

**MINUTES
SPECIAL SESSION
MAYOR and COMMON COUNCIL
Of the
TOWN OF CAMP VERDE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
Tuesday, February 7, 2006
6:30 p.m.**

Minutes are a summary of the actions taken. They are not verbatim.
Public input is placed after Council motions to facilitate future research.
Public input, where appropriate, is heard prior to the motion.

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

Mayor Gioia, Vice Mayor Baker, Councilors Hauser, Smith, Kovacovich, Parrish and Parry were present.

Also Present: Town Manager Bill Lee, Town Attorney Bill Sims, Deputy Town Clerk Virginia Jones, and Recording Secretary Margaret Harper.

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge was led by Kovacovich.

4. **Discussion, review and possible action regarding 90 day probationary period for the Town Manager.**

On a motion by Baker, seconded by Smith, the Council voted unanimously to continue this item until March 30, 2006, in order to have time to do the reevaluation.

When it was moved that the subject item be continued to a date late in March, after a brief discussion the date of March 30th was agreed upon. Attorney Sims confirmed that further discussion of the item could continue at this time; there was none, and the public was then invited to speak.

PUBLIC INPUT

Jerry Tobish, owner of the two Ancient Bear Galleries in Camp Verde, said that the only reason he has those stores in town is because of Bill Lee; Mr. Tobish described how Lee persuaded him to locate in the town. Mr. Tobish also mentioned other businesses that he personally persuaded to come to the town, based on promises from Lee, and said that those promises have been kept.

Tap Parsons requested that the Council take a good look at Bill Lee's ability and accomplishments before considering termination of employment.

Mitch Dickinson credited Bill Lee with major accomplishments since he took over as Manager for the town. In summary, those accomplishments included successfully handling problems with the Main Street Beautification project that had existed, contributing to the increase in tax revenues, the Coury annexation that created much-needed manna for the Town, helped envision and implement financial plans through his guidance and direction, and helped promote economic development with vision and energy, developing relationships with people who have brought the town what was needed. Dickinson challenged the Council to find any other manager anywhere who could have accomplished what Lee did for economic development in such an easy-going manner and at no expense to the Town of Camp Verde. The economic development through special events, especially the two that have earned statewide acclaim, are directly due to Mr. Lee and his ability to motivate his staff. Dickinson feels that what is happening is a personal vendetta,

and he outlined actions and phone calls that he believes were for the purpose of trying to find some criminal damage, or criminal intent, at an expense of approximately \$2500. Since the report from the Attorney General's office has not been made public, Dickinson suggested that Gioia is still sitting on the results, and obviously there has been no ruling of criminal intent. Dickinson defended the Ramada project as a good one. Dickinson requested that the Council do its hiring or firing in a straightforward, honest manner with maturity and honor, without the backbiting, mudslinging campaign that has gone on too far. Dickinson also commented on the petition and what he felt may have been Gioia's participation in it. Dickinson took exception to a comment from Parrish during a conversation with Dickinson's mother, that he (Parrish) "never liked Bill Lee since the day he come to Town." As for the portion of the Wischmeyer proceeding coming up in two weeks, it is absolutely vital that Bill Lee be available to testify as the Town star witness and to defend the Town. Dickinson summarized Lee's fine qualities, saying that his track record speaks for itself and that there is no valid reason based on job performance to let the man go.

Councilor Parry, as "the new guy," then held a brief conversation with Dickinson asking when the Ramada started and why it took so long.

Danny Parker said that Bill Lee brought the crowdads event to Camp Verde, put the Town on the map, and has done a lot. Parker commented on Parrish saying that he is all for getting rid of Lee based on the problems with the building purchased for the Marshal's Office. Parker said that Lee has done nothing but good for the Town, letting him go would be letting a lot of Camp Verde go. Parker insisted that since Parry is so new he is not qualified to make a judgment regarding the Town Manager who has been doing a good job.

Teresa Tobish, the wife of Jerry Tobish, said that in her experience and profession a person who makes mistakes is a person who is doing his job; someone who puts his head, foot and heart out to do something to make it better will make a mistake. In this world nobody is perfect. She urged the Council to look at what the man has done, not what he has not done; he is trying to make Camp Verde better and helping merchants to succeed.

Lynda Moore said that Bill Lee has accomplished more for the Town in his eight years than she has seen in the 30 years she has lived here. As a department head, she assured the Council that the dedication of the staff in the Parks & Recreation Department is not to them, but to Bill Lee, adding that she believes he has more integrity than any man in this room.

Robert Foreman agreed that no one, including Bill Lee, is perfect, and that anyone who walks into a new job will make mistakes; the only person who never makes mistakes is one who never tries to do anything. Lee is genuinely concerned about the people and interested in the future of Camp Verde. There is a learning curve on any job; Foreman suggested that whichever one of the members sitting on Council feels that he or she has never made a mistake in trying to do their job should be the one who makes the motion to terminate Mr. Lee.

Jim Bullard urged the Council to listen to what the people have to say.

Jeremy Bach commented on Bill Lee doing a great job for the town and bringing economy to the town, and referred to an article in the newspaper that Witt wrote that fits the situation nicely. Lee is good for the town; try to work things out and judge a person on merit, not on a couple of mistakes.

Wally Dickinson said he has been working for the town almost 17 years, and has never known a Town Manager who worked harder or who had a better heart; nobody is perfect.

Beck Hubbell said he wanted to address Councilor Parry's question about why the Ramada took so long; Perry interrupted, denying that was his question. Hubbell described how salvage

material had been used to help construct the Ramada, with the help of many volunteers. Hubbell also commented that neither Parrish nor Gioia had participated in the project.

Alex Wilson, of the Edward Jones Investment Office, described how Lee had persuaded him to get into volunteering for the Town, first as a Parks & Recreation Commissioner, and now also with the Chamber of Commerce, none of which would have happened if it were not for Bill Lee. The Chamber is trying to get business owners pulling together; Wilson would like to see the whole Town pull together. Bill is the kind of guy that is needed for that; it would be a mistake to get rid of him.

There was no further public input.

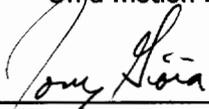
5. **Discussion, review and possible action regarding Town policies concerning the implementation of the open meeting laws.**

Staff was directed to itemize what may be discussed, leaving it open for further points that may come up in that discussion, yet giving the public an idea of what Council and staff may be working on in the retreats.

There was comment that the Council had received recommendations from past Town Attorneys to not prepare agendas. In light of recent input, however, it was requested that the Clerk, Manager and Attorney address any items that may be discussed in retreats by the Town Council and/or the staff, so that the public is aware of what the Town Council is doing in a retreat, and that Minutes be kept as a summary of discussions that that retreat. It was also confirmed that the handling of retreats by other communities seemed to be split half and half. There was input from the Town Attorney assuring the Council that there have been many violations by other communities of the Open Meeting Law, mistakenly. Mr. Sims complimented the press for their diplomatic approach to questioning a possible violation of the Open Meeting Law, and said that the Council fully intended to comply with that Law. He suggested that the important wide-ranging free discussions that take place during retreats be followed up with directions to staff to come back with agendized action items at a subsequent meeting. The Council also commended the Press for their input and being "a watchdog" in a positive way, to help the Town.

6. **Adjournment**

On a motion by Hauser, seconded by Baker, the meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

 2/17/06

Tony Gioia, Mayor

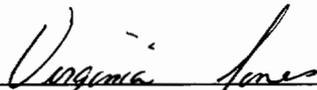


Margaret Harper, Recording Secretary

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing Minutes are a true and accurate accounting of the actions of the Mayor and Common Council of the Town of Camp Verde during the Special Session of the Town Council of Camp Verde, Arizona, held on the 7th day of February, 2006. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 21 day of Feb, 2006.



Virginia Jones, Deputy Town Clerk