

February 2016 News

Tucson Residents for Responsive Government

TRRG Members,

The weather may be chilly, but TRRG members are staying warm getting tasks done.

TRRG Participation in the City Manager's Boards, Committees and Commissions (BCC) Study Group

Last summer TRRG Board members visited Mayor and Council (M/C) Offices to share areas which our members had identified at the "Mr. Ortega, Meet TRRG" meeting on June 20, 2015 as ones we felt needed greater public participation. BCC's was one of those topics. TRRG was the catalyst for M/C to direct the City Manager on November 17, 2015 to set up a Study Group to take an in-depth look at the existing structure. He was asked to work with TRRG on this assignment. We have now had two meetings. Two staff members from the City Manager's Office, one ward staff member and two TRRG members are doing this preliminary basic work. Colette Altaffer and I are representing TRRG, trying to unravel this very complex organizational structure and practice. There will be opportunities for public input in the future.

Charter Review Committee Reports

Last year, TRRG posted key points of each Charter Review Committee (CRC) meeting on line for the public to read to stay aware of the deliberations of the CRC. That committee was reconstituted at the end of last year to deliberate on two topics: financial recommendations and election format. Once again, Bonnie Poulos and I will be writing a review of each meeting for the lay person. I urge you to visit the TRRG website to stay informed. This last posting for the January 25th meeting has interesting information from the consultant on the differences in district (ward) elections and at-large elections.

Code Enforcement Working Group (TRRG-CE)

There are a number of changes to City Code Enforcement (CE) about to occur. You may be aware of City Manager Michael Ortega's reorganization efforts begun last December. One of his administrative moves has the Code Enforcement Division moving from Planning and Development Services to the Environmental Services (ES) Department. The formal move has not taken place yet, due to funding and authorization issues, but ES Director Andrew Quigley is now providing direction for the CE Division's future.

The TRRG-CE group suspended work last fall as the hiring process for a permanent Code Enforcement Administrator unfolded. CM Ortega halted the hiring process in December as part of his reorganization program. He said that TRRG-CE was to work with Interim Administrator Michael Wyneken as before. TRRG-CE planned a meeting for February 2, 2016 involving Mr. Wyneken, but his involvement was superseded by Mr. Quigley. The meeting and a wide ranging discussion did occur on February 2, with Mr. Quigley as a guest participant. Notes from the meeting are here, which is a good place to check for future updates as developments occur.

TRRG Special Event with City Manager Michael Ortega

A TRRG Special Event with City Manager Michael Ortega was held on Saturday January 9, 2016 at the Ward 6 Council Office starting at 1 PM. Approximately 30 people attended the event. Facilitator for the event was Ruth Beeker.

Mike Ortega was welcomed and invited to discuss several topics: changes in administrative structure over the past 6 months, issues with Transportation Department (DOT), and reflections on being Tucson's City Manager. There was also time allotted for questions by audience members. Notes are [here](#).

TRRG Board of Directors Sent a Ward Consolidation Position Paper

The TRRG Board of Directors sent a position paper to Mayor and Council in mid January in opposition to a proposal for consolidating several Ward offices in City Hall.

TRRG Process Task Force

The TRRG Process Task Force, being chaired by JD Garcia, is continuing to work toward a final draft of its study of public participation in Mayor and Council meetings, particularly Calls to the Audience, Public Hearings and Study Sessions. The results of this work will reviewed during the April 30 TRRG Annual Meeting.

Planning for the TRRG Annual Meeting

Planning well underway for the TRRG Annual Meeting. I hope you have already marked your calendar to save Saturday, April 30, 2016, 12:00 to 3:00 PM for TRRG. We will contact you around mid-March to RSVP. There will once again be Baggins sandwiches provided by an anonymous donor, so we will need to know if you plan to come for lunch or not. But regardless, we will need your RSVP so that we have adequate materials available.

As we plan the agenda, we will be incorporating an update on progress made on topics from last year's Keys to Collaboration Annual Meeting and looking for guidance on TRRG's future agenda of Strengthening Public Participation. TRRG will also have a business meeting, including election of Board members. We will be meeting in the Ward 6 Community Room, 3202 E. First St.

Valentine card: Here's a Valentine for Tucson. We enjoy living where we do not have snowstorms, tornadoes, and earthquakes to contend with. If the worst we get is a few days of sub-freezing temperatures, we are blessed to live here.

Ruth Beeker, Chair of the Board of Directors