

MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING – CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 27, 2009

The special meeting of the City Council of the City of Benicia was called to order by Mayor Elizabeth Patterson at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 27, 2009, in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 250 East L Street, complete proceedings of which are recorded on tape.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Council Members Campbell, Ioakimedes, Schwartzman, and Mayor Patterson
Absent: Council Member Hughes (arrived after roll call)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Patterson 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).

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

WRITTEN:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ANNOUNCEMENT OF CLOSED SESSION:

Heather McLaughlin, City Attorney, read the announcement of Closed Session

CLOSED SESSION:

**A. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR
(Government Code Section 54957.6)**

**Agency negotiators: City Manager and Administrative Services Director
Employee Organizations: Benicia Senior Management Group, Benicia
Middle Management Group, Police Management Group, Benicia Firefighters
Association (BFA), Benicia Police Officers Association (BPOA), Benicia
Dispatch Association (BDA), Local #1, Benicia Public Service Employees'
Association (BPSEA), BPSEA Part-Time Unit, and Unrepresented
Employees**

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Patterson adjourned the meeting to Closed Session at 6:02 p.m.

RECONVENE OPEN SESSION:

Mayor Patterson reconvened the meeting to Open Session at 6:34 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Action taken in Closed Session:

Ms. McLaughlin reported that Council received information from Staff.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Review of current economic conditions and the impact of the FY 2008-09 Municipal Budgets:

Jim Erickson, City Manager, introduced the agenda item.

Rob Sousa, Finance Director, reviewed the staff report.

Mayor Patterson asked Mr. Sousa to try and get the specific unemployment data for Benicia. Mr. Sousa stated that he would try and get that information.

Mayor Patterson discussed the unemployment issue, the stimulus bill, and the transportation bill (as discussed at a conference she attended in Albuquerque, New Mexico).

Council Member Schwartzman discussed the current state of local real estate listings, the issue of the temporary hiring freeze (in particular the situation at the Fire Department), STA funding, funding for paving, foreclosure monies, and the unemployment situation.

Council Member Hughes and Staff discussed the contingency plan, how the plan would be prioritized, that the goal is to be in a position where the City could act quickly, the need to have a list that the City could refer to in order to move quickly (with an indication of how quickly we could act noted on that list), whether the 3% and 6% cuts are aggressive enough, and the need to prioritize so that there is the least impact on the City and its services.

Mayor Patterson discussed the need to be cautious regarding cutting the workforce, and developing some choices for Council to consider.

Vice Mayor Campbell and Staff discussed the 6% reduction, at what point the City would need to reduce its reserves, and the issue of the hiring freeze.

Public Comment:

None

Mayor Patterson discussed the reported 40% decline in home values, the need for trend information on home values, the City's sales tax, the possibility of a state tax (which

would not be shared), the fact that there was a majority vote for a State budget, and the issue of vehicle replacement (not replacing the vehicles could be pennywise and pound foolish).

Council Member Ioakimedes discussed the fact that Benicia is positioned fairly well, that Benicia has consumer confidence, and the need to let people know that we are in a good position.

Vice Mayor Campbell and Staff discussed the status of the Enterprise Funds and Transit Funds.

Council Member Schwartzman and Staff discussed whether there were regulatory requirements that would force the City to do upgrades to the water and wastewater treatment plants.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Patterson adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Lisa Wolfe, City Clerk