



# CITY OF BULLHEAD CITY

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

MEETING DATE: October 5, 2010

SUBJECT: Mohave County Nutrition Center Funding

DEPT OF ORIGIN: Office of the Mayor

DATE SUBMITTED: June 2, 2010

SUBMITTED BY: Jack Hakim, Mayor

*SUMMARY:*

The Mayor requested that this item be added to the agenda following a presentation given to the Mayor/City Council at its meeting on September 21. Attorney Steve Moss made a presentation about funding for the Mohave County Nutrition Center during the open call to the public. The Mayor and City Council cannot directly respond to a presentation or comments made during call to the public. They can ask for items to be put on a future agenda.

*FISCAL IMPACT:*

REVIEWED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

*Finance Department*

Initial Project Costs: N/A

Future Ongoing Costs: N/A

Physical Impact (on people/space): N/A

Residual or Support/Overhead/Fringe Costs: N/A

*ATTACHMENTS:*

1. Presentation by Attorney Steve Moss presented to City Council on September 21.
2. Email by City Manager Toby Cotter to Mohave County
3. Email from County Manager Ron Walker to Toby Cotter

*LEGAL REVIEW:*

APPROVED AS TO FORM: \_\_\_\_\_

*City Attorney*

*RECOMMENDATION:*

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL BY:

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COUNCIL ACTION TAKEN

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

Continued To: \_\_\_\_\_

Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_\_

Referred To: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Denied \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

File No. \_\_\_\_\_

Department Director

City Manager

Mr. Mayor and Honorable Council Members.

My name is Steven Moss.

I am a local attorney speaking to you today in my capacity as the current chairman of Mohave County's Bullhead City Meals on Wheels/Senior Nutrition Center Site Council.

The local Meals on Wheels has requested that I reach out to community organizations, including the City, regarding recent County Budget cuts. Those cuts will have an adverse health impact on some of our City's most vulnerable residents, our impoverished seniors.

The bulk of the budget cuts have fallen on County employees. However, based on information I've obtained from the County, the following numbers are applicable to the Bullhead City area:

Total number of congregate meals served in FY 2010: 12,197.

Total number of congregate meals budgeted to be served in FY 2011: 9,725.

Number of people served congregate meals in FY 2010: 238 seniors.

Number of people proposed to be served congregate meals in FY 2011: about 165.

**In brass tack terms, we will service 2,472 fewer meals and 73 fewer impoverished seniors in 2011 as compared to 2010. These 73 people number amongst our most vulnerable City residents.**

The meals will be cut from our "congregate" meals program. Despite being a basic meal, it is incredibly important to our impoverished seniors. Currently, they are hot meals, called institutional meals, and are the equivalent of what a child or prisoner would receive in a cafeteria

setting .<sup>1</sup> The congregate meals are only served Monday through Friday. These nutritious meals are incredibly important to our City's mobile senior population, and are a public health issue for this City, as:

1. It is the only decent 5 meals they get in a week, and kicking them off the program means that they will consume far fewer calories and, as a consequence, suffer health risks.
2. Congregate meals are taken at the Senior Nutrition Center, which is directly across the street from City Hall. This lunch time period is frequently our seniors only social interaction which is incredibly important to their maintaining good mental health and avoid the perception that they are unwanted recluses.

What is a shame is that these cuts not only effect our most vulnerable, but they are modest in the grand scheme of things. The County's gross cuts applicable to Bullhead City seniors from the food budget (not total budget) is contemplated to be \$28,530 for FY 2011. However, an estimated \$14,907.65 in additional<sup>2</sup> funds may be provided to offset those cuts. Thus the "net" budget cut as set forth above will hopefully be only \$13,622. If this \$13,622 shortfall were to be made up, we could restore our congregate meals program to something approaching FY 2010 levels.

In more general terms, I have spoken with Ms. Guzman, who is the Site Supervisor for Mohave County's Bullhead Senior Nutrition Center. Our local Nutrition Center/Meals on Wheels serves 30 to 85 congregate

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<sup>1</sup>I previously reported that the congregate meal was roughly 800 calories or more, including a peanut butter base and treated milk that won't spoil or require refrigeration. This was formerly correct (and was funded by additional monies) but has since come to an end.

<sup>2</sup>I previously described these monies as "stimulus" monies, which is apparently incorrect.

meals a day for the last year, depending on the time of year. During the summer, the quantity of meals served is much reduced and during the fall and winter months much increased.

Per Ms. Guzman, the cuts will mean that we will be able to serve about 30 meals a day year round which means that there will be roughly a 55 meal/day average short fall for FY 2011 from our peak of 85.<sup>3</sup>

As a result of the budget cuts, we will have to create a list.<sup>4</sup> This list will be generated on Friday. The first 30 seniors to sign up will be allowed to eat the following Monday-Friday. The list will be recreated every Friday and the first 30 will be served the following week.

It has been suggested by some that we can cut off the snow birds or that seniors don't really need the meals as there are expensive cars in the Senior Center parking lot. As to the first point, federal law prevents us from checking residency status. As to the second point, the only expensive car that I've seen in the parking lot is my vehicle (when attending meetings) or County vehicles. Regardless, there is no legal, practical method of confirming either residency or income. For those who dislike that state of affairs, they need to take it up with the politicians in Washington DC, and not lash out at our impoverished seniors.

The practical effect of a "list" is that the lucky 30 seniors will be served and the balance turned away. Of those lucky 30 they will lose their place on the list and go to the end of the line if they are not able to sign

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<sup>3</sup>Since I last reported, the daily meals anticipated to be served has dropped from 35 to 30 meals as a result of budget adjustments.

<sup>4</sup> I previously reported that the list was compiled on a first come, first serve basis. This was true at the time but has since been modified as set forth above.

up as of Friday as they encounter health (hospitalizations, bed ridden due to illness, etc.) and family issues which cause them to miss their lunch meal.

In my opinion, if there is true abuse in the system, the "list" process will not weed out the abuse and will on exacerbate it. The most needy will most likely suffer as a result of the cuts as they will lack the resources and energy to compete with the not so needy when it comes to getting first in line for the congregate meals we will continue to serve.

I hope the City will engage with our County government regarding these cuts or otherwise find a way of minimizing their impact on our senior population. It is a public health issue which directly affects the most impoverished of our senior residents. Thank you for your time.

Mr. Walker,

Attached you will find comments made to the City Council Tuesday evening from Steve Moss. The Mayor has asked me to place this item on the upcoming City Council agenda for discussion. In preparation for placing this item on the agenda, I was wondering if you or someone from the county would be able to provide a response to the information provided to the City. In particular, does Mohave County have the additional \$13,622 that is being requested by the Nutrition Center?

I appreciate your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,  
Toby

Toby Cotter  
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[tcotter@bullheadcity.com](mailto:tcotter@bullheadcity.com)

## Toby Cotter

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**From:** Ron Walker [Ron.Walker@co.mohave.az.us]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 23, 2010 10:59 AM  
**To:** Toby Cotter  
**Subject:** RE: City Council Presentation

**Attachments:** City Council Outline.PDF



City Council  
Outline.PDF (35 K...

The County budget is set. Mr. Moss represents the nonprofit and not Mohave County. We have no role in his request.

Sent from my HTC Touch Pro2 on the Now Network from Sprint@.

-----Original Message-----

From: Toby Cotter <TCotter@bullheadcity.com>  
Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2010 8:58 AM  
To: Ron Walker <Ron.Walker@co.mohave.az.us>  
Cc: Dana Hlavac <Dana.Hlavac@co.mohave.az.us>  
Subject: City Council Presentation

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