

**MINUTES OF THE FOWLER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 2, 2017**

Mayor Cardenas called the meeting to order at 7:01 p. m. Roll call was taken.

Councilmembers Present: Cardenas, Hammer, Kazarian, Rodriquez
Councilmembers Absent: Parra

City Staff Present: Interim City Manager/City Clerk Davis, Interim Police Chief Bessinger, Public Works Director Weisser, City Attorney Wolfe, Fire Chief Lopez, Planning Consultant Marple, Finance Director McDonald, City Engineer Peters

The Flag Salute and Pledge of Allegiance were led by Interim Police Chief Bessinger, followed by the invocation led by Minister Bryan Mays.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Edith Altamirano, of Fresno, requested help with her Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a used car lot to be located at 600 N. 8th Street, on property where a tire shop currently operates. She is subleasing a portion of the property and one of the requirements of her CUP, approved by the Planning Commission, was to install slats into the existing chain link fence. The property owner will not allow her to alter the fence, so she cannot meet that condition. City Attorney Wolfe stated that the time to file an appeal on the CUP conditions to the Planning Commission, or for the Council to review the CUP, has passed. Ms. Altamirano was advised to speak further with City staff, as the item was not a part of the agenda.

Andy Gonzales, Fowler business owner, commented that since a new fire station will be built, that Fire Chief Lopez should be put in charge of the Fire Department full time, and have an office. Mayor Cardenas invited him to stay for the agenda item regarding plans for the new fire station.

PRESENTATION BY FOWLER GIRL SCOUT TROOP NO. 3116: COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT

Members of Fowler Girl Scout Troop No. 3116 each read aloud a statement about the benefits of having a community garden. They plan to develop the garden with the help of grant funding and community support, and are seeking a location such as a City park. Mayor Cardenas thanked the troop members for their presentation, and asked that they meet with City staff to help them with their efforts.

SWEARING IN CEREMONY - INTERIM POLICE CHIEF

Interim City Manager/City Clerk gave the Oath of Office to Interim Police Chief Drew Bessinger. Chief Bessinger thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve the City, and introduced members of his family.

PRESENTATION BY S.K.F. SANITATION DISTRICT: SEWER RATE STUDY AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Ben Munoz, General Manager and Veronica Cazares, Engineer, presented S.K.F.'s Sewer Rate Study and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The presentation included pictures and videos of needed repairs to the sewer infrastructure in the various cities. The City of Fowler has 33 miles of sewer line in Fowler and 6 lift stations. The study evaluated the high and low risk areas, age of equipment, location to facilities, potential for failure, and other factors. A large portion of the system was installed before 1950.

Mr. Munoz noted that the Study and CIP initially called for a five year capital improvement plan, but after discussing the impact to the sewer rates, the S. K. F. Board ultimately approved a two year CIP instead. S.K.F. is applying for a state revolving loan at an interest rate of 2 percent to fund the capital improvements. Public notices for the proposed sewer rate increase have been mailed to the citizens of the three communities, and S.K.F. is visiting each city to give presentations on the matter. The proposed increase for Fowler residents would be approximately \$4.36 per month per household in 2017-18, and an additional \$3.93 per month in 2018-19.

George Bacon, Fowler resident, asked questions about the study and the process for the proposed increase.

COMMUNICATIONS

Interim City Manager Davis reminded the Council of the Annual Mayor's Breakfast on Friday, May 12, 2017, at Favorito's; Fowler High School's College Signing day - Friday, May 5, 2017; and that Fresno County Rural Transit Agency will hold a ceremony for the new electric car charging station located at the Fowler library, on Wednesday, May 24, 2017, at 10:00 a. m.

STAFF REPORTS

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Interim City Manager Davis reminded the Council that the interviews for Police Chief are scheduled for a Special Meeting on Tuesday, May 9, 2017, beginning at 6:00 p. m.

CITY ENGINEER REPORT

- **Update on formation of Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA): Proposed Memorandum of Understanding with CID; Consider formation of a JPA among the cities of Fowler, Kingsburg, Parlier, Sanger and Selma with respect to implementation of Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)**

City Engineer Peters stated that there has not been any more communication with Consolidated Irrigation District since the last Council meeting. The five cities have decided to pursue the formation of a JPA, and the cities will need to select a council

member representative to attend the first JPA meeting, which will be held on Thursday, May 25, 2017, in Fowler. At the meeting, the members will vote to form a GSA. The Del Rey and Caruthers Community Service Districts may choose to join the JPA at a later date.

— **Adoption of Resolution No. 2366 - Traffic and Speed Study**

City Engineer Peters explained that to ensure that the enforcement of radar on certain streets remains defensible in a court of law, the City must conduct a traffic and speed study every five years. A traffic and speed study was recently completed for 14 roadway segments in the City. The study recommended slight increases to speed limits on various streets, including Golden State Boulevard from Merced Street to South Avenue, and from South Avenue to Temperance Avenue.

Councilmember Rodriguez made a motion, seconded by Councilman Kazarian, to adopt Resolution No. 2366, "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Fowler Adopting a Traffic and Engineering Speed Survey Pursuant to California Vehicle Code Section 40802." The motion carried by unanimous voice vote: Ayes: Cardenas, Hammer, Rodriguez, Kazarian; Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Parra.

— **Update on Fire Station Project**

City Engineer Peters stated that the USDA loan for the new fire station was finally approved, though the design was presented to the Council several years ago. Since that time, building codes have changed. The plans must be updated to comply with current codes, and it would be a good time to also revisit the design plans. The project should be ready to go to bid in July, with construction to begin in October. It was discussed that the design of the station might be enhanced somewhat, and pictures of fire stations from other cities, with more decorative designs, were shown. The consensus was for the City Engineer to provide some design options for discussion at a future workshop.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

— **Award the City of Fowler ADA Improvements CDBG Project No. 16231**

The project includes ADA accessible door openers at City Hall and curb improvements at 5th and Vine and 5th and Fresno Streets. Councilmember Hammer made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Rodriguez, to approve the award of the City of Fowler ADA improvements CDBG Project No. 16231 to RJ Berry Jr., Inc. in the amount of \$141,876.00 (representing the base bid schedule and the additive alternate). The motion carried by unanimous voice vote: Ayes: Cardenas, Hammer, Rodriguez, Kazarian. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Parra.

Mr. Weisser was asked about the possibility of returning to a more frequent watering schedule, due to the improvement of drought conditions. The consensus was that the item be brought back to the first meeting in June for more discussion.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Finance Director McDonald reported that he should be receiving the final draft of the 2015-2016 audit by the end of the week, and will schedule a presentation for the May 16, 2017 meeting. He noted that the draft audit shows that the \$50,000 deficit from the prior year has been turned around with conservative spending, and the City should be ending the fiscal year with a \$300,000 surplus.

He stated that he will be communicating with USDA regarding the fire station loan and how best to handle the costs to re-engineer the plans.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Interim Police Chief Bessinger reported that he has met with many staff members in the past two days and will be reaching out to the schools.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Lopez reported that there have been more vehicle accidents near the Highway recently, and more vegetation fires. He will be meeting with the new area Battalion Chief.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The Consent Calendar consisted of: A) Ratification of Warrants - May 2, 2017; B) Approve Minutes of the City Council Meeting - April 18, 2017. Councilmember Hammer made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Rodriguez, to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote: Ayes: Cardenas, Hammer, Kazarian, Rodriguez. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Parra.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Cardenas commented on the Employee Appreciation Dinner and thanked staff for their help in organizing the event.

Councilmember Hammer mentioned the upcoming food giveaway, and commented on the success of the Springfest event.

Councilmember Kazarian reported on attendance at a 5 Cities meeting. The Fresno EDC will be hiring a new Retail Specialist soon to assist the cities. He commented on the success of the Employee Appreciation Dinner, noting that there was a great turnout.

Councilmember Rodriguez reported that the Fowler Library is planning three activities in

the fall. Friends of the Library has commissioned local artist Ted Rose to paint a mural in the children's area. The funding came from the Margaret Cholakian Memorial Fund.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Councilmember Kazarian made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Hammer to adjourn. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 9:24 p. m.