

MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING – CITY COUNCIL
February 25, 2014

City Council Chambers, City Hall, 250 East L Street, complete proceedings of which are recorded on tape.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Patterson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. CONVENE OPEN SESSION:

A. ROLL CALL

All Council Members were present.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Lydon led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. REFERENCE TO THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

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

Ayes: Patterson, Strawbridge, Schwartzman, Campbell, Hughes

Noes: (None)

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

A. WRITTEN COMMENT

Two items received (copies on file).

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

V. STUDY SESSION:

A. PRIORITY PROJECT LIST QUARTERLY REVIEW

Anne Cardwell, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the staff report and a PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Strawbridge and Staff discussed the Food Truck Ordinance. She would like to see it spelled out separately in the priority list. She and Staff discussed the Economic Development Action Plan.

Vice Mayor Campbell and Staff discussed purchasing the property that is for sale on the north side of Lake Herman Road. Mayor Patterson suggested the Sky Valley Open Space Committee meet to discuss the issue.

Council Member Hughes and Staff discussed the Benicia Industrial Park circulation study. He wanted to ensure someone from the Industrial Park was on the committee (they would be). They discussed #32 (public notification process). He and Staff discussed the process for putting specific projects on the priority list. Council discussed coming up with ways to make the list more user friendly.

Council Member Schwartzman and Staff discussed the Benicia Industrial Park broadband project, status of the boat yard cleanup, and the status of the final phase of the Rose Drive traffic calming project.

Mayor Patterson discussed being approached to support the San Francisco Bay Area Restoration Program.

Mayor Patterson and Staff discussed the broadband project in the Industrial Park, the Benicia Industrial Park market study, and the grant proposal program being addressed by the Community Sustainability Commission.

Council Member Schwartzman and Staff discussed the issue of the drought/water, and possibly putting that on the priority list. He and Staff discussed the broadband project in the Industrial Park.

Council Member Schwartzman discussed the importance of putting water on Council's list of priorities.

Mayor Patterson discussed being able to handle 'bolts from the blue.' She would like Staff to come up with a simple way to handle bolts from the blue, specifically the water situation.

Staff confirmed the water issue was a top priority, as it was a health and safety issue.

Mayor Patterson suggested adding a #9 to the list of criteria to address bolts from the blue.

Public Comment:

None

B. RESOLUTION AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2013-14 BUDGET, CLOSING FUNDS, AND CHANGING FUND DESCRIPTIONS

RESOLUTION 14-14 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BENICIA AMENDING THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013-14

Brenda Olwin, Interim Finance Director, reviewed the staff report and a PowerPoint presentation.

Vice Mayor Campbell and Staff discussed the impound account, and the Valero property tax appeal.

Mayor Patterson and Staff discussed the possible need for additional reserves to deal with the appeals. Mayor Patterson asked for an understandable explanation for the public for why the improvements at Valero do not affect the property tax values.

Council Member Schwartzman and Staff discussed the property tax appeals process. He discussed his lack of confidence in success for defending the Valero appeal. He and Staff discussed the revenue challenges, the fact that the City needs to think ahead as to what can be done to gain more diversification (sales tax generators), and the issue of residential property taxes.

Mayor Patterson and Staff discussed the increase in costs to deliver services, and growing services that the public would be willing to pay for. She would like Staff and Council to have a discussion about some strategies that might come out of the market studies.

Vice Mayor Campbell and Staff discussed the property tax appeals.

Council Member Hughes and Staff discussed the issue of increasing the City's reserves to be able to handle the Valero property tax appeals. They discussed the 10-year forecast.

Mayor Patterson and Staff discussed the 10 year forecast. Mayor Patterson would like to have a conventional wisdom scenario and a worst case scenario, and how the City is capable of dealing with that. She and Staff discussed North Bay Aqueduct, and what mechanism the City has to deal with a 10-year drought.

Council Member Schwartzman would like to see a budget update for the second year each time an update is given (2013-14 and 2014-15).

Vice Mayor Campbell discussed the issue of reducing the reserve. He discussed concern regarding the lack of department directors, and the need to invest in those positions.

Council Member Strawbridge discussed the housing in Benicia being in high demand. She discussed the need to capitalize on that. She discussed the market study for the Industrial Park. She suggested doing a market study in the Downtown area as well.

Public Comment:

None

Mayor Patterson discussed the studies that need to be done so that Council could make some important decisions. There is an opportunity to use some of the reserves. She discussed using part of the reserve for the infrastructure and debt. She discussed looking at properties that could be used for re-purposing. She discussed making sure the public and business has the amenities necessary to do the things they need to do (Wi-Fi on First St. etc.) She supports the notion of employee retention and recruitment for the open director positions.

Public Comment:

None

On motion of Council Member Hughes, seconded by Council Member Schwartzman, Council adopted Resolution 14-14, as presented, on roll call by the following vote:

Ayes: Patterson, Strawbridge, Schwartzman, Campbell, Hughes
Noes: (None)

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Patterson adjourned the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Lisa Wolfe, City Clerk