



Tri - City Council

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

**Regular Meeting of the Tri-City Council
Wednesday, January 20, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.
Conducted via Zoom Conference**



**City of
Bullhead City, Arizona**

Tom Brady, Mayor
Steve D'Amico, Vice Mayor



Lake Havasu City, Arizona

Cal Sheehy, Mayor
Jeni Coke, Vice Mayor



City of Kingman, Arizona

Jen Miles, Mayor
Ken Watkins, Vice Mayor

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Mayor Miles called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
Chairwoman Miles led in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Call & Introduction of Special Guests
(All in attendance participated via remote conferencing)

Lake Havasu City

Council Present

Cal Sheehy, Mayor
Jeni Coke, Vice Mayor
David Lane, Council Member
Michele Lin, Council Member
Cameron Moses, Council Member
Nancy Campbell, Council Member

Staff Present

Jess Knudson, City Manager
Jerri Bracamonte, Executive Assistant
Kelly Williams, City Clerk
T. J. Cook, Intern
Dan Doyle, Police Chief
Vinny Gallegos, Lake Havasu Metropolitan Planning Organization
Shawn Irula, Human Resources/Risk Management Director
Anthony Kozlowski, Assistant to the City Manager

Bullhead City

Council Present

Tom Brady, Mayor
Kathy Bruck, Council Member
Norma Brummett, Council Member
Dr. Waheed Zehri, Council Member

Staff Present

Toby Cotter, City Manager
Susan Stein, City Clerk
Claire Adams, Assistant to the Mayor/Manager

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City of Kingman

Council Present

Jen Miles, Mayor
 Ken Watkins, Vice Mayor
 Deana Nelson, Council Member
 Cherish Sammeli, Council Member

Staff Present

Ron Foggin, City Manager
 Annie Meredith, City Clerk
 Rusty Cooper, Police Chief
 Coleen Haines, Public Affairs Coordinator

Others Present

Coral Evans, Senator Mark Kelly's Office
 State Representative Leo Biasiucci
 Sam Elters, Mohave County Manager
 Denise Burley, Mohave County Health Director
 Jeanne Kentch, Mohave County Assessor
 Jamie Kelley, Kelley Law
 Tom Belshe, League of Arizona Cities and Towns
 Stacy Klippenstein, Mohave Community College
 Anthony Lombardi, Unisource Energy Services
 Kevin Adam, Rural Transportation
 Jaime Hernandez, AZ DEQ
 Alvin Stump, ADOT
 Becky Fawson, Kingman Chamber of Commerce
 Mike Horton, Suddenlink
 Brandon Messick, Today's News Herald
 Roy Hendrickson, Cameron Broadcasting



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3. Call to the Public

Chairwoman Miles opened the call to the public. Having no one requesting to speak, Chairwoman Miles closed the call to the public.

4. Approval of the Minutes from the October 21, 2020, Tri-City Council Meeting

Mayor Brady made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 21, 2020 Tri-City Council Meeting as presented. Mayor Sheehy seconded the motion. A vote was taken on the motion with all in favor. Motion Carried.

5. Introduction of Coral Evans from Senator Mark Kelly's Northern AZ Transition Team

Coral Evans said Senator Kelly and she had the opportunity to speak with some of this meeting's attendees and looked forward to speaking with everyone. She said the transition was going well and Senator Kelly was very dedicated to being the senator



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for all of Arizona. She said he was passionate about small businesses, infrastructure, forestry and natural resources, water, as well as the armed forces and the rail. She said COVID was a priority and said Senator Kelly had heard from all of the mayors regarding the need for adequate public safety and health personnel required to address the needs of small businesses, as well as providing direct funding to cities and towns.

6. Updates from Mohave County Board of Supervisors and Elected Officials

Representative Biasiucci said they had been working on getting quality broadband to rural Arizona and said this was included in the budget, as well as the I-40 corridor, infrastructure repair and maintenance on Highway 95 in Bullhead City and Lake Havasu City, and work on the Bridge in Lake Havasu City. He said the voters passed Proposition 208 that would impact small businesses in Arizona which were the lifeline for any economy to boom. He said the Legislature had discussed some tax cuts to help the small businesses.

Coleen Haines asked about the initial conversations regarding possible tax cuts or small businesses moving forward.

Representative Biasiucci said they were looking at a few options; including a flat tax across the board or income tax cut, or making it a net neutral and pushing up the sales tax a little.

Tom Belshe said the League of Arizona Cities and Towns would love to be included in these discussions as they had some ideas about how to lessen the impact.

Representative Biasiucci said their committee voted unanimously to restore the State SLIF Fund in the amount of \$5 million and would not use any of those funds for administrative costs, which would come out of the general fund.

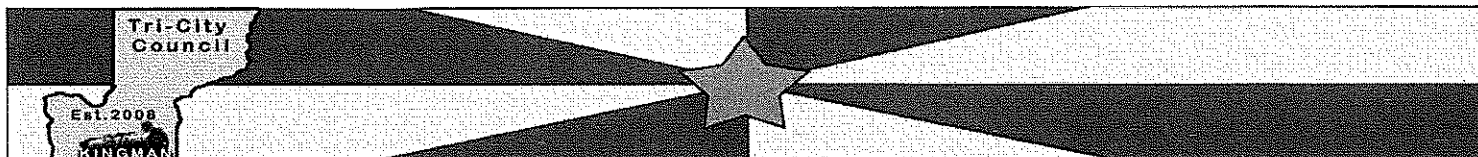
Bullhead City Council Member Dr. Zehri asked about the status of the medical bill sponsored by Representative Cobb. He asked what was planned this year in support of the medical community and the retention of medical personnel in the county.

Representative Biasiucci said he was not familiar with any bills at this time but he would follow up with Representative Cobb and report back.

7. Update from the Mohave County Health Department

Denise Burley said they had received 9,600 first doses of the Moderna vaccine, and providers would receive 8,100 more first and second doses next week. She said their goal was to distribute the vaccines to the community very quickly. She said they did not receive any advance notice about the number of vaccines the County would receive each week.

Bullhead City Council Member Dr. Zehri asked which city received the highest number of vaccines to date. Ms. Burley said Lake Havasu City.



Tri - City Council

Ms. Burley said they would focus on getting the vaccines out to the Embry sites. She said they would supplement all of the activities in the county based on the availability of the vaccines.

Mayor Miles asked if the 1A and 1B categories were open. Ms. Burley said the 1B category was sub-prioritized, and said adults 65 and older and educators were included in the 1B group as well. She said they wanted to prioritize the vaccine to those individuals with the greatest risk.

Bullhead City Council Member Dr. Zehri asked if there were any reported adverse reactions to the vaccine. Ms. Burley said they had received no reports to date about any adverse reactions, but some might have occurred in a hospital setting and not reported yet.

Lake Havasu City Council Member Campbell said they heard reports about second dose side effects and asked if this information would have an overall effect on the confidence of the vaccine. Ms. Burley said some people were waiting to get vaccinated after seeing others' reactions. She said they could not change that at this point and said this would be a challenge going forward.

Lake Havasu City Council Member Coke asked if there were any statistics on the percentage of those living out of the area receiving vaccines in Mohave County. She asked if there was a process to track this or if it was a matter of just pushing things out. Ms. Burley said the place of residence did not dictate where someone could get the vaccine. She said many people had a second home here, and they also wanted to vaccinate as many people as possible.

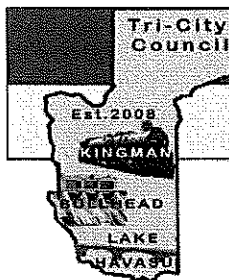
8. Legislative Update

Tom Belshe said the Senate and House had new rules about how they would conduct meetings under COVID-19 restrictions and said they allowed Zoom testimony on bills. He said there were a lot of bills in process that were not ready to go yet. He said the League staff read every single bill, and said any bill of concern would be highlighted. He said the HB2039 Eminent Domain Bill relating to the utility condemnation process would require a city to take on all assets and liabilities of that company. He said this created problems with contracts put into place by that utility and would make it more difficult and costly to take over a system. He said it was unfair for cities and towns to have to take on any costs that were not appropriate, especially with respect to the gift clause.

Mayor Brady said he testified against the bill yesterday in Phoenix and was disappointed in the whole process. He said Representative Weninger basically lied to the Committee and said Bullhead City was in agreement with the bill as written. He said nothing could be further from the truth. He said Representative Weninger misled the Committee and this was bad policy.

Mr. Belshe said the League signed in as opposed to the bill and they were continuing to fight it. He said hopefully they would have better luck opposing it in the Senate.

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Mr. Belshe discussed a telecommunications development bill related to the amounts that could be charged to fiber optic companies for cabling occupying rights of way. He said they believed the companies were willing to work with the League in making changes to it. He said they did not want to get rid of the entire linear foot charge and would continue to work on an agreement down the road.



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Mr. Belshe said HB 2310 was of concern. He said the bill stated that any city or town that decreased its public safety operations by 10 percent could lose its shared revenue. He said they understood where this came from - the "defund the police" movement. He said when they talked about public safety altogether, they talked about police and the courts. He said they think this was a bill/solution in search of a problem and would continue to watch it. He said they did not like when they used the hammer of reducing state revenue especially when it was not occurring in the state.

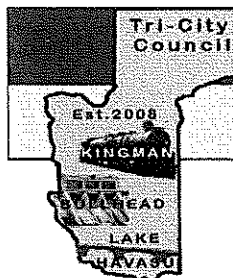
Mr. Belshe said there were two prime contracting bills out there. He said the League worked with the contracting industry to come up with a compromise bill simplifying the MRRA process. He said the bill would determine where the taxes were paid, and said small or medium sized communities without a regional building center received basically no benefit if construction materials were purchased outside of the area. He said Senator Fann worked with the League to make compromises that would provide years of not having to keep going back down this path. He said the other bill, HB2211, was introduced and would put everything at the point of purchase and not be good for areas outside of Maricopa County. He said they would continue to monitor and defeat this bill.

Mr. Belshe said HB 2152 was out there regarding redacting of police body cam videos. He said this bill would require a whole lot more redacting as the videos were being stored. He said the most expensive part of the body cam system was the storage of the data. He said getting the information from the videos was critical but the bill required additional protection of private information. He said they would work with the sponsor to enable cost sharing on a scale they could take advantage of.

Mr. Belshe said SB1062 related to engineering definitions. He said the bill stated that certified engineers were not required for certain types of infrastructure development. He said infrastructure that was put in would become the responsibility of the municipality. He said the League was working to defeat this bill as they believed all engineers had to be certified and there was no middle ground.

Lake Havasu City Manager Knudson asked about legislation for short term rentals. Mr. Belshe said they were trying to get last year's bill back on its feet but the bill had not yet been scheduled in committee. He said the one real hurdle was the Governor felt that if they did anything that curtailed a business, it would be unfair licensing. He said when they had language agreed upon with the sponsor, they would be able to take it to the Governor's office.

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Ms. Haines asked about the status of the bill regarding the blight of downtown commercial buildings. Ms. Belshe said there was a bill in the hopper and felt they had a lot of support. He discussed a related situation in Superior where the owner refused to do anything with the buildings.



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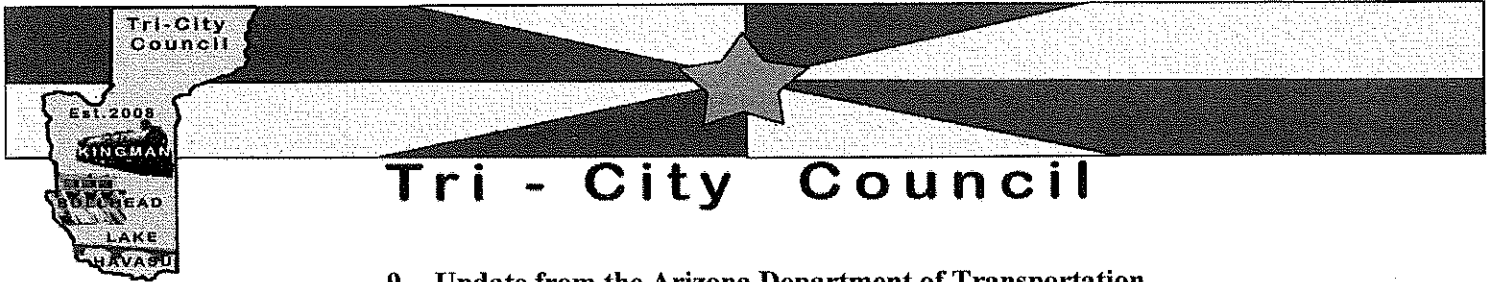
City of Kingman, Arizona

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Mr. Belshe said there were no real proposals in the Governor's budget yet to consider. He said the initiative that passed would not benefit the cities and towns. He said they were being asked to give up 15 percent of state shared income tax (urban revenue sharing). He said they sent out information to the mayors and managers about what those costs would be, and said it would cost cities and towns \$180 million over three years. He said there was a two-year lag when income tax was collected until it was distributed to the cities. He said the impact of the initiative would not be felt until 2024. He said the money from the initiative would go to education only. He said they were making the legislature aware that this would not sit well with the cities and towns.

Mayor Miles said they were in a fortunate position now with a strong budget, and asked if there were projections for impacts on future budgets. Mr. Belshe said they worked with the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, and said they would be informed if there might be any snips to the budget.

Kevin Adam said the future of transportation was unpredictable. He said one of the positives for transportation was there would be an anticipated \$750 million carry forward balance at the end of the state fiscal year. He said if trends continued, this would give the legislature more flexibility going forward. He said one of the biggest concerns was the potential return of HURF rates as this had gone away after the last couple of years due to the public safety fee being put into effect. He said that fee would be repealed on July 1st and create a \$160 million hole in the state budget as far as highway patrol. He said one of the significant portions of the Governor's proposed budget was to fill the majority of that hole with the general fund. He said \$7 million would come out of ADOT's portion, and said the local HURF funds would be untouched based on the Governor's proposal. He said they were seeing infrastructure bills that would direct one-time funding for projects across the state. He said they anticipated that several bills would be introduced this year, including a bill on indexing/adjusting the fuel tax for inflation and a stand alone bill to establish comparable fees and taxes for alternative fuel vehicles. He said the last round of COVID relief included funding for highways. He said ADOT anticipated one half million dollars lost due to the pandemic and said Arizona's share of the relief bill was \$183 million which should go a long way in making up the lost revenue for the state. He said they hoped to see a re-authorization of some transportation programs and an infrastructure package.



9. Update from the Arizona Department of Transportation

Alvin Stump, Northwest District Engineer, provided a review of current construction projects. He said they were performing a shoulder widening project on US 93, replacing bridge decks on I-40, performing a raised median project on Highway 95 in Bullhead City, beginning to construct the Bullhead City Marina Blvd. right turn lane, and they were waiting for the poles and equipment to arrive for the Acoma Blvd. project in Lake Havasu City. He said future expansion projects included the West Kingman TI that was scheduled for 2024, and the Rancho Santa Fe Parkway in Kingman plans were finalized and would be advertised for construction in April. He said the expansion project had not been scheduled for Wickenburg Ranch, there was a small widening project on SR 69 in Prescott and they were performing the widening project on I-17. He said future pavement preservation work was planned for I-40 2.4 milepost to Lake Havasu, I-40 Walnut Creek to Holy Moses Wash, and I-40 Ft. Rock to Markham Wash planned for 2023.

Mayor Sheehy asked if Representative Biasiucci's bills were to pass regarding Highway 95 improvement work, would ADOT find room in their schedule to perform the work. Mr. Stump said they would be able to fit the work into the schedule.

Jeanne Kentsch thanked ADOT for the hard work they had done to improve the roads.

10. Colorado River Water Transfers Update

Jamie Kelley, General Counsel for the Mohave County Water Authority, provided an update on the Green Stone Farm water transfer to Queen Creek. She provided a brief overview on the history of the transfer. She said the Director included language in his recommendation that could be subject to negotiation related to increasing the amount of water to be transferred. She said those discussions would occur between the Bureau of Reclamation, Green Stone Farms, Queen Creek, and the Department of Water Resources. She said she and High Ground, lobbyist for Mohave County, both submitted a records request and said it appeared there had been extensive negotiations going on to justify the need for more water. She said there was an intent to develop the land for seven-plus acre lots with a building envelope to minimize the amount of water. She said she did not think they would have an opportunity to comment on that additional data until the federal process began. She said the federal process had not yet started, and said the Bureau would host a website with information when the process began.

Mayor Sheehy said each of the tri-cities, their chambers, and boards of realtors had passed resolutions in opposition to this transfer. Mohave County Manager Elters said the Mohave County Board of Supervisors had also passed a resolution in opposition.



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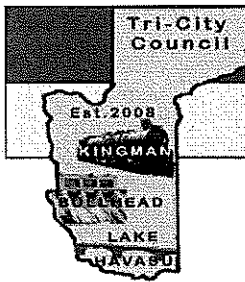
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11. Update from Suddenlink

Mike Horton said he was responsible for states in the western pacific region. He said they felt the impact of the pandemic in March with more disconnects, and they closed their regional retail stores in April. He said there was a shift in network traffic patterns and unprecedented usage and demand from the residential areas. He said one of the challenges was to create more symmetrical network footprints in the communities to meet the demands. He said they were working to resolve their issues in customer care and call center availability. He said their field staff were affected with the COVID quarantining and social distancing. He said they were hiring people and spending money for remediation and upgrades. He said they continued to monitor their customer service experience to improve the process, and made investments in personnel, communications and technology. He said they looked at the customer staff level to meet demands and were working to increase and enhance the skills of their care agents by a more rigorous call review and improvement guidelines. He said they realigned the reporting structure of the call centers directly to the business to consumer organization. He said they increased automation of the phone menu and the integrated voice response system to systematically access service reports and respond with the best method of handling. He said they launched a troubleshooting tool and conversation cloud based on artificial intelligence. He said they increased the node upgrades in Bullhead City and Laughlin by adding new field electronics to increase signal strength. He said they realigned the entire field force under a senior executive leader in order to increase operations performance and improve customer service. He said the dispatch operation had been a point of frustration in the tri-city area. He said they were on track with improvements to the dispatch organization to improve on-time tech arrivals and customer communications. He said the field operations leadership was working closely with the dispatch team to increase focus on their intra-day management procedure. He said the Kingman retail store reopened on August 13th, the Lake Havasu store reopened on Sept. 11th, and the Bullhead City location opened on Nov. 20th. He said the retail centers were working aggressively to hire required staff. He said they were in this for the long run.



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Mayor Sheehy thanked Mr. Horton for Suddenlink's commitment to the market. He asked when the dispatch customer service took place. Mr. Horton said it took place on December 15th. Mayor Sheehy asked for the reason why this did not happen as planned for last January. Mr. Horton said this was a fundamental change and he was optimistic moving forward in 2021. Mayor Sheehy asked if the office hours could be expanded, especially in Lake Havasu City, because customers were waiting in long lines and getting frustrated. Mr. Horton said this was an issue and said he would get back to the Mayors. He said some of their employees were put in difficult positions due to irate customers in Lake Havasu. He said they maintained social distancing and COVID-19 protocols and were working to improve customer service experiences. Mayor Sheehy asked about the future of the infrastructure system. Mr. Horton said they were enhancing both their coaxial cable and fiber optic technology, and said channels were improved for a better experience. Mayor Sheehy said reliability was a priority for their citizens and asked when Suddenlink could expect the infrastructure investments in the community. Mr. Horton said he could meet with constituents and a technology team in the tri-city area and discuss Suddenlink's investments and improvements.

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Steve Greeley from Radio Central said as a radio operator he understood the problems of technology. He said the frustration was with customer service and internet downtime. He said he communicated to Suddenlink that he was willing to help get information out to the citizens over the radio. He said Suddenlink was not interested in doing this and asked Mr. Horton to reconsider as it would help reduce the tension within the community. He said Governor Ducey said the State of Arizona would make it a priority for rural Arizona to have dependable broadband service. He asked if Suddenlink had any communications with the Governor's office.



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Mr. Horton said he was aware of the challenges and offered to work with his leadership and communication team on a communication plan. He said Suddenlink had a government affairs team and said rural broadband was an initiative that needed further discussion. He said the discussion to improve broadband should not just be for within each city, but between the cities.

Mr. Greeley asked if there had been consideration regarding the possible implementation of establishing a live customer service response center to assist with both business and residential customers' telephone problems. Mr. Horton said this was not an implausible recommendation.

City Clerk Meredith read three emails related to Suddenlink's quality of service. Copies of these emails are attached to the minutes and will become part of the permanent record.

Mayor Miles thanked Mr. Horton for working with them in improving service to the communities. Mr. Horton asked for copies of the customers' emails in order to address their concerns.



Lake Havasu City, Arizona

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12. Mayors' Reports – City Updates

Mayor Brady said after twenty years, the new second bridge was out to bid. He said the Nevada Dept. of Transportation was working on the project that was expected to cost between \$42 and \$47 million dollars. He said the bridge project had a termination date of June 30, 2024. He said Mohave County Judge Gurtler ruled in the city's favor to take over EPCOR through the legal process in place. He said the amount of the bond for the water system would be determined in February, and said a jury would determine what the final purchase price would be sometime in the future.

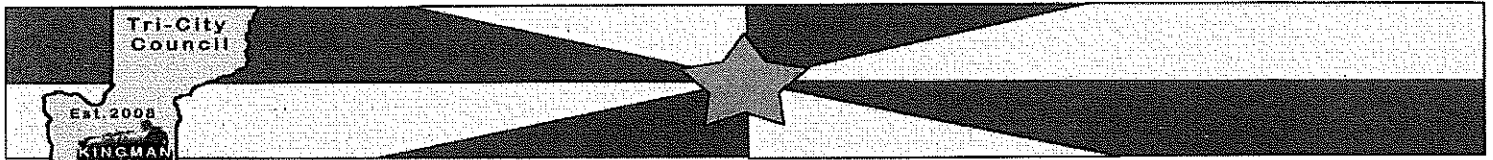


City of Kingman, Arizona

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Mayor Sheehy said the Council's annual planning session would take place on January 21st. He said they rezoned the former Hastings building for a NASCAR retail center and off-road store. He said they were excited about the creation of 150 jobs. He said the 50 year commemoration of the London Bridge would take place in October. He said they were working on a second well project that would allow redundancy in drinking water. He said they were conducting utility rate studies in order to analyze the entire water and wastewater system and rate structure. He said they purchased a building adjacent to City Hall that would be converted into a court house. He said they had an RFQ out for the "America's Best Community" downtown project.

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Mayor Miles said their budget process would began later that day. She said she was pleased that Rancho Santa Fe would be bid out in April as it was a wonderful project that would finally come to fruition. She said the airport master plan was completed and it would go to the FAA for approval. She said they would continue the partnership on monitoring their well in the aquifer in order to project the uses and to possibly expand into other wells in the future. She said their waste management survey was completed regarding recycling and pick up services. She said it appeared the community supported the city's waste removal service and there was no support for raised rates. She said they would receive updates on their consultant's recommendations for zoning and planning. She said improvement projects were still going on in the downtown area.

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13. Discussion and possible action regarding Future Agenda Items

Mayor Sheehy said another update from Suddenlink would be appreciated.

ADJOURN

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