

## Ward 6 Staff



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# Ward 6 -Update from the Council Meetings

SEPTEMBER 22, 2010

## A Message From Steve

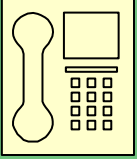
The Tucson Mayor and Council met on Tuesday the 21st and again had an agenda full of pocketbook items. The budget, how we fund individual elements embedded in it, the proposed convention hotel, and how we kick-start private sector development were all a part of the day's discussion.

KIDCO is a hotly debated budget item. There are many who take the position that we should not be participating in an after-school daycare program in competition with the private sector. For me it's more a question of how we ensure that the people taking part in the low-cost program truly are deserving of the low-income subsidy that it offers.

The program received rave reviews by a study group commissioned through the University of Arizona to assess its performance. All parties involved with KIDCO spoke glowingly about their experiences. So the success of the product isn't the issue. What we need to ensure is that we are putting into place a pricing structure that is truly needs-based, and not simply a subsidy to those who can afford to pay market rates for the program. That's the clear message the Parks and Recreation Director came away with today. As we move through this budget process, we'll be looking at the pricing to ensure that those in need are taken care of, and those who can afford to pay more are in fact not being subsidized by the taxpayers.

Mayor and Council voted 6-1 on Tuesday to pass along to the Rio Nuevo District Board some guidelines related to our expectations with respect to how the proposed downtown hotel is going to be financed. I voted in the minority. My reasoning is simply that by the terms of the Master Development Agreement, the District is the owner of the hotel.

In addition, the agreement calls on Rio Nuevo to develop a Guaranteed Maximum Price and a finance plan for the hotel, and then to present it to the City for our consideration. I expressed my objection to the fact that we're spending taxpayer money studying and preparing finance options when it is the District that is responsible for developing those items. The City cannot move forward with a final decision on the project without the direct involvement of the District. If they're unwilling, we should not be spending money studying it any longer. Stay tuned; a reply from Rio Nuevo may come later this week.



### Important Phone Numbers

#### Tucson Police Department

911 or 791-4444  
nonemergency

#### Mayor & Council Comment Line

791-4700

#### Neighborhood Resources

791-4605

#### Park Wise

791-5071

#### Water Issues

791-3242

#### Pima County Animal Control

243-5900

#### Street Maintenance

791-3154

#### Development Services

791-4505

#### Southwest Gas

889-1888

#### Gas Emergency/ Gas Leaks

889-1888

#### West Nile Virus

#### Hotline

243-7999

#### Environment

#### Service

791-3171

#### Graffiti Removal

792-2489

## Continued: A Message From Steve

Both the M&C and the Rio Nuevo Board have been independently wrestling with this hotel decision for far too long. In the process we have spent thousands of dollars of taxpayer money in process driven activities. I have been asking for a joint meeting for months, to no avail. I continue to believe that if we are going to be a partner with the District on a project that will cost in excess of \$200 million, we should at some point be seated in the same room, at the same time hammering out the details of the pact. If we cannot agree to meet across a table with them, how can we pretend to be in a partnership that will succeed on a project of such an immense scale?

The budget was yet again on the agenda. Since putting forward my Plan D, I have discussed the various component parts of it with staff, constituents, and the Labor Council, and have listened to comments from the Mayor and Council. Today I presented what for me will be a final, revised plan that incorporates to the level at which I'm comfortable many of the suggestions I received from those groups. I continue to believe that if the Mayor and Council do not show the leadership of making significant cuts to the FY2011 budget ahead of the November election, the sales tax will fail and we will be forced to make cuts into our police and fire department budgets at a level that is intolerable to me.

I also reiterated my sense that if we do not make clear that we will dedicate the sales tax revenue to the core services identified (police, fire, transportation and parks) and establish a baseline funding below which we will not allow their budgets to fall—and to sunset the tax based on economic metrics, not a date on a calendar—the voters will not trust us to use it as advertised. None of these decisions is easy; I expect to see more input from other Council members in the days ahead.

On a more upbeat note, staff has finally brought back a draft of the Safe Harbor Ordinance that I have been pushing for. The short description is that it will allow businesses located in construction corridors to remain open until their “taking” is imminent. In the case of partial acquisitions, those businesses will be granted relief of some code issues (parking, landscaping, and set-back) where those do not pose health and safety problems. The goal is to keep businesses open and operating for as long as possible, and to give them guidance in terms of relocation assistance funds to which they're entitled when they finally do have to shut down and move. Coupled with the recent changes we adopted with respect to the Certificate of Occupancy guidelines, this Safe Harbor Ordinance will be of great value to local businesses that are struggling to keep their doors open.

Finally, let me plug two wonderful civic events that are in need of assistance. The Winterhaven Festival of Lights ([www.winterhavenfestival.org](http://www.winterhavenfestival.org)) is one of the festivals whose financial subsidy has been eliminated from the City budget. The residents are determined to continue the holiday festival, but they now need the help of those who enjoy the show each year. If you are so inclined, go to their website and help out to the extent you feel led.

In addition, Tucson Meet Yourself is right around the corner. From October 8 to 10, we'll again have the opportunity to celebrate what makes our community what it is—who and what we are. Take a moment and visit the festival website at [www.tucsonmeetyourself.org](http://www.tucsonmeetyourself.org) and look for ways you can both support and participate in the event.

Sincerely,



Steve Kozachik  
Councilmember, Ward 6  
<http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/ward6>

## ZOOcson Feast for the Beasts!

This annual gala will be held on Saturday, October 2, at 6:00pm at the Reid Park Zoo with proceeds to benefit the Reid Park Zoological Society – it's the "wildest" party in Tucson! Sample delectable food and beverages from more than 30 of Tucson's finest restaurants while strolling through the Zoo. Enjoy the calypso sounds of Jovert - Tucson High's acclaimed Steel Drum Band and the jazz sounds of Grammy-nominated Amo Chip! Silent Auction, Live Auction and more. Tickets can be purchased by calling 881-4753 or at [www.tucsonzoo.org](http://www.tucsonzoo.org)

## Arizona Underground Film Festival

You still have a few days to enjoy "true independent underground and cult film-making at its best" at the 2010 Arizona Underground Film Festival, with films showing at four locations around Tucson. The festival got underway last weekend and continues every day through Saturday, September 25, with showings at the Fox Theatre, The Screening Room, and Beowulf Alley Theatre in Downtown, and the Crossroads Cinema at 4811 E. Grant Rd. For more information, visit [www.azundergroundfilmfest.com](http://www.azundergroundfilmfest.com)

## Downtown Development Progress

More physical progress is imminent Downtown with next week's kickoff of the construction of a new facade and marquee at the Beowulf Alley Theatre Company, 11 S. 6th Avenue. The project is a result of a financial partnership between the non-profit theatre and the City's Facade Program, which has already helped revitalize three other historic downtown buildings.

In addition to the announcement of the start of construction of the Art Deco-style facade and marquee on Wednesday, September 29 at 10am, there will be an exciting announcement of a new public-private partnership for Phase 2 of the Facade Program. Significant private-sector funding is being raised to match the existing public funds, so that more old buildings Downtown can be renovated to make way for new businesses.