

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Huntington Park held Tuesday, January 3, 2012.

Following the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, the meeting was called to order in the Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Hernandez. Present: Council Member Mario Gomez, Council Member Elba Guerrero, Council Member Rosa E. Perez, and Mayor Ofelia Hernandez; Absent: Vice Mayor Andy Molina.

Mayor Hernandez opened oral communications, indicating that this was the time for anyone in the audience to address the City Council on any matter of City business.

City Attorney Leal stated that there may be some people here for the public hearing on the proposed water and sewer rate changes; therefore he announced for the public that this is not the time and place set for the public hearing and read the following statement: In November of 2011, the City received its final water and sewer charge report from an outside consultant which revealed that the revenues the City receives from its water and sewer fees cannot pay for the necessary expenses to operate the City's water and sanitary sewer system. The report therefore recommends that the City increase its current base structure to help pay the current expenses and future capital improvements necessary for the operation of the City's water system and sanitary sewer system. The State law requires that a public hearing be held to inform the public of the proposed water and sewer fee increases. Notices of this public hearing which was scheduled for January 3, 2012 were mailed to all property owners; however, we have been informed that not all notices were mailed within the 45 day period prior to the hearing, as required by law. Therefore, on my advice, new notices will be mailed out and a public hearing will be rescheduled. I understand and appreciate that the residents have many questions regarding the proposed rate increase. At this juncture we are still working with the consultant to determine a fee structure that minimizes the fiscal impact on the residents. The City will hold a public hearing at a later date to receive citizens' comments on the proposed rate increases, residents will be given the opportunity to participate in this process and to review the costs associated with protecting our environment and the water system.

Alfred Areyan, property owner in Huntington Park, informed City Council that Golden State Water Company, who recently increased their water rates for the next three (3) years, services the City of Bell and also stated that the City of Bell Gardens changed the water billing period to every month instead of every two months. Mr. Areyan informed City Council that many cities are facing similar issues with the water industry and asked City Council to ensure that the proposed water and sewer rate increases are fair and reasonable for the taxpayers in the City of Huntington Park.

Colin Chambers, longtime resident of the City of Huntington Park, addressed his concern to City Council regarding the aesthetics of businesses located on Pacific Boulevard, especially during the City's semi-annual sidewalk sales. Mr. Chambers distributed photographs and informed City Council that some merchants are placing mannequins and signs near the middle of the sidewalk thus giving the downtown shopping area an undesirable appearance. Mr. Chambers requested that City Council inform the property owners and

business license holders of the approved sidewalk sale dates and regulations. Mr. Chambers also addressed his concern regarding the lack of code enforcement personnel regulating sidewalk sales and asked City Council to resolve this issue.

Francisco Lopez, business owner, addressed his concerns to City Council regarding the lack of professionalism and assistance from the City's Building Inspector. Mr. Lopez informed City Council that he has encountered various issues trying to get approval from the City to open a restaurant and presented copies of plans and permits required by the City to be able to open his business along with a formal complaint regarding the Building Inspector. Mr. Lopez asked City Council to have a more business-friendly approach which would make businesses feel like they can count on the City and asked City Council to look into this matter.

Jose Rodolfo Vallejo addressed City Council to commend Senior Officer Wiggins for his fast response to a request to remove abandoned refuse and encouraged City Council to take a tour of the City to see the amount of graffiti and trash in the City. Mr. Vallejo stated that he would like to become a City volunteer.

Edgar Gordillo addressed his concerns to City Council regarding the deteriorated conditions of the streets and sidewalks from Hope Street to Cudahy Street and asked City Council to look into possibly resurfacing Hope Street. Mr. Gordillo also expressed his concerns regarding the proposed water and sewer rate increase and requested City Council re-examine the proposed rates.

Beatriz Rubalcava addressed her concerns regarding certain Council Members and their lack of commitment to the community. Ms. Rubalcava also addressed her concern regarding the amount of taxes imposed on the residents in the City of Huntington Park and asked City Council to improve community outreach and education on matters that can potentially impact the community such as the proposed water and sewer rates.

Rosa Meza addressed her concern to City Council regarding the proposed water and sewer rate increase and to support the proposed 7-Eleven to open at 2321 E. Florence Avenue. Ms. Meza stated that having this type of store will reduce crime in that area of the City due to 7-Eleven's surveillance cameras. Ms. Meza addressed her concern to City Council regarding the amount of graffiti and trash abandoned on the streets of Huntington Park and stated that everyone has to do their part and contribute towards the City.

Gloria Enciso addressed City Council in support of the proposed 7-Eleven store to open at 2321 E. Florence and stated that these types of businesses will help generate revenue for the City. Ms. Enciso informed City Council that she agrees that the City needs to raise the water and sewer rates but the proposed increases are substantially high and asked City Council to reconsider the amount of the increases.

Jose Navarro addressed his concern to City Council regarding the fees for the collection of trash and recycling in the City and asked why the City of Huntington has higher fees in comparison to the surrounding cities.

Luz Mera and Maribel addressed City Council in support of the proposed 7-Eleven to open at 2321 E. Florence Avenue stating that it would bring jobs for the community.

The following individuals addressed City Council to oppose the proposed water and sewer rate increase: 1) Paul Townsend; 2) Antonio Padilla; and 3) Bernabe.

Nick Ioannidis informed City Council that he does not have a designated parking space for himself at his place of business. Mr. Ioannidis also informed City Council that the parking lot of his business is adjacent to the mortuary and since there are no designated parking spaces, he usually has nowhere to park his vehicle. Mr. Ioannidis asked City Council to assist him in this matter.

Balle Dario Machuca addressed City Council regarding a previous request for the City to look into the lack of parking for residents on Seville Avenue. Mr. Machuca informed City Council that he is still forced to park faraway from his home and continues to receive parking citations for exceeding the parking time limit. Mr. Machuca inquired about the parking committee formed to address this matter and volunteered to be part of the committee and find solutions.

Veronica Ceja informed City Council that she had recently viewed the Council Meeting recording in which the City Council addressed the proposed water and sewer rate increases and asked for clarification on City Council's comments made during and after the City Council meeting. Ms. Ceja also inquired about getting involved and attending the proposed water and sewer rate increase meetings and asked City Council to include her.

Mayor Hernandez called for any other oral communications, and hearing none, declared oral communications closed.

City Clerk Ramirez announced that in accordance with published notice, this is the time and place set to consider a decision denying a request for a Development Permit and Variance to deviate from the minimum development standards to establish a convenience store with no alcohol sales at 2321 E. Florence Avenue in the C-G (General-Commercial) Zone. Mayor Hernandez declared the appeal hearing open and called for oral communications from the appellant. David Sabin, representing 7-Eleven, Inc., displayed a PowerPoint to reintroduce the proposed 7-Eleven project and informed City Council that 7-Eleven is known for being an anchor tenant with long term leases. Mr. Sabin briefed City Council regarding the quality of products offered by 7-Eleven to meet the needs of the community and the benefits of allowing these types of businesses to come into the City. Mr. Sabin also informed City Council that the proposed 7-Eleven convenience store at 2321 E. Florence Avenue will provide local jobs and increase tax revenue for the City. Mr. Sabin informed City Council that the distance between the proposed 7-Eleven store and schools nearby does meet the distance requirements of the City of Huntington Park Municipal Code and the land uses for Walnut Park.

Council Member Perez left her seat at 7:22 p.m. and returned at 7:25 p.m.

The following individuals addressed City Council in support of the proposed 7-Eleven store at 2321 E. Florence Avenue and informed City Council of the benefits of having 7-Eleven open at this particular location which include: additional camera surveillance to reduce crime in the area; increase of local jobs; quality products and healthier food options; and give the area a positive image: 1) Paul Townsend; 2) Carlos Contreras; 3) Yvonne Correa; 4) Maria Elena Arreola; 5) Xochilt; 6) three (3) gentlemen; and 7) a woman.

Ralph Deppisch, representing 7-Eleven on the proposed development located at 2321 E. Florence, informed City Council that 7-Eleven has a policy of removing graffiti and trash from their premises right away and that it is community minded. Council Member Guerrero left her seat at 7:25 p.m. and returned at 7:26 p.m.

Maurice Refoua, developer of the Santa Fe Avenue Project located at 2321 E. Florence Avenue, informed City Council that this location was previously a severely contaminated site which cost approximately \$3 Million to clean and develop. Mr. Refoua informed City Council that all the materials, landscape, and architecture used in this development are of a higher quality and will increase the value of the surrounding properties. Mr. Refoua stated that 7-Eleven is charitable and takes pride in making a commitment to be part of the community.

A gentleman addressed his concern to City Council regarding the proposed 7-Eleven at 2321 E. Florence Avenue and stated there are many stores that carry the same types of products that 7-Eleven is offering and that the City should focus on approving the types of businesses that the community needs. The gentlemen asked why he did not receive the public hearing notice on the proposed water and sewer rates.

Eric Garcia, Planning Manager, announced that this item was continued from the November 21, 2011 City Council meeting and did not require to be re-noticed. Mayor Hernandez called for any other oral communications and hearing none, Mayor Hernandez declared the **public hearing** closed.

RESOLUTION NO. 2012-1. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HUNTINGTON PARK, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, GRANTING THE REQUEST FOR A DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AND VARIANCE TO DEVIATE FROM THE MINIMUM DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS TO ESTABLISH A CONVENIENCE STORE AT 2321 E. FLORENCE AVENUE, HUNTINGTON PARK, CALIFORNIA was presented. Motion by Perez, seconded by Guerrero, to adopt Resolution No. 2012-1, carried as follows: Ayes: Council Members Guerrero, Perez, and Mayor Hernandez; Noes: Council Member Gomez; Absent: Vice Mayor Molina.

Mayor Hernandez recessed the meeting at 7:54 p.m. and reconvened at 8:01 p.m.

Motion by Guerrero, seconded by Perez, to approve the Consent Calendar, carried as follows: Ayes: Council Members Gomez, Guerrero, Perez, and Mayor Hernandez; Noes: None; Absent: Vice Mayor Molina.

CONSENT CALENDAR

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

Approve minutes of the special meeting of the City Council held Tuesday, December 13, 2011.

Approve minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council held Monday, December 19, 2011.

Approve the reading by title of all ordinances and resolutions. Said titles which appear on the public agenda shall be determined to have been read by title and further reading waived.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Approve Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants dated January 3, 2012.

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR

Community Development Department requested discussion and/or action on a proposed **bike safety program**. Eric Garcia, Planning Manager, briefed City Council on the proposed bike safety program and informed City Council that the Police Department will be present at the Three Kings and Children's Fair event on January 6, 2012 to distribute information on the importance of bike safety. Mr. Garcia also informed City Council that in collaboration with the Police Department, the Parks and Recreation Department will conduct one or two bicycle safety events a year and offer bike safety classes. Chief of Police Cisneros informed City Council that the Police Department is currently working with school officials to inform students about bike safety and distribute pamphlets on pedestrian/bike safety and other literature containing safety tips. Director of Parks and Recreation Espinosa informed City Council that she has contacted several local bike shops to coordinate a small event possibly during the month of the child in April to participate in the City's bike safety program and have give-a-ways.

Interim City Manager Romero announced that the City will be conducting a Study Session on the proposed rate changes for water and sewer services provided by the City of Huntington Park on January 9, 2012.

Mayor Hernandez declared the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m., in memory of Marcella Calderon, wife of former Assemblymember Thomas M. Calderon.

Ofelia Hernandez, Mayor

Rosanna M. Ramirez, City Clerk