

**MINUTES OF THE FOWLER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 1, 2020**

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

Councilmembers Present: Cardenas, Hammer, Kazarian, Parra

Councilmembers Absent: Rodriquez

City Staff Present: City Manager/City Clerk Davis, City Attorney Cross, Police Chief Alcaraz, Finance Director Uyeda, Public Works Director Dominguez, City Engineer, Peters, Fire Chief Lopez, Deputy City Clerk Burrola

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no public presentations.

Accept/Approve Donation for the New Fowler Fire Station in the Amount of \$5,000 from Wright Oil Company

City Manager Davis said the City received a letter from Humiyo Wright, Wright Oil Company, wanting to donate to the new Fowler Fire Station in the amount of \$5,000 to honor the memory of her late father and former fire fighter, Donny Wright. Humiyo Wright joined via teleconference.

The Council thanked Ms. Wright and the Wright family for the donation to the new fire station.

Councilmember Parra made a motion to accept the donation for the new Fowler Fire Station in the amount of \$5,000 from Wright Oil Company, seconded by Councilmember Kazarian. The motion carried by roll call vote: Ayes: Cardenas, Hammer, Kazarian, Parra. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Rodriquez.

Consider/Approve Request to Close City Street (A Portion of 4th Street at Merced Street) Sunday Services – Fowler Presbyterian Church

City Manager Davis said she received a request from the Fowler Presbyterian Church to close off a portion of 4th Street from Merced Street to the end of their property at 115 N. 4th to hold outdoor worship services due to social distancing and limited space. Public Works Director Dominguez said he spoke with Pastor Irwin; they would start blocking the road from 9:30 a.m. and remove the barricades at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday morning starting September 13, 2020. This would be a trial run to see how it goes. Mr. Dominguez said he had some concerns regarding noise but Pastor Irwin had contacted the surrounding neighbors and they don't have an issue with it. A discussion took place on being open to the possibility of other churches requesting street closures due to limited spacing.

Councilmember Kazarian made a motion to approve request to close City Street, a portion of 4th Street at Merced Street, for Sunday Services, requested by the Fowler Presbyterian Church, seconded by Councilmember Parra. The motion carried by roll call vote: Ayes: Cardenas, Hammer, Kazarian, Parra. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Rodriquez.

COMMUNICATIONS

City Manager Davis said the new Fowler Fire Station is near completion. She invited the Council to schedule a date and time to tour the building the following week.

Ms. Davis provided the Council with sample renderings of monument plaques to choose from for the new Fire Station building which has the City's logo and Fire Departments logo.

Fire Chief Lopez said the designation for the City's fire station engine company changed from number 48 to number 101. The number 48 designation company number was assigned to the City of Clovis. The City's Fire Department was the last city to change over and received the last designation numbers.

STAFF REPORTS

First Reading of Ordinance No. 2020-05

City Manager Davis said as discussed during the last Council meeting, with City Engineer Peters, it was recommended to eliminate several truck routes throughout the City. City Engineer Peters joined the meeting via teleconference. He said the elimination was discussed at the last meeting and this ordinance will be put into effect if approved by the Council tonight.

Councilmember Kazarian made a motion to waive the first reading and approve Ordinance No. 2020-05, "An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Fowler Amending Sections 4-4.601 and 4-4.602 of the Municipal Code Relating to Changes in Designated Truck Routes within the City of Fowler", seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hammer. The motion carried by voice vote: Ayes: Cardenas, Hammer, Kazarian, Parra. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Rodriquez.

Discussion – New Police Station Project

Police Chief Alcaraz said he has spoken with the City Manager, City Council and other community leaders on building a new police department and a location for this facility. Chief Alcaraz said the current department is too small and is in need of properly housing the police department in a facility that can accommodate a larger group of officers and support staff with modern equipment. He said effective law enforcement agencies evolve to meet the ever changing needs and demands of the community it serves. Unfortunately the current facility has become inadequate for actual departmental functions. He said he has been touring other cities newly built police stations and has been working with professionals to assist in designing the City's new police station, the only issue is finding a location.

A discussion took place on several City owned locations and the possibility of building a multi-structural facility to budget costs. Chief Alcaraz said he has been looking into the possibility of building the new police station where the senior center is currently located. He said the area is appropriate in size and the surrounding area is non-residential and would accommodate the facility by space and structure. A discussion took place on the location of the senior center and the Council expressed their agreement on further research on a design for placing the facility at this location. The Council agreed to have Chief Alcaraz get more information on the location and design of the project and to bring it back to the Council for further discussion.

City Manager's Report

COVID-19 Update and Discussion

City Manager Davis provided an update on the current COVID-19 cases in the City; there are 220 total cases, 154 closed and 2 deaths, leaving 66 open cases remaining in the City. She said starting Monday, September 1st, Fresno County allowed hair salons and barber shops to reopen at 25 percent capacity.

Councilmember Kazarian said he wanted to discuss the Great Plates project. The Great Plates program provides three meals a day to seniors and provides essential economic stimulus to local restaurants struggling to stay afloat during the COVID crisis. The program reimburses approved restaurants for meals delivered to a target population of underserved home-bound seniors. He said he received a lot of interest from local restaurants. A discussion took place and the consensus of the Council was to bring it back for further discussion.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Public Works Director Dominguez said he wanted to discuss and get direction from the Council on the energy conservation project. He said the Energy Conservation Act is available to the City for solar projects which involve AC units, street lighting, waste water treatment plants and well pumps. The maximum loan amount for this project is \$3 million dollars at a rate of 1% for a 20 year loan. He said the funding source will come from the Energy Conservation Act under the California Energy Commission. He has met with several firms in finding a location, but being that the project total size came to about three acres; it's been a challenge finding a location that large. Mr. Dominguez said he would like to get direction from the Council to move forward with a Request for Qualification (RFQ) in order to get the project started. The consensus of the Council was for Public Works Director Dominguez to move forward with and RFQ.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

No report was given.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

No Report was given.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

No report was given.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Cross said earlier this year the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) changed the conflict of interest qualification requirements of the 500' foot rule which has been expanded to 1,000' feet. He said another change from FPPC is the disqualification requirement.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The consent calendar consisted of: A) Ratification of Warrants – September 1, 2020, 2020; B) Approve Minutes of the City Council Meeting Special meeting and City Council Meeting – August 18, 2020; C) Approve Proclamation to observe September 6, 2020 as Jaswant Singh Khalra Day; D) Adopt Resolution No. 2476, “ A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Fowler Declaring Real Property Located at 127 South 6th Street to be Surplus Property and Directing the City Manager to Send Notices of Availability Pursuant to Government Code Section 54220, ET SEQ”

Councilmember Kazarian made a motion to approve the consent calendar, seconded by Councilmember Parra. The motion carried by roll call vote: Ayes: Cardenas, Hammer, Kazarian, Parra. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: Rodriquez.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilmember Kazarian said he is currently working on the Great Plates project with staff and the state.

He provided an update on the outdoor seating project. The first enclosure has been completed and is still waiting for plants to be placed. He received a lot of positive comments on the project. He said the second enclosure placement is underway. Discussion arose regarding the second seating area phase. The consensus of the council is to postpone the additional second outdoor seating enclosure and bring it back to the Council for further discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Mayor Pro Tem Hammer made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Parra to adjourn. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.