

MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING – CITY COUNCIL
PRIORITIES WORKSHOP
JANUARY 9, 2006

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Benicia was called to order by Mayor Steve Messina at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 9, 2006, in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 250 East L Street, complete proceedings of which are recorded on tape.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Council Members Hughes, Patterson, Schwartzman, Whitney, and Mayor Messina

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Messina led the pledge to the flag.

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS:

A plaque stating the Fundamental Rights of each member of the public is posted at the entrance to the Council Chambers per Section 4.04.030 of City of Benicia Ordinance No. 05-6 (Open Government Ordinance).

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

On motion of Council Member Patterson, seconded by Vice Mayor Schwartzman, the Agenda was adopted as presented, on roll call by the following vote:

Ayes: Council Members Hughes, Patterson, Schwartzman, Whitney, and Mayor Messina

Noes: None

ACTION ITEMS:

Discussion and identification of City Council Priorities:

Mayor Messina stated that although Council will set priorities tonight, Staff will need time to run the numbers and tell Council what the cost impacts are (if any) on the proposed adjustments. The final action in terms of the priorities will not be set until a subsequent meeting.

Jim Erickson, City Manager, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation (hard copy on file) titled 'Priorities Workshop.'

Council then decided to individually address and discuss the priorities.

Category 2 Priorities:

- Benicia Business Park:

Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked where Staff is with regards to the economic study and the sewer study. Mr. Schiada stated that Staff has not received the final draft sewer study (which is a component of the EIR), but expects to receive it within the

next month or so. Staff expects to receive the draft EIR sometime around the first part of May 2006.

Council Member Patterson asked for clarification on 'category 1' with regards to design. The greater portions of the projects involve planning, for which there is enormous direction in the General Plan. Of all the things we do in the City, we have more clear direction about having a Master Plan for the Arsenal, developing some kind of criteria for sustainable development, design guidelines, and updating the zoning. It is clear that the only thing lacking is identified revenue. Planning is always in 'want.' When Council is looking at the category 2 priorities and is making decisions, we need to be mindful that there are some things where the cart is before the horse, such as the Seeno Benicia Business Park.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman discussed the need for having a fully staffed Community Development Department. The City needs to get that department filled. Without that, it will be tough to get some things done.

Public Comment:

1. Kitty Griffin – Ms. Griffin stated that the logic she would measure the priorities by has to do with the General Plan. In the past, there was a community survey and the General Plan. The six things she feels should be priorities are 1) Arsenal Historic District, 2) Sky Valley and Lake Herman Road, 3) air quality, 4) industrial safety ordinance, 4) trees, 5) historic preservation, and 6) traffic calming. Ms. Griffin provided a handout with details on each of the above listed priorities (hard copy on file).

- Commandant's Building Stabilization & Preservation:

Mr. Alvarez gave a brief review of the project.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked if Staff had been on site since the latest storms. Mr. Alvarez stated that Staff had been out there. They found one leak, but other than that, the storms did not cause any additional damage. Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked if the money quoted for the front porch and ADA access in the rear of the building needed to be spent at this time. Mr. Alvarez stated that that the ADA access issue was part of the original grant. The grant has been modified twice. Currently the State is reviewing construction drawings. The City will have to modify the grant one more time. The ADA accessibility is something the State wanted to see.

Council Member Hughes asked what it would take to move from the current status of the building to full public use. Mr. Alvarez stated it would take \$2.3 million. If we are lucky, half of that will be grant money. Right now, the City has \$800,000 for the project. After the engineering costs, there is about \$600,000 left for construction.

- State Park Road Bridge:

Mr. Erickson reviewed the details of the project. There were no further comments from Council.

- X-Park Skate Facility:

Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked how close they were with regards to funding. Mr. Alvarez stated that they are very close. They are close enough to go out to bid on the project. They are under a lot of pressure. They realize the City is ready to go. They hope to secure the funds by the end of January 2006.

Council Member Hughes stated the project has been around for a long time. He asked Staff if they (X-Park people) know the window of opportunity is open now and it may close in the future. Mr. Alvarez stated that they are very enthusiastic and realize the City is ready to go. They are having problems in securing some of the bids, primarily the concrete bids. Council Member Hughes stated that the X-Park people need to understand Council's sense of urgency with the project.

Council Member Whitney stated that he has been on board with this project since the first day. He feels that there may be some gaps but if the City has to fill some of the voids, it should do so. Some of the commitments are stale. They are currently trying to freshen up the commitments. Council Member Whitney hopes this project makes the list.

Council Member Patterson asked if it was possible to have the bid package go out where there are optional choices. Could the bid package be flexible? Mr. Alvarez stated that probably could be done. Staff will look into that. It would be perfect timing to move on this.

Additional priorities suggested by Council:

- Sign Code Enforcement:

Mr. Erickson reviewed the details of the project.

Council Member Hughes stated that his two questions he considered when considering these priorities were: 1) how critical is it to the community, and 2) what is the price tag? He asked Mr. Erickson if he had an idea of the cost for sign code enforcement. Mr. Erickson stated that it requires reviewing and updating the City's ordinance, he would estimate it would be in the category of the 'low thousands' range, mostly because it is legal compliance. Ms. McLaughlin stated that Staff received a rough preliminary estimate of \$25,000. It depends on how extensive Council wants to revise the ordinance. She recommended if Council were going to do that, they should do it right, as the ordinance involves First Amendment issues. The cost will depend on how the process is done. Whether it is sent out to be revised, a committee is formed, etc. She recommended having an expert take a look at the ordinance.

Council Member Patterson stated that we lack design guidelines that would give a lot of guidance to the sign ordinance. She would like to see the design guidelines underway so it will give Council the guidance for redoing the sign ordinance.

- Planning and building permit notices:

Mr. Erickson stated that there is a strong interest in Council, the City commission, and the public to know more about projects going on around the community. Staff has broken this project into two phases. Preparation of a summary report indicating what discretionary permits had been issued or applied for would be issued on either a monthly or bi-weekly basis. Staff is approximately 30 days away from having a rough report on this to Council. The second phase would be to (if approved by Council) place the report on the City's website. A possible third phase would be finding a way to expand noticing for certain kinds of projects that either currently do not get noticed or are presently not sufficiently noticed. The resources to accomplish Phase 1 are doable. Phase 2 will be doable when staffing resources are improved. Staff could come back to Council and suggest some ways to accomplish Phase 2.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked if what we are really talking about in phase 3 is not just permits or expanded noticing, but more involvement in the BMC. The BMC outlines the noticing requirements, which is where we have the controversy.

Mr. Brown stated that Phase 1 could be done in the next 30 days. Phase 2 would probably require some policy changes.

Council Member Patterson stated that if Council agrees to this, the code would need to be changed. She would like to see some range of what it would cost to do this in-house and then the cost if it were to be contracted out. Mr. Brown stated that Staff would prepare those numbers for Council.

- Grading ordinance revisions:

Mr. Erickson reviewed the details of the project.

Council Member Patterson stated that the grading needs to be updated to accommodate some requirements for storm water runoff. The code needs a fair amount of work and should be done sooner than later. The change she was recommending in terms of bringing Benicia into conformance with County standards at least equal to Vacaville (if not higher standards) is a zoning change. It is a one-sentence change. The effort involved is minimal. The bulk of the technical work is underway. We should get advisement from Mr. Schiada on what it would take to finish that. Mr. Schiada stated that Staff would be moving forward with the updates to the grading ordinance with regards to the Storm Water Management Program. Staff anticipates coming back to Council with some revisions and a first reading in March 2006. With regards to adding in additional regulations regarding land user zoning, that will need to go through a process of review. He is assuming it would go through the Planning Commission and Council. It can be done. It is a matter time. It is more restrained by the process, going through a Planning Commission review, public involvement, etc. Hiring a consultant may not speed the process up.

- West 7th Street creek restoration:

Mr. Erickson reviewed the details of the project.

Council Member Whitney thinks the sidewalk is very dangerous. To Council's chagrin, they found out there was a previous agreement that made it so that the owner is not responsible for repairing the sidewalk. Mr. Schiada stated that was correct. That is why the City is moving forward quickly to eliminate the public safety issues in the area. Staff is working with the regulatory agencies on an urgent basis to address the repairs. Staff gave Council an approximate cost of \$75,000 for the repairs. It will be tough to stay within that cost. They are moving ahead with the design. They will get back to Council with the costs. Staff is suggesting the future developer pay for enhancements to the creek (similar to what was done in the Clipper Bay Development).

Council Member Patterson stated that the problem has existed since the development began. We need to move forward with the public safety aspect of the project. She is concerned that the City is being penny-wise and pound-foolish. If the City doesn't address the bigger issue, we are putting additional damages off to a later date. The City needs to address public safety, water quality issues, opportunity for traffic calming, etc. She suggested that we proceed with the temporary fix for public safety. She suggested Staff look into researching some grants that would pay for part of the project.

- Adoption of Ahwahnee Principles:
Mr. Erickson suggested this item be lumped together with other planning items on the other category list.

There were no further comments from Council.

- Community Development Department staffing:
Mr. Erickson briefly reviewed the status of hiring Staff for the Community Development Department.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked what the current staffing was. Mr. Brown stated that there is an Interim Community Development Director, an Associate Planner, a Permit Technician, and a Department Secretary. The City is looking for a Senior Planner and two Associate Planners. The city received twelve applications for the Senior Planner and eight for the Associate Planner.

- Sky Valley watershed protection:
Mr. Erickson reviewed the details of the project.

Council Member Patterson stated that Council approved ten hours, not five. In order to expand the work of the committee, it needs to have technical assistance from existing City Staff. In order to do that we need to have a watershed orientation. The end result will hopefully be that we provide permanent protection for certain areas in Sky Valley. Vallejo has an emerging watershed planning group. The Committee would like to have the City Staff participate in that. They would like to have it so that it is coordinated with the committee. Although the Resource Conservation District's

jurisdiction does not include portions of Sky Valley, they are interested in working with the City. They are currently working with Syar Industries. As indicated by Ms. Griffin, we have a willing seller. Their interests are dealing with another aspect of resources, but it all fits in together. We can't have success if they don't have the technical assistance from the City staff.

- Employee Compensation:
Mr. Erickson reviewed the details of the project.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked if Staff was suggesting the policy was inadequate. Mr. Erickson stated that he was not suggesting that. This item has come up in Council discussions over the past few months. The question is where this fits in Council's priorities and its importance to Council. Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked if Staff was suggesting that the policy should be reviewed. Mr. Erickson stated that this item was on Council's list of priorities to determine where it fits in terms of overall priorities.

Council Member Hughes clarified that this item should actually be a category 3 item on the list of priorities. Mr. Erickson agreed with that statement. .

- Waterfront Park (Foot of First Street.):
Mayor Messina stated that he would like to begin with comments from the public.

Public Comment:

1. Susan Street – Ms. Street stated that she is glad the Council meetings don't start at 6:30 all the time. Getting here on time tonight was a struggle. She stated that Waterfront Park would be an integral part of the revitalization of Downtown. It is time to form a committee of citizens to lay out a plan. They will need help from Council, Staff, etc. It is more an issue of time than money. They are not asking for money, just time. She hopes that this is in the top 50 priorities. She wants to start work on the project. She provided a handout w/pictures of magazine cut outs of possible ideas for the park. She invited everyone to join the League of Women Voters to chat with the City's public officials on 1/19/06 at OZ Gallery and Salon.

Additional Council priorities not on the list:

- Council Member Whitney stated that he had brought up the need for a fire rescue/security vessel for the waterfront area. He would like to see this added to the list of priorities. The boat could be used for fire, rescue, security, etc. Another safety related item he would like to see considered is a fire training facility. We don't have such a facility right now. The Fire Department is currently using the Clocktower for ladder exercises. Another safety related issue is the need for a review of the City's emergency plan. Coordinating this with BUSD would be a good idea.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that the Emergency Preparedness Plan is in its final draft form. It will be finished in a few weeks. Council Member Whitney suggested bringing in some members of the public for input on the plan. Integrating BERT should be considered.

- Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that getting the Fire Department contract resolved needs to be a priority. He would like to see the motorcycle officer's program going. Chief Trimble stated that his staff was working on a grant and on the policies for this issue. Forty Percent of the Department of Transportation's funds have to go to local agencies for traffic safety. This will be an easy form to fill out to apply for the grant funds. It will be a two-year grant, with the option of extending it for an additional two years. Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that the walkway on the north side of Military West (by Mary Farmar) needs to be fixed. Staff believes there needs to be some permanent repairs done on the entire slope. A technical engineer needs to be hired to do the survey on it. The pathway is currently closed. Staff is getting some quotes right now. Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that he hoped some of the funds would come from FEMA. He then asked if there was a clinic that could handle workers compensation needs. Ms. O'Connell stated that Sutter Occupational Health used to have a clinic in town. The City is now contracting with Kaiser in Vallejo for workers comp. SB899 made it difficult for such clinics to operate financially. Vice Mayor Schwartzman would like to see some sort of program to recruit young teachers to Benicia and allows them to be able to afford living in Benicia. He suggested the Silent Second Program. It is a revolving fund program. He would also like to see the City look into conserving energy, solar heating, etc. Mr. Alvarez stated that there were some energy saving ideas that were implemented in the past. He will get that information to Council. A study was done approximately three years ago. Because the City is an ABAG member, we are able to have another firm look at the City's energy usage. That firm is about a month and a half away from having a report ready for Staff to review.
- Council Member Patterson stated that regarding energy conservation, PG&E had announced a 40% increase in natural gas costs. She suspects the City will start seeing an immediate return on energy conservation overall. She thinks legislation for funding more energy conservation is back on the state legislative agenda and it looks promising. Additionally, the need for an urgent care clinic is important. This needs to be looked at when reviewing the Emergency Response Plan. We are not self sufficient with regards to urgent care. She thinks and hopes the issue of the motorcycle officers will help enforce the noise with the modified mufflers on the motorcycles as well as the traffic safety. She was a little concerned about the training facility for the Firefighters. Anything that takes away from our getting a proper police station for the Police Officers has to be considered carefully. We need to make sure we focus on the police station. She is confused because there is a mixed potpourri items that have to be done because of public safety. Council should be giving direction to Staff on certain items. Why was staffing the Community Development Department be given a priority? That could be direction to Staff, not one of the ranked priorities.

Mayor Messina stated that there were a couple of items like that. He suggested those be taken off the list. Maybe they should go on the category 3 list.

- Council Member Whitney forgot one item. There is a horrible problem at the Benicia Historical Museum. The roof needs to be replaced.
- Mayor Messina stated that he wanted to add the addition of a police beat to the list of priorities. This will be needed when the Seeno Development comes on board. This could be rolled into the motorcycle concept. Also, he would like to see a fire department presence in the Industrial Park. He discussed the concept of bonds. Council should revisit the concept of the bond capacity to lower water rates for the citizens. Specifically, the wastewater treatment bonds. It might make sense to revisit what has been planned for the Clocktower and Commandants Residence and use the funds for the community center. Maybe Council should look at the land that the City owns to put a facility for the Scout's.
- Council Member Hughes stated that he submitted his list to the City Manager and most comments were incorporated into the lists provided to Council. He would like to see more dollars and resources put towards improvements to the City cemetery.

Council Member Whitney suggested the Scout's use the Mills site. Staff stated that they discussed that idea with BUSD earlier this afternoon. BUSD is a ways away from establishing a committee that will make a decision on that. What is the highest and best use for BUSD for that site has not yet been determined.

Council Member Patterson asked for clarification on the Mayor's comment regarding the wastewater treatment bonds. Mayor Messina stated that the public gave Council authority to issue a bond to pay for this. If council were to issue additional bonds to pay off the loan, we would be required to repay the bonds. If we did not have the loan on the books for the Wastewater funds, the citizen's water bills could be lowered by as much as \$14.00 per individual per month. This would tend to favor seniors and individuals that have owned their properties long term. Council Member stated that she wants to be careful when getting into debt when the City has such a low rate on its revolving loan. Regarding the Mills site, there is an opportunity for use that would give the district some security, occupancy, etc. The City should do everything it can to encourage this idea.

Ms. McLaughlin stated that regarding whether or not the City can use the bonds as Mayor Messina discussed, she received two opposing opinions. The City will have to spend some money to get a firm opinion. The other thing in the way is the Resolution committing not to use the money unless they took it back to a vote of the people.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that the bonds get repaid over a long period. That means that our children and grandchildren will be paying them. He is interested in finding out how much would be spent on interest on this versus what the City is paying now.

COMMUNICATIONS:

WRITTEN:

One item submitted from Ms. Kitty Griffin (copy on file).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mr. Robert Moore – Mr. Moore stated that the Affordable Housing Affiliation would like to see the conversion of the revolving loan fund into an Affordable Housing Fund. He suggested using the proposed site for the Scout house for affordable housing. He stated that the Affordable Housing Affiliation has a proposal to develop that site with homeownership programs targeted specifically to low income teachers. They are very interested in this project.

Mr. Erickson reviewed the Staff High Priority List (continued from the PowerPoint Presentation).

Mayor Messina stated that the City Manager requested Council each make a list of their top 10 items so Staff could compile a list to see how close they were.

Mayor Messina called for a break at 8:42 p.m. so Council could each work on their list of top ten priorities.

The meeting resumed at 9:06 p.m.

Items that received 5 votes:

- Commandants Residence and Clocktower project
- 911 Police Station Upgrade project
- Sustainability, Design guidelines, zoning codes, etc.

Items that received 4 votes:

- Community Center

Items that received 3 votes:

- Joint Use Agreement
- State Park Road Bridge
- Marina Fund
- Fire Rescue Boat

Council Member Whitney stated that he would like to see the X-Park on the top ten list.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that since the X-Park was so close, he was not sure if it needed to be on the list.

Council Member Patterson stated that she had a grouping of public safety issues that dealt with the need to hire the planning department staff.

Council Comments on Consensus items:

- Commandant's Residence and Clocktower:

Council Member Hughes stated that he wanted to see the Commandant's Residence be repaired and made available for public use. Mr. Alvarez stated that the Commandant's Residence project is underway. The project is in the first phase. In a few months, Staff will have a strong cost estimate for what it would take to open the doors to the public. The Clocktower is a different situation. Conceptually, Staff wants to make the downstairs usable (meeting rooms, fix elevator, etc.). The Clocktower is a bigger project for Staff to undertake, since they will have to start over again. With all the projects the Parks and Community Services Department is responsible for (per the list of priorities), timing is horrible. If he had no other projects, he could give Council a very good estimate in two months. Council Member Hughes stated that he separated the two projects. He did not list the Clocktower on his list, as it is currently useable.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that if he had to pick, he would choose the Commandant's Residence. Regarding the Clocktower, he was just thinking about repairing the stairway.

Council Member Patterson stated that she was interested in the Mayor's suggestion to use the community center funds and divide them up between the Commandant's Residence and the Clocktower. She asked if it would be possible to get an extension of Staff person on board for a temporary assignment. If we could get things initiated, we have a good chance at getting funding.

Mr. Alvarez stated that he liked Council Member Patterson's suggestion regarding the extension of Staff person. In Council's priorities, the X Park and the Community Center are listed. He suggested possibly outsourcing construction management and his one staff person would not have to watch some of the other projects. That may allow Parks and Community Services to take the extra work on.

Mr. Erickson stated that Staff needs to take the list of priorities back and see how they can be incorporated into its work schedule in a manner that is consistent with Council's priorities.

Council Member Patterson stated that there are various solutions that have been brought up. Staff can go back and brainstorm at Staff level to see how to make these things happen.

Mayor Messina stated that the Commandant's Residence has been on his list for six years. The City needs to look at how it can be used as a community asset. He would like to commence with spending the monies. Regarding the Clocktower, it needs more tweaks (elevator, stairway, kitchen, etc.). Would it be wiser to spend some of the dollars from the Community Center on making the Clocktower more useable?

- Community Center:
Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that he did not have a strong opinion whether it should be at the Community Park or at Mills. He just wants to see something.

Mayor Messina asked what the shortfall was in terms of dollars. Mr. Alvarez stated that the City is short \$1.5 million. If Council sets aside mitigation measures through some action, then it is only short \$500,000. The Girl Scouts would like to see 1,500 sq. ft. The Boy Scouts would like the same. The original leadership agreed that 750 sq. ft. was acceptable.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that maybe the priority should be getting a usable facility rather than an ideal facility.

Council Member Whitney asked about the wall (that would divide the Girl Scout/Boy Scout rooms). The wall in question is not a load-bearing wall. It could be something like an accordion wall. Storage could be developed on the outside of the building.

Council Member Patterson stated that she was encouraged about redistributing the money for the project (community center) for which we don't have enough resources and use it for the projects for which we do have adequate funding if these funds are included. We need to see how we can achieve a number of the goals quickly. If Council could have more definition on what that could get us, they might be able to finish the downstairs area of the Clocktower to the point of having a very usable facility. She restated her concerns about the location of the Community Center in terms of the Scout's needs. There is no question in her mind that it is not a good location for the Scout's needs. She would like to see a report from Staff on how that (redistributing the money) would work out.

Council Member Hughes stated that he is sold on the need for the Community Center. He is not sold on the fact that it needs to be at the Community Park. He asked Staff to come back with the options and the pros/cons of each. He would like to move forward sooner than later.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked what the possibility was for the Scout's using the downstairs of the Clocktower. Mr. Alvarez stated that size wise, it would work. If Council directs staff accordingly, they will begin discussions with the Scout's.

Council Member Whitney stated that he did not have a problem redirecting the money, as long as we find a place for the Scout's. We need to find the Scout's a home quickly. Having a community center is overdue.

Mayor Messina stated that Valero promised the City \$400,000 towards a Scout house. Maybe if those funds were put towards renovating the current Boy Scout House, it could be done quicker.

Mr. Alvarez stated that in a perfect situation, Mills would solve all the problems. If BUSD is forming a committee to discuss reuse of the Mills site, the City should formally ask for participation in the meeting. He would like to meet with the Scout's to introduce the idea of using the Clocktower to them. Then, once the City knows what their program is, he would like his staff to evaluate the Boy Scout house to see if

the building can be saved. He would also need to look at the Clocktower to see what improvements would need to be made. He would also like to meet with Carey and Company (Historical Consultants) to see if any of the proposed changes would damage the historical integrity of the building.

- 911 Center Police Station Upgrades:

Chief Trimble stated that he would be bringing a project to Council in two weeks. The project includes seismic upgrades; equipment for 911 center would be seismically sound, jail cells upgraded, sally port, and a new roof.

Council Member Patterson stated that there is a different revenue projection than when this project was brought to Council last year. It is more optimistic than is being indicated.

- Sustainability, Design Code, Zoning Codes, etc:

Mayor Messina suggested the codes should be reviewed. Council should have the Planning Commission and HPRC provide input on the issues. Council could use the committees that have already been formed to gather information (including public input).

Council Member Patterson discussed the Form Based approach. The uncertainty the public has about the use of the Arsenal area will slow things down. When the Form Based approach is used, people can visualize the use and what something will look like with the use and design. It would be more appropriate to take a few members of each group (HPRC and Planning Commission) to form a working group to look into this. Separating them out could slow things down.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that he agreed with Council Member Patterson. Forming a subcommittee makes sense.

Council Member Hughes stated that he agrees but he is not very familiar with the Form Based approach. If it gets where we need to be quicker, he would be in favor of it.

Mr. Erickson stated that there is \$50,000 in the budget for looking into this.

Mr. Brown stated that it would be approximately \$75,000 to look into this (study). It would take 4-6 months minimum.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman asked if someone could come and do a 20-minute presentation on Form Based Zoning for the new Council members.

Mayor Messina stated it was the will of the Council to proceed with this. He asked Staff to come up with a more formal presentation and idea of what needs to be done to move forward, what is needed, how much it will cost, etc.

- Joint Use Agreement:

An update on this item is on the 1/17 Council meeting. Mr. Erickson stated that it is Staff's intention to present Council with an agreement at that time.

- State Park Road Bridge:

Mr. Schiada stated that the City needs \$1.5 million more for this project, which Staff is looking for through grant monies. Staff is proceeding ahead with the final design, although they are slightly short on funds. Staff has enough to complete the environmental and the permitting process with Caltrans. If the City doesn't get the money, it won't proceed with the project.

Council Member Whitney stated that this is a very important project. He would like the Mayor to go back to the Four C's at the Clocktower and press them for the funds.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that Staff needs to exhaust every effort to locate funds for this project before we even consider funding the project.

- Marina Fund:

Mayor Messina stated that he would like to form an assessment district that is just the Marina and have them pay for the dredging.

Council Member Patterson stated that the berthers don't have a vested interest in the property. The owner of the property is the City. The money would come to the City in the form of a collection. If the assessment district was larger (including the east and west sides), the park could be developed. She hoped the Mayor would agree to ask Staff to come up with a few scenarios. It could then be discussed in more detail.

Council Member Whitney stated that he is not married to a solution, but Council needs to come up with something that works. There are some areas where there could be limited development. There are some opportunities there. This issue has gotten to the back of the bus for too long. He wants to see a solution.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that this needs to be kept on the front burner and make the Marina pay for itself.

Mayor Messina stated that he would like to make the funds from an assessment district go only towards the Marina.

Council Member Whitney asked Mr. Schiada what the status was with regards to discussions between with Benicia Harbor Corporation regarding the idea of sucking out the mud and putting it into a pond scenario. Mr. Schiada stated that Staff is working on some other multi-million dollar projects and have not been addressing that. This is not an easy thing do deal with. It will take at least 6 months to address the master plan. There are a lot of ideas out there. One of the ideas is suction

dredging. Where to do it and where to put it (mud) are some lingering questions. Step one is to do the dredge master plan to look at some of the alternatives. This will not make the deficit go away. There will still be at least \$150,000 continued deficit (minimum).

Council Member Patterson stated that the long-term management strategy that was developed by the Army Corp of Engineers (and BCDC, among other agencies) is to have a source reduction in terms of disposing dredged material. The regulatory climate will not get easier it will get tougher. The City could be caught in a more serious predicament than it already is in. She wants to pursue alternate dredging opportunities. If Council could give Staff guidance to be more expansive of what the choices are and what it would take, they could make an informed decision.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman discussed the suction dredging process, which is taking out the dredging, dry it out on adjacent land, and ship it somewhere for sale. He inquired if Amports owned the land adjacent to the treatment plant. Mr. Schiada discussed the difficulty in transporting dredged materials. The regulatory agencies have very strict rules with this. There is a cost to transport the dredged material. Mr. Schiada stated that although Martinez and Vallejo have land where they can accommodate this, we do not have that luxury.

- Fire Rescue Boat:

Council Member Whitney stated that he has been having informal discussions with Chief Hanley on this issue. This is a golden opportunity to create for the Firefighters another skill and opportunity to apply their trade in another way.

Chief Hanley discussed financing options from the boat manufacturers. The boat could also be rigged to accommodate security situations. It would have been very valuable at the pier fire.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that he was interested in the boat for fire, rescue, and security situations. Chief Trimble stated that the Police could absolutely assist with security situations involving the boat.

Council Member Patterson stated that she would be very disappointed if there was not some participation from Valero on this.

Staff will research the cost for manning the boat as well as talk with Valero on the issue of funding participation.

- X-Park:

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that this does not need to be on the priority list because the gap seems to be so small. He asked Staff to find how close they are and let Council know if they need to get involved.

- Public Safety Issues:

Council Member Patterson stated that there were various projects underway such as West 7th St. stabilization of walkway, community development staffing, employee compensation, and a few more Public Works projects on the way. She wanted to make sure these projects get done.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that they are actually category 3 items and should be left on that list of priorities.

Mr. Schiada stated that regarding the grading ordinance; Council could give Staff direction when that item comes up what they want included in the grading ordinance updates that Staff is doing for the storm water to see what is appropriate to add to the discussion.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that a few items that did not show up on the list were the revenue enhancement, Benicia Business Park, the E Street parking lot, and a few others. He would like to see the E Street parking lot paved.

Mr. Erickson stated that there are ongoing projects that are not listed on the top ten priorities. The projects will not go away; they just won't have the priority that the top ten projects have.

- Revenue Enhancement:

Council Member Patterson encouraged Council to form a committee (ad-hoc) to look into revenue enhancement.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated that he was looking at revenue for the future and trying to be proactive.

Council Member Hughes stated that Council has identified a lot of areas where increased revenue is needed. He would not mind adding this to the overall list.

Mayor Messina asked the Finance and Audit Committee to look into this and report back to Council.

- Review of Emergency Plan:

Council Members Patterson and Whitney expressed interest in making sure this is addressed. Chief Hanley will have the review completed by the second meeting in February. Mayor Messina stated he would like the Chief to come back and present it to Council to get feedback.

Council Member Patterson stated that having a subcommittee review the information would be more efficient.

Vice Mayor Schwartzman stated he was okay with the subcommittee idea. He asked about early warning being addressed for the folks at Rancho Benicia, as there will be

high tide at the end of the month. Mr. Erickson stated that the topic of early warning is on the agenda for the Fire Department to address at its meeting tomorrow.

Council Member Whitney stated that a workshop environment was a good idea. He wants to have some dialogue on this issue started soon. He is okay with a subcommittee.

Council Member Hughes stated that he would prefer to hear from the Chief first before proceeding with a subcommittee. Council Members Whitney and Schwartzman agreed that was okay. After Chief Hanley reports back to Council, they will discuss how to proceed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Messina adjourned the meeting at 10:44 p.m.

Lisa Wolfe, City Clerk