

**MINUTES OF THE FOWLER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 3, 2012**

Mayor Cardenas called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Councilmembers Present: Cardenas, Darling, Parra & Simonian

City Staff Present: City Manager Elias, City Clerk Davis, Finance Director Wong, Public Works Director Weisser, Police Chief Brand, Fire Chief Lopez, City Attorney Cross, City Engineer Peters

The Flag Salute and Pledge of Allegiance were followed by an invocation given by Councilmember Darling. Roll call was taken.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

City Manager Elias noted that citizens were in the audience who have expressed concern with the City's change to curbside trash pick-up, instead of alley pick-up. He assured that senior citizens and those who have difficulty transporting their garbage cans to the curb can make special arrangements to continue with alley pick-up.

COMMUNICATIONS

City Manager Elias reminded the Council of the upcoming Fowler Chamber of Commerce Community Awards Banquet on April 12, 2012, and the League of California Cities South San Joaquin Valley Division meeting the same evening, at Favoritos Restaurant in Fowler.

STAFF REPORTS:

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2245

City Manager Elias explained that adoption of Resolution No. 2245 would begin the process and set a public hearing for the abandonment of a 400 foot portion of Fowler Avenue, between 10th Street and Highway 99. The pavement condition of the street is poor and there are no sidewalks, curbs, or gutters. Due to liability exposure and maintenance costs, staff recommends abandonment. City Engineer Peters further explained that if approved, the vacated street will be conveyed to the owners of four adjacent properties, although a 60 foot right-of-way easement for public utilities will remain. Adjacent property owner Bobby Williams asked questions about the abandonment, noting that it would affect access to his business.

The Council discussed the matter. Mayor Pro-Tem Parra stated that the street should be left the way it is, and that the abandonment could be addressed by the Motel 6 developers if the project progresses. Mayor Pro-Tem Parra then made a motion not to approve Resolution No. 2245. The motion died for the lack of a second.

It was discussed that the street is a maintenance concern, and if the Motel 6 project proceeds, the abandonment will help ensure sufficient space for amenities and a better quality project. The Council directed that the additional public notice provided for the hearing on the Motel 6 project be used for the hearing on the proposed street abandonment, which included written notice to property owners within a 1,000 foot radius, and a citywide phone message.

Councilmember Simonian made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Darling, to adopt Resolution No. 2245, "A Resolution Before the City Council of the City of Fowler, County of Fresno, State of California, of Intent to Vacate Portions of a Street Pursuant to Streets and Highways Code Sections 8300, Et. Seq. and Intent to Convey Vacated Property to Adjacent Property Owners," with the additional public noticing discussed. The motion carried on a roll call vote: Ayes: Simonian, Darling & Cardenas. Noes: Parra. Absent/Abstain: None.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Elias reported that he and Mayor Pro-Tem Parra attended a Fresno County Board of Supervisors meeting where the Board discussed providing a letter to the High Speed Rail Authority modifying their stated position of support for the BNSF alignment, and urging the Authority to consider other alignments instead.

City Manager Elias stated that the City received notice that it was not successful in applying for a Proposition 84 parks grant for a neighborhood park and recreational sports facility. Notice was also received that longtime Fowler business, Jet Plastica, will soon be closing and laying off employees.

Mr. Elias noted that there were no items of business for the April 17, 2012 agenda and recommended canceling the meeting. The consensus was to cancel the meeting, unless a need arose.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

— Veterans Monument Update

Public Works Director Weisser gave an update on final repairs that were completed on the Veterans Monument site, including removal of an upper level bowl on the fountain that was creating water overspill.

Mr. Weisser reported on a series of repairs in areas of the City: repairs to a street light after a recent copper wire theft incident; repairs to a sink-hole that developed on Sumner Avenue due to a trench failure; and that repairs to fire damage at the Fowler Chamber of Commerce office have been completed.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

No report was given.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Brand reported that two patrol cars have been purchased. After concluding a recruitment process for two new officers, one officer began work on April 2nd, and the second will begin work on April 16th.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Fire Chief Lopez gave a report on emergency calls, noting that almost three-quarters of the volunteer firefighters responded to a recent structure fire. He recently completed a command training course.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report was given.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The Consent Calendar consisted of: A) Ratification of Warrants - April 3, 2012; and B) Approve Minutes of the Fowler City Council Meeting - March 20, 2012. Mayor Pro-Tem Parra made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Darling, to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Pro-Tem Parra attended a press conference on the High Speed Rail project. He met with the EDC to discuss providing assistance to Jet Plastica and its employees who are facing layoff. He also circulated some recommendations for economic development from the League of California Cities task force he is serving on.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Councilmember Simonian made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Darling. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:44 p. m.