

**MINUTES
SPECIAL/WORK SESSION
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS · 473 S. Main Street, Room #106
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.**

Minutes are a summary of the discussion. They are not verbatim.
Public input is placed after Council discussion to facilitate future research.

1. **Call to Order**

Mayor German called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

Mayor German, Vice Mayor Baker, and Councilors Carol German, Brad Gordon, Bruce George, and Robin Whatley were present. Councilor Jessie Jones was absent.

Also Present

Clarkdale Mayor Doug Von Gausig, Former Mayor Tony Gioia, Town Manager Russ Martin, Marshal Nancy Gardner, AZ State Parks Park Ranger S. Max Castillo, Town Clerk Deborah Barber, and Recording Secretary Saepyol Warren.

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice Mayor Baker led the pledge.

4. **Presentation by Clarkdale Mayor Doug Von Gausig regarding the Verde River designation as an "American Blue River Trail" followed by discussion, consideration, and possible approval of a proclamation supporting the designation of the Verde River as an American Blue River Trail.**

On a motion by Gordon, seconded by George, Council voted unanimously to postpone the proclamation supporting the designation of the Verde River as an American Rivers Blue Trail.

Mayor German welcomed the public to the work session, explaining that the intent was to invite public input early on in the discussion and decision-making process. Council clarified that the agenda for work sessions, however, would *not* include, "public input for items *not* on the agenda."

Mayor German recommended postponing the Proclamation due to the level of confusion and need for more public awareness and input on this significant issue. This would also allow the Council time to become more familiar with the details of the proposal.

Clarkdale Mayor Doug Von Gausig presented a slideshow presentation of the American Rivers Blue Trail project, explaining that they planned to introduce their proposal first to all Verde Valley public officials, then to the Yavapai Apache Nation, Yavapai Cattle Growers and other major stakeholders, then finally to individual property owners through several open forums. Though this order may not seem preferable to all, he recognized that they could likely not please all parties no matter where they started the flow of information.

The most important matter of clarification was that the "American Rivers Blue Trail" project falls under "American Rivers," a privately-funded organization with no regulatory authority, which has no connection with the "National Blueways System" enacted by the Secretary of the Interior. Though American Rivers is headquartered in Washington D.C., it is not a federal program, and has no authority or intent to affect the control, appropriation, use or distribution of water or water rights.

Their mission is to connect people with the river, enhance the local economy, and preserve environmental health and community identity—by working in partnership with the community, while making the most impact possible with the funds available. Management and mitigation are top priority considerations in planning and education efforts, as part of building a culture of an environmental ethic. They are not involved in ditch efficiency issues, however, as this is already the work of The Nature Conservancy. This "Blue Trails" project would become the first one west of the Mississippi and the Verde River is a viable candidate for modeling how to successfully promote and protect a state treasure.

Mayor Von Gausig highlighted unique features of the 192-mile long Verde River to include its support of 200+ species of birds and six endangered species, as well as its critical role in supplying water to 2.3 million people throughout AZ. The American Rivers' goal is to keep the Verde River flowing and to stop the trend of desert rivers drying up, as seven have dried up in the last 50 years. The general outline of the plan is to make the Verde River a part of people's lives by: improving access, promoting recreational uses, educating the public, advocating for a healthy sustainable ecosystem, improving irrigation efficiency, and bolstering the economic value of the Verde River. He highlighted work that has already been done such as new signs at river access points and waterproof flip-chart maps for boaters. They are working on detailed river mapping to establish "mile markers" which would facilitate emergency response and provide users with points of reference.

Several stakeholders shared their input and concerns, including Eureka ditch boss John McReynolds, Verde Ditch commissioner Al Dupuy, Yavapai Cattle Growers Association President Gary Mitchell, shareholder Linda Buchanan, former Camp Verde Mayor Tony Gioia, and AZ State Parks Ranger S. Max Castillo.

There was a mixed response of fear, concern, and optimism, indicating the need for more time to improve familiarity and trust with American Rivers. Major concerns expressed were over issues, including: 1) fear of any federal involvement and subsequent loss of property, water, and/or irrigation rights; 2) the need for improved communication and partnership concerning Blue Trails project initiatives; 3) the need for improved public awareness, input, and general consensus on important decisions concerning the River and any projects; 4) fear of a hidden agenda; 5) litter management; and 6) concerns about the reliability of private funding.

McReynolds and Dupuy, representing the ditch companies offered their support in involving the shareholders in the discussion about the Blue Trails project. Dupuy offered to make it an agenda item for their October 17th shareholders meeting.

Buchanan, property owner, multi-ditch shareholder, and representative of the AZ Farm Bureau and Agricultural Coalition expressed optimism for the beneficial appropriation of American Rivers' private philanthropic resources. She recommended starting an online forum to facilitate public awareness, discussion, input, and information access.

Former Camp Verde Mayor Tony Gioia, self-declared advocate of water management for two decades, expressed strong support for the Blue Trails Proclamation, explaining that getting people to experience the river would change their mindset and motivate them to keep the Verde River healthy.

Mayor German called a 5-minute recess at 8:00pm. Meeting resumed at 8:10pm.

5. **Discussion, consideration, and possible direction to staff relative to the Personnel Manual.** Staff Resource: Russ Martin
Council took no action on this item.
It was generally agreed that this item required further discussion.

Section 2-3-1.A – Following a brief discussion, Council agreed that the suggested changes should apply to non-department head positions only.

Section 3-7-3 – Termination of Employment had been deleted. Council agreed that this section should not be deleted.

Section 4-8-8 – Council discussed removing this section, noting that sick leave is a benefit to be used when ill, not a bank account. After a short discussion and staff input relative to morale, Council agreed to leave it as is.

Section 4-10-3.A1 and A2, B, C, and D suggested changes were accepted. However, the proposed Section E

resulted in a lengthy debate. Some Council members felt that the decision to have the ability to offer more vacation time as an incentive to new employees belonged with the Manager, while others felt strongly that it was Council's job to set policy, whether it was in the Town Code, the Personnel Manual, or in procedures and then it became the Manager's job to carry out those policies.

There was also a lengthy discussion about how to make the Section fair for all if it were added, such as changing the word 'may' to 'shall' and ensuring that the offer would be made only if there was a lateral transfer for police officers and that other employee candidate's claims of existing benefits would be verified.

Some Council members suggested discussing the matter at another time due to the late hour, while others wished to continue the discussion and come to a decision.

6. **Discussion, consideration, and possible direction to staff regarding the Town's complaint procedures.**
Staff Resource: Russ Martin
Council took no action on this item.
7. **Adjournment**
Mayor German adjourned the meeting at 9:19 p.m. without a motion.



Charles German, Mayor



Saep Yol Warren, 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/Work Session of the Town Council of Camp Verde, Arizona, held on October 9, 2013. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 19 day of November, 2013.



Debbie Barber, Town Clerk