

MINUTES

**Special Meeting of the
City of Huntington Park City Council
Thursday, June 11, 2020**

The City Council conducted this meeting in accordance with California Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-25-20 and N-29-20.

The Rules of Decorum were played prior to the start of the Regular Meeting.

The special meeting of the City Council of the City of Huntington Park, California was called to order at 5:04 p.m. on Thursday, June 11, 2020, in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 6550 Miles Avenue, Huntington Park, California; Mayor Manuel "Manny" Avila presiding.

PRESENT: Council Member(s): Eduardo "Eddie" Martinez, Marilyn Sanabria, Karina Macias, Vice Mayor Graciela Ortiz, and Mayor Manuel "Manny" Avila.

CITY OFFICIALS/STAFF: Ricardo Reyes, City Manager; Cosme Lozano, Chief of Police; Araceli Almazan, Legal; Raul Alvarez, Assistant City Manager; Sergio Infanzon, Director of Community Development/Acting City Clerk; ABSENT: Cynthia Norzagaray, Director of Parks & Recreation; Nita McKay, Director of Finance & Administrative Services; Cesar Roldan, Director of Public Works.

INVOCATION

Invocation was led by Council Member Martinez.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Sanabria.

PUBLIC COMMENT –

A representative from the business "Dream Maker" talked about the importance of being invited to all the council meetings. She stated that all the small businesses located on Pacific Boulevard didn't have resources, and didn't receive any information about the help from the city. She also requested help from the city with publicity and the information about the loans. She stated that she was representing many of the small businesses and that they have formed a group called united small business. She mentioned they were struggling due to the COVID-19 situation and felt that they needed to be heard. The representative asked to have a conference with all of the councilmembers so business owners could share their concerns. The representative requested a letter from the city to the landlords asking them to help them with their rent.

Alejandro Melendi (business owner) – Mr. Melendi mentioned that changing the name from microbusiness to small business will affect those businesses that have less than 3 employees and all microbusiness will be affected. He also stated that 95% of those microbusinesses haven't received any type of federal funding.

Yohanna Ruvalcaba (business owner) – She stated that she had a high rent and she needed help from the City.

Gloria Rivera (business owner) – Miss Rivera stated that she applied to different loans and didn't qualify because she only had one person on the payroll. She asked the city to do more publicity so people know that they are open.

Chamber of Commerce (business owner) – Leticia Martinez mentioned that most of the businesses in Huntington Park are microbusinesses and need help. She also stated that she heard that out of the \$250,000 allocated, only \$50,000 were allocated for administration, but then she saw that \$25,000 are secured for administration so she asked for a clarification to provide the exact amount available for the small business to apply. She also mentioned that she doesn't understand why the loans will be used to stabilize or expand current businesses, she didn't see how under the current economic times that

would be possible. The Chamber of Commerce is asking council to consider keeping the microloan vs including other businesses due to the unlimited amount of funds.

Ahmed Hassanin (business owner) – Mr. Hassanin stated that he has been in Huntington Park for 20 years as a business owner and this has been the hardest moment. He stated he was a microbusiness and needed help. He asked the Council to consider to keep the loans for microbusinesses of less than 5 employees. He also stated that he would like to come back and meet with the councilmembers and share some ideas about how to improve the boulevard.

STAFF RESPONSE – Mr. Reyes stated that the item to be considered at the meeting was the housing assistance program being developed by the City and not the small businesses program. The microbusinesses are still eligible under the small business program so they will not be left out. The City continues working on the small business program to make it fair for everyone and once is ready the City will release the application.

Council Member Sanabria had a question about the eviction moratorium and Mr. Reyes responded that the City under the emergency proclamation approved an eviction moratorium for commercial and residential. He also stated that if anyone was experiencing any formal eviction, to contact the Community Development Department for assistance.

Council Member Martinez asked if the eviction moratorium was until the end of June and Mr. Reyes responded that the emergency proclamation didn't have an expiration date and was going to continue until changes were made by Council.

Vice Mayor Ortiz stated that she was going to make comments or questions during the public hearing or when the item in the agenda was under discussion by the City Council.

REGULAR AGENDA

CITY MANAGER

1. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT NUMBER THREE TO THE FY 2019-20 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN (AAP) FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE (CDBG-CV) FUNDS

City Manager announced the item and introduced Renea Ferrell to present the item.

Mayor Avila opened the public hearing:

PUBLIC COMMENT

Leticia Martinez (Chamber of Commerce) stated that there are 2000 businesses registered in the City, and according to the presentation by Miss Renea only 20 businesses will be eligible for a \$10,000 forgivable loan, she asked if there was any way to change that so more businesses could get help. Limiting to 20 was not going to cut it for all the small businesses you have in the City. She also asked why bringing the issue about the small business description to Council to vote if the City was still working on it.

Alejandro Melendi (business owner) talked about the 20 loans being not enough for the businesses in the City, he also asked the City Council to allocate funds from other sources to help them.

Business Owner from June Maker talked about reducing the amount of the loan to help more small businesses. She also stated that the businesses are interested in participating and access the information for the meetings.

Joana Ruvalcaba (business owner) stated that every business pays different amount of rent, therefore, one option to help the businesses is to allocate the amount of the loan based on the amount of rent businesses pay.

Ahmed Hassanin (business owner) asked the City Council to help the small businesses.

Vice Mayor Ortiz made a point of clarification and stated that they were not voting on the small business loan program. She clarified that the City Council was voting to modify the amount the Salvation Army was going to receive to manage the Homeless vouchers program, and adding to microenterprise the term small businesses and the CDBG administration amount. There are still concerns the City has to address and the City Council is not voting on the small business program but just to add the small business to the criteria.

Mayor Avila closed the public hearing:

Council Member Sanabria stated that Council is listening and working to help everyone in the City and at this point they are just voting on the homeless program and adding the small business component.

Motion: Vice Mayor Ortiz moved to approve the substantial amendment number three to the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Annual Action Plan (AAP) for Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus response (CDBG-CV), seconded by Council Member Sanabria. Motion passed 5-0-0, by the following vote:

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Council Member(s): Martinez, Sanabria, Macias, Vice Mayor Ortiz
and Mayor Avila
NOES: Council Member(s): None
ABSENT: Council Member(s): None

2. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF FIRST AMENDMENT TO LOCAL EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION

Assistant City Manager Raul Alvarez presented the item:

Motion: Council Member Sanabria moved to approve the first amendment to local emergency proclamation, seconded by Vice Mayor Ortiz. Motion passed 5-0-0, by the following vote:

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Council Member(s): Martinez, Sanabria, Macias, Vice Mayor Ortiz
and Mayor Avila
NOES: Council Member(s): None
ABSENT: Council Member(s): None

END OF REGULAR AGENDA

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Acting City Clerk Sergio Infanzon stated that a correction needed to be made and that the local emergency eviction moratorium for the City of Huntington Park ended on May 31, 2020, however, the City was still abiding by the eviction moratorium from the Los Angeles County that is in effect until the end of the month.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None.

COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

Council Member Macias thanked Director Infanzon, staff and business owners for attending the meeting. She also stated that they try to divide the funds as much as possible to help and provide resources. We understand the situation is difficult but we are trying to help as much as possible.

Council Member Martinez thanked Director Infanzon and acknowledged all the small business attending the meeting today and encouraged everyone to participate and continue voicing their concerns.

Council Member Sanabria thanked all the people who attended the meeting, asked everyone to visit the City's website and get the latest information on the decisions the City is making. She stated that Council is here to help and her business card is always available. She also thanked Director Infanzon for the good work he is doing. She encouraged everyone to complete their census form and return it as soon as possible.

Vice Mayor Ortiz thanked the business owners and let them know that the Council Members always listen to everyone. She stated that we are living a very difficult time and there are different needs for everyone, not just the small businesses are in need of financial assistance, there are families that are living in the streets and they need food, and housing. She stated that small businesses are very important because they are the foundation of our economic plan, but the reality is that the federal government didn't give us what we needed, we have a small pot and we have to divide it for; housing, food, and businesses. She also mentioned that her business card is available and invited the attendees to call or email her to figure out what is realistic for the small businesses.

Mayor Avila thanked all businesses attending the meeting and mentioned that the City Council is listening and if they have an opportunity to help them, they will do it. He also encouraged everyone to continue participating.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Avila adjourned the meeting at 6:01 p.m. in the name of all the Class 2020 Graduates, to a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,


Sergio Infanzon
Acting City Clerk