



Staff Liaison
Crystal Reams | 510-215-4312
creams@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF THE FINANCIAL ADVISORY BOARD (FAB)

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.
City hall, Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible

6:30 p.m. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING

- 1. ROLL CALL** – Chair Kimberly White; Vice-Chair David Carvel.
Members Janos Szlatenyi and Michael McDougall.

- 2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Remarks are typically limited to three (3) minutes per person and may be on anything within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. Remarks on non-agenda items will be heard first, as well as introduction by individuals interested in serving on the advisory body. Remarks on agenda items will be heard at the time the item is discussed.

- 3. COUNCIL/STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS (5 min.)**

Staff and/or Councilmembers may report Council policies, priorities and significant actions taken by the City Council, and/or on matters of general interest to the FAB.

- [March monthly disbursement report \(5/6 Council meeting\)](#)
- [April monthly disbursement report \(5/20 Council meeting\)](#)
- [FY 2024-25 Third Quarter Cash and Investment report \(5/6 Council meeting\)](#)
- [FY 2024-25 Third Quarter General Fund Budget Update \(5/6 Council meeting\)](#)
- [FAB Recommendation \(5/20 Council meeting\)](#)
- [2025 User Fee Study and Adoption of the 2025-26 Master Fee Schedule \(5/20 Council meeting\)](#)
- [Consideration of Fiscal Year 2024-25 One-Time Uses of General Fund Balance \(5/20 Council meeting\)](#)
- [CalPERS Pension Costs Update presentation by NHA \(5/20 Council Meeting\)](#)

- 4. YOUTH MEMBER INTRODUCTION (5 min.)**

Clive Watson-Lamprey Singer.

- 5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES (5 min.) (Attachment)**

Consider a motion adopting the minutes for the FAB meeting held on April 29, 2025.

6. BUDGET / ONE-TIME EXPENDITURE RECOMMENDATIONS (30 min.)

(Attachment)

Discuss and possible action regarding recommendations to Council.

7. AD-HOC COMMITTEE PURCHASING ORDINANCE UPDATE (30 min.)

(Attachment)

Ad-hoc committee to discuss updates.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (5 min.)

9. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Staff Liaison at 510-215-4312. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102—35.104 ADA Title I).

Any writings for documents provided to a majority of the members regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at <https://www.el-cerrito.org/Archive.aspx?AMID=93>.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Crystal Reams](#)
Subject: Public Comments
Date: Friday, May 23, 2025 10:07:37 AM

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

Hello Crystal,

I am submitting the following Comments into the Record:

1. I would Like to invite the FAB to the Richmond Rainbow Pride on June 1st from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM at 440 Civic Center Plaza
2. Contra Costa Mayors Conference on July 10th at 6:30 PM Hosted by the City of Brentwood RSVP is Required

Location to be Determined

Sincerely
Cordell

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Crystal Reams](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: FAB 20250527 Items Not on the Agenda
Date: Friday, May 23, 2025 10:18:37 PM

This sender is trusted.

Yes.

On Friday, May 23, 2025 at 08:26:22 PM PDT, Crystal Reams <creams@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us> wrote:

Hi Ira,

Is this for public comment?

Thanks,

Crystal

Crystal Reams, CPA, CPFO

Finance Director/City Treasurer

City of El Cerrito

10890 San Pablo Avenue

El Cerrito, CA 94530

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Email: creams@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

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From: Ira Sharenow [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 5:03 PM
To: Crystal Reams <CReams@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>
Cc: Kimberly White [REDACTED]
Subject: FAB 20250527 Items Not on the Agenda

It is time for FAB members to start showing up to council meetings and speaking up.

The council refused to even consider the FAB 2% proposal.

The council was unable to meaningfully address Pension Liability, Fire Truck, and Swimming Pool. FAB was not consulted.

It seems clear to me there is no meaningful plans. It is not a surprise that these sorts of issues arise, yet they are treated as one-off surprises.

The general fund is being depleted while the infrastructure is in decline. Senior management seems to think El Cerrito employees are not getting paid enough. I expect the upcoming study to increase the pressure to pay people even more even as the services and infrastructure continue to decline.

The question is do FAB members care enough to do more than just meet for a couple of hours and pass resolutions that no one pays attention to?

Council Member Motoyama provided some useful information. She mentioned that the California Policy Center website can be used as a replacement for the State Auditor's website.

<https://californiapolicycenter.org/fiscal-health-dashboard/#el-cerrito>

El Cerrito received multiple F grades even with the grade inflation.

El Cerrito's 2024 Reserve Rank ratio of 0.41 is 157 out of 211, so El Cerrito is in the bottom one-third.

Management is bragging about the reserves while it goes about depleting it, just as was done about 10 years ago.

In comparison, Hercules has a reserve ratio of 1.59 and ranks 13.

So El Cerrito – bloated staff at excessive wages while services and infrastructure are in decline.

What do the FAB members plan on doing?

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Crystal Reams](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: FAB Item 6 BUDGET / ONE-TIME EXPENDITURE RECOMMENDATIONS
Date: Friday, May 23, 2025 10:18:12 PM

This sender is trusted.

Yes.

On Friday, May 23, 2025 at 08:25:56 PM PDT, Crystal Reams <creams@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us> wrote:

Hi Ira,

Is this for public comment?

Thanks,

Crystal

Crystal Reams, CPA, CPFO

Finance Director/City Treasurer

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From: Ira Sharenow [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2025 7:20 PM
To: Crystal Reams <CReams@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>
Cc: Kimberly White [REDACTED]
Subject: FAB Item 6 BUDGET / ONE-TIME EXPENDITURE RECOMMENDATIONS

“One Time Expenditures”. That is the wrong way to look at this. A tree did not fall on the fire truck. The pool was known to have issues. The city did not plan for these expenditures. I am not the only one who thinks there should be an amortization schedule where the city saves money for when the big expenditures occur.

The council failed to adequately address the issues.

How will the city pay for the fire truck?

How will the city pay the over \$3 million for the pool? What are the considerations for waiting? Does the city expect money to fall out of the sky? By splitting up the projects into two pieces, how will that impact the total time closed? How will that impact revenues?

Clearly, the council did a poor job with respect to the UAL by putting more money in the Section 115 Trust and not really thinking about discount rate sensitivity. Why is that better than leaving the money in LAIF? But the reality is the big issue is that the city's pension liability is at risk of considerable growth with larger payments. Nothing was addressed.

Costs associated with the trophy library proposal were not discussed.

No mention of a senior center.

No mention of fixing the Ohlone Greenway.

No mention of fixing the roads.

It seems like everything is “one-off” and viewed in isolation with no meaningful planning.

FAB needs to do the analysis and then to make sure council members understand the precarious situation for El Cerrito's finances.

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA