

MINUTES OF THE FOWLER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
April 20, 2021

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

Councilmembers Present: Cardenas, Rodriquez, Kazarian, Mejia, and Parra

City Staff Present: City Manager Quan, City Attorney Cross, Police Chief Alcaraz, Public Works Director Dominguez, Fire Chief Lopez, Assistant Fire Chief Hernandez, City Planner Marple, Deputy City Clerk Vasquez, Rebecca Molina

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no public presentations.

COMMUNICATIONS

Approve Proclamation “Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide” - Coucilmember Kazarian. There was a moment of silence.

A motion was made by Councilmember Parra to approve Proclamation “Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide,” seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Rodriquez. The motion carried by roll call vote: Ayes: Parra, Rodriquez, Cardenas, Kazarian, and Mejia. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

STAFF REPORTS

CITY PLANNER’S REPORT

City Planner Marple updated the council on a number of items. Staff will be conducting a General Plan update workshop via Zoom Wednesday, April 28, 2021 from 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. The Zoom link will be posted on the city’s website tomorrow, mailers are being sent out, and flyers will be passed out to local residents. Staff will be utilizing the feedback from the workshop to present the alternatives to the Planning Commission the first week of June and to council on June 15, 2021, and will be looking for recommendations on the preferred alternative.

Ms. Marple reported staff has been conducting stakeholder interviews for the zoning code audit. A summary of the feedback will be shared with the council. Ms. Marple also reported on the regional housing needs allocation; the Fresno COG is beginning the process for our next allocation of housing needs. A meeting was held last week with all of the member agencies that will be participating in the housing element update for 2023. The state has given us preliminary numbers and we're looking at how the money will be distributed amongst the member agencies of Fresno County.

City Planner Marple reported she, City Manager Quan, and other staff visited Bee Sweet earlier in the month for a tour of their plant. Bee Sweet submitted a new building for their mandarin line processing; staff is looking forward to assisting them through the process. Mayor Pro-Tem Rodriguez inquired when Bee Sweet planned on doing the upscale mandarin line. Ms. Marple explained they have to go through the site plan review process and the CEQA process; approval will possibly be within the next month so they can move forward with building permits and construction.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

COVID-19 Update

City Manager Quan reported the City is currently at 1,000 total positive cases and 20 deaths to date. Vaccines are open to everyone over age 16. The vaccination rate amongst Fowler residents is 43%. Because of that, Fresno County Department of Public Health (FCDPH) is no longer looking at Fowler as a permanent vaccination site, but as a one day mobile walk up clinic with a target of 200 vaccinations. Once we have more information, it will be posted on the city's website and shared with the council to assist with getting the word out.

Ms. Quan also reported staff is working with FCDPH on opening city hall; their recommendation is to wait until June 15, 2021 with a transitional opening, i.e. possibly a few days a week or in the morning to reduce the amount of exposure to everyone. Staff will keep council updated. Ms. Quan announced FEMA is now accepting applications for funeral expenses for anyone that has a COVID related death that occurred after January 20, 2020. Once staff has more information on the application process it will be posted on the city's website.

Ms. Quan stated staff continues to monitor the American Rescue Plan. Ms. Quan attended the League of CA Cities meeting last week as well as Councilmember Parra. Staff has ensured we are registered with System for Award Management so funds can be distributed once the funding process is established.

City Manager Quan reported Recreation Coordinator, Yvonne Hernandez, is working to contract this year with America's Kids in Motion for swim lessons. The price is \$105 for ten, 30-minute sessions over a two week period. Staff is looking for donations to help off-set costs to our residents. The councilmembers were asked to share any donor recommendations with staff. Ms. Quan announced the fireworks contract was signed yesterday for the July 4th fireworks show. The show will take place at 9:15 p.m. in two different locations; it's a dual show this year that is 18 minutes long. Staff will share with the community where the best locations are to watch the fireworks. Councilmember Parra requested a flyer for the swim lessons donation request.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Approval of Resolution No. 2499, a Resolution of the City of Fowler Approving Agreements with Sitelogiq, Inc. and Advanced Lighting Services, Inc. for energy conservation improvements pursuant to Government Code Section 4217.10, et. seq. (Item to be Continued to May 4, 2021 City Council Meeting)”

Public Works Director Dominguez requested Approval of Resolution No. 2499 item to be continued to May 4, 2021 City Council meeting. Staff is currently working on finalizing the agreements.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Rodriquez to continue approval of Resolution No. 2499, a Resolution of the City of Fowler Approving Agreements with Sitelogiq, Inc. and Advanced Lighting Services, Inc. for energy conservation improvements pursuant to Government Code Section 4217.10, et. seq. to May 4, 2021 City Council Meeting seconded by Councilmember Kazarian. The motion carried by roll call vote: Ayes: Rodriquez, Kazarian, Cardenas, Mejia, and Parra. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

Mr. Dominguez reported due to the recent rise of catalytic converter theft, the Prius' have been relocated to the new fire station. Councilmember Mejia suggested it may be a good idea to look into purchasing a catalytic converter guard as an additional safeguard. Staff will research further. Mr. Dominguez announced one of our water meter data collectors is currently down which reads approximately 500 meters. Staff shipped to the manufacturer for repairs and expects it back within two weeks. Staff will use the previous month's water usage to determine the next billing cycle. Mr. Dominguez stated staff will mail a letter to the residents affected explaining the matter.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

City Manager Quan shared HDL's quarterly newsletter for Fowler's sales tax. The report showed improvement from 2019 to 2020. Staff will continue to monitor and will meet with HDL quarterly.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Police Chief Alcaraz handed out DOJ crime stats for the month of March 2021. There was a dramatic increase in citations. Officers will be more active in traffic enforcement as there is an increase in pedestrian traffic as well. Chief Alcaraz shared the Virtual Business Awareness Discussion flyer with the council; the date is Wednesday, May 12, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom. Council is welcome to attend and invite guests. The event is also on the Fowler PD app calendar.

Chief Alcaraz reported there have been a few vehicle burglaries recently. Staff has been working on this diligently and has come up with a few investigative leads. Chief Alcaraz asked the council to encourage constituents to use the Fowler PD app for helpful tips. Staff will continue to work on improving response times. Chief Alcaraz also stated he

and Councilmember Mejia are working with Travis Feaver of Young Life to organize a graffiti clean-up community event possibly on May 1, 2021.

Mayor Pro-Tem Rodriguez notified Chief Alcaraz there has been discussion in the Ahronian neighborhood of petitioning to have a gated community. Chief Alcaraz noted the more accessibility the officers have the easier it is for them to patrol. Police Chief Alcaraz stated some criminals are tracking the number of officers on the street, have police scanners, and phone apps; officers are doing their best to mitigate the counter procedures the criminals are using. Chief Alcaraz suggested we look into installing cameras.

Councilmember Mejia inquired if the big rigs driving on Merced St. is due to the Adams Ave. construction and if this is being waived. Chief Alcaraz stated the revamping of the truck route has been completed and approved, but staff wants to give the business owners and truck drivers time to acclimate to the new truck route; approximately six months. Officers are handing out truck route flyers to truck drivers and businesses where trucking is a big part of their industry. Chief Alcaraz stated if it's something egregious officers will take enforcement action immediately.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Approval of Resolution No. 2500, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Fowler approving a lease-purchase agreement with Leasing 2, Inc. for the purchase of two new fire engines for \$726,835.68.

Fire Chief Lopez requested approval of Resolution No. 2500 for the purchase of two new fire trucks. This will improve the fleet and increase the department's response time.

Councilmember Parra made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2500, a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Fowler approving a lease-purchase agreement with Leasing 2, Inc. for the purchase of two new fire engines for \$726,835.68, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Rodriguez. The motion carried by roll call vote: Ayes: Parra, Rodriguez, Cardenas, Kazarian, Mejia. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

Chief Lopez thanked Council, City Manager Quan, Public Works Director Dominguez, and City Attorney Cross.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Cross reported there was action on only one item from the special meeting. Pursuant to government code section 54957: public employee-appointment, Finance Director.

Mayor Pro-Tem Rodriguez made a motion to approve; seconded by Councilmember Parra. Approved unanimously 5 – 0. The council authorized City Manager to hire and appoint Margarita "Maggie" Moreno as the new Finance Director of the City of Fowler

and authorized to begin at the E step in the city's salary schedule, which is approximately \$115,000 annually with a \$500 per month car allowance consistent with other directors.

Mr. Cross announced Brown Act, conflicts of interest, ethics training will be scheduled soon. The training will possibly be split up into two days in conjunction with department directors; the first tentatively scheduled for May 18, 2021 and the second, June 1, 2021.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The consent calendar consisted of: A) Ratification of Warrants – April 20, 2021; B) Approve Minutes of the City Council Special Meeting – April 6, 2021, and City Council Meeting – April 6, 2021

Mayor Pro-Tem Rodriguez made a motion to approve the consent calendar, seconded by Councilmember Parra. The motion carried by roll call vote: Ayes: Rodriguez, Parra, Cardenas, Kazarian Mejia. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Cardenas reported United Health Center requested their COVID-19 vaccine hours be placed on the city's website. Everyone is welcome to get the vaccine over the age of 16. They are open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and have both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines.

Councilmember Kazarian raised his concern over Cesar Rodriguez and his appointment to the Planning Commission. It appears Mr. Rodriguez wasn't truthful about his involvement in the re-zone project. Councilmember Kazarian is requesting this discussion be placed on a future council agenda to speak with Mr. Rodriguez about his involvement. It was the consensus of the council to add to the May 4, 2021 agenda to reconsider Mr. Rodriguez's appointment.

Councilmember Parra thanked City Manager Quan for attending the League of CA Cities meeting. Councilmember Parra also announced Fresno Irrigation District is backing out of their area that supports Fowler. Mr. Parra will share more information with Councilmember Kazarian. United Health Center's COVID-19 vaccine event scheduled for last week was postponed due to the vaccine being Johnson & Johnson; the rescheduled event date is still yet to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, Councilmember Mejia made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Kazarian to adjourn. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.