

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL JOINT WORK STUDY MEETING
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF STAR VALLEY**

**Thursday, October 5, 2021 @ 3:00 P.M.
Payson Public Library Meeting Room
328 N. McLane Road, Payson, Arizona**

- **CALL TO ORDER**
- **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- **ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Coon; Vice Mayor McKinney; Council Member Davis; Council Member Armington; Council Member Rappaport; Council Member McDaniel. Town Manager Grier, Finance Administrator Nutt and Town Clerk Chapin were also present.

- **PURPOSE OF MEETING:**

1. **Joint Work Session of the Star Valley Town Council, Payson Town Council and Tonto Apache Tribal Council. Each council will discuss current priorities and provide a general update on current or planned initiatives. The council's may also discuss ways the three governmental entities can work in collaboration for the benefit of the region.**

Town of Payson Mayor Morrissey explained the purpose of the meeting is to have dialogue about what will benefit the area in general. He feels it's critically important that the discussion starting today will continue down the road in whatever frequency is determined by all entities. The dialogue, stated Mayor Morrissey, will engender an environment of cooperation. The meeting began with introductions by members of the Star Valley Town Council, the Tonto Apache Tribal Council, and the Town of Payson Council. Town of Payson Town Manager Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated he supports the meeting for the purpose of continuing to build these relationships and also to contemplate how we might work together for the strength of the entire region. Town Manager Smith proceeded with a slide show presentation that provided information on the towns general plan, corporate strategic plan, CIP survey results, top ten requests, two year comparison, survey questions, council's priority KRA's, and council's identified priorities. The 2021/2022 budget key initiatives concluded the presentation.

Tonto Apache Tribal Chairman Johnson explained they can't discuss a lot of the things that they are doing because they have signed non-disclosure agreements with their partners. Some of the things that they are doing would not only benefit the tribe but would benefit the town as well. One of the biggest hurdles they have been facing, and what they want to accomplish soon, is the water agreement with the Town of Payson. There has been a battle between Payson and the Tribe on water. In order to strengthen the relationship, concluded Chairman Johnson, he thinks they need to come to some agreement. Mayor Morrissey stated he couldn't agree with him more and he thinks that is part of the progress that needs to be

made. Mayor Morrissey stated the dialogue needs to start from the point of respect. Chairman Johnson gave his thanks for being included in the meeting and stated they are open to dialogue anytime.

Mayor Coon reported Star Valley incorporated in 2005 because of water issues. As far as he is concerned, added Mayor Coon, Star Valley, Payson and the Tribe are brothers. Communication is the key. Mayor Coon thanked Payson and the Tribe for participating. Town Manager Grier explained that he and Town Manager Smith started talking about the idea of having the three councils meet at the flag raising ceremony that the tribe hosted. Finance Administrator Nutt proceeded with a slide show presentation that provided information on the towns partnerships with the Town of Payson, Native American Tribes, and other entities. Public safety and council's identified priorities concluded the presentation.

Chairman Johnson disclosed they are proud of the clinic they built and it is open now to the community members. They built it strictly for their tribal members and employees but decided to open it up to anybody in the Rim Country. They are in the process of building a small micro-hospital that will provide twenty-four hour service. Queried Council Member Davis – The clinic is open to the general public? “Yes,” answered Chairman Johnson. Flyers will be sent out and an announcement will be made. Queried Town of Payson Council Member Nossek – Where is the clinic housed? Across from the casino, responded Chairman Johnson. Council Member Rappaport stated she's glad the clinic has taken shape and has come to fruition.

Tonto Apache Tribal Council Member Lopez reported they are currently building a fifty spot RV park with the goal of one hundred spots and further expansion beyond that. Another recognized need they are working on is housing for their people, as they still have a lot of younger families who are living with relatives in the Payson area and are paying rent. They are also in the middle of a study to see whether or not expansion of their market will be worthwhile for them. Council Member Lopez reported they were the first tribe in the State of Arizona to lock down sports betting. They are also looking at a school on the reservation for their children. There are a lot of exciting things going on in the reservation, concluded Council Member Lopez, some of which can't be discussed. Council Member Underwood commented that affordable housing is an issue for all three communities and asked if the Tribe is going to do more housing. Chairman Johnson answered that is one of the things they are working on. They will be developing forty five lots initially and then another fifty lots in two to three years. Council Member Davis thanked the Tribe for coming to the table to meet and for the donations they have provided to Star Valley in the past. The RV park is outstanding. There is a big demand for that because we are a pass through community, concluded Council Member Davis. The things the Tribe is stepping out and doing, acknowledged Mayor Morrissey, is an inspiration.

Council Member Lopez reported they are looking for something for the land they own south of the event center that will be complimentary to what Payson is doing. Mayor Morrissey commented the Tribe is achieving the goal of making this area a destination rather than a pass through. Council Member Underwood asked about thoughts on covering or re-doing the event center. Chairman Johnson stated he recalled they had given the Town of Payson the opportunity about fifteen or twenty years ago, but it didn't work out. Council Member Nossek asked if they are still open to those kind of projects. Chairman Johnson responded they are doing a lot of other things and they would have to see if it fits in to what they can do. Council Member Underwood stated the biggest need of the town is a swimming

pool and she is hoping to work out some sort of an agreement, even if it's just to provide swim lessons. Chairman Johnson responded they are open to it. Mayor Morrissey commented their pool is a perfect resource but he doesn't want to overwhelm them. He would love to see some kind of an agreement to use the pool and establish a protocol. Council Member Lopez added the gym management and staff would need to be involved in this conversation because they have a better understanding of the day to day operations.

Mayor Morrissey asked if Star Valley has any concerns or any issues with the Town of Payson or the Tribe. Mayor Coon responded whatever happens in Payson affects Star Valley in some way and what happens between the Tribe and the Town of Payson will directly or indirectly affect Star Valley in some way. Mayor Morrissey stated he believes these meetings should be held every other month. Mayor Coon suggested to include Gila County in on these meetings if appropriate or beneficial. Mayor Morrissey responded he thinks it would be appropriate. Council Member Davis complimented the Town of Payson for working so closely with the Town of Star Valley. Payson staff has been great to work with and Star Valley is very satisfied with the service that we receive, concluded Council Member Davis. Town of Payson Council Member Tubbs commented she would like a follow-up meeting with the tribe about covering the rodeo grounds. Mayor Morrissey stated he would like to have these meetings quarterly. Council Member Rappaport responded once a quarter would be good. Chairman Johnson agreed that would be fine. The meeting concluded and adjourned.

APPROVED:

_____ **Date:** _____
Gary Coon, Mayor

ATTEST:

Eddie Chapin, Town Clerk

CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Joint Work Study Meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Star Valley held on this day, the 5th day of October 2021. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 12th day of October 2021.

Eddie Chapin, Town Clerk