

EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, October 1, 2013 – 6:25 p.m.

Hillside Conference Room

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, October 1, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING – CLOSED SESSION

Tuesday, October 1, 2013 – Immediately following the Regular City Council meeting

Hillside Conference Room

Meeting Location

El Cerrito City Hall

10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito

Greg Lyman – Mayor

**Mayor Pro Tem Janet Abelson
Councilmember Jan Bridges**

**Councilmember Rebecca Benassini
Councilmember Mark Friedman**

6:25 p.m. ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Abelson, Benassini, Bridges, Friedman and Mayor Lyman all present.

CONVENE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Lyman convened the Special City Council meeting at 6:27 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC – No comments.

COMMISSION INTERVIEWS, STATUS AND APPOINTMENTS

Conduct interviews of candidates for city boards, commissions and committees. Interviews may result in an announcement of appointment at the meeting. The City Council may also discuss and determine the scheduling and structure of future interviews.

Action: Interviews conducted. Appointed Tess Taylor to the Economic Development Board for a term concluding on January 1, 2014.

ADJOURNED SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Abelson, Benassini, Bridges, Friedman and Mayor Lyman all present.

7:00 p.m. CONVENE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Lyman convened the Special City Council meeting at 7:06 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OR OBSERVATION OF

MOMENT OF SILENCE was led by Mayor Lyman.

2. COUNCIL / STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Lyman stated that the West Contra Costa County Mayors recently received a presentation from the City of San Pablo and San Pablo Economic Development Corporation on its *Removing Barriers* tattoo removal program. The program focuses on providing assistance to individuals in the State of California who want to remove tattoos that might be a barrier to employment. The program also includes a job readiness training program and is subsidized by the San Pablo Economic Development Corporation.

Mayor Pro Tem Abelson announced that the City had received a Beacon Spotlight Award for Energy Savings from the League of California. It is a significant award. Not many cities in California received the Award. Mayor Pro Tem Abelson thanked Community Development Director Mintz for attending the award ceremony. Mayor Pro Tem Abelson also reported on her attendance at the Alberrito Street Play Fair on September 29, 2013. She was pleased to see *Off the Grid* trucks at the event and noticed the large number of little feet doing physical activity at the street fair such as riding bikes, playing ball and other sports. It was a very healthy event that was well attended by families from El Cerrito and Albany.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Al Miller, El Cerrito, spoke about a safety hazard associated with a depression in the street median that was very close to the Off the Grid event and how it was promptly fixed through the efforts of Community Outreach Specialist Suzanne Iarla and Public Works staff. Mr. Miller stated that residents are fortunate to live in a city that has a staff that listens to people and is responsive.

Liz Block, El Cerrito, stated that she is a long time resident who is happy with all the changes that have occurred in El Cerrito over the past five years, including redevelopment, the Recycling Center and *Off the Grid*. Ms. Block produced letters containing signatures of 250 parents who strongly support a middle and high school charter school option at 1800 Elm Street in El Cerrito. The parents were devastated to learn that the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) denied the request for a charter school in El Cerrito. Ms. Block stated that WCCUSD schools continue to fail in West Contra Costa County and that parents just want children to attend good schools where kids can be safe and learn.

Robin Mitchell, El Cerrito, informed the City Council and the public that there will be a Family Field Day at the Gill Tract on October 13, 2013 between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. The University of California, who owns the land, has given the College of Natural Resources ten years to conduct urban agriculture and an agroecology project there. Forty community members, working in groups of four, have been given ten plots at the Gill Tract to grow food under the supervision of a professor of the University. Much of the produce grown is given to food banks and those in need of fresh vegetables. The event provides an opportunity for the public to see what is being done there and collect other ideas. The organizers are interested in having elected officials from local cities come to see the project. Ms. Mitchell stated that the soil is Class One Agricultural Soil that is very fertile and very special. Plants grow three times better. The Day includes lunch and a community forum.

Virginia Duplessis, El Cerrito, spoke in support of a Summit Charter School at the old Windrush School site from the perspective of a parent and as a home owner in El Cerrito. Ms. Duplessis stated that she is committed to living in El Cerrito and improving it. She is excited to have a viable, vibrant option at the site and is also excited to have a new,

innovative public school option in the community.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Girls Inc. of West Contra Costa County – *Presentation by Miesha Harris, Executive Director*

Girls Inc. West Contra Costa County inspires all girls to be strong, smart, and bold through life-changing programs and experiences that help girls navigate gender, economic and social barriers.

Speakers: Bree Allen, Richmond, stated that she has been involved with Girls, Inc. for three years and is college bound. Ms. Allen described how she has benefited from her association with Girls Inc. and the College Bound program, and expressed her desire to help others in her future career as an Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agent.

Mia Harris, stated that she has been with Girls Inc. for three years and described the many benefits resulting through her association with Girls Inc. and the College Bound program.

Action: Received presentation.

B. Arts and Culture Commission Update on San Pablo Avenue Art Project – *Presentation by Suzanne Iarla, Community Outreach Specialist, Staff Liaison, Arts & Culture Commission.*

Speakers: Suzanne Iarla, Arts and Culture Commission Liaison, Nancy Donovan, Chair, Arts & Culture Commission, Jonathan Russell and Saori Ide, artists.

Action: Received presentation.

C. Arts and Humanities Month Proclamation

Approve a proclamation declaring October as National Arts and Humanities Month in the City of El Cerrito and encouraging all members of the community to celebrate and promote the arts and culture in our nation and encourage community members to participate, patronize and support the arts and humanities in El Cerrito.

Action: Moved, seconded (Friedman/Abelson) and carried unanimously to approve the proclamation. Proclamation presented to Arts and Culture Commission Chair Donovan.

5. ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR – Item Nos. 5A through 5C

Moved, seconded (Abelson/Bridges) and carried unanimously to approve Consent Calendar Item Nos. 5A through 5C in one motion as indicated below.

A. Minutes for Approval

Approve the September 17, 2013, Special City Council and Regular City Council meeting minutes.

Action: Approved minutes.

B. Classification Plan Amendment

Adopt a resolution amending the City's Classification Plan to revise the class specification of Permit Technician as recommended.

Action: Adopted Resolution No. 2013-55.

C. Annual Maddy Act Local Appointments List

Receive and file a listing of all current board and commission members whose terms will expire on January 1, 2014 and vacancy information for each board, commission and committee.

Action: Received and filed.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

7. POLICY MATTERS – None

8. COUNCIL ASSIGNMENTS/LIAISON REPORTS

A. Mayor Lyman Mayor Lyman and Councilmember Friedman met as a subcommittee to discuss commission rules and are working toward bringing a study session to the City Council in October or November.

B. Mayor Pro Tem Abelson attended the League of California Cities East Bay Division meeting. Representatives of each local Chamber of Commerce attended. El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Mark Scott and past presidents John Stashik and Marilyn Hanson attended. This meeting provided a nice opportunity to get to know each other better and build working relationships with sister cities in the region.

The West Contra Costa County Transportation Advisory Committee (WCCTAC) is transitioning into becoming its own agency including moving CalPers under WCCTAC. Recruitment for a new executive director is underway.

It is an exciting time at the Contra Costa County Transportation Authority (CCTA). As Chair of the CCTA, Mayor Pro Tem Abelson has attended many celebratory events including the recent groundbreaking for phase one of an Intermodal Transit Center (ITC) in Hercules. This project will ultimately feature rail, ferry, bicycle paths and bus access. In East Contra Costa County the goal is to reduce traffic congestion using an interchange. Traffic congestion and delays also result in more air pollution. The Sand Creek Road Interchange Project in Brentwood was opened recently. In West County you may see signs which tell autos when it is too crowded on I-80 to be on the freeway and to get off and on depending on traffic congestion. The project will also feature an intelligent kind of ramp metering. Busses will receive priority treatment. The project is designed to move vehicles on the road in an intelligent way without building extra lanes. It is a start-of-the-art, low cost solution to traffic. Another project, the fourth bore of the Caldicott Tunnel, between Oakland and Orinda, provides the capability for two additional lanes. This project is one of the largest projects of its type in the United States and is coming in under budget. All of the projects are funded by voter approved Measure J and will come to completion in four to five years. Big projects are getting done. The *eBart* is another big project that is underway in Eastern Contra Costa County. It will extend the BART system using different technologies. There is a lot happening, and it is really exciting. A lot of people associated with transportation are doing really good work.

C. Councilmember Benassini reported that the Financial Advisory Board (FAB) had a preliminary discussion about the liquidity of the City and the temporary financing that the City has been using this year and the previous year. The FAB also discussed the reserve policy and asked whether other cities are using reserve cash. The discussion was interesting and engaging and will continue throughout the year. The Planning Commission held a study session on the Eden Housing Proposal and Draft Environmental Impact Report. The commissioners asked questions and provided many detailed comments. There were eight speakers at the meeting. Most spoke about the Mabuchi Building and the use proposed by Eden. Eden explained that there are restrictions on how funds can be used on the project related to affordable housing. The proposal is to rehabilitate the building and do things that commemorate the building and the site but ultimately it will be a building for the residents that will include a fitness room and storage area for bicycles. There was a lot of discussion about appropriate use. Eden also discussed the project's aggressive schedule. Eden has a deficit between the amount of money supplied by tenants and the costs associated with constructing the building.

D. Councilmember Bridges reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission met on September 25 and discussed the remainder of Measure WW funds. The Commission decided to wait for the Urban Greening Plan to be completed and consider priority projects at that time. The Commission also discussed the umbrella joint use agreement between WCCUSD and the City. Parks and Recreation Director Chris Jones delivered a presentation on the agreement. The Commission approved of the agreement. The City Council will be considering the joint use agreement at a future meeting. Councilmember Bridges introduced two handouts relating to user fees. The Soccer Group currently spends almost \$6,000 for eleven reservations under the use agreement for the turf field at El Cerrito High School. The fee is primarily for custodian and staff overtime costs.

The Community Center is holding its annual Halloween festivities this year, including a haunted house, costume dog parade and "trunk and treat." The Tom Bates Sports Field Joint Powers Authority met on September 18. The turf field needs replacement. There will be a meeting on October 15 for all the users of the Bates fields. The proposed user fee increase is approximately 36%. Additionally, each member city will continue to contribute the agreed upon \$15,000 per city.

E. Councilmember Friedman reported that the Arts and Culture Commission produced a flyer that details the many arts events that are happening this month and gives one the sense of how culturally rich the community is not just during Arts Month but every month.

SUPPLEMENTAL REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS

Item No. 2 Council/Staff Communications

1. League of California Cities Beacon Spotlight Award for Energy Savings: Gold Level 14% Agency Electricity Savings (2005–2011) September 2013 – *Submitted by Mayor Pro Tem Abelson.*

Item No. 4(A) Girls Inc. of West Contra Costa County

2. Powerpoint presentation and informational materials – *Submitted by Miesha Harris, Executive Director.*

Item No. 4(B) Arts and Culture Commission Update on San Pablo Avenue Art Project

3. Powerpoint presentation – *Submitted by Suzanne Iarla, Liaison to the Arts & Culture Commission.*
4. Video presentation – *Submitted by Artists Jonathan Russell and Saori Ide.*

Item No. 8 Council Assignments/Liaison Reports

5. WCCUSD invoice and 2013-14 Facility Use Fees – *Submitted by Councilmember Bridges.*

Other:

6. Signed letters (approximately 250) in support of the proposed Summit Public School – *Submitted by Liz Block, El Cerrito.*
7. Family Field Day and Community Forum at the Gill Tract Farm flyer – *Submitted by Robin Mitchell, El Cerrito.*
9. **ADJOURNED REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING** at 8:12 p.m.
10. **CONVENE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING – CLOSED SESSION**
Mayor Lyman convened the Special City Council Meeting – Closed Session at 8:13 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC – No speakers.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF CLOSED SESSION

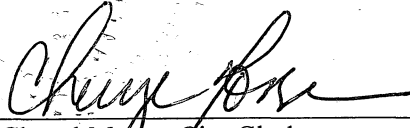
PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Title: City Manager

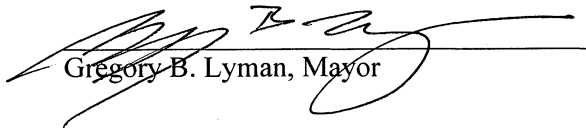
RECESSED INTO CLOSED SESSION at 8:13 p.m.

ADJOURNED SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING – CLOSED SESSION at 9:30 p.m.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of October 1, 2013 as approved by the El Cerrito City Council.



Cheryl Morse, City Clerk



Gregory B. Lyman, Mayor