

MAYOR AND COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE  
SPECIAL MEETING - MARCH 27, 2024 AT 5:30 PM



MINUTES

The City of Douglas Mayor and Council met in a Special Meeting on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., at City Hall Council Chamber, 425 10th Street. The Honorable Mayor Donald Huish called the meeting to order.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER. 5:30 p.m.
- 2. ROLL CALL.

	PRESENT	ABSENT
MAYOR, DONALD C. HUISH	X	
MAYOR PRO TEMPORE, MARGARET MORALES		X (excused)
COUNCILMEMBER, DANYA ACOSTA		X (excused)
COUNCILMEMBER, RAY SHELTON	X (excused at 6:19 p.m.)	
COUNCILMEMBER, MICHAEL BALDENEGRO	X	
COUNCILMEMBER, JOSE GRIJALVA	X	
CITY MANAGER, ANA URQUIJO	X	
CITY ATTORNEY, DENIS FITZGIBBONS	X	
CITY TREASURER, LUIS PEDROZA	X	
CITY CLERK, ALMA ANDRADE	X	

- 3. PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL IN WRITING OR VERBALLY ON ANY ITEM NOT ON THE AGENDA.

Judy Bernard, of 211 N Willcox Rd, Pearce, AZ, commented on the following:

- Opposes the IDA approval of the Riverview, LLC \$15mil bond.

Diana LaMar of 1303 F Avenue, Douglas, AZ, commented of the following:

- Opposes the IDA approval of the Riverview, LLC \$15mil bond.

- 4. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE DIRECTION.

A. GOLF COURSE CAPITAL.

Ms. Urquijo provided an update on the council meeting held on March 13th regarding the master plan for the golf course. She discussed the capital infusion from the sale of La Perilla Apartments and the estimated funds available for the golf course. The city aims to optimize existing funds to enhance the golf course's condition, considering both short-term and long-term sustainable solutions. Stakeholder input, including from the MPC Golf board and the Douglas Golf and Social Club, will be considered in decision-making. The city plans to provide a project page on their website for clarity and will engage with stakeholders for input. She addressed questions regarding the necessity of redesign, stating that it's essential due to aging infrastructure and the need for modern sustainability practices. Solar energy and effluent use were discussed as potential avenues for savings and sustainability. The city plans to enhance marketing efforts for the RV park and is exploring grant opportunities to improve the golf course facilities and operations. She emphasized the importance of a master plan for informed decision-making and are awaiting quotes from golf architects. Despite focusing on a long-term plan, they will maintain the golf course's appearance in the short term. Lastly, Ms. Urquijo sought direction and clarification from the council on these matters.

Mayor Huish commented Ms. Urquijo's report answered questions, and stated he wanted to make it known that the golf course is a valuable asset to the community. Council wants to make sure that things are done right and properly, not just for tomorrow, but for the long term, for future generations. Lastly, he commented taking the opportunity to be able to see what is the best plan and how to proceed, to ensure that the golf course remains viable at all times and for the future of Douglas.

Council Member Shelton highlighted the importance of attracting visitors to Douglas, mentioning that many tourists stop in nearby towns like Tombstone and Bisbee. He emphasized the potential significance of reviving the golf course in Douglas, particularly in stimulating tourism. Despite acknowledging current water challenges, he expressed optimism about future rainfall and stressed the need for water conservation efforts. Additionally, he emphasized the urgency of preparing the golf course for the upcoming Labor Day tournament to ensure a positive experience for visitors and to promote tourism in Douglas throughout the year.

Council Member Grijalva inquired what is the master plan itself projected to be.

Ms. Urquijo mentioned that the cost to conduct the master plan is approximately \$40,000 which would provide detailed insights to determine whether the project falls within the \$750,000 range or higher. These estimates are based on the quotes received and past case studies from other projects and emphasized the need for a current assessment of material costs to finalize the budget.

Council Member Baldenegro inquired of looking into golf courses in Saudi Arabia, because they have golf courses there and it is in the Sahara Desert.

Ms. Urquijo stated that they have not examined any particular designs yet, focusing instead on two or three architects known for their well-rounded experience. The priority is sustainability and efficiency in their search, particularly to improve water usage efficiency.

Mr. Shelton acknowledged 17 golfers in attendance, and thanked them for attending the meeting.

Nick Forsythe, of 3003 E Quail Hollow, Douglas, AZ commented on the following:

- Concerns of Golf Course.

Joshua Carson, of 1421 Camino Chavinda, Douglas, AZ, commented on the following:

- Questioned the city's ability and past performance seeking grant funds to help with the revitalization of the golf course.

Council Member Shelton stated a former student, Jose Carrillo; has been writing grants for the Silver City, NM golf course and offered his help with grant writing.

**Direction to move forward with the architectural evaluation to include the input received.**

Mayor Huish moved Item 4C.

**B. GROWING WATER SMART.**

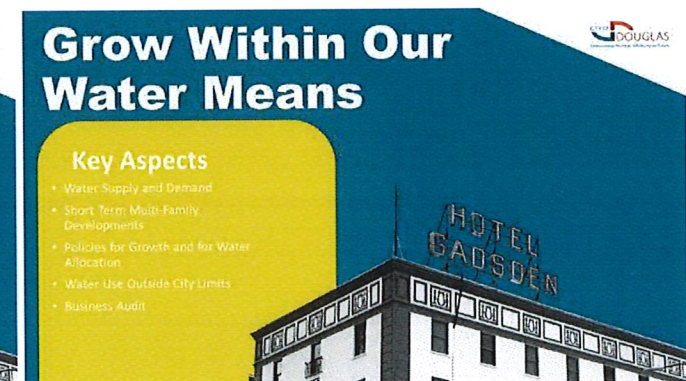
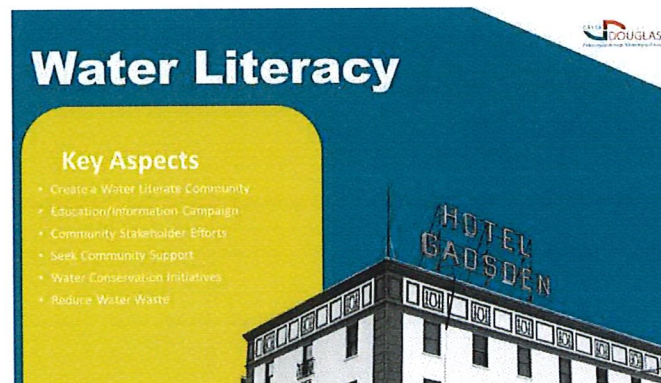
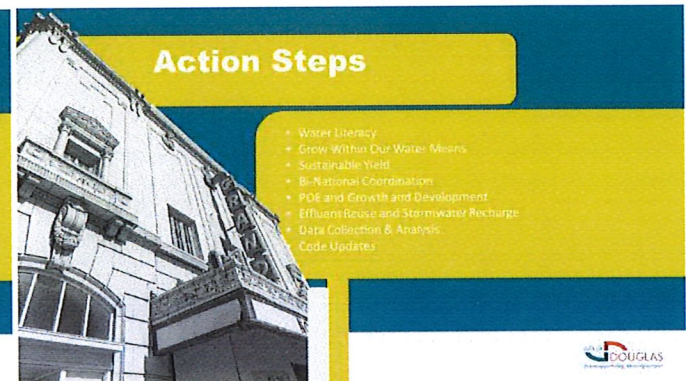
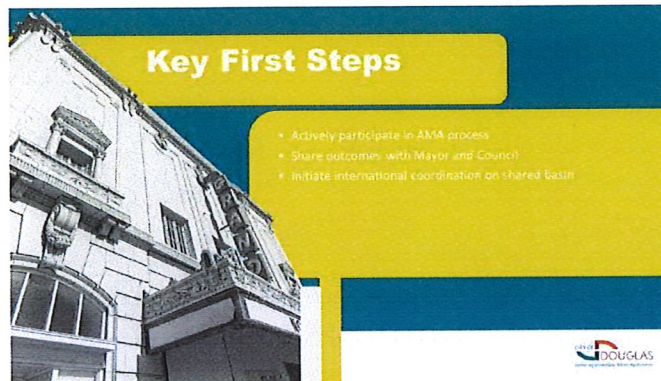
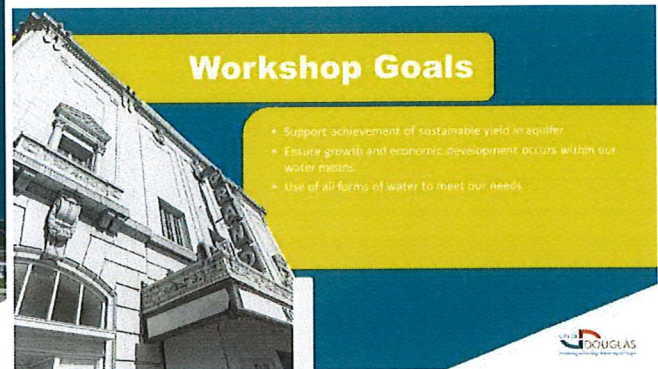
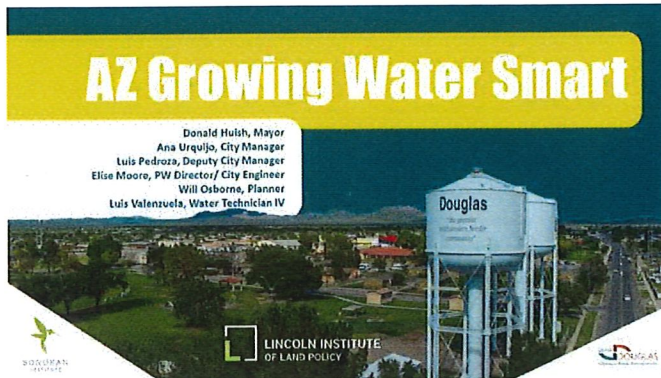
Mayor Huish reported attending a workshop to gain better understanding of how to approach the issue of water management for our community over the long term. It was sponsored and paid for by the Sonoran Institute and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. He thanked them for their generous offer of making them part of this team which included the participation of the communities of Sedona and Oro Valley. He expressed the workshop being insightful to the water issue.

Ms. Urquijo reported City Engineer, Elise Moore, Water Tech, Luis Valenzuela, former planner, William Osborne, Mr. Pedroza and herself attended the workshop which provided them with three days rich with information and allowed them to return with goals.

Ms. Urquijo summarized the goals set during the workshop, emphasizing the importance of achieving sustainability in the aquifer for economic development in Arizona, particularly considering its desert environment. She highlighted the need for proactive planning and collaboration to ensure water sustainability, mentioning participation in the AMA process and the appointment of Elise Moore, City Engineer to the Groundwater Advisory Committee. She also acknowledged the efforts of Luis Valenzuela present before the WIFA board key strategies for future grants for the SCADA system, which needs to be replaced. Due to his technical expertise and reporting before the board the grant was secured along with the effluent pre-engineering study. Overall, she expressed pride in the team's



accomplishments and emphasized the importance of ongoing efforts toward water literacy and sustainable water use.



Mr. Valenzuela outlined the importance of water literacy and identified key aspects for achieving it, including education and information campaigns, community stakeholder efforts, seeking community support, focusing on water conservation initiatives, and reducing water waste. The goal is to create a water-literate community through an outreach plan involving billing inserts, school programs, and social media efforts. They emphasized the need for multiple communication channels with the community and service providers to educate, inform, and gather input, especially given upcoming legislative changes and regulations such as the Douglas AMA requirements and lead and copper rule implementation.

Ms. Moore outlined strategies for growing within their water means, highlighting the ongoing study by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) on groundwater limits and withdrawal. They mentioned exploring water-efficient development options like multifamily housing and policies to support future growth funding groundwater recharge. Additionally, they proposed updating billing systems, revising water service fees, and assessing water allocations to encourage efficiency. They emphasized participation in the AMA planning process, collaboration with neighboring communities like Agua Prieta, and leveraging guidance from organizations like the International Border



Water Commission. Furthermore, they suggested learning from sister cities and adopting mechanisms such as SCADA systems to enhance water utility efficiency and reduce waste.

## Sustainable Yield

**Key Aspects**

- AMA Process
  - Includes B. National Collaboration
- Stakeholder Involvement
- Regional Partnerships
- Water Utility Improvements
- ADWR Guidance

## Bi-National Coordination

**Key Aspects**

- Binational Coordination on Water Use Policy
  - Agua Prieta
  - International Boundary Water Commission
- Begin Conversations about united effort in water conservation efforts
- Acquire and share data
- Seek funding for binational water projects

Mr. Pedroza emphasized the unique challenge of sharing an aquifer with neighboring Agua Prieta and highlighted the importance of binational coordination for water conservation efforts. He identified Agua Prieta and the International Boundary Water Commission as key partners in this coordination. He stressed the need for sharing data between the United States and Mexico and leveraging funding opportunities for binational water projects through agencies like NADBank. Lastly, Mr. Pedroza underscored the significance of collaboration to address the shared challenges of managing the aquifer effectively.

## POE Growth and Development

**Key Aspects**

- Annexation
- Shared Aquifer
- Demand Exceeding Supply
- Balancing Water Use & Growth
- Water Quality Regulations

## Effluent Reuse and Stormwater

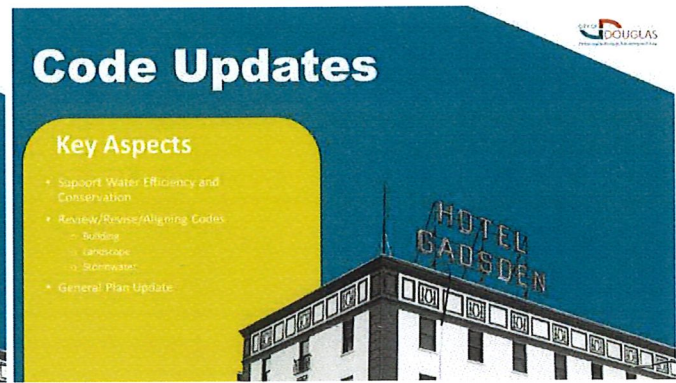
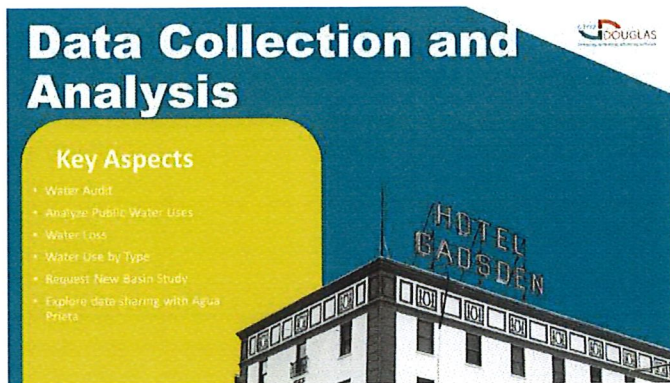
**Key Aspects**

- WAPA Grant Award for Effluent Study
- Injection Well Option
- Effluent Piping Option
- Stormwater Capture
- Rainwater Capture
- Peer Policy Review
- Use all Forms of Water to Meet Needs

Mr. Pedroza discussed the goal of managing growth in the community alongside water conservation efforts. He highlighted the importance of establishing development policies that align with water-smart practices, especially as the community expands to the west and aims to provide water services. He emphasized the need to consider the shared aquifer with Mexico and the challenges of exceeding water demand according to DWR reports. Lastly, he stressed the importance of balancing growth with water conservation and addressing evolving water quality regulations, particularly in areas where water quality may be a concern.

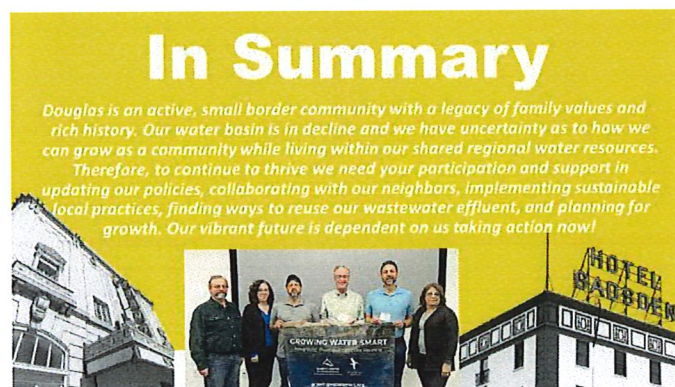
Ms. Moore proposed utilizing effluent reuse as a resource to recharge the aquifer and for non-potable purposes such as landscaping. She suggested redirecting stormwater for similar purposes instead of funneling it out of town, highlighting the potential benefits of using water where it falls, and mentioned receiving a grant to explore options for the effluent from the wastewater plant, aiming to design for future utilization of this resource. She emphasized the importance of considering alternative water sources and maximizing the use of existing resources for sustainable water management.





Mr. Valenzuela outlined various key aspects of data collection and analysis related to water management. These include conducting internal water audits, analyzing public water use, identifying water loss, categorizing water use by type, and requesting new basin studies. The goal is to gather comprehensive metrics to understand water usage patterns and make informed decisions for the future. He emphasized the importance of tracking every drop of water, understanding both the actions of the service provider and the customers, and implementing best practices to reduce water usage. By initiating data collection efforts several years ago, leveraging systems like the Army program and automated metering, and planning to utilize data systems for further analysis and decision-making.

Ms. Urquijo emphasized the importance of updating building codes and ordinances to support water efficiency and conservation efforts. She mentioned aligning existing codes with water conservation goals and considering adopting building codes that promote water efficiency in areas such as landscaping and stormwater management. Additionally, Ms. Urquijo highlighted the incorporation of water conservation measures into the general plan update, focusing on various elements such as land use, growth areas, public facilities, and recreation. Overall, the goal is to intensify water conservation efforts throughout the community's codes and general plan.



Mayor Huish highlighted the increasing importance of water in economic development, noting a shift from past practices. They stressed the necessity of integrating water considerations into economic development analyses and emphasized the opportunities presented by innovative grant funding. He urged thinking creatively and leveraging technology to propose novel solutions for water sustainability, envisioning a future where innovative grants support sustainable water use for future generations, and concluded by advocating for a mindset focused on dreaming and innovation rather than mere management.

Mayor Huish read a statement it into the record.

"Douglas is an active small border community with a legacy of family values and rich history. Our water basin is then declined, and we have uncertainty as to how we can grow as a community while living within our shared regional water resources. Therefore, to continue to thrive, we need your participation and support in updating our policies, collaborating with our neighbors, implementing sustainable local practices, finding ways to reuse our wastewater effluent, and planning for growth. Our vibrant future is dependent on us, meaning all of us taking action now."



Mayor Huish expressed gratitude to the team, acknowledging their contributions and noting their belief in the team's excellence. He appreciated the support received from organizations like the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and the Sonoran Institute, recognizing them as valuable resources to help achieve their goals moving forward.

Council Member Baldenegro inquired about the wastewater effluent and how far down would the pipe even be to recharge our basin and exactly where does this water drain.

Ms. Moore discussed various options for managing water resources, particularly focusing on recharging effluent into the aquifer as a method of storage. She mentioned how this process is done in several areas, including Tucson, where effluent is stored and later blended with surface water for reuse. Other options such as direct reuse through a purple pipe system are also considered, especially for purposes like watering parks and golf courses. Additionally, she provided details of stormwater capture techniques like depressions in road medians, traffic circles with plants, and swales along sidewalks to reduce downstream flooding and improve water management. Overall, the emphasis is on exploring different strategies to conserve and utilize water resources effectively.

Council Member Baldenegro inquired with the streetscape in mind whether there is any idea on how to capture rainwater.

Ms. Moore stated there could be different solutions in different areas, for example the downtown area, may not be an area but there are areas in the town with wide streets where it would make sense.

Council Member Grijalva emphasized the interconnected nature of water issues, stating that borders between regions, counties, and cities don't segregate water concerns. He highlighted that decisions made in one area can impact neighboring cities and even cross-border regions. Specifically, they mentioned Douglas expanding and how it would affect water issues in neighboring areas like Bisbee and Willcox. He appreciated the efforts to conserve water but stressed the importance of considering the broader implications and the impact on neighboring communities, both within the county and across international borders.

### **C. MAKING CHANGES TO THE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE.**

Ms. Urquijo stated that they were tasked with discussing the potential changes to the holiday schedule for employees, particularly the consideration of adding Juneteenth as a holiday. She mentioned that the HR manager, Rocio Garcia Pedroza, will present research conducted over the past year. Additionally, she explained the necessary steps before proposing any official changes, including addressing the merit board and employees. They seek guidance and information on the matter before proceeding further.

Ms. Garcia Pedroza presented findings from research conducted last year, including data from the League of Cities and Towns survey and discussions within the HR group regarding Juneteenth observance. She highlighted that the city currently has 11 holidays listed in the agenda memo and provided statistics on holiday provision by other cities and towns, indicating varying levels of holiday allowances and Juneteenth observance. During discussions with the merit board, considerations were raised about budget implications and the inclusion of holidays celebrating Hispanics. The merit board recommended adding Juneteenth, with one member emphasizing budget feasibility. Employee feedback was sought, with one suggestion received so far to consider adding Easter Monday and Super Bowl Monday as holidays.

Mayor Huish appreciates the provided information, noting its helpfulness in understanding the situation. He emphasized the importance for the council to consider whether they want to add a holiday and which holiday it might be. He suggested seeking input from employees on this matter. Additionally, he mentioned receiving requests for holidays such as Good Friday, Easter, Easter Monday, and Christmas Eve since the discussion began. He proposed considering these requests if the city council and leadership team decide to add an additional holiday.

Council Member Grijalva expresses satisfaction that there seems to be agreement on the matter, noting that some cities observe the holiday while others do not. He highlighted the potential for Juneteenth as an incentive for people to work for the city, considering the job openings that have remained unfilled for years. He emphasized that from a budget perspective it would not pose an additional financial burden as it's essentially a day off without extra costs.

Mayor Huish inquired on the next steps.



Ms. Urquijo stated that they will continue to gather employee input as the second aspect, alongside the merit board's recommendation. She mentioned having received feedback from one employee, but anticipate more responses. Also, she explained that any revisions to the personnel rules would need to be presented in the form of an ordinance.

Council Member Baldenegro inquired on what day other cities observe Juneteenth.

Ms. Garcia Pedroza replied Juneteenth is observed on June 19<sup>th</sup> every year.

Mayor Huish acknowledged the council's direction to proceed with a decision. He suggested that it might require an ordinance and urged the council to consider the broader implications. Additionally, he expressed interest in hearing from employees regarding their preferences beyond the proposed holiday. He emphasized the importance of making an informed decision, even if it involves increasing the number of holidays to 13 or 14.

Ms. Urquijo stated she will prepare an Ordinance.

**Direction to move forward and prepare the ordinance to come back to council for consideration.**

Racheal Running, of P.O. Box 1457, Bisbee, AZ, commented on the following:

- In support of the Juneteenth Holiday.

Remaining Call to the Public speakers were allowed to speak at this moment.

Cheryl Knott of Pearce, AZ commented on the following:

- Opposes the IDA approval of the Riverview, LLC \$15mil bond.

Hazard Hawk, of 189 W Papago Way, Cochise, AZ, commented on the following:

- Opposes the IDA approval of the Riverview, LLC \$15mil bond.

Meeting continues with Item 4B.

**5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND REPORTS FROM COUNCIL AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEM REQUESTS.**

Council Member Grijalva thanked Mayor and city manager for allowing the item on the agenda, due to this item usually not being on special meetings. He stated: "I'd like to thank my colleagues, present and past in the last six years for working together and helping grow Douglas. I'd also thank city staff who put up with me throughout those years. A huge thank you to our employees for their hard work. I'd like them all to know their dedication to our city hasn't gone unnoticed. Lastly, I thank you to my constituents who have trusted me to sit in the seat and represent them. I'd also like them to know that in every decision I made, I've always kept the best interest of our community at the forefront of every vote, and never how it would affect us as elected officials." Lastly, Mr. Grijalva announced his resignation from his council seat, expressing gratitude to everyone.

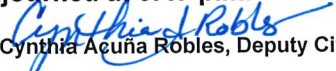
Mayor Huish expressed sadness at Council Member Grijalva's departure but fully understands the reasons for leaving, and expressed gratitude for the dedicated service over the past six years.

Council Member Baldenegro inquired if measures would be taken in helping the public with water harvesting.

Mayor Huish stated yes, it is part of the public information program that Mr. Valenzuela talked about, and also the innovative grants that are available.

**6. ADJOURNMENT.**

**Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.**

Prepared by:  Cynthia Acuña Robles, Deputy City Clerk