

**November 14, 2018
MEETING SUMMARY**

Meeting Attendees

Community Working Group members present:

Bruce Wittig – Queen Valley Fire Department
Hank Gutierrez - Superior Copper Alliance
Pam Bennett – Queen Valley Community Liaison
Jeff Bunkleemann – Central Arizona College
Pamela Rabago – Superior Chamber of Commerce
Anthony Huerta – Town of Superior
Fred Gaudet – Arizona Trail Association
Tweedy Armitage – Superior Historical Society
Arlynn Godinez – Superior Unified School District Board / Maricopa County
Tiffany Rowell – Superior community
Rick Cartier – Superior Chamber of Commerce alternate
Todd Pryor – Town of Superior
Jim Schenck – Rebuild Superior
JoAnn Besich – Superior Optimist Club

Community Working Group members not present:

Karen Kitchayan Jones – San Carlos Apache Tribe
Cecil Fendley – Queen Valley Water Board
Lynn Martin – JF, JI Ranch
George Martin – JF, JI Ranch
Roy Chavez - Concerned Citizens and Retired Miners
Sylvia Werre – Top of the World
Richard Matthews – Queen Valley Fire Department
Fernando Shipley – Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center Board

Resolution Copper Company:

Melissa Rabago – Communities Manager
Andrew Lye – Project Director

Facilitators – Godec, Randall & Associates (GRA):

John Godec, Debra Duerr

Speakers:

Mila Besich-Lira – Mayor, Town of Superior

Public Guests:

Bruce Armitage, Town of Superior Councilman

Introductions & Housekeeping

John Godec observed that there's been a lot of things going on lately. He mentioned the shooting in Globe; Andrew Lye said that Resolution has made counselors available to staff in Globe who may have been affected. Godec showed a YouTube video of the smelter stack demolition that took place on Saturday, and the group asked that it be put on their website. Hank Gutierrez complimented Resolution on their communications about this event and other CWG members agreed. Lye acknowledged that this weekend was difficult for the community, and he thanked everyone for their support, particularly help from police and fire departments.

Melissa Rabago told the group that Resolution has been working with Westland Resources to document artifacts from Magma and to conduct oral histories, and these will be displayed this winter. An exhibit will open on November 20 at the Gibson House at Boyce Thompson Arboretum at Gibson House. This will be free to the public and will be there for a few months.

Gutierrez told the group about their presentation at the international foresters' conference, which was the third time that CWG representatives have done this. It was a very engaged and energetic group who was very interested in the work of the CWG. Hank gave them the CWG website address to learn more. He felt that this type of community group is a difficult concept for many from other countries to understand. He illustrated this with some stories from participants about the challenges of working with rural and tribal communities in some countries such as Congo. A suggestion was discussed at the conferences about establishing a clearinghouse among countries to learn from each other's efforts in community relations and sustainability. Hank committed to attending next year and would like to include a PowerPoint presentation. The Mayor added that the group also visited Superior, and one thing they were surprised about was that there is a female mayor. They also wanted to know more about how the town works with the tribe and the company, as they were very interested in tribal relations; they tend to assume that Native American groups are disenfranchised and disengaged.

Subcommittee Updates

Godec mentioned the RUG meeting this morning. He showed a map of the trail plan that has been refined through Forest Service review. He told the group that the Forest Service has been working with Bronco Creek Exploration who is seeking permits for 79 drilling sites within the area included in the RUG trail plan. The Bronco application is on hold because that company has not agreed to fund an Environmental Assessment at this time. Mayor Lira said that this is very concerning to the town, particularly since it seems that the Tonto National Forest is not talking to each other internally. She observed that this drilling program could have negative impacts to both the proposed trail system and the town's economic and tourist development programs, as well as interfering with Resolution's Environmental Impact Statement mitigation plan, as these would be contradictory schemes. Todd Pryor urged the CWG to submit comments indicating that there would be significant impacts. Fred Gaudet noted that Arizona Trail Association had made comments; other RUG members observed that they probably should have paid more attention to this issue when it first surfaced but did not realize the extent of the proposal or the potential impacts. A CWG member also mentioned that Bronco built a new road into Silver King mine; Prior suggested that that portion of their program is not as much a concern to the town since it's not in their viewshed.

The group asked if Rio Tinto is a partner in this Bronco Creek effort. Andrew Lye said that they might be, as part of Kennecott, but further research will be done to answer this. The CWG would like to find a way to 'red flag' this region so they can find out about these kinds of proposed activities and conflicts. Godec assured them that some steps were taken with the Forest Service today to at least get notifications of activities.

Discussion of Town of Superior Planning Initiatives

Mayor Mila Besich Lira, Town of Superior

The Mayor reviewed some challenges in Superior in 2016: completing the transfer station, road conditions were bad, six audits were conducted, there was a recall election, and the town finally completed negotiations with Resolution on emergency services. She noted that problems were even bigger in earlier years like 2013-14.

Despite previous challenges, however, the Mayor characterized what's going on in Superior now as "Superior Renaissance", a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to redefine the future and purpose of the community. She distributed copies of the new *Strategic Plan 2018-2023*.

She talked about some of the current programs that have undertaken. One is the blight reduction program, working with Rebuild Superior Blight Committee to do abatement, and to obtain Brownfields grants through the state ADEQ and USEPA for a communitywide Brownfields program. In this regard, the Mayor reported that Superior was successful in getting the majority of the state's Brownfield's funds this year. Code enforcement is making progress, and commercial blighted property codes are being reviewed. The town has been working with Legislative District 8 representatives to deal with salvage properties and assessments; she noted that some state laws mitigate against community efforts to fight blight.

Other positive programs include completing the transfer station cleanup six months ahead of schedule and \$60,000 under budget. The town has just learned that all audits have been completed with a clean report. Excise tax has been returned to the town after past misappropriation of HURF funds. The street repair program is in full swing, relying heavily on local crews who have been trained because Valley contractors are so busy and expensive. Another major initiative is downtown revitalization.

For many years the town spent all its funds on the wastewater treatment plant (now funded by a grant from the US Department of Agriculture), and finally the Council got tired of doing this.

Top priorities now include:

- Multigenerational center complex (at Roosevelt School/Town Hall complex)
 - Possibly including a business incubator/makers' space (The Mayor posed the question: "What do you want to be the world capital of...?")
- Hotel feasibility study (showing favorable results)
- Annexation (Boyce Thompson Arboretum has requested annexation, Box 8 Ranch, possibly parts of the RUG area, the Congressional Land Exchange lands although no one in the current administration had a hand in picking these)
- Opportunity Zone investment (state Commerce Authority through Pinal County)
- Cradle-to-career education strategy, workforce development
- Tourism

The town has also been working on its relationships with other entities. An example is support for local events, which also bring tourism. Partnerships like that with the Chamber of Commerce are critical for promoting sustainable development. Key partners include Resolution,

IO Inc. (Ioanna Morfessis, consultant), Karen LaFrance, Local First Arizona, Helios Educational Foundation, Arizona Community Foundation (funder), Lowes (provided makeover for food bank), Arizona Forward, and Expect More Arizona. She talked about some of the grants that have been obtained including from National Park Service for floodway management on Queen Creek, and some of the additional potential partnerships such as Chicanos Por La Causa (could be a fund manager).

One objective of all of this is to make Superior the “number one home” for the workforce of Resolution Copper. Maintaining a focus on our natural resources is another focus. The NPS grant, the RUG plan, parks plan, and others support this. A slogan for the town’s efforts is “Together, We Are Superior!”

CWG members asked the Mayor to elaborate on the Opportunity Zone concept. She observed that this is a once-on-a-lifetime chance to get into this new program. Arizona was the first state to send their zones to the President for approval. It’s not a grant but a stimulus to those who have capital gains tax obligations; these can now be invested in opportunity zones. There are estimated to be \$6 billion in capital gains taxes that are available nationally. The money needs to be held for 10 years to avoid taxes and must be invested as soon as you know you owe tax. There are many ideas for investment opportunities, but these would need to be carefully considered and managed. The Town Manager has spent a great deal of time reviewing all of the plans the town has ever prepared, as input to both the Strategic Plan and the Opportunity Zone program.

In summary, the Mayor thanked Resolution Copper for their support in many of the town’s efforts over the years.

Public Comments

There were no visitors.

Future Meeting Planning & Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for:

*Wednesday, **December 12, 2018**
Superior Chamber of Commerce
6:00pm*

Vicky Peacey is scheduled to talk about the Forest Service’s alternative tailings site review. Lye said that Resolution had a meeting with the Forest Service today to discuss this. He reviewed the alternative sites that have been proposed. A CWG member asked if site testing would need to be done on all these sites; Andrew mentioned Silver King (not feasible), Skunk Camp, and Peg Leg, in addition to the original site (map available on the Tonto National Forest website). The Mayor noted that other communities may be affected by these alternative sites and therefore urged the CWG to support them and bring them into the conversation.