

**ARLINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA  
JANUARY 12, 2016 AT 6:30 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

1. Call to Order.
2. PUBLIC HEARING
  - A) Arlington Mobile Home Park Closing.
3. Adjournment.

**ARLINGTON CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 12, 2016**

The regular meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m., Mayor Richard Nagel presiding.

Members present: Battcher, Jaszewski, Heiland, Mayor Nagel, Nuesse, Wills

Members absent: None

Also present: City Adm. Donabauer, PZ Adm. Cynthia Smith-Strack, Kevin Wright representing the Mobile Home Park Owner, Judd Schultz of MVAC, Jose & Dina Batres, Nestor Hernandez, Samuel Diaz, Maria Estrada, Jennifer Gonzalez, Rosa Acevedo, Jose Martinez, Warren Hell, Audrey Serbus, Shianna Becerra, Sharon & Paul Bird, Celia Diaz, Silvia Sanchez, David Ibarra, Heriberto Garcia, Maria Torres, Valerie Villerance

Mayor Nagel stated the purpose of the special meeting was to hold a public hearing with regards to the closing of the mobile home park.

Mayor Nagel recessed the special meeting and called to order the public hearing regarding the closing of the mobile home park.

PZ Adm. Smith-Strack reviewed the procedure/agenda for the evening. She invited those present to speak and/or express their concerns about the closing of the park and how it will affect them. Several residents spoke on the poor condition of the park, lack of (organized) management, sewer and water line problems, continuing to increase rent and not making any improvements within the park, etc. Concern was also expressed about having to find a new place to relocate to and costs associated with it (some trailers are too old and can't be moved).

Kevin Wright was present to speak on the owner's behalf about the closing of park. He stated that he has worked with the owner on and/off over 20 years. His personal experience includes running 30 parks (nothing less than 100 units) around the country; the Arlington park is the smallest at 29 units of which 26 are occupied. The owner is paying the water bill to the City personally; not from the rent he receives from the tenants and can't afford to keep doing this. In order to fix the water problem completely, the main lines would have to be taken out and replaced and would cost approximately \$200,000, which the property is not worth. Wright commented that the owner is not happy to be closing the park, as he does care about the people and families living in it.

A resident asked what will happen to the property. Wright commented the owner is trying to close it down to eliminate expenses. Smith-Strack re-iterated that the City has nothing to do with the closing of the park; it's only responsibility is holding the public hearing per state law; along with appointing a third party to provide funds for demolition or relocation expenses.

Residents questioned if the Park was or could be for sale and kept open. Wright commented that the owner tried to sell the Park, but did not receive positive responses. It is a business decision to close the park; the owner can't afford the monthly expenses. The owner doesn't want to create a hardship for the residents and not have them with a place to go. Wright commented that he was willing to meet individually with each resident of the Park to see what can be done.

Smith-Strack discussed the transition period to the official closing of the park scheduled for September 1, 2016. She presented information through a power point presentation. She stated that the owners of the dwelling units are responsible for either relocation or demolition. It was noted that there was financial assistance available through the Minnesota Manufactured Home Trust Fund for those residents who own their home. Wright noted that the owner of the Park paid into this fund on behalf of the residents.

Judd Schultz from MVAC talked about the trust fund and how it would be handled, as well as the application process. He stated that the funds are to help with either buying out (demolition) or relocating of trailers. He noted that MVAC has other funds or resources available to help with moving, such as paying first month's rent and/or damage deposits for renters. Schultz commented that there are organizations called North Country Cooperative or APEC who help residents who own their mobile homes form a cooperative to buy and manage the park they currently live in as a way to prevent it from closing.

Residents questioned if they would still have to pay rent up to the closing date of the park. Wright commented that he could not answer that question; that was up to the owner of the Park. He will find out the answer to the question and contact each property dweller.

Smith-Strack commented on the need for permits to either move or demolish property. She stated that permits must be acquired from the City from property/mobile home owner. Schultz re-iterated that permit fees would be covered through the Trust Fund. Smith-Strack explained that all utilities must be disconnected prior to removal or demolition. It was noted that the Park owner is expected to remove electrical transformers, cap sewer/water at the main (inspected by the City), and finally grade the property level with four inches of top soil (minimum) and seeded or sodded; this included all streets being removed. It was noted that it was the responsibility of the residents who own their home to find new locations for their trailers.

It was noted that no written comments had been received pertaining to the public hearing. Both Kevin Wright and Judd Schultz both commented that they will do what they can to help the residents.

Mayor Nagel thanked all in attendance. He adjourned the public hearing and reconvened the regular meeting.

Battcher commented that she would like to see the City act as a liaison to ensure that communication is happening between the owner of the mobile home park and the residents; there appears to be some trust issues currently.

Motion by Battcher, seconded by Nuesse, and passed by unanimous vote to appoint MVAC as a neutral third party with regards to the closing of the mobile home park.

Schultz thanked the City for the opportunity to help in this venture. He commented that he could sense from some of the residents that they would not be able to front any portion of this endeavor on their own, so he was going to have MVAC make payments and then have the Trust Fund reimburse MVAC directly. He recommended that some type of Agreement and/or Contract be drafted between the City and MVAC.

Heiland and Wills commented that they hate to see approximately 100 people leave Arlington. Heiland liked the idea of the residents buying the park. Additional discussion was held on the idea of the residents buying and managing the Park. Schultz commented that it has worked well in a few communities and not worked in others.

It was questioned if there are any federal grant dollars available. Smith-Strack commented that there are funds (urgent public need loans) available to improve commercial/residential property.

Motion by Heiland, seconded by Jaszewski, and passed by unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 pm.

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City Administrator Liza M. Donabauer

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Mayor Richard Nagel