

**YUCCA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP
APRIL 6, 2013**

Mayor Abel called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Member Huntington, Leone, Lombardo, Rowe,
and Mayor Abel

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- 1. The following items will be presented and discussed as part of a verbal presentation and discussion:**

- A. FY 2013-14 Baseline Budget Update**

Town Manager Nuaimi gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the budget trends of declining revenues and increasing costs. Since FY 2009/10 Contract Safety Costs have increased 18%. Personnel services budget has been reduced 28% since FY 2008/09 and full time equivalent staff has been reduced 33% going from 52 to 35 full time employees. The baseline budget has decreased, but there are still additional budgetary requirements of \$300,000 for public infrastructure maintenance, \$200,000 for Brehm Park maintenance, \$35,000 PERS retirement increase and \$65,000 OPEB contributions.

- B. Community Services Activities Update**

Available financial and personnel resources will require a redesign for how the Town delivers community services. Have to redesign how provide community services. Full time staffing includes a Recreation Supervisor, Administrative Assistant II and Museum Programs Coordinator. Scalable components are part time staffing, independent contractors and volunteers.

With regard to the Museum, there are insufficient staffing resources to maintain the status quo. Staff is working on collaborations. We need resources to provide day to day staffing and expertise. If unsuccessful, there will be a need to reduce hours of operation to match staffing and to look at seasonal vs. year round activities.

There will be continued support for special events and program however there is likely a need to charge for them, more use of the contractor instructor model being used now.

Concerts are moving forward. Community input highlighted the desire for the program. The Council sub-committee was successful in their efforts to obtain additional resources in the form of \$10,000 matching funds from Supervisor Ramos. The Town's recreational programming website is accepting donations from supporters to accommodate public desire to assist in funding the program. Six concerts have been scheduled.

C. Aquatics Programming Alternatives and Policy Guidance

Community input highlighted the many user groups impacted by the program, both inside and outside the programming scope of the Town. There were also multiple indications from the Community to assist in partnering with the Town to deliver service. Council indicated the desire to continue delivery of the program in a long term sustainable fashion. Fixed costs are approximately \$52,000, broken down to preventative maintenance staff at \$17,000, maintenance equipment and supplies \$9,000, chemicals \$5,000 and utilities \$21,000. Staff's recommendation for the program goal is to deliver a break-even program, reduce the hours of operation and increase user fees. Staff will be approaching the School District to propose that they agree to partner with the Town by covering costs of chemicals and utilities. In turn they would have unlimited pool use upon conclusion of the Town programming season and Town staff would continue pool maintenance year round.

Mayor Abel questioned if that would allow the school to have swimming in PE again. Town Manager Nuaimi stated yes.

Council Member Rowe questioned the impact of the loss of the \$40.00 from the swim team. Town Manager Nuaimi advised that the \$40 per hour did not cover all the costs.

Council Member Leone questioned if there is any cost maintained by the School District as of now. Town Manager Nuaimi stated currently they are not paying anything; the swim team has to fund raise to pay the \$40 hr.

D. Community Partnerships Review and Policy Guidance

Town Manager Nuaimi displayed the partnership requests, and questioned what other agencies have been asked for funding assistance. The fireworks show is a part of Fire Prevention activity and \$10,000 of the Basinwide Foundation Youth Sports Park is for water. Both the Hi Desert Water District and County Fire received considerable one-time resources from the dissolution of the Yucca Valley RDA sweeping of low/mod funding. The basin needs a single ED strategy coordinated with funding from San Bernardino County EDC.

Richard Harlan, Yucca Valley, commented regarding the additional responsibilities the Town has taken on since 2008.

Charles McHenry, Yucca Valley, spoke in favor of the museum, noting it seems like it is being hit awful hard. It is an asset and needed in community.

Mark Wheeler, Joshua Tree, spoke in support of the museum, noting it has repeatedly been ignored and is the most used and recognized facility in the basin.

Chuck Miller, Yucca Valley, commented that employees who work in Yucca Valley should live in Yucca Valley. He also spoke in support of the concerts and his hope to get a military band to perform.

Claudia Spotts, Joshua Tree, MB Historical Society, spoke in support of the museum, advised they have been partnering with it on the 2nd Wednesday program every month.

Richard Schwartz, Yucca Valley, spoke in support of the museum and the partnership request for the tennis program.

Barbara Harris, Yucca Valley, spoke in support of the museum and suggested a partnership with the Morongo Basin Historical Society.

Cary Harwin, Yucca Valley, spoke in support of the partnership request for DRTA and the Welcome Center.

Michelle Myers, Pioneertown, spoke in opposed to any reduction in the museum,

Sarah Kennington, Pioneertown, spoke in support of the museum.

Ron Cohen, Yucca Valley, commented he is not convinced the Town needs more revenue; there are a lot of other expenditures that are not being considered.

Edith Jones-Poland, Yucca Valley, commented regarding cost per person per program.

Sue Tsuda, Yucca Valley, spoke in support of the partnership request from the Senior Support Center, urged discussion regarding ways they can collaborate with the Town to provide vital services at the least cost.

Charlyne Connors did not speak but submitted a card in support of the museum.

Rae Packard, Yucca Valley, commented regarding the budget being overextended.

Margo Sturges, Yucca Valley, commented in support of the museum and opposition to

Brehm Park, stating that kids in the swimming programs aren't interested in soccer.

Trina Whiting, Yucca Valley, President of Morongo Basin Youth Soccer Association, advised that all the organizations such as the Lobos, Soccer Association and Tri Valley Little League are working together to come up with solution of trying to take over maintenance of Brehm Park for the next 2 years and think they can pay at least half of proposed costs. She noted there are over 650 kids in the soccer program.

Council Member Leone commented that partnerships are very important for all these activities and issues that are facing budget cuts. He added he does think the School District and Hi Desert Water District do need to play a bigger part.

Council Member Rowe thanked Karalee Hargrove from the School District for attending today's meeting to clarify the Town's request for the Board, and people who have come out to help us seek partnerships and solutions. Town Manager Nuaimi advised that what the Town is seeking, in order to expand from the Town's basic program is for the School District to pick up the costs for the chemicals and utilities and the Town will continue to provide maintenance and repairs. Council Member Rowe asked if that would allow the use of the pool for the school's PE program and year round use of the pool. Town Manager Nuaimi advised it allows for all the uses. During the summer it is the Town's pool and when we aren't there it is open for the School's use. Council Member Rowe commented that all of us up here on the Council listen and we provide input to staff for suggestions. The suggestions are not staff recommended.

Mayor Abel gave background on the pool noting that the School District had decided they were closing the pool down and came to the Town. Town Manager Nuaimi advised that in about 2003 the District did come to the Town indicating the pool had problems and that they were going to close it town. At that time the Town took it over and spent \$300,000 on improvements

Council Member Rowe commented the pool is an asset in our community and not only serves the high school team, but also our swim program and provides a feeder program for the high school swim team. She added the pool serves a great portion of our community. The Council did hear that and is coming back to figure out a fair and equitable decision, and hopes the District can work with the Town.

Council Member Leone concurred on the time frame and the costs the Town of Yucca Valley put into the pool.

Council Member Huntington questioned the savings over last year's budget if the program is reworked, and the District partners with us. Town Manager Nuaimi advised the modified Town program relieves about a \$15,000 subsidy plus about \$26,000 for their share.

Council Member Lombardo stated he is also in favor of the retooling the program. He

also agreed with asking some of the other agencies to assist with funding.

Mayor Abel commented he is glad to see there is a plan moving forward to deal with safety and water issues. He also acknowledged the statements about the quality of the museum and how it has been run. That is equally true for our aquatics program. As a former pool manager here, he knows how much effort it takes to run a program. He thanked the community for following through and contacting the School Board. He also commented regarding the importance of partnerships and their need for funding assistance.

Council Member Lombardo commented in support of the Welcome Center, noting it is important to maintain that designation because if we lose it, it may not return.

Council Member Rowe expressed appreciation for the time spent talking about what DRTA does and her hope that the FAM tours will continue.

Council Member Leone commented that about 10 years ago when the Town initially looked at increasing the TOT, it was expected that the revenue would have been about \$45,000 and would be donated to the Chamber. If there is any future increase in revenue enhanced by TOT he suggested it goes to the Chamber and DRTA.

Mayor Abel questioned where staff would like to see the discussions continue noting that budgetary decisions cannot be made today. Town Manager Nuaimi advised staff heard input on the aquatics program and will make changes and approach the School District seeking their participation. If the proposal is accepted by MUSD, staff will take those costs out of the budget. With reference to partnerships, staff wanted to pose a couple of questions but is not ready to complete that at this time.

Town Manager Nuaimi stated that specific comments were provided by Mr. Cohen and Dr. Jones-Poland providing budget numbers, and noted he is more than happy to go through the budget with them.

Buck Buckley, Joshua Tree, commented regarding the need to do a line item review of the budget and not cut any of the things people need in these tough times.

Bonnie Brady, Yucca Valley, commented in support of the museum.

Lori Herbel, Yucca Valley, proposed the Council look at a zero based budget with every program analyzed for need and cost. Administrative Services Director Yakimow advised that staff does just that by looking at every program, line item by line item, every year. We are very conscientious and deliberate when establishing budget and it is placed on the internet for all to see.

Barbara Miller, Yucca Valley, commented that all government is always top heavy whether it is at the local or federal level. Added she doesn't remember discussion about

the value of buying a million dollar bank building. Mayor Abel advised the purchase of the PFF Bank building was a previous Council decision in a different economic climate, and purchased through RDA funds that are no longer available.

Meredith Jones, Yucca Valley, commented in support of the museum and commended all Community Services staff and volunteers.

Patience McDowell, Yucca Valley, commented it looks like the Town is headed in a positive direction, suggested the Town get current parks we have situated before putting money into another park.

Jennifer Collins, Yucca Valley, thanked the Mayor and Council for allowing the community to come up to share their thoughts and wishes. Commented regarding the importance of partnerships.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Abel adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.