

MINUTES
LAWNDALE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
October 2, 2023

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Pullen-Miles called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, 14717 Burin Avenue, Lawndale, California.

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Robert Pullen-Miles, Mayor Pro Tem Sirley Cuevas, Councilmember Rhonda Hofmann Gorman, Councilmember Pat Kearney, Councilmember Bernadette Suarez

Other Participants: City Manager Sean M. Moore, City Attorney Gregory M. Murphy, City Clerk Erica Harbison, Assistant City Clerk Yvette Hall, Deputy City Manager/Director of Human Resources Raylette Felton, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Sergeant Justin Smith, Battalion Chief Brian Kane, Municipal Services Director Michael Reyes, Finance Director Hrant Manuelian, Community Development Manager Jared Chavez, Public Works Director Lea Reis, Community Services Director Mike Estes

B. CEREMONIALS

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas led the flag salute and Pastor Dwight Dudley of Calvary Chapel South Bay provided the inspiration.

C. PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

a. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Update

Sergeant Smith summarized the recent law enforcement activities and announced a Coffee With A Cop event at Target located at the Lawndale Plaza on October 18, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

b. Los Angeles County Fire Department Update

Battalion Chief Kane summarized the recent Fire Department enforcement activities.

D. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS - ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (Public Comments)

Josh Standifer, Resident, commented on the grave marker found in the backyard of his property and asked if the City Council would consider assisting with a private investigation to find out what is underneath the marker.

Deena Sopko, Resident, commented on coyote sightings and that a cat was hit by a moving vehicle.

Randall Abram, Resident, commented on fireworks safety, and palm tree trimming requirements and the dangers of palm fronds.

Monica Padilla, Resident, commented on illegal fireworks, requested that the City enforce the fireworks ordinance and amend the property owner's liability provision.

Ray Hollar, Resident, commented on the Metro meeting and would like updates about the Metro C Line (Green) Extension Project from the City.

Norman Mason, Resident, commented on the need for traffic lines to be painted on Larch Avenue and on the service the Public Works Department provided him.

E. COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

City Attorney Murphy announced that due to a conflict of interest with the Metro C Line (Green) Extension Project, Councilmember Hofmann Gorman will comment as a resident.

At this time, Rhonda Hofmann Gorman, Resident, commented on the Metro Meeting. She thanked the City's Special Counsel, residents, staff, and City Councilmembers who attended the Metro meeting. Resident Hofmann Gorman stated that she would like Metro to answer the questions the City submitted for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

City Attorney Murphy reminded the public that he will not be commenting on the Metro project as his firm also has a conflict of interest; therefore, the City hired special counsel to assist with those matters.

Councilmember Hofmann Gorman asked Public Works Director Reis to speak with Resident Mason regarding his concerns, thanked everyone that attended tonight's meeting, commented on coyotes, and thanked Resident Abram for his remarks on fireworks use and for the report about palm tree trimming.

Councilmember Kearney thanked everyone that attended tonight's meeting and that made public comments, commented on speeding vehicles, and the traffic lines being requested on Larch Avenue.

Councilmember Suarez thanked everyone that attended tonight's meeting and deferred the request for a private investigation into the grave marker to special counsel, thanked Resident Abram for the report about palm tree trimming, commented on the illegal fireworks citations, and announced that the South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) Board of Directors will be visiting the Right-of-Way (ROW).

City Manager Moore commented that the City is still working on the illegal fireworks citation appeals, and that the graves are on Metro's ROW. He indicated that the responses to the comments made on the Draft EIR will be made available after the EIR is finalized.

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas thanked everyone that attended tonight's meeting and commented on coyote sightings, palm tree trimming, falling palm tree fronds, and on the report that will be provided by Metro regarding the gravesite.

City Manager Moore explained that the City Council could consider regulating the trimming of palm trees on private property.

City Attorney Murphy commented on lawsuits that arise from falling palm tree fronds.

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas asked how the City will handle the report from Metro regarding the gravesite.

City Manager Moore responded that staff will review the archeological report provided by Metro as they are the lead agency.

Mayor Pullen-Miles commented that State agencies will conduct investigations on the burial sites, thanked Resident Abram for the report on palm tree trimming, commented on palm trees and fronds, requested that notices be issued for palm tree trimming, suggested reducing the bail amount when requesting illegal fireworks appeals, and thanked residents for attending the Metro meetings.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. **Motion to read by title only and waive further reading of all ordinances listed on the Agenda**
Recommendation: that the City Council approve.
2. **Accounts Payable Register**
Recommendation: that the City Council adopt Resolution No. CC-2310-039 authorizing the payment of certain claims and demands in the amount of \$508,313.83.
3. **Minutes of the Lawndale City Council Regular Meeting, September 18, 2023**
Recommendation: that the City Council approve.
4. **Routine Records Destruction**
Recommendation: that the City Council adopt Resolution No. CC-2310-038, approving the requests from the City Manager's Office, City Clerk's Department, Community Services Department and Public Works Department for authorization to destroy routine records as listed in the exhibits of the Resolution.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas and seconded by Councilmember Kearney to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

G. ADMINISTRATION

5. **Potential Reschedule and/or Cancellation of Upcoming City Council Meetings**
Recommendation: that the City Council 1.) discuss if the City Council wishes to cancel the meeting on Monday, November 20, 2023; 2.) Cancel the City Council meetings on Monday, January 1, 2024, and Monday, January 15, 2024, and reschedule a City Council meeting to Tuesday, January 16, 2024; and 3.) Cancel the City Council meeting on Monday, February 19, 2024; or 4.) Provide staff with other direction.

Assistant City Clerk Hall presented the staff report.

Councilmember Hoffmann Gorman suggested holding meetings on Monday, November 20, 2023, Tuesday, January 2, 2024, Tuesday, January 17, 2024, and Tuesday, February 20, 2024.

Councilmember Suarez commented on canceling some meetings and stated that staff could schedule a Special Meeting if urgent City business arises.

Councilmember Kearney and Mayor Pullen-Miles both commented that they would like to hold a meeting on Monday, November 20, 2023.

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas agreed to cancel some meetings and stated that a Special Meeting could be scheduled if needed.

By consensus, the City Council canceled the City Council meetings on Monday, January 1, 2024, and Monday, January 15, 2024; rescheduled a City Council meeting to Tuesday, January 16, 2024; and canceled the City Council meeting on Monday, February 19, 2024.

6. **Request for Additional Funding for Increase to Contract with SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) for Kenneling and Animal Care Services**
Recommendation: that the City Council approve the Request for Additional Funding for Increase to Contract with SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) for Kenneling and Animal Care Services, and Staff will prepare a new contract reflecting these changes for September 2023 - August 2024.

Municipal Services Director Reyes presented the staff report and corrected the funding requested.

Councilmember Kearney asked when the City was notified about the funding increase.

Municipal Services Director Reyes responded that the City was informed about the funding increase within the last 12 months.

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas asked if residents are aware of the available after-hours services provided by the SPCA.

Municipal Services Director Reyes responded that only staff has 24-hour access to SPCA services to drop off animals.

A motion was made by Councilmember Kearney and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas to approve the Request for Additional Funding for Increase to Contract with SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) for Kenneling and Animal Care Services, and direct Staff to prepare a new contract reflecting these changes for September 2023 - August 2024. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

7. **Lawndale Beat Fixed-route Transportation System Ridership Report**
Recommendation: that the City Council 1.) receives and files this report; or 2) provides further direction.

Community Services Director Estes presented the staff report.

Councilmember Suarez asked what the current fare is.

Community Services Director Estes responded that the fare is \$0.75 cents for adults and children over six years of age, free for disabled citizens, senior citizens, and children under the age of six.

Mayor Pullen-Miles asked if service is provided to El Camino Community College and if adding a stop there is an option.

Community Services Director Estes responded that El Camino Community College is not serviced; however, bus services are free to students who show their student identification card.

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas commented about the process to add a route to El Camino Community College.

Councilmember Kearney commented on the cost of adding a stop to the route and gas prices.

Discussion ensued among the City Councilmembers and staff regarding increasing ridership for different rider groups, advertising strategies and the Google maps feature.

A motion was made by Councilmember Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Hofmann Gorman to advertise the Lawndale Beat Fixed-route Transportation services by installing banners on Hawthorne Boulevard, utilize social media, the City's website, and City TV. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

8. Public Works Part-Time Office Assistant Amendment

Recommendation: that the City Council approve funding for the part-time Office Assistant position and approve the budget amendment of \$18,199.

Finance Director Manuelian presented the staff report.

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas asked what are the responsibilities and work hours of the part-time Office Assistant.

Public Works Director Reis responded that the responsibilities would include answering telephones, assisting customers at the counter, route work orders, and schedule will be from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Councilmember Hofmann Gorman inquired about the workload and the need for a part-time position.

Public Works Director Reis responded that the part-time position will relieve staff of telephone calls, counter assistance, and work order routing.

City Manager Moore commented that the department has had this position in the past and continues to be an area of need.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas and seconded by Councilmember Kearney to approve funding for the part-time Office Assistant position and approve the budget amendment of \$18,199. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

H. CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Moore reported that he and staff went to view the grave marker in the residents' back yard and commented that Public Works staff was performing bulky-item pick-ups.

I. ITEMS FROM CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

9. Mayor/City Councilmembers Report of Attendance at Meetings and/or Events

Councilmember Hofmann Gorman attended a Metro meeting as a resident, California Contract Cities Association Legislative Committee meeting via Zoom, and the Lawndale High School Homecoming Football Game.

Councilmember Kearney attended the Centinela Valley Union High School District (CVUHSD) 7th Annual Industry Partner Breakfast, Lawndale Clean-Up Day, and a Metro meeting.

Councilmember Suarez attended the CVUHSD 7th Annual Industry Partner Breakfast, Metro meeting, and a SBCCOG meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Cuevas attended the 125th League of California Cities Annual Conference and Expo, Seminar on Fentanyl Crisis, Latino Caucus Business Meeting, asked City Attorney Murphy if the City can pass a law to supersede Los Angeles County's zero bail law and if the City can join another City's lawsuit.

City Attorney Murphy responded that the City's laws would only be applicable to enforcing the City's codes and commented that he will brief the City Council at a separate time on whether the City can join another City's lawsuit.

Mayor Pullen-Miles attended a Metro meeting, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts meeting, and he met with Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly Mitchell. He asked that the City assist in promoting the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's job openings, attended Lawndale Clean-Up Day and asked staff about electronic bicycle and electronic scooter regulations.

City Manager Moore commented that the City has an electronic bicycle and electronic scooter ordinance, and that staff will bring back a report to the City.

J. CLOSED SESSION

10. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation

The City Council will conduct a closed session, pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9(d)(2), because there is significant exposure to litigation in one (1) case. Facts unknown to the potential plaintiff.

City Attorney Murphy read the aforementioned Closed Session matter by title only.

The City Council convened into closed session at 8:03 p.m.

The City Council reconvened from closed session at 9:31 p.m.

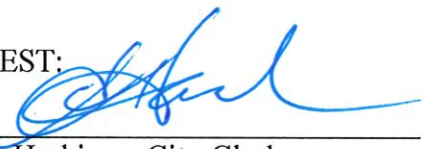
City Attorney Murphy announced that there was no reportable action for Closed Session Item No. J.10 with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation. City Attorney Murphy stated that by consensus the City Council gave staff direction; however, this action is not reportable under the Brown Act.

K. ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor adjourned the meeting in memory of the late Senator Diane Feinstein, who served in the Senate for 31 years and passed away on September 29, 2023.

There being no further business to conduct, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

ATTEST:


Erica Harbison, City Clerk

Approved: 10/16/2023


Robert Pullen-Miles, Mayor