

MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the
City of Huntington Park City Council
Monday, May 5, 2025

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Huntington Park, California was called to order at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, May 5, 2025, in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 6550 Miles Avenue, Huntington Park, California; Mayor Arturo Flores presiding.

PRESENT: Council Member(s): Martiz, Macias, Sanabria, Vice Mayor Martinez, and Mayor Flores

ABSENT: None

CITY OFFICIALS/STAFF: City Manager Ricardo Reyes; Eduardo Sarmiento City Clerk; Cosme Lozano Police Chief; Gerardo “Gerry” Lopez Public Works Director; Jeff Jones Finance Director; Louis Morales Interim Community Development Director; Cynthia Norzagaray Parks and Recreation Director; Andrew Sarega City Attorney.

INVOCATION

Invocation led by Mayor Arturo Flores.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilmember Jonathan Sanabria.

PRESENTATION(S)

1. COMMUNITY OUTREACH PRESENTATION

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following people/ person provided public content:

1. Rodolfo Cruz
2. Systems Ink
3. Nina Resk
4. Enrique Gonzalez
5. Bernardo Rodriguez
6. Jane Doe w/ Bernardo Rodriguez
7. Jane Martinez

STAFF RESPONSE

CM: Addressed concerns to ease traffic project off Slauson Improvement Project. A brief history of the project was stated: Around 2019 the project commenced, Sub Amendments were made in 2021 and 2023. The current Public Works Director took over in Late 2024.

Mayor Flores motioned to add an emergency Public Works Item on the grounds that stripping of the road was scheduled for the following evening [Tuesday, May 6th, 2025]. The emergency Item was set to Discuss and Vote on a permanent or temporary solution for the Slauson Congestion Improvement Project.

CONSENT CALENDAR

CITY CLERK

1. CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CITY COUNCIL:

Approve Minute(s) of the following City Council Meeting(s):

1. Regular City Council Meeting held April 21, 2025
2. Special City Council Meeting held April 23, 2025

FINANCE

2. CHECK REGISTERS

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CITY COUNCIL:

- 1. Approve Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrant(s) dated May 5, 2025

MOTION: Councilmember Sanabria motioned to approve the consent calendar. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martinez. The motion was carried by unanimous consent.

AYES: Council Member(s): Martiz, Macias, Sanabria, Vice Mayor Martinez, and Mayor Flores

NOES: Council Member(s): None

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR

REGULAR AGENDA

PUBLIC WORKS [EMERGENCY ITEM]

1. DISCUSS AND ADDRESS CONCERNS ON THE SLAUSON CONGESTION RELIEF IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

MOTION: Mayor Flores motioned to bring this on the agenda as an emergency Item, due to the fact, the re-lining of the roads was scheduled for the next evening, and completing would permanently impact businesses parking. After discussion Councilmember Sanabria motioned to restore the street layout to what it was prior to the commencement of the Slauson Congestion Relief construction project with the addition of parking on both sides. Councilmember Martinez seconded the motion and added a friendly amendment to restore former stripping and remove parking signs. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

AYES: Council Member(s): Martiz, Macias, Sanabria, Vice Mayor Martinez, and Mayor Flores

NOES: Council Member(s): None

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE 2025 GENERAL PLAN ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CITY COUNCIL:

- 1. Approve the 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report.

MOTION: Councilmember Sanabria motioned to approve the 2025 General Plan Annual Progress Report. The Motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Martinez. During the discussion portion of the item Councilmember Sanabria made a point of order that Councilmember Macias was on her cellphone. Councilmember Macias responded that she was note taking. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

AYES: Council Member(s): Martiz, Macias, Sanabria, Vice Mayor Martinez, and Mayor Flores

NOES: Council Member(s): None

CITY MANAGER

3. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION APPROVING DELEGATION OF AQUATIC CENTER INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY TO THE CITY PROSECUTOR

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CITY COUNCIL:

1. Provide the City Prosecutor's office with full and unhindered investigative authority into the Aquatic Center matter.

MOTION: Councilmember Sanabria motioned to provide the City Prosecutor's office with full and unhindered investigative authority into the Aquatic Center matter. Councilmember Macias stated that she had concerns regarding the budget for items. Mayor Flores wanted to state on record that he had championed for this item back in November of 2024. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Martinez. The motion was carried by majority vote.

AYES: Council Member(s): Martiz, Sanabria, Vice Mayor Martinez, and Mayor Flores

NOES: Council Member(s): None

ABSTAIN: Council Member(s): Macias

CITY ATTORNEY

4. CONSIDERATION OF REIMBURSEMENT FOR LEGAL REPRESENTATION EXPENSES INCURRED IN CONNECTION WITH THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S INVESTIGATION CONCERNING THE AQUATIC CENTER PROJECT

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CITY COUNCIL:

1. Review and discuss authorizing reimbursement of an amount, not to exceed \$30,000 per individual, for legal representation related to the investigation by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office into the Aquatic Center Project.

MOTION: City Attorney Andrew Sarega requested that City Manager Ricardo Reyes, Councilmember Karina Macias, and Vice Mayor Eduardo "Eddie" Martinez step outside of the room. The three individuals stepped outside of the room. City Attorney read that the three individuals are presumed innocent until the courts determine otherwise. If individuals are convicted or take a plea deal of any kinds, any money expended by City will have to be paid back by the individual. If individuals are found innocent, then the city should pay. If the individuals are found guilty individuals, then the individual should pay any expenditures burdened by the city. [At this moment Councilmember Sanabria made a point of order that this meeting was being recorded without their knowledge by an individual who had stepped out of the room. Councilmember Sanabria asked if this would be considered a violation and requested legal recommendation regarding the recording. As this is a public meeting this would not be considered a violation. City Attorney made a point of order that unless the recording was made during closed session then it would be considered a violation. As the time stamp stated it had been 10 minutes of recording and the time was 9:33, then the recording began after closed session.] Individuals do not have to accept the 30,000 dollars. Mayor Flores motioned to vote on an individual basis, as in separate votes for each of the individuals involved. The City Attorney explained that since it is under one item, you could packet {split into 2 votes} but not three. It also wouldn't be appropriate. Legally you can take the packet motion; however, due to optics and ethics it just wouldn't be appropriate. The Mayor explained he wanted to vote on representation of Councilmember Macias separate from Vice Mayor Martinez and City Manager Ricardo Reyes. Councilmember Martiz stated she was conflicted about separating the item per individual as she feels all members have the right to innocence until proven guilty. Due to lack of second

motion made by Mayor Flores the motion dies. Councilmember Sanabria motioned to Review and discuss authorizing reimbursement of an amount, not to exceed \$30,000 per individual, for legal representation related to the investigation by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office into the Aquatic Center Project. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Martiz. The motion was carried by unanimous consent. All three individuals [Councilmember Macias, Vice Mayor Martinez, and City Manager Ricardo Reyes] returned to the council chambers following the voting of this item.

AYES: Council Member(s): Martiz, Sanabria, and Mayor Flores

NOES: Council Member(s): None

ABSTAIN: Council Member(s): Macias and Vice Mayor Martinez

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Parks and Recreation: Remind High School seniors to apply for Scholarships. We will also have a ribbon cutting event on Wednesday, May 7th, 2025 @12pm.

Communications: Art Walk this upcoming Sunday from 12:30pm-6pm. Hopefully we can have an extraordinary time.

Chief: Happy Mother's Day to all the moms out there. And to all the single fathers.

Public Works: He will bring back the Slauson Project in the next council meeting.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

Councilmember Martiz: Congratulate City and Sergio for Art Walk. Coming back this is an important space for our families. She took notes on how to improve that she will send over to the City Manager. She looks forward to the future masterplan for Pacific Boulevard. How can we invite families without having to find parking. She also attended the Bell Open's Street event. Next year we should coordinate so that we can connect the event with the City's Bell Open Streets event. We should start collaborating with our neighbors as well. It was very fun and special seeing these events because growing up here we didn't have these events. She got a message from a resident on how important it was to her to have this event. We can help a neighbor with these events. Thank you to everyone who went to open the streets.

Councilmember Macias: Thank you to staff for their work at the Art Walk and she was glad to see the community out there and engage with the business. Community has full access to the businesses. There is work we can do to improve it. Earlier the mayor apologized for her. She has been here 12 years. For her it is not about the power, it is about working with the community. She gets frustrated hearing that the projects weren't a success. She knows that her phone was touched by the mayor. She recorded for her notes since the live stream is not working. She doesn't record closed sessions. She recorded now because live stream is not working. For the record, she does not have an attorney on retainer for the DA investigation. Whatever happens she is not spending one dime of the city. If she needs to defend herself she will spend it herself. If at some point she needs an attorney it will not come from the City. She will put herself in debt if it means covering her legal fees. The cost will come from her. She came here to do a service and she has done it for 12 years. The moment she is not wanted here the community will vote her out. She doesn't want to spend any money from community, other than the stipend she receives as a councilmember.

Councilmember Sanabria: Thank you to staff for the art walk. He was unable to be there for the art walk because his job required him to travel for his work. For him, it is

very hard being up on council right now. He takes his job very seriously. He didn't do it for the money. He does it for community service. One of the most important responsibilities to invoke trust on this community. When a member of this body does not follow the procedures it is not a minor misstep but serial breach that undermines the integrity of this council. That concern is only compounded when a member of this council is constantly on their phones. It brings concerns that there are external factors influencing their decisions. In Huntington Park the community has long had concerns about how contracts are awarded. This behavior only deepens public skepticism. There is no justification for recording this body without their knowledge. It is not just about what the law says, but rather what the morals are. If we want the community to think decisions based on ethics and merits it starts with taking these roles serious. He is now part of the majority who is not actively being investigated. There was an LA Times article that calls out a member of this body being called out to receive money from vendors for themselves and their campaigns. It is hard to do this job when individuals lack integrity and professionalism. He is tired of having to fix these issues. It's 10:10 he should be at home with his son, but he is still here. And he will continue to be here fighting for this community.

Vice Mayor Martinez: Thank you to everyone who came here tonight and be part of the Civic process. Thank you to the staff for allowing us to be here safe. And thank you to those who came out to the Art Walk and the Community Clean Up beforehand. He knows we are dealing with some dark issues at the moment but he guarantees that he trusts the process and investigation. At the end we will see the truth and take the city forward in a positive direction. Wished everyone a goodnight.

Mayor Flores: Thank colleagues. Councilmember Martiz, Councilmember Sanabria, and Vice Mayor Martinez. The political courage that you guys have about leading the city in the right direction. In the face all the political backlash threats, and character assassinations and all the pushback that comes with it. To the directors who are coming on board and those have been here a while, you guys have a front row seat of a metamorphosis that is taking place within the city. We can all sit up here and convince the audience. However, you guys have seen what is occurring and what has occurred in the past. Individuals who are here to take advantage of the city, and make their friends rich. Thank you to the businesses who came out tonight to address their concerns. We will listen to you when you come out here. Take that back to the community. It's a new day in Huntington Park; Huntington Park is open for business and is here to support small businesses and residents. Regardless of how many text messages and emails are sent out by some individuals who thought they wouldn't be held accountable. They need to prepare themselves because any day now justice will be coming. Have a good night!

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mayor Flores adjourned the meeting of Monday, May 5, 2025 @10:15pm. The next Huntington Park City Council meeting to be held on Monday, May 19, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted


Eduardo Sarmiento, City Clerk

