait a couple years, and the Committee would then negotiate that off the record, and then present in the Meet and Confer meetings with Council a united plan on how to solve that problem. Arizona law stated that any firefighter, all the way down to a probationary firefighter can come to Council and suggest a proposal. This is just a more coherent process for that to occur that is not as intimidating. This is also done in conjunction with the fire chief. Therefore, when that plan comes forward, Council has subject matter experts from fire chief down to firefighter saying that this is a challenge that they have, and this is how they think it should be solved. If Council cannot do it for whatever reason, because of revenue streams or tax base, the power still lies within Council to say that they cannot do that; but at least Council has heard from everybody in the organization. This has been done in the County, Bisbee, Douglas, Green Valley, Dallas, Tucson, Rincon, NW Golder Ranch, and Peoria. The fire chiefs in and around Phoenix spoke to Council and they stand by this process and the valley has produced some of the best fire departments around the world because this is not hard lined, East Coast style collective bargaining. It is in Arizona Law that it cannot become that.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey asked Captain Mott if he is aware of what happens when there is such a disagreement, which happened in Mesa. Captain Mott noted that it was a citywide issue that affected all the departments.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey noted that the Fire Association paid for commercials, made videos, and it was a very us versus them mentality that seems very unhealthy. Captain Mott asked if there is another example of mediation.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that she has a list compiled by admin that out of the 91 cities and towns, there are currently 23 that allow meet and confer. There would have been 25, but there were issues in Gilbert and Marana. There are articles that can be looked at that relay all the negativity, arguments, disagreements, with a result of having them removed. People do end

up in court. Captain Mott stated that most cities and towns, jurisdictions, and school districts get it and do not get rid of it, but there are cases where they do. However, it is in no one's interest to have any situation where that arises right. The locals are certainly not interested at all in any sort of things like that. He added that the firefighters do not have money to hire attorneys.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that the larger organizations do, and she knows that they will help the firefighters out if they need it. She noted that she understands why the school districts and the fire districts work better with meet and confer because independent fire districts do not have Ms. Fleming in HR to help them out. The school districts do not have departments against another one, where only a department gets to meet and confer and then they meet and confer separately with the principal. It is the paraprofessionals and the teacher, all-in-one association.

Captain Mott stated that no one is getting put above or prioritized over any other department. This is simply a better way of doing business that the firefighters can present a coherent, united plan to Council on how to administer the Fire Department. It is not prioritizing the firefighters in any way, it is meeting with the Chiefs as a formal process, not an open-door policy, a conversation, but a formal process.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey asked if it is not appropriate to bring up concerns during Chief Jones' monthly all hands meeting. Captain Mott stated that it is, but is it appropriate to bring these issues up, and is one, or two-year firefighter going to speak to the fire chief.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that she would hope that his leadership would encourage that one-two-year firefighter to speak up and be heard or call on if the firefighter has been quiet for a couple months. Captain Mott stated that he would speak to his leadership, and absolutely does; but he also cannot control the probationary firefighter or anybody who is simply too timid or whatever the individual's reasons are for not bringing it to a fire chief. This process just presents again, a coherent plan with the fire admin to Council.

Council Member Benning asked if they will be too timid to bring it to a captain or battalion chief. Captain Mott stated that it would be at a union meeting and at the organization's association meeting. That timid person would be there with several other firefighters and there would not be, and chiefs present because they are non-voting members of the union.

Council Member Benning asked about the number of members and the number of firemen and EMTs. Fire Chief Jones stated that there are 48-line personnel plus Brad Dever, Don Foster, and himself - 51. There are 48 members. Captain Mott stated that three are EMS employees.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Fire Chief Jones stated that currently the Fire Department has been allotted 75 spots, but Mr. Potucek has allowed to overstaff the EMS personnel. Therefore, the Fire Department is currently at around 80. There is one fire vacancy and five EMS vacancies, but there are people in the process from the EMS to be fulfilled.

Council Member Landry stated that this is something that they could talk about all night long. It is an important moment because it has not come this far before and it has been brought up before in the past. However, to her, it feels like things are being pushed fast because Council had the presentation not long ago, and there are still a lot of questions and things that have not been discussed. To some people, it is clear, but to others it is not. Everybody comes at it with their own perspective, background, and experience. Council has a lot of things that they must talk about during the work session, and they have been talking about this issue for an hour. She added that there are some things that are unclear to her and questions that she does not even

know what to ask and believes that Council needs to put a break on it because it is being pushed too fast.

Council Member Messmer asked if the firefighters joined the organization or union voluntarily. Captain Mott stated that she is correct and explained that a right to work state means that workers are not compelled to join a union.

Council Member Messmer asked if Fire Chief Jones following all state standards and federal standards for the Fire Department. Captain Mott stated that she is correct.

Council Member Messmer noted that Mr. Klassen had mentioned that the firefighters would be safer if four people were on a truck rather than the three that are the standard. She asked if there needs to be more research on that because it sounds doable, but the department would need nine for all the all the shifts to have the proper amount of people on the truck for a total of \$1,000,000 a year for that one person, and not for his equipment. She added that this is not supposed to be about money; however, at the end of the day, it is and to her it is about the money. She further stated that when Mr. Klassen must leave his regular job and attend a meeting, it is a volunteer position, but the City is paying for him to go to that meeting. When the firefighters are asking HR to take their dues out of their pay, that is money, noted that she does not have the City take out her historical dues out of her pay and reiterated that it is all about the money and she would like to her them say it. At the end of the day, it might save money somewhere, but when they are talking about all the different meetings, going to the fire chief, and coming back to Council, it is all money that the City may not have. She does not understand why the firefighters cannot put a list together and state what they want.

Council Member Johnson moved for a point of order and indicated that Council has less than half an hour to cover four more subjects on the agenda. He asked to cut off the debate and noted that it is up to the Council if they want to go over the 90 minutes. Mayor McCaa stated that items D, E and F may be moved to another work session. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that Council will be voting on Thursday, March 23, 2023 on this issue. Council Member Benning stated that he agrees with Council Member Landry because this is being fastballed down the pipe. Mayor McCaa noted that Council will only be voting on for them to meet and come up with an MOU.

Council Member Benning stated that his issue is that if Council is not going to approve meet and confer to begin with, why are resources being spent to have them do that. He suggested holding off on the vote, have more meetings because evidently there is a lot of conversation. Mayor McCaa disagreed.

Council Member Benning stated that if Council must vote on Thursday, March 23, 2023, he is voting no because he does not have enough information, answers to sit up on the dais and say yes, go beyond his beliefs and organize unions and vote for meet and confer. He added that he would like the firefighters, who he has listened to and gives the utmost respect, to show him why this is important because it is not going to end with the Fire Department. Mayor McCaa stated that it is true.

Council Member Benning stated that Council is going to kick a can down the road with each division in the City, which means that Council will need to rewrite ordinances, and have HR come back to Council and to inform them as to the number of FTEs they will need to process and do all this. This is not a simple MOU. This is a let us change how business is done in the City, and that is what this is going to do. Therefore, he would like more information and time,

and he does not want to spend money. Lastly, he noted that Mr. Potucek is against this and Mr. Klassen is for it – there are going to be two bears in a room trying to come up with an agreement that works, when they do not even know if Council is going to vote for this. If the vote is that important, then Council could have done this during the first of the year. He wants to be able to go home, look at a constituent, at himself and say, “Sean, Chris, I appreciate you and I did this for you, and I agree with you.” However, until he can do that, he cannot say yes because he does not know. He noted that when Council was discussing chickens in backyards, it took five months, and now Council wants to change how the City is run in two meetings.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that this is an important conversation, topic, or it would not be at this point, still talking about it. If Council goes over 90 minutes, he does not care because it is important to Council, and to the employees, and it should be heard. He added that he is glad that the firefighters made it this far, the presentation is good, but previous attempts for whatever reason were not successful. They provided more information this time and he believes that people needed more information. He voiced his appreciation at all the information, and noted that there is a lot of information in the document and it has already explained a lot of the questions that Council has. The biggest key take away is that the voice is being heard from the lowest level to the captain. Council could indicate what the firefighters need all day, but they do not know because they do not work there. He noted that he does not know what the firefighter do every day; therefore, he is not going to be the one to ever tell them who to do their job or that they already have equipment because he does not know. He can suggest ideas, and he has sat in plenty of the meetings and it is not how the all hands is set up and it is not the place for those issues. Money is important, and when the MOU is put together, it is important to write those monetary figures out so that everybody knows what the cost is. If Council has the money to pay expensive lawyers then they can also hear the firefighters’ side and find out the cost. Lastly, he voiced his appreciation and stated that he does not care where they live as long as they put in their hours for work, just like the PD, where some live out of town, they get take home cars, Council does not care where they live. He is glad the firefighters are doing what they do in providing services for the City and their representation that they brought before Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey note that she made the comment about not living in Sierra Vista, strictly based on the position he would have in negotiations that dictate City policy and budget. It has nothing to do with him being an engineer at the Fire Department.

Mayor McCaa asked how to proceed. Council Member Rodriguez stated that it sounds like people need more time. Council Member Benning stated that he already gave his and stressed that it nothing against the firefighters. It is about information gathering and changing how business in the City is done, which he does not feel comfortable doing that in a month.

Mayor McCaa stated that he is glad that they had this discussion because their feelings came out and they must talk about it. Council Member Benning stated that he mentioned earlier, that he is on the fence, he know of people that are not on the fence, people that are, and he does not know where some people stand; but six, seven months ago he told the firefighters that he would hear them out and he has let them present everything and bring him everything that they wanted to bring him, which is what he thought was being done. When it comes to putting a vote to the table, put a meeting together to where they can come up with a MOU, he thinks that they are putting the cart before the horse. He would like to get other people in the City in the room for a conversation to see if they are thinking the same because as soon as the pebble is dropped, those ripples are going to affect everything done in the City and that is not something that he takes lightly and something that he is going to do overnight.

Council Member Rodriguez noted that change is hard. Council Member Benning stated that it is and it depends on who's change is being done and who needs to do the change. Therefore, he would like to hear that out and if he is requesting another month is wrong, then he will vote on Thursday, March 23, 2023, but he already stated what his vote will be.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey shared that in Minneapolis there was a horrible incident, where most of the world watched a man, George Floyd, being killed by an officer. That officer belonged to a very powerful union, a very different scale, but he had 17 department complaints against him and the union protected him. She noted that the City has a grievance process and personal rules and regulations, but there is an additional section in the MOU for the whole department, and it concerns her. This is not seen often in Sierra Vista, but Sierra Vista is not immune. The City has had people come through who did not fit because of serious reasons. She voiced her concern about a liability problem with an MOU, creating another layer of grievance process in addition to what the City already has.

Council Member Rodriguez noted that suspension/discipline is not a part of the MOU. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that it is in addition.

Council Member Benning stated that he knows that this is important because the firefighters waited since 2018, and kept pushing it, up to 2023. He asked if five months is too much for them to wait. Mr. Klassen asked what he meant by five months. Council Member Benning stated that he is talking about everything that needs to be considered, the public input period and other periods, and noted that the firefighters have waited since 2018. Mr. Klassen stated that he would have to ask the members. He added that he has been doing this a long time and he can stand on his head for four months, but this is important to all the members and noted that he is in it for the long haul because he is going to retire from the City of Sierra Vista.

Council Member Johnson stated that no amount of further discussion is going to change his mind on his vote. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that she agrees with Mayor McCaa because she would rather vote on Thursday, March 23, 2023.

In response to Mayor McCaa, Council Member Benning stated that the vote on Thursday, March 23, 2023 allows Mr. Potucek and Mr. Klassen to talk, and he is ok with that because he does not believe that they need his permission to do that. However, if Council must vote on letting them talk, they can negotiate all they want, but as far as meet and confer, that is not a vote for this month. Mayor McCaa stated that the vote is just for them to talk. Mr. Klassen stated that he believes that they are getting the cart in front of the horse in talking about the MOU because the one that Council currently has could be scrapped. If they could enter a meet confer resolution, that opens the door for that discussion to happen.

Council Member Benning stated that if Council does not vote on a meet and confer, then there is no reason to write an MOU. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that if she were to remove all the parts of the MOU that she does not agree with, she believes that the firefighters would not want it. She added she does not see the purpose of even entering negotiations for one if everything that comes back is going to be something that Council does not want. Mr. Klassen stated that all they want is to be able to talk with Council about it.

Mr. Klassen asked if should come back to every work session. Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that he is free to do so. Mr. Klassen stated that he is trying to think of a way to move forward and asked that if it would help the process along, if he were to answer a list of questions that everybody wants answered.

Mayor McCaa stated that Council would vote on Thursday, March 23, 2023 for Mr. Klassen and Mr. Potucek to talk. Council Member Rodriguez stated that Mr. Potucek stated that they would go into a comment section after that. He then asked about the process because he thinks that there is confusion on the next steps and what the Council is voting on and what the vote means. Mr. Potucek stated that the vote on Thursday, March 23, 2023, directs the City Manager to negotiate with the Sierra Vista Firefighters Association an MOU for Council's consideration that gets to meet and confer at some point in the future. He added that he does not know how long that takes or whether legal representation will be needed and certainly the Council will be involved in that process.

Council Member Benning stated that it is his understanding that they are going to have a pseudo meet and confer session. Mr. Klassen stated that they first enter a meet and confer resolution saying that firefighters' labor group can meet with the fire chief on a monthly meeting, meeting, and conferencing. They go through their conferencing and meeting and develop an MOU, they move forward with that to Council or City Manager, and then Council will either agree or not on the MOU or changes that need to be made that Council may see fit. The process is allowing the meeting and conferring process to happen, and then moving into an MOU that everybody agrees with.

Council Member Benning stated that this goes back to what he just said. Step one is saying that they can have a meet and confer; therefore, they can meet and confer, and if Council votes yes then they are saying yes to them having a meeting. Mr. Potucek noted that it is a legal term, and he would be very cautious about using that. Mayor McCaa suggested changing the language. Mr. Potucek stated that the language in the resolution does not get to that point.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that if Council votes on Thursday, March 23, 2023, that is not Council saying yes, there is meet and confer. That is not the process, and what Mr. Klassen is saying is that the vote on Thursday, March 23, 2023, is not the MOU because the MOU that was provided is only an example. This is the time that Council must look at and say that it is not going to work, or let's change this or let's add this to the MOU.

Council Member Benning stated that he understands what the resolution is for, but he is highlighting expectations of people because when someone says that the first step in this process is to approve a meet and confer, and then sit down and come up with an MOU, Council is giving them permission to come up with an MOU on Thursday, March 23, 2023. Therefore, he wants to set expectations, so that everyone knows that when Council votes on Thursday, March 23, 2023, it is so that they can negotiate without no meet and confer being approved.

Mr. Klassen state that he is confused because the process that he knows of is the meet and confer resolution followed by whenever the MOU is drafted between all the parties.

Council Member Benning asked Mr. Klassen that if Council approves the resolution on Thursday, March 23, 2023, he will think that they then have meet and confer. Mr. Klassen stated that he is correct. Council Member Benning stated that this is why he wanted to set expectations. Mr. Potucek stated that it is not what it does, and Council drives the process.

Mayor Por Tem Umphrey asked Mr. Potucek to explain, with the way that the resolution is drafted, his opinion because this is the first time that he is recommending against a resolution. Mr. Potucek stated that it is up to Council in the interest of time. A lot of his concerns were brought up during the discussion, but he can articulate them.

Council Member Messmer stated that she would like to hear Mr. Potucek's concerns. Mr. Potucek shared that he comes from a union background, he is the son of a union carpenter, and his father would not have had guaranteed wages, health benefits, or a pension, if it was not for the Union. His family greatly benefited from that, but typically the reasons to have unions or union representation are for wages, benefits, health and, pensions. They want a certain amount of job security from that, working conditions to be improved, and there are several reasons to do that. However, he believes the City Council already provides all those things to all employees, not just the Fire Department. These people have not come to him, and during the discussion, the city manager was left conspicuously out of the discussion. By ordinance, the Council has the city manager, who will not be him forever because he is old now, in charge of all matters relating to personnel, budget, etcetera. This MOU, the way it was presented, takes the city management out of that loop, and bypasses. Therefore, the other departments are then not represented at the table when it comes to resource allocation, budget, the application of the personnel rules and regulations, which drive grievance processes, disciplinary processes that are very stringent in the personnel rules and regulations as they should be. He added that he believes that the employees should have that, and the City does not have a lot of issues currently with a lot of these things. Anybody can come and talk to the Fire Chief, to him, and anybody that works in the Fire Department knows that he goes to the fire station every Saturday and opens himself up to any discussion or questions that anybody cares to have. The Fire Chief is not afraid to bring the concerns of the Department to Ms. Yarbrough and himself for discussion and if they see something that is wrong, they endeavor to fix it. If something needs to be changed, they endeavor to bring those changes to Council.

Mr. Potucek stated that he is other concerns regard the potential for division in the organization starting with the City Council, which can already be seen by the discussion. Potentially division and distrust between management and the department, and division amongst all the employees in the City in the different departments, setting different standards for personnel actions and that kind of thing, which could result in more meet and confer discussions that the Council will have in going forward. Other concerns involve the MOU as it was presented, the conflicts with that, and the City Code that is currently under operation of the City. It is a huge change in how the City does business. Lastly, he stated that in 27 years that he has been with the City, it is probably the most profound change that has ever been made for the organization. Therefore, he does not believe it is one to take lightly. If Council approves this, as a professional it is his job to negotiate an MOU leading to meet and confer. That is what he will do. However, there are serious legal and organizational issues that warrant the discussion that Council had and probably more discussion going forward.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that on March 7, 2023, when Mr. Klassen came before Council and presented with Mr. Jeffries, at the end Mr. Klassen stated that he would continue to work hard just as he always does regardless of the outcome, and she believes him and she knows that the Council will continue to do everything they we can to provide for the Fire Department regardless of the outcome, and do everything that they can to make sure that they are fully funded, well paid, make their jobs better and easier, and make sure that they are heard, which came up during the strategic planning - communications and working on that.

Mr. Klassen thanked Council and stated that it is not going to change how they operate at the Fire Department, exceptional services is what they do.

B. [Presentation by the Sister Cities Association](#)

Mr. Randi Buros thanked the Mayor and Council for the opportunity to present on the Sister Cities Association. He introduced Co-chair Heika Robbins and Rachel Henry, Buena High School Liaison. He stated that 35 years ago, Sierra Vista set up a Sister City with Cananea, Sonora Mexico and a few years later they joined up with the Radebeul, a city suburb of Dresden in Germany. A commission was established and managed by the City, but it was a smaller organization with less mandates. At that time, the Sister Cities only fundraising event was the annual Oktoberfest and the City provided seed money for that so that the Commission could buy the materials to sell brats. The Commission made about \$4,000 that was paid back to the City, leaving them with \$2,000.00 for a student exchange with Radebeul, about 16 students per year. They spend a week in Sierra Vista and a week in Mexico. However, the Commission was running into some problems because the monies that were being held for them by the City had to be used by the end of the year, and if they did not use the funds, they would be reallocated; therefore, the Commission was losing funds. Also, at that time, the German high school students started losing interest and were pulling out of the student exchange. Therefore, the Chair at that time, Susanna Hemstad Gilbert, increased the size of the program and added a trip to Phoenix and the Grand Canyon, which got the German students interested and it reinvented and invigorated the program. However, by doing that, the cost increased.

The City made a change to its Oktoberfest and now have the Knights of Columbus sell the beer, but still invites the Association to sell alongside the beer tent, which increased the annual income to about \$16,000 a year. The Association works with several organizations, i.e., Buena High School, the marketing kids, the DACA kids, about 50 of them that come and help throughout the year. The Association is then able to give them a donation of \$5,000. The Culinary Club at Buena High School also help with food prep, and they get about \$2,500. Originally, the program used to be kind of a rich kid's game, because to go to Germany, their parents would have to provide \$1,000 for the Association to make all the travel arrangements. Then whatever was left would be returned to them. This year the Association covered all the costs except for \$342 for the four kids who went, a good deal for two weeks in Germany with travel and everything.

Recently, the Association partnered with Cochise College. The College has a Spanish professor, and the Association is trying to invigorate their work with Cananea, Sonora. A couple months ago the Association did a test trip which Parks and Recreation lent a 15-passenger van and paid for the gas for the Buena High school kids. Cochise College kids and adults from Sierra Vista also went on the trip and some even drove their personal vehicles. They visited the mine, museum, City Hall, a restaurant, and then did some shopping. It was a big success, and it looks like the Association was able to turn that into something that would not only cover all costs, but also make a small profit as well.

The Association made about \$16,000 at Oktoberfest and donated all of that to the youth within the community along with other smaller things.

Mr. Buros announced that 16 German kids and a couple of teachers as chaperones will be in Sierra Vista on April 6, 2023 and noted that the Association members are a little rusty since COVID shutdown the exchange for a couple of years.

Ms. Henry stated that she wears many hats and noted that the student exchange has occurred for many years. She took students in October 2022 and now students are coming to visit the community. There are students from Kenya and Sierra Vista, and they stay in homes with families in Radebeul. There are three schools in that city that are participating in the program

and then those students that hosted students from Sierra Vista and Cananea come to Sierra Vista and spend time in Sierra Vista and Cananea. They all want to go to the Grand Canyon, and the Association in conjunction with Buena High School will be taking them. The student exchange program started in 1990 and the Association has many partnerships. The program shut down for a couple of years due to COVID, but it has been a very successful program that provides the students with the experience of going to a school in another country, staying in the home of another country, and they do not necessarily do the same thing every time. However, they will do the same things in Sierra Vista. They will be meeting with Mayor McCaa and the program will also teach them life skills, communication skills and they will have a farewell party. The Association has increased partnerships; therefore, they are benefiting from the community in trying to establish an understanding of other parts of the world. The Association also provides a delicious broth, potato salad, sauerkraut or brooch and the main person running that now is Miss Heika Robbins. The Association also provides Schnitzel dinners at the VFW as well as the Christmas market.

Council Member Rodriguez stated that it is good to see the Sister Cities Association in Council Chambers and thanked them for being present and patient due to the delay in getting to their presentation. He commented that what they do for Sierra Vista helps to put Sierra Vista's face in other countries. He further commented that the Association is the only one that does this, and he appreciates that because it is huge for Sierra Vista and the Association is such a small group. He added that he likes the history of how they got started, like most nonprofits, but he is glad that it has worked out. Lastly, he asked that they advise Council on what they would have provided because a lot of things have fallen off since COVID. He added that he plans to meet up with them on April 10, 2023 at the museum, but there is a list of events forthcoming, and he wonders if the Association wants Council to be present.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Ms. Henry pointed out that the slides are for Council. She added that there was a pause, there are new employees, and some of the roadblocks that the Association had was in getting re-established and changing how they do things. The Association works with Ms. Wilson in figuring out the transportation and she was going to find out if some of the City employees could do some of the driving because there is no longer a bus driver with a CDL, and in the past that is how they did most of the transportation for the students. She also stated that a formal invitation to the farewell party on April 26, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at Mr. Downey's residence will be sent out.

Council Member Rodriguez mentioned that in the past a goodie bag has been given out to the students and he is glad that the Association was able to schedule a trip to the Grand Canyon. They get to see the American culture. Ms. Henry stated that they try to do things on the scheduled that they think will interest the students and adults. In having just gone to German, for her personally, she has gone five times and each time she walks into their city hall, she finds the architect amazing and points it out to the students and gets their perspective.

Mayor McCaa stated that the students will get to see the new turf fields.

Ms. Henry stated that in the past, the slides were a part of the presentation that the students would do and if Council would like, she can have the students present with slides of them visiting Sierra Vista. The students then tell Council what they got out of the program.

Council Member Benning stated that the Council was going to talk about the Boards and Commissions Handbook and noted that the Sister Cities used to be a Commission. They felt that they could do more work on their own and became a nonprofit and started working together

with the City. The City would support them in any way it could as a City, but they would come back with the students and the students would explain what it meant to them, how they explored it, how they enjoyed it. Therefore, he would love to see that again.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey noted that the Herald did a really nice article.

Council Member Benning stated that the City Commissions are important, and he is glad that Council is taking them back under the wing of the Council because this a true story of where there was a need, and the citizens said that they were over the City and could do more on their own and became a nonprofit. Mr. Buros stated that they were kind of pushed.

Ms. Henry stated that she does not know of the possibility in the future, but there have been exchanges where they had volunteer fireman from Cananea that were trained by the City's Fire Department. She added that one of the finest times that she participated in was the Independence Day celebration, September 16, in Cananea, Sonora and that was when the Association was still a commission.

Council Member Rodriguez noted that Cananea's Lord Mayor will be visiting Sierra Vista soon.

Items C, D, and E were moved to a future work session(s) in April.

- C. [FY 2023-2024 Budget: Revenue and Debt Presentation](#)
- D. [Discussion of Fab Avenue Concept Designs](#)
- E. [Discussion of City Council Handbook and Board and Commissions Handbook](#)
- F. Report on Recent Trips, Meetings and Future Meetings

Ms. Yarbrough stated that she will reschedule everything that was on the agenda and since, Mayor McCaa will not be present at the next meeting, she is looking at adding a special date, possibly the first week of April. She added that she also has on her list for presentations Council Member Landry's request for an update on the Schneider Electric Project.

Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey stated that she will be going to DC with Ms. Yarbrough and Council Member Rodriguez.

Council Member Benning asked if the executive session would still take place due to the discussion just held. Mr. Potucek stated that he did not have clarification from Council as to how they want to proceed. He explained that Council has three ways to proceed, one is to proceed with the vote, and obviously the executive session would continue; two, Council could pull the item from the agenda, and have it on a future work session, or Council could table the item during the meeting. The only reason to not hold the executive session is if Council pulls the item from the agenda.

- G. Future Discussion Items and Council Requests

Council Member Rodriguez asked if the part on the airport can include what it means, i.e., fuel, etc. and have them broken down. Ms. Yarbrough stated that she always goes through that in the presentation, and she will include that in her comments.

Council Member Landry thanked everybody for being present and sitting tight with Council.

3. Adjourn

Mayor McCaa adjourned the March 21, 2023, work session of the Sierra Vista City Council at 4:55 p.m.

Clea McCaa II, Mayor

Minutes prepared by:

Attest:

Maria G. Marsh, Deputy Clerk

Jill Adams, City Clerk