

**MINUTES
TOWN OF CAMP VERDE
SPECIAL SESSION
MAYOR AND COUNCIL
473 S MAIN STREET, SUITE 106
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022 AT 5:30 P.M.**

ZOOM MEETING LINK:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83828600936?pwd=TIVyOUprY0c5WWxrV1FTcnowanAvUT09>

One Tap Mobile: 1-346-248-7799 or 1-669-900-9128

Meeting ID: 838 2860 0936

Passcode: 239632

Note: Council member(s) may attend Council Sessions either in person or by telephone, video, or internet conferencing.

1. Call to Order-

Mayor Jenkins called the meeting to order at 5:46 p.m.

2. Roll Call. Council Members Jackie Baker, Cris McPhail, Jessie Murdock, Robin Whatley, Vice Mayor Joe Butner, and Mayor Dee Jenkins

Others present; Town Clerk Cindy Pemberton, Town Manager Russ Martin, Transcriptionist Dana Donahue, Doug J (Zoom)

3. Pledge of Allegiance-

Councilor Murdock led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Interviews with applicants to fill the vacant Council seat until the seat is fulfilled during the 2022 election cycle. Resource: Cindy Pemberton

Town Clerk Cindy Pemberton stated the Clerk's Office received four applications for the vacant Council member seat for the Town of Camp Verde. She said we will be conducting ten-minute interviews for each applicant. Applicants will be called alphabetically.

Mayor Jenkins recognized Councilor Whatley.

Councilor Whatley recused herself for this portion of the meeting because she will be running against several of the applicants in the next election cycle. She felt it would be best if she was not part of the interview processes. Councilor Whatley exited the room.

Mrs. Pemberton called the first applicant, Richard Ellis. Mayor Jenkins asked Ms. Pemberton if she should open this as a public hearing. Ms. Pemberton replied Council is conducting ten-minute interviews for each application. Public input will not be allowed during this Special Session.

Mayor Jenkins asked if anyone had questions for Mr. Ellis. Councilor Baker stated she had read through the applicant's application. She felt he was well versed and had been involved in the community for some time. She thanked him for his continued service and involvement.

Vice Mayor Butner asked Mr. Ellis; What do you believe is the most important problem presently facing our town and how would you address it?

Mr. Ellis replied that he would very much like to be part of the solution. He feels that infrastructure in the town is a problem. It appears we are saddled with budget constraints and lack of manpower. Big business is asking to be part of the town, but we don't have the physical population that would warrant their investment. We need to operate until we get to that point. We are looking at growth, fiscal responsibilities, cooperation with other jurisdictions, local, state, and federal. We need to make Camp Verde more desirable to move to. He is a member of the Camp Verde Chamber and Cottonwood Chamber. He continued, stating Cottonwood and Sedona are having some problems that we should avoid. We need to look at long term growth. Time is not going to stop for us. We can't afford to play catch up with growth and infrastructure because growth may pass us by. He came from a town that had to play catch up. He states he is a team player. All his background has been as a team player.

Councilor Murdock asked if Mr. Ellis is familiar with the term, Council Manager form of government? Mr. Ellis replied he is aware of it, but his primary experience has been on the Board of Directors elected positions. He has been part of many state organizations. He was the State Commander of the Rangers. He is familiar with the term, but not intimately. Councilor Murdock asked if Mr. Ellis was aware of what a council member job entailed. Mr. Ellis replied he felt the responsibility was to guide the town into growth, be fiscally responsible in that growth, planning ahead, set policies, guide the town through the various departments it reports to.

Mr. Robert Foreman was called next. Mr. Foreman said he forgot to add that he was President of the Chamber of Commerce at one time and needed to add that.

Mayor Jenkins stated that Mr. Foreman has been a long-standing member of the community and has held many offices and does a wonderful job. You have wonderful credentials. However, you are an important member of the Planning and Zoning. It would be difficult to lose you from the PZ Commission. We want to do what is best for the town. It is difficult for me because you have really stepped up and are a valuable member of the community.

Vice Mayor Butner asked the question; What do you believe is the most pressing problem facing the town and how would you address it? Mr. Foreman stated that the I17 and 260 corridors should be developed smartly. We have been talking about it for thirty years and now it is coming. I don't want the Town of Camp Verde to end up where Cottonwood was a decade ago. We don't need what Cottonwood has, an old town and a new town. We need to make sure the downtown area does not decay, is not neglected,

and is not set aside. I am also very interested in the revitalization of the Verde Lakes area. I think that is where the Town Council should focus for the next few years.

Councilor Murdock asked if Mr. Foreman understood the concept of Council/Manager form of government.

Mr. Foreman replied that the Town Council sets policy, and the Town Manager implements policy. The town manager acts as a buffer between the politics and the town staff. Councilor Murdock followed up by asking how Mr. Foreman would define his role as a council member. Mr. Foreman replied he sees his role as one of consensus, bringing all the town council together to serve the Town of Camp Verde as a whole and where Camp Verde should go in the future.

Councilor Baker stated that the Planning and Zoning commission is so important, and we appreciate your service to the town. Mr. Foreman stated he felt he would be a good addition to the council as he is very familiar with the town and what happens here. Mr. Foreman replied he thought he would be a good addition to the council; he is fair and honest and works well with others. He is very familiar with the Town of Camp Verde.

Mrs. Pemberton called Marie Moore. Vice Mayor Butner asked the candidate; What do you believe the most important problem facing our town and how would you address it?

Mrs. Moore said things are interconnected. She was at Council last summer with an issue regarding infrastructure on Main Street. The issue caused several businesses not able to operate properly. She continued, stating we are going to have difficulty bringing more business into Main Street without addressing that situation. Ms. Moore was pleased with the manner that the town addressed it. She spoke about our downtown area. We have good "bones." Main street could stand to have a little resurrection. Ms. Moore stated she grew up in this area and remembers when Old Town Cottonwood was a place a person didn't go, and now look at it. Now people drive twenty-five miles to go to Old Town Cottonwood to spend their money. We should try to keep them in our town.

Ms. Moore feels Camp Verde can maintain their small-town values and grow large commercial businesses. She feels that keeping the industrial businesses on the west side of I17 and out of main downtown is important. Housing is also important. We don't have that right now and it all connects. We need to have housing, so we can have workers, so our businesses can thrive.

Councilor Murdock asked Mrs. Moore about Council Manager form of government and how a council member would feel their place is. Mrs. Moore replied that the council makes rules, and the town manager implements them. The manager is running the day-to-day operations of the town and the council oversees it.

Mayor Jenkins asked Mrs. Moore if there was anything else to add.

Mrs. Moore replied that she grew up in this town and has a business downtown with her mother. They are here to stay, and she is in a time in her life that she can dedicate time and effort toward the town. She owns a business on Main Street and wants to be represented along with other businesses. She feels she can connect with businesses in the town because she too is a business owner.

Mrs. Pemberton called Robert Witt. Mr. Witt stated he is grateful for the opportunity to be

here and is impressed with the quality of the candidates that are present.

Mr. Witt stated his greatest concerns are our freedoms. He feels that we need to represent our people. We should paint the decisions based on the individuals in our community and their freedoms. His greatest concern is that we have lost a tremendous amount of our freedoms in the last three years. We need to stop that at the lowest level of government, or it is going to continue.

Vice Mayor Butner asked; What do you believe is the most important problem facing our town and how would you address it? Mr. Witt replied that we need to prioritize the lives of our citizens. We got up this morning and we were all free. The solution to problems is not the government. We have twelve thousand, nine hundred people in this town and if we allow every one of them to express their opinions, we have better decisions and many solutions. If we allow seven people to set policy, it is inefficient and doesn't work historically. When you allow people to exercise their freedoms, things get resolved. He feels freedom of the individual is of most important because it makes better solutions.

Councilor Murdock asked if Mr. Witt knew of anything the Town is doing that is restricting the town individuals' freedoms? Mr. Witt replied there are things, but it is a national trend. He feels people should be able to decorate their houses any way they want. He wants the town to help citizens, not tell them what to do. He does not feel we are in a very bad place. There are some very specific things we can address.

Councilor Murdock asked if Mr. Witt was familiar with the Council/Manager form of government. Mr. Witt replied that that form of government is about serving the citizens and represent the people. We aren't supposed to tell people what to do, we lay out the vision and allow our staff to implement it. He thanked the council for their time.

5. Public Hearing followed by Possible Discussion, of public input regarding applicants Robert Witt, Marie Moore, Richard Ellis and Robert Foreman to fill the vacant Council seat. Staff Resource: Cindy Pemberton

Mayor Jenkins stated that the Public Hearing is now open. Councilor Murdock asked Ms. Pemberton to explain how the seating process works. Ms. Pemberton stated that the vacant seat must be filled by appointment. Town staff advertised in the papers, radio and around town. The deadline was closed, and four applicants were published. Currently, we are going to allow the public to provide input about the candidates.

Councilor Murdock asked Ms. Pemberton to clarify the processes of making the appointment and how it relates to the upcoming election in August. How does the seating take place? Ms. Pemberton replied that on February 16, 2022 our previous Council Member Bill LeBeau resigned his position as Council Member, leaving a vacant seat. ARS 9-235 requires the Council fill the vacancy by appointment until the next regularly scheduled council election. The staff advertised in the newspaper, on the radio and we posted around town and on the website for the opportunity. It closed on March 9th. We had four applicants that submitted their interest on time. We are now opening the Public Hearing to allow any citizens to express their insight regarding the candidates. When Council goes into their Regular session at the next meeting, they will select a new Council

Member to fill the interim seat. The appointed applicant will take their seat after their oath of office this evening.

Councilor Murdock inquired about filling the vacancy by appointment when we go to our primary and we have a clear winner, how long is the appointment? Is it possible the appointment could be through November? Ms. Pemberton replied, yes, up to November.

Councilor Murdock reiterated her statement to make sure the applicants were aware the appointment could continue up to the primary in November. Is that correct? Ms. Pemberton replied yes.

Mayor Jenkins stated that even if the appointment is through the primary, we won't seat our next Council until November. Ms. Pemberton stated the County conducts the canvasses and once the Clerk reads the canvas to you, they may not take the seat until as late as December. We are establishing that the appointment will take their seat until the seat is filled electorally by the public.

Councilor Baker stated whoever is appointed, and is going to run for council, they can be seated and still campaign. Ms. Pemberton replied that some of the applicants are only applying for the short-term appointment, however, they can campaign while actively seated. We currently have members that are running for Council seats.

Mayor Jenkins opened the floor to public comment.

Shawna Oothoudt spoke in favor of Marie Moore. She has known Marie for a long time and believes she will be a good fit to the Council.

Jeremy Brady stated he is a business owner and is speaking in favor of Marie Moore. He feels she would be a good representative of the business owners.

Shannalee Brady also spoke in favor of Marie Moore. Mrs. Brady feels that Mrs. Moore is a business owner and feels Mrs. Moore would be fair and just in her service. Ms. Moore possesses vision and would do her job without bias.

The public hearing closed.

Mayor Jenkins asked if any councilmembers had comments.

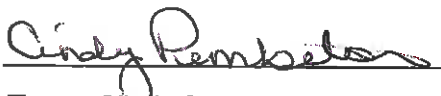
No comments.

Mayor Jenkins adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

6. Adjournment



Mayor Dee Jenkins

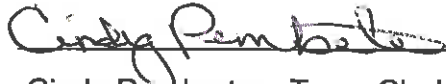


Attest: Town Clerk Cindy Pemberton

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 March 16, 2022. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 11th day of April, 2022.

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Cindy Pemberton, Town Clerk