

**MINUTES OF THE FOWLER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 19, 2013**

Mayor Cardenas called the meeting to order at 7:00 p. m.

Councilmembers Present: Cardenas, Hammer, Monis, Parra & Simonian

City Staff Present: City Clerk Davis, Public Works Director Weisser, Police Chief Brand, City Attorney Wolfe, Fire Chief Lopez, City Engineer Peters

The Flag Salute and Pledge of Allegiance were followed by an invocation given by Councilmember Simonian. Roll call was taken. There were no public presentations.

COMMUNICATIONS

City Clerk Davis mentioned the upcoming S.S.J.V. League of California Cities division meeting in Dinuba.

STAFF REPORTS:

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 2268 - VACATING A PORTION OF BONITA AVENUE

City Engineer Peters stated that a portion of Bonita Avenue west of Golden State Boulevard is no longer needed, and staff recommends abandonment. The matter was discussed at the prior meeting, but a question came up about whether a public easement was for an access road that should be a private easement. City Engineer Peters affirmed that the easement for the road will be private, but there will be a public easement reserved for utilities. Resolution No. 2268 initiates the abandonment process and sets a public hearing for March 19, 2013.

Councilmember Simonian made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Parra, to adopt Resolution No. 2268, "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Fowler, County of Fresno, State of California, of Intent to Vacate Bonita Avenue West of Golden State Boulevard Pursuant to Streets and Highways Code Sections 8300, Et. Seq. and Intent to Convey Vacated Property to Adjacent Property Owners." The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION: PURSUE GRANT FUNDING FOR A TRAFFIC ROUNDABOUT NEAR THE MERCED STREET/10TH STREET INTERSECTION

The Council discussed a simulated traffic roundabout driving test they recently viewed, and whether grant funding should be pursued to install a roundabout at the Merced/10th Street intersection. City Engineer Peters stated that CalTrans has approved fully funding the project at a cost of approximately \$750,000. When submitting information for grant funding, he began by using criteria for traffic signals, but was not successful.

When he used criteria for a roundabout, the application was successful.

It was asked whether the City would lose the funding if the Council delayed approving the application to have more time for study and discussion. Mr. Peters said the funds cannot be held for more than a few months, but there will be future grant funding opportunities. It was suggested that the item be tabled until more information can be provided, including more input from the public and affected businesses. The consensus was to bring the subject back for consideration, along with thorough information on alternatives such as traffic signals.

DISCUSSION/DIRECTION: NEIGHBORHOOD PARK IMPROVEMENTS, AND PROPOSED DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS RELATED TO THE AHRONIAN AND CRESTWOOD ESTATES RESIDENTIAL TRACTS

City Engineer Peters stated that the City currently has grant funding to install turf and a walking path at a planned neighborhood park near Fresno Street and Stanford Avenue. In conjunction, there is a need for a paved parking lot and other improvements to provide better public access to the park, at an estimated cost of \$277,000. He noted that the next agenda item concerning drainage improvements for the Ahronian and Crestwood Estates subdivisions should be discussed simultaneously, as information from Finance Director Wong has indicated that there is not enough funding in the Recreation portion of the Utility Users Tax for both projects.

The consensus was to discuss both items together. Mayor Pro-Tem Parra and Councilmember Hammer left the dais during the discussion of the combined items, due to a conflict of interest from residing in the Ahronian tract.

Mr. Peters explained that an existing ponding basin in the Ahronian tract would be converted to a pocket park, and a drainage pipe would be brought over to an expanded ponding basin in the nearby Crestwood Estates subdivision. The City would purchase two lots in the new subdivision to expand the basin. Options for the project were: 1) maintain existing facilities without modification; 2) have Woodside Homes do the improvements at a cost of \$543,461; 3) purchase the two lots only at a cost of \$120,000 and pursue improvements at a later date; or 4) purchase the two lots and bid the project in the summer, at an estimated cost of \$260,000, including the lots.

Ahronian tract residents spoke. Britta Hammer said that the park on the west side of town will serve more people and should be a priority. Jose Figueroa commented that he would like the Ahronian ponding basin converted to a pocket park. Dan Parra spoke as a member of the public, stating that he confirmed with City Manager Elias that there is, in fact, enough money for both projects, by using park development funds in addition to Utility Users Tax funds.

After a discussion, Councilmember Monis made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Simonian, to approve funding the neighborhood park improvements near Fresno Street and Stanford Avenue. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote as follows: Ayes: Cardenas, Monis, and Simonian. Noes: None. Absent: None. Recused: Hammer and Parra.

Councilmember Simonian made a motion to approve the proposed drainage improvements related to the Ahronian and Crestwood Estates residential tracks - Option 4. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Monis and carried by unanimous voice vote as follows: Ayes: Cardenas, Monis, and Simonian. Noes: None. Absent: None. Recused: Hammer and Parra.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

— Update on applications received for vacancy on Planning and Recreation Commissions

City Clerk Davis said that the vacancies on the Recreation and Planning Commissions have been publicly noticed and advertised, and the City has received a number of applications. The City Manager recommends working with Mayor Cardenas to review the applications and bring a recommendation back to the next meeting.

— Discussion: Requiring a City Commissioner to resign their position if they run for election to the City Council

The item was tabled.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Public Works Director Weisser said the department has been busy gearing up for spring, patching potholes and spraying weeds.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

No report was given.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Brand said that the new online crime reporting system is almost ready for launch.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Lopez gave a report for January 2013, with a total of 74 medical calls, 3 motor vehicle accidents, and 3 active fires during the period. The fires were located just outside of the City limits.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report was given.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The Consent Calendar consisted of: A) Ratification of Warrants - February 19, 2013;

and B) Approve Minutes of the Fowler City Council Regular and Special Meetings - February 5, 2013, and Special Meeting - February 13, 2013. Mayor Pro-Tem Parra made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Monis, to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Cardenas reported that S. K. F. received several awards from the California Water Environment Association. He was recently appointed as Vice-Chair of the S.K.F. Board, and as Secretary for the Consolidated Mosquito Abatement District Board.

Mayor Pro-Tem Parra reported that he has been officially appointed as a Boardmember of the League of California Cities.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Councilmember Simonian made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Parra, to adjourn. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p. m.