

**MINUTES
JOINT ORO VALLEY/MARANA TOWN COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION
MAY 13, 2011
HILTON EL CONQUISTADOR RESORT
10000 N. ORACLE ROAD
CORONADO BALLROOM**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hiremath called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

Oro Valley
Present: Satish Hiremath, Mayor
Mary Snider, Vice Mayor
Bill Garner, Councilmember
Barry Gillaspie, Councilmember
Joe Hornat, Councilmember
Steve Solomon, Councilmember
Lou Waters, Councilmember

Marana
Present: Ed Honea, Mayor
Herb Kai, Vice Mayor
Russell Clanagan, Councilmember
Carol McGorray, Councilmember
Jon Post, Councilmember
Roxanne Ziegler, Councilmember

Absent: Patti Comerford, Councilmember

Mayor Hiremath and Mayor Honea welcomed everyone to the second Oro Valley/Marana joint study session.

1. Presentation by Arizona State University – Tourism Resource Assessment

Marana's Assistant to the Town Manager Josh Wright welcomed the students from Arizona State University (ASU) and introduced Dr. Tim Tyrrell, ASU Professor of Tourism Development and Management and Director of the Center for Sustainable Tourism.

Dr. Tyrrell said his team was trying to develop an assessment tool to help build a regional tourism plan. The assessment identified unique assets and what made the region desirable and the qualities that made the region a desirable place to live for residents and an attractive destination for visitors.

The authors of the assessment report were from the ASU School of Community Resources and Development. The assessment was based on the work of tourism and community development scholars.

Dr. Tyrrell said the framework of the assessment was based on eight community tourism resources: community governance; community tourism industry; community economic system; social and cultural systems; historical community development; natural and environmental system; place making and branding; and public service and infrastructure.

The Marana – Oro Valley region was divided into six districts: Marana - Dove Mountain and Tangerine Corridor; Downtown/Heritage and airport; South Marana and Twin Peaks; Oro Valley - North Oro Valley and South Oro Valley; and County islands – Rillito and Casas Adobes.

The tourism resources and assets of the Individual districts were unique but complementary within the Marana – Oro Valley region. An integrated tourism industry was feasible and would be highly beneficial to businesses and residents of both towns. The pursuit of an integrated development plan should focus on three areas:

1. infrastructure development
2. regional branding
3. collaborative leadership

Councilmember Garner asked how technology such as smart phones could be used to promote the region?

ASU student Alastair Jack said extensive smart phone applications were available for the Phoenix metro area. He suggested the towns work with Google to put attractions into its mapping system. It would be beneficial to have a dedicated map for the Marana/Oro Valley area that identified hotels, entertainment, attractions, etc.

Councilmember McGorray asked if it was possible to integrate the diverse activities.

Mr. Jack said the towns had complementary amenities and a package could be created for the two towns.

ASU student David Borsheim said transportation and signage were important. The towns had to pull people off the interstate. The Tangerine Corridor beautification was important and there was a need for a trolley system between Marana and Oro Valley to get visitors to stay in the region. The lack of signage presented challenges.

ASU student Kendall Meritt said there were big opportunities to develop outdoor activities and a regional brand. An equestrian center could be a great opportunity.

Mayor Hiremath thanked Dr. Tyrrell and the ASU students for the work done on the assessment and for their attendance at the study session.

a. Discuss Oro Valley/Marana Branding/Marketing/Tagline

Mr. Wright said the next discussion regarded the branding initiative. Staff was suggesting that an outside person be engaged to help develop the brand.

Mayor Hiremath said there were experts out there that would assist for a nominal cost. He suggested soliciting bids for the work.

Councilmember Ziegler asked if there were any examples of a brand.

Mr. Wrights said a good example was the east valley of Phoenix. The region had built a brand to make people want to stay in the east valley.

Council Member Waters had recently been at Tucson International Airport (TIA) and observed that there was not one attraction brochure for either Oro Valley or Marana. He asked if that was the responsibility of the Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau (MTCVB)

Mayor Hiremath explained that outside marketing groups placed the brochures at TIA, not the MTCVB.

Councilmember Garner said the MTCVB had not yet delivered on the promise of an Oro Valley brochure. It was important to get people to realize that Oro Valley was separate from Tucson and he always used an Oro Valley return address instead of Tucson.

Mayor Honea said the question was whether to be part of the Tucson region or identify Oro Valley and Marana as a separate destination. He thought the two towns had something to offer visitors.

Mayor Hiremath agreed that the goal was to have Oro Valley and Marana be the destination not just an afterthought to Tucson but the question was how to do it.

Councilmember McGorray said a good example was the Accenture Match Play and how long it took to get the announcers to say Marana instead of Tucson.

Mayor Hiremath said the two communities were taking a huge step forward together. A presence at TIA was important.

Councilmember Solomon said it was important to put together an Oro Valley/Marana brochure of activities.

Councilmember Ziegler suggested going directly to TIA.

Mr. Wright said it was important to develop a defined brand first.

Vice Mayor Snider said one challenge was the lack of direct flights into TIA which needed to be addressed.

Mayor Honea suggested advocating flights into Phoenix and then traveling to Marana and Oro Valley. He said corporate jets could fly into the Marana airport. The towns had to start identifying things that were available to visitors.

Councilmember Garner said the towns should look into partnering with Google to map attractions.

Vice Mayor Kai said the airport needed to do a better job of attracting major carriers.

Councilmember Waters agreed that smart phone apps were wonderful. He said a low power FM radio license was low cost and could broadcast what's happening in Marana and Oro Valley.

Mr. Wright said the next step was to develop a common brand and build a theme for the region.

b. Presentation - Unveiling of Draft Marana/Oro Valley Recreation Brochure

Oro Valley's Economic Development Manager Amanda Jacobs unveiled the draft of the joint recreational brochure. Staff expected to print 2,000 for each community and provide them to area hotels, TIA, MTCVB, etc.

Mayor Hiremath asked that the draft be forwarded to both Councils for review before printing.

2. Imagine Greater Tucson update

Councilmember Waters said 6,000 conversations had been condensed into the next phase of creating a map to act as a vision tool for the future. The trendline was that we were not going in the direction the community thought we should be going. He said a Gallup Poll had shown that communities in Arizona were very dedicated and loyal to their own communities. It was important to get Arizonans to connect with each other. Diversity was a major component and people needed to get together and the next workshops were a way of doing that.

Councilmember Gillaspie said it was important for the towns to identify a position on Imagine Greater Tucson. With regard to transportation - there was a tremendous opportunity to connect the bio tech corridor with the Marana airport. There was a need to create a transportation system to connect people.

3. Council One-on-One Partnerships

Mayor Hiremath said the idea was to match up councilmembers from each town.

Mayor Honea appreciated being able to talk with Mayor Hiremath when issues came up. It had worked well for them and he and Mayor Hiremath thought it would be a nice way for councilmembers to make connections.

Mayor Hiremath announced the following pairings: Councilmembers Hornat and Comerford; Councilmembers Post and Solomon; Councilmembers Ziegler and Garner; Councilmembers Gillaspie and Bowen; Councilmembers Waters and McGorray.

Councilmember Ziegler reminded everyone to get involved and attend the redistricting meetings that Pima County would be hosting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Prepared by:



Julie K. Bower, MMC
Town Clerk

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the joint study session of the Town of Marana and the Town of Oro Valley held on the 13th day May 2011. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 8th day of July, 2011



Julie K. Bower, MMC
Town Clerk