



DiCiccio has a full agenda to help economy, cut city costs

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Today, Nov. 18, the election results became official, with Sal DiCiccio winning a four-year term on the Phoenix City Council with 56 percent of the vote, against challenger Dan Marie Kennedy's 44 percent of the vote in the Nov. 3 run-off election.

The win returns DiCiccio to the City Council, where he served in the 1990s until resigning in 2000 to run for Congress.

And the end of the campaign now allows DiCiccio to return to the agenda he first proposed when he was appointed earlier this year to fill the seat vacated by then-Councilman Greg Stanton's resignation.

One of the first things DiCiccio plans to do is to hit the streets, going from business to business to find out what the city can do to help them expand and hire more staff.

"We want to go to business, not have them come to us ... no one has ever done that before," he said.

DiCiccio noted that everyone in his office will be spending time each week speaking with business owners.

"We'll all be losing weight," pounding the pavement, he laughed.

While working on how the city can help jump-start economic development for business, DiCiccio is still focused on pushing the Arizona Department of Transportation to make a proposal to the Gila River Indian Community to move the South Mountain Loop 202 south of Pecos Road.

But he did say that the campaign attacks on him and allegations that he could personally benefit from the freeway being built on Pecos Road or south of Pecos Road have hurt the momentum he was building to get the state to look south.

"I thought that was horrible and it harmed our area and our community," by giving the state a reason not to try to deal with the Indian community on an alternative route, DiCiccio said.

The biggest challenge facing DiCiccio and the City Council will be the upcoming budget, which could require as much as \$100 million in cuts.

"We need to be smarter. Just like the private sector, government will have to do more with less, not less with less," DiCiccio said.

He has begun to look at cost and efficiency savings in the city that can help balance the bottom line while still preserving the core services that city government should provide.

One area DiCiccio's looking at is vehicle repair, where he said the city employs 200 mechanics to keep the city fleet running.

"Is that the most strategic thing the city of Phoenix can be involved in?" Or should operations like that be

farmed out to the private sector, he asked.

DiCiccio said that police and fire have direct public benefit, but everything else should be looked at to see if it is a function that city government should be involved in.

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