



January 27, 2017

Council: All Dressed Up and Ready To Go

"We are a big city now. We have big city problems and we'll have big city solutions. I believe this council will work together and we will get those solutions to our city."

Councilman Guy Phillips
Inauguration Speech
January 17, 2017

The first City Council session of the year is a lot like the first day of the new school year with everyone optimistically looking forward to the year ahead.

Last week was no different in the Kiva. The city even sprung for cookies. A sure sign that it was a special occasion.

Mayor Lane and Councilmembers Suzanne Klapp, Virginia Korte and Guy Phillips took the oath of office to serve Scottsdale for four more years. They followed the expected protocol by thanking voters for re-electing them and those who had worked on their respective campaigns (paid and unpaid). But it was Councilman Phillips who took the opportunity to go one step further by observing: *"We are a big city now. We have big city problems and we'll have big city solutions."*

Truthfully, our city often feels more like Mayberry than Metropolis.

Unlike real "big cities," Scottsdale's problems start and end with the city's success ... not its shortcomings. In other words, most of our city's "problems" are generated by growth.

Different members of the Council frequently mention that *"Other cities only wish they had our kinds of problems."*

Last year during the mayoral and council races, at least four separate citywide surveys had similar results: When respondents were asked their opinions about the city, approximately 70% felt it was headed in the right direction, 20% believed it was on the wrong track and 10% weren't sure. Even with those positive findings, campaigns were overtly contentious - especially in the race for mayor.

In his inaugural remarks, Mayor Lane said that his campaign was *"a defining campaign for me and all our citizens. In this race our political system worked well."* Of course the 36% of voters who voted for Bob Littlefield would disagree.

Continuing to reflect on the election, the Mayor concluded: *"We must heal any residual animosity."* No one disagrees. But "how?"

The skirmishes will continue over the Desert Discovery Center, downtown development and transportation issues. But the real questions revolve around growth. ... and all the challenges that come with it.

There are those who are desperately clinging to the past. But dude ranches have been replaced by resorts. Small adobe buildings have been displaced by tall glass ones. And the past is giving way to the future.

Historically, our city didn't evolve accidently. The generations who came before us didn't help grow the city by looking in the rearview mirror. They were bold and had vision.

Most of all they weren't frightened by the future. They embraced it.



BITE ME!

This week's best sound bite comes from South Scottsdale resident and business owner Steven Jackson, who wrote:

"With all the emphasis on development, rebranding, and new business, I hope the mayor, Scottsdale City Council, and the Gateway Alliance consider more than just the brand for the area. SkySong isn't the first thing people will see as they come from the 101. A better, safer McDowell Road will be an essential part of any sustained success for growth."

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