AGENDA

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 25, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Location:
Via Teleconference (for City Council and Staff only)

Members:
Mayor Gregory B. Lyman

Mayor Pro Tem Paul Fadelli · Councilmember Janet Abelson
Councilmember Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto · Councilmember Gabriel Quinto

Pursuant to Executive Orders N-25-20 and N-39-20, Teleconference Restrictions of the Brown Act Have been Suspended, as Well as the Requirement to Provide a Physical Location for Members of the Public to Participate in the meeting.

Members of the Public will **not** be able to participate directly through the teleconference platform but can watch or listen to the meeting as follows:

1. Cable T.V. Broadcast on KCRT Channel 28 or AT&T Uverse Channel 99
2. Radio Broadcast on FM 88.1 or 97.7
3. Livestream online at www.el-cerrito.org/CouncilMeetingMaterials

Public Comments **are limited to items on the special meeting agenda only** and may be submitted one of two ways:

Via email to cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us. Email must contain in the subject line **Public Comments - Agenda Item #.**

Via Voicemail at 510-306-2558. The caller must start the message by stating **Public Comments - Agenda Item #** followed by their name and city of residence, followed by their comments.

The city cannot guarantee that its network and/or the site will be uninterrupted. To ensure that the city council receives your comments prior to taking action, **you are strongly encouraged to submit your comments in writing in advance of the meeting.**

Comments received up until **4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 24, 2020** will be provided in advance to the City Council, including transcribed voicemails, and posted online with meeting materials.

Comments received **during the meeting and up until the public comment period on the relevant agenda item is closed**, will be read into the record and will be limited to a maximum of 3 minutes. Comments that do not conform to the city council's rules of decorum may be summarized rather than read verbatim. As allowed by the Brown Act, the Mayor may limit the total time for public comment to facilitate the completion of business on the agenda.

All comments received by the close of the public comment period will be available after the meeting as supplemental materials and will become part of the official meeting record.

Please note that all information provided in public comments including phone number called with, email addresses and any other personal information written or stated is subject to disclosure on the broadcast of the teleconferenced meeting. Comments posted online will not include personal information.

10:00 A.M. ROLL CALL - CONVENE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

1. TELECONFERENCE AND PUBLIC COMMENT INSTRUCTIONS

2. POLICY MATTERS

A. Adoption of a Modification to the United Fire Professional Firefighters Association, Local 1230 Memorandum of Understanding

Action Proposed: Adopt a resolution approving a side letter to the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of El Cerrito and the United Professional Firefighters Association, Local 1230 (Local 1230) to modify language on salaries and provide a one (1) year extension to June 30, 2022.
Contact: Alexandra Orologas, Assistant City Manager

B. City Council Division Budget Discussion

Action Proposed: Discuss and provide direction regarding the City Council's division budget reductions.
Contact: Gregory B. Lyman, Mayor; Karen Pinkos, City Manager; Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk, City Management

3. ADJOURN SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City of El Cerrito serves, leads and supports our diverse community by providing exemplary and innovative services, public places and infrastructure, ensuring public safety and creating an economically and environmentally sustainable future.

- Copies of the agenda bills and other written documentation relating to items of business referred to on the agenda are on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the City Clerk, at the El Cerrito Library and posted on the City's website at www.el-cerrito.org prior to the meeting.
- In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk, 510-215-4305. 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).
- ***The Deadline for agenda items and communications*** is eight days prior to the next meeting by 12 noon, City Clerk's Office, 10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA. Tel: 510-215–4305, email cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us
- IF YOU CHALLENGE A DECISION OF THE CITY COUNCIL IN COURT, YOU MAY BE LIMITED TO RAISING ONLY THOSE ISSUES YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE RAISED AT THE COUNCIL MEETING. ACTIONS CHALLENGING CITY COUNCIL DECISIONS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE TIME LIMITATIONS CONTAINED IN CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE SECTION 1094.6.
- The City Council believes that late night meetings deter public participation, can affect the Council's decision-making ability, and can be a burden to staff. City Council Meetings shall be adjourned by 10:30 p.m., unless extended to a specific time determined by a majority of the Council.

AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 2.A.

Date: April 25, 2020
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Alexandra Orologas, Assistant City Manager
Subject: Adoption of a Modification to the United Fire Professional Firefighters Association, Local 1230 Memorandum of Understanding

ACTION PROPOSED

Adopt a resolution approving a side letter to the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of El Cerrito and the United Professional Firefighters Association, Local 1230 (Local 1230) to modify language on salaries and provide a one (1) year extension to June 30, 2022.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

On October 1, 2019, the City Council approved a three year agreement with Local 1230 through Resolution 2019-62 by modifying salaries and creating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) effective July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021. Local 1230 represents the classifications of Firefighter, Fire Engineer, and Fire Captain. The COLA amendments agreed at that time were as follows:

- Effective the first pay period in July 2019, the base monthly salary for Fire Captain to increase by 1.0%, Fire Engineer by 4% and Firefighter by 1.5%.
- Effective the first pay period in July 2020, the base monthly salary for all classifications in the bargaining unit to increase by 3.0%

While the City has continued to monitor and make adjustments to its fiscal position in light of the results of the FY 2018-2019 independent financial audit and the review initiated by the California State Auditor, the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic has resulted in a public health crisis that has further exacerbated the City's fragile financial position (as discussed at the April 7, 2020 City Council meeting).

Local 1230 recognized these efforts and agreed to forgo their cost of living adjustment (COLA) scheduled for the first full pay period in July 2020 and extend their current MOU by one (1) year to June 30, 2022 through a side letter (Exhibit A to the Resolution).

The following is a summary of proposed changes to the existing Local 1230 MOU via side letter:

- Extend the period of the MOU from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021 to July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2022.

- Effective July 2020, there shall not be a salary increase for any classification in Local 1230.
- Effective the first full pay period of July 2021, the base monthly salary will be increased by 3%.

The City would like to thank Local 1230 for the leadership they have shown during this challenging time by being the first bargaining unit to agree to employee concessions. The City looks forward to continuing the strong collaborative relationship with Local 1230. The City is continuing conversations with other bargaining units and unrepresented employees and will update the City Council if/when any tentative agreements are made.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS
Adopting the Resolution for Local 1230 fulfills Goal A, Deliver Exemplary Government Services, including the strategies of “Recruiting and retaining a talented and effective workforce” and “Maintain emphasis on providing excellent customer service.” and Goal B "Achieve long-term financial sustainability."

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS
This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
The total cost savings of Local 1230 forgoing their 3% COLA in July 2020 is $177,683.97. This cost savings would be realized in the first year of the FY 2020-2022 budget. The total cost of a 3% increase for Local 1230 on July 1, 2021 is $177,683.97. This cost would be realized in the second year of the FY 2020-2022 budget.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS
This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

Reviewed by:

Karen E Pinkos

Karen Pinkos, City Manager

Attachments:
1. Resolution
2. Exhibit A to Resolution
3. Public Comments

RESOLUTION 2020-XX

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL CERRITO APPROVING A SIDE LETTER TO THE EXISTING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE UNITED PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, LOCAL 1230 (LOCAL 1230) TO MODIFY LANGUAGE ON SALARIES AND PROVIDE A ONE (1) YEAR EXTENSION TO JUNE 30, 2022

WHEREAS, the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act allows employee units within the City to represent themselves on matters concerning salaries, hours and working conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Employer-Employee Relations Ordinance of the City of El Cerrito provides the methods and procedures for meeting and conferring in good faith; and

WHEREAS, the United Professional Firefighters, Local 1230 is recognized as the majority bargaining unit for firefighters, fire engineers and fire captains; and

WHEREAS, representatives of the City of El Cerrito and the United Professional Firefighters, Local 1230, have met and conferred in good faith; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 2019-62 approved the current Memorandum of Understanding with United Professional Firefighters, Local 1230; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Cerrito and United Professional Firefighters, Local 1230 representatives have agreed to modify the salaries and agreed to an extension of the current Memorandum of Understanding ending June 30, 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council does hereby adopt the side letter, attached hereto as Exhibit A, between the City of El Cerrito and United Professional Firefighters, Local 1230 effective through June 30, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

I CERTIFY that at a special meeting on April 25, 2020 the City Council of the City of El Cerrito passed this Resolution by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS:
NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSTAIN: COUNCILMEMBERS:
ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS:

IN WITNESS of this action, I sign this document and affix the corporate seal of the City of El Cerrito on May ____, 2020.

____
Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk

APPROVED:

____
Gregory B. Lyman, Mayor

SIDE LETTER AGREEMENT
BETWEEN

THE CITY OF EL CERRITO
AND
UNITED PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
LOCAL 1230

REGARDING EXTENDING TERM AND MODIFING SALARIES

April 15, 2020

Representatives for the City of El Cerrito and representatives for the United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa County, Local 1230 have agreed to the following modifications of the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of El Cerrito and United Professional Firefighters of Contra Costa County Local 1230 which expires on June 30, 2019.

3.1 Duration of this Memorandum

This agreement shall be in full force and effect commencing July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2022~~2021~~. Terms and conditions of this Agreement shall remain in full force until adoption of a successor Agreement.

Nothing herein shall prevent the parties to this Agreement from meeting and conferring and making modifications hereto by mutual consent.

13.1 Base Monthly Salaries

The intention of both parties to the MOU is to achieve a median salary level with respect to surrounding response jurisdictions. Both parties recognize that wage adjustments are based partially on projections and that the actual median may differ from the final salary achieved.

A. Effective the first full pay period in July 2019, the base monthly salary for the classifications listed below shall be increased as follows:

Fire Captain	1.0%
Fire Engineer	4.0%
Firefighter	1.5%

B. Effective the first full pay period in July 2020, the base monthly salary for all classifications in the bargaining unit shall not be increased.~~. by 3.0%.~~

C. Effective the first full pay period in July 2021, the base monthly salary for all classifications in the bargaining unit shall be increased by 3.0%.

D. For the purposes of establishing median total compensation, the City and Local 1230 agree to survey eleven jurisdictions: the eight comparable cities of Alameda, Albany, El Cerrito, Hayward, Livermore, Pinole, Pleasanton, and Richmond; and three comparable fire districts, including the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, the Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District, and the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District.

E. For the purposes of the agreement, “median total compensation” for the survey shall include the following items of compensation for the ranks of Firefighter, Fire Engineer and Fire Captain: Base Salary (top step); Employee’s Retirement Contribution Paid by Employer; E.M.T. Incentive Pay; Haz-Mat Incentive Pay; Continuing Education Pay; Officer Certification Pay; A.A./B.A. Degree Pay; Acting Incentive Pay; Basic Qualifications Pay; Advanced Skills Pay; Rank Proficiency Pay; Major Emergency Pay; Uniform Allowance. The survey shall also include the maximum City contributions for dental, medical, life insurance, vision care, long term disability, and Medicare.

For the City of El Cerrito	For Local 1230
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________
Date: ________________________	Date: ________________________

From: Sherry Drobner
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment: Item 7 b.
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 3:42:39 PM

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I am astonished to think that the City would consider extending the Union contract with an offer of a 3% salary increase for 2022, given the financial projections. Again, what information do we have that affirms that this salary increase will add to the health of the budget? I will be listening carefully to the rationale and budgetary assumptions that guided this agreement. I hope Council members ask!

I am all for public employees --having worked for both County and City for 35 years. But it seems odd for the City to make this concession, unless the plan is to reopen the contract and ask Fire personnel to forgo the increase for 2022 next year. Financially, the City will be adding another $216,205 to personnel costs, not to mention the costs for benefits which will be in an upward direction. Given the kind of cuts necessary to remain solvent, I assume the City will be back to the table, sooner than later.

Sincerely,

Sherry Drobner

From: Vincent Wells
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public comments on 7B
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 5:35:59 PM

Mr. Mayor, and members of the council,

On behalf of the El Cerrito Firefighters of Local 1230 I submit this public comment.

As you know, prior to this pandemic, we attended the budget workshops and subsequent council meetings that followed after the state preliminary audit. We were made aware of the budget situation the city was in and understood that we were in a position where significant cuts were necessary. With that information we did agree to sit down with city staff to discuss actions that we could take to help. Since I have been president and have been the representative of the El Cerrito firefighters, this is not the first time we have stepped forward to provide financial assistance when the city was in a financial crisis. We recognize that the city was insolvent prior to this pandemic so we understand that the situation is now worse due to the financial losses caused by the shut in that has resulted from the COVID19 pandemic. We ask that you act aggressively to address your budget shortfalls and realize that the number one priority of any governing body is to assure the safety of your constituents. Our members have and will continue to work on the frontlines to protect this community. As we continue to put ourselves at risk we also want to assure that the city is solvent and is able to respond to emergencies like this with adequate resources and employees that are dedicated to the community. Our members voted unanimously to take this action and we hope that you support this agreement and that our actions and the actions of other labor groups is enough to get us through these unprecedented times.

Vince Wells, President of Local 1230

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

From: Mark Figueira
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comments-agenda item 7B
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 6:16:54 PM

From: Mark Figueira
Department Representative
Contra Costa Professional Firefighters (Local 1230)

Mr Mayor & Council Members,

I would like to take this opportunity to address the modifications being considered for the El Cerrito Professional Firefighters (Local 1230) MOU. The El Cerrito Firefighters have stayed informed and understand the economic challenges facing our City. With this understanding, the El Cerrito Firefighters made a unanimous decision to defer our bargained raise for 2020. This was made in good faith, to help our City achieve general fund stabilization and increased reserves. El Cerrito Firefighters have a long history of doing more with less and understand the need to work together moving forward. Your Firefighters take great pride in the job they do. The safety and security of the El Cerrito and Kensington residents is our daily mission.

Sincerely,

Mark Figueira
Department Representative(Local 1230)

AGENDA BILL

Agenda Item No. 2.B.

Date: April 25, 2020
To: El Cerrito City Council
From: Gregory B. Lyman, Mayor; Karen Pinkos, City Manager; Holly M. Charléty, City Clerk, City Management
Subject: City Council Division Budget Discussion

ACTION PROPOSED
Discuss and provide direction regarding the City Council's division budget reductions.

BACKGROUND
The City Council was scheduled to review their division budget at the March 17, 2020 City Council meeting. The COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in a public health crisis that has interfered with the planned course of business. On April 7, 2020 staff presented City Council with an update on the City's General Fund Budget, the impact of the public health crisis, and began the discussion regarding the need for substantial reductions to the City's budget.

The City's biennial budget process has been underway, and all City departments have been in the process of closely reviewing their budgets. On February 4, 2020, the City Council directed staff to identify $2 million in reductions in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 for the upcoming biennial budget. Potential savings and reductions continue to be evaluated, and departments had initially been requested to provide two scenarios for internal review and discussion: a 5% reduction to achieve the requested $2 million, as well as a scenario identifying all potential reductions.

Historically the budget allocated to the City Council has been treated as its own division, and has been carried forward with minimal changes and/or review. Staff has identified this as an area in need of increased review and has been actively working to update the accuracy of revenues and expenses within the division's budget. At the request of Mayor Lyman, the City Council is being asked to receive this information, discuss, and provide staff direction regarding reductions to the City Council division budget.

ANALYSIS
The City Council budget is comprised of expenses related to funding additional library hours, transparency measures for City Council meetings such as TV and radio broadcasting; Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) expenses set by state law; membership fees for the League of California Cities (League) and Contra Costa Mayors Conference; the annual Commission Appreciation Dinner; and expenses related to Councilmember travel, training, and event attendance. Personnel costs are limited and are set by the City's municipal code at $441 per Councilmember per month.

Attachment 1 provides a Budget Worksheet Report for the City Council division budget which includes the adopted FY 2019 budget, FY 2019 actuals, FY 2020 amended budget, and FY 2020 year-to-date actuals. Attachment 2 provides a detailed breakdown of expenses, services, and personnel costs budgeted in the City Council division.

The *FY21 Projected* column is the baseline budget which provides adjustments that have been made by staff to reflect the true costs and spending trends for the last two years, and does not account for any proposed reductions or restrictions to spending. Notably, this total includes funding for services that have previously been included in other department budgets but are more appropriately reflected within the City Council's budget, totaling approximately $8,700. Additionally, the budget includes an expected increase of $4,700 to AV support/TV broadcast services provided by the City of Pinole, and approximately $4,700 increase to Council travel and event expenses based on average expenses for the last two years.

The *Maximum Reductions* column provides identification of all potential reductions that could be considered from the City Council's budget, and includes the following reductions to services and expenses:

- Additional Library Hours ($101,108)
- Commission Appreciation Dinner ($6,500)
- Television Broadcast/AV Support of Council Meetings ($14,000)
- Radio Broadcast of Council Meetings ($4,000)
- Livestream (online) of Council Meetings ($6,000)
- Closed caption services for Livestream ($2,700)
- Council Travel and Training expenses ($12,950)
- 54% of Council Events and Trips ($10,039)
- Council meeting meals ($636)

This represents a total potential reduction of 70% from the FY 2021 proposed budget, and a 77% reduction from the approved FY 2020 budget.

Some services and expenses are not included as potential reductions for a variety of reasons as summarized below:

- LAFCO annual fees are the City’s portion of the LAFCO operating budget, which is payable pursuant to state law ($9,284).
- Membership to the League of California Cities is considered essential for advocacy and support, ensuring the City’s interests are represented at a state level, and providing invaluable knowledge-sharing and networking with other member cities ($11,002).

- Membership and related expenses for the Contra Costa Mayor's Conference meets regulations which require Mayors of counties to meet regarding regional appointments, and helps to ensure that the City's interests are represented at a county level ($9,067).

A 5% reduction to the City Council division budget represents roughly $10,700. The *5% Reduction* column in Attachment 2 outlines just one of the many scenarios that could achieve a 5% reduction and is summarized as follows:

- Reduces the total Travel & Training budget to allow for expenses related to one attendee at the annual League conference, three attendees monthly to the Contra Costa Mayor's Conference, delegate attendance at the East Bay Division meeting for the League, and one attendee monthly to Chamber of Commerce events; and provide a maximum $1,750 per Councilmember per year to cover any expenses related to additional travel, training, events, and trips.
- Reduces the number of City paid attendees (which has historically included former Mayors and City staff) to the event hosted by El Cerrito for the Contra Costa Mayor's Conference, scheduled for June 3, 2021.
- Reduces the budget for the Commission Appreciation Dinner by $6,000 to cover a social and recognition event without venue/meal expenses.

While the information for a 5% reduction is included in this staff report, in light of the current public health crisis, a 5% reduction is not substantial enough to contribute to the total reductions now needed. It is recommended that the City Council consider taking action to make a more significant reduction to their division budget.

LIBRARY HOURS

The Contra Costa County (County) funds and operates the El Cerrito Library at a base of 35 hours per week. In 2016 the City Council agreed to pay the County $101,108 in order to fund the operating cost of keeping the library open an additional 15 hours per week. The current City Council budget includes $101,108 to cover the cost of this service, which covers the County's operating and staffing costs for those additional open hours. The County invoices the City for the actual costs during the year. This is a fee paid directly to the County and does not include funding for any City of El Cerrito employees. This service, which represents over 50% of the City Council Division budget, is expected to increase next fiscal year to $129,104.

Staff has been in communication with the County Librarian to discuss various options for the City to consider that may present some cost savings. The County provided information on costs based on staffing models for the full 15 additional hours/7 days per week, as well as costs for 11 additional hours/6 days per week and 4 additional hours/5 days per week. The options are as follows:

50 Hours (current schedule) $129,104	**46 Hours (no Sunday) $111,399**	**39 hours (no Friday, no Sunday) $86,946**
M 12-8	M 12-8	M 12-8
T 12-8	T 12-8	T 12-8
W 10-6	W 10-6	W 10-6
Th 10-6	Th 10-6	Th 10-6
F 10-5	F 10-5	F closed
Sa 10-5	Sa 10-5	Sa 10-5
Su 1-5	Su closed	Su closed

Considering the City's current financial position, staff is recommends that the City Council consider reducing the number of hours that the City funds for the current fiscal year. If the City were to not provide any additional funding, the Library would be open 35 hours per week and would result in a savings of $129,104 in FY 2020-21.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONSIDERATIONS
Consideration of potential reductions is consistent with Goal A: Deliver exemplary government services and Goal B: Achieve long-term financial sustainability.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS
This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
A 5% reduction to the City Council department budget represents approximately $10,700. The City Council may choose to reduce or increase the amount of reductions to the department budget, which would affect the total proposed budget for FY 2021 and FY 2022.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS
This section is not applicable to this agenda item.

Reviewed by:

Karen Pinkos, City Manager

Attachments:
1. Council Budget Worksheet Report
2. City Council Budget Reduction Worksheet
3. Supplemental Memo Re: Library Hours
4. Public Comments

Budget Worksheet Report

Budget Year 2021

THE CITY OF EL CERRITO

Account	Account Description	2019 Adopted Budget	2019 Actual Amount	2020 Amended Budget	2020 Actual Amount
Fund **101 - General Fund**					
REVENUE					
Department **10 - Administration**					
Division **10 - City Council**					
Charges for Services					
Program Fees					
46520	Program Fees	4,000.00	.00	4,000.00	4,890.00
	Program Fees Totals	$4,000.00	$0.00	$4,000.00	$4,890.00
	Charges for Services Totals	$4,000.00	$0.00	$4,000.00	$4,890.00
	Division **10 - City Council** Totals	$4,000.00	$0.00	$4,000.00	$4,890.00
	Department **10 - Administration** Totals	$4,000.00	$0.00	$4,000.00	$4,890.00
	REVENUE TOTALS	$4,000.00	$0.00	$4,000.00	$4,890.00
EXPENSE					
Department **10 - Administration**					
Division **10 - City Council**					
Personnel					
Salaries & Wages					
51110	Regular Salaries & Wages	26,460.00	26,460.00	27,254.00	19,845.00
	Salaries & Wages Totals	$26,460.00	$26,460.00	$27,254.00	$19,845.00
Taxes & Benefits					
51210	PERS Contributions	7,811.00	1,196.27	9,072.00	978.39
51211	PERS UAL	.00	4,854.17	.00	4,258.44
51220	FICA/Medicare	2,024.00	1,954.99	2,085.00	1,452.58
	Taxes & Benefits Totals	$9,835.00	$8,005.43	$11,157.00	$6,689.41
Personnel - Non Position Budgeting					
51150	Special Pay	.00	250.00	.00	.00
	Personnel - Non Position Budgeting Totals	$0.00	$250.00	$0.00	$0.00
	Personnel Totals	$36,295.00	$34,715.43	$38,411.00	$26,534.41
Purchased Professional & Technical Services					
Professional Services					
52110	Collect & Admin Services	8,000.00	8,345.88	8,240.00	9,014.59
52190	Miscellaneous Prof Svcs	9,000.00	111,465.67	109,270.00	55,895.48
	Professional Services Totals	$17,000.00	$119,811.55	$117,510.00	$64,910.07
	Purchased Professional & Technical Services Totals	$17,000.00	$119,811.55	$117,510.00	$64,910.07
Other Purchased Services					
Communications					
54210	Telephone Expenses	300.00	142.63	309.00	95.78
54220	Mobile/Wireless Expenses	500.00	1,872.98	515.00	1,237.32

Budget Worksheet Report

Budget Year 2021

THE CITY OF EL CERRITO

Account	Account Description	2019 Adopted Budget	2019 Actual Amount	2020 Amended Budget	2020 Actual Amount
Fund	**101 - General Fund**				
EXPENSE					
Department	**10 - Administration**				
Division	**10 - City Council**				
Other Purchased Services					
Communications					
	Communications Totals	$800.00	$2,015.61	$824.00	$1,333.10
Printing Services					
54410	Printing & Binding	150.00	180.83	155.00	.00
	Printing Services Totals	$150.00	$180.83	$155.00	$0.00
Transportation & Training					
54610	Travel & Training	8,000.00	13,922.68	8,240.00	6,240.52
	Transportation & Training Totals	$8,000.00	$13,922.68	$8,240.00	$6,240.52
Other Administrative Services					
54910	Dues & Subscriptions	10,000.00	8,687.00	10,300.00	10,932.00
54920	Events & Field Trips	18,000.00	11,249.06	18,540.00	11,082.68
54990	Other Administrative Svcs	4,000.00	3,000.00	4,120.00	.00
	Other Administrative Services Totals	$32,000.00	$22,936.06	$32,960.00	$22,014.68
	Other Purchased Services Totals	$40,950.00	$39,055.18	$42,179.00	$29,588.30
Supplies					
Office Supplies					
55110	General Office Supplies	1,100.00	1,658.23	1,133.00	1,113.38
55120	Postage & Delivery	.00	25.50	.00	2.75
55130	Photocopying Charges	200.00	196.34	206.00	98.38
	Office Supplies Totals	$1,300.00	$1,880.07	$1,339.00	$1,214.51
	Supplies Totals	$1,300.00	$1,880.07	$1,339.00	$1,214.51
	Division **10 - City Council** Totals	$95,545.00	$195,462.23	$199,439.00	$122,247.29
	Department **10 - Administration** Totals	$95,545.00	$195,462.23	$199,439.00	$122,247.29
	EXPENSE TOTALS	$95,545.00	$195,462.23	$199,439.00	$122,247.29
	Fund **101 - General Fund** Totals				
	REVENUE TOTALS	$4,000.00	$0.00	$4,000.00	$4,890.00
	EXPENSE TOTALS	$95,545.00	$195,462.23	$199,439.00	$122,247.29
	Fund **101 - General Fund** Totals	($91,545.00)	($195,462.23)	($195,439.00)	($117,357.29)
	Net Grand Totals				
	REVENUE GRAND TOTALS	$4,000.00	$0.00	$4,000.00	$4,890.00
	EXPENSE GRAND TOTALS	$95,545.00	$195,462.23	$199,439.00	$122,247.29

Net Grand Totals	($91,545.00)	($195,462.23)	($195,439.00)	($117,357.29)

Budget Reduction Worksheet - City Council Department Budget

REVENUES	ACCOUNT CODE	What's Included	FY20 Budget	FY21 Projected	Notes	Maximum Reductions	Notes	5% Reduction	Notes
Program Fees	**101-1010-46520**	Mayors Conf. payments from Cities (when hosting)	$ 4,000	$ 4,500		$ -		$ -	
TOTAL REVENUES			**$ 4,000**	**$ 4,500**		**$ -**		**$ -**	
EXPENSES (PERSONNEL)									
Regular Salaries & Wages	**101-1010-51110**	5 Council Members (set by ordinance)	$ 27,254	$ 26,460	$441 pp monthly	$ -		$ -	
Benefits	**101-1010-51210, 51211, 5122(**	PERS, PERS UAL, FICA/Medicare	$ 11,157	$ 11,492	3%	$ -		$ -	
Special Pay	**101-1010-51150**	Annual Public Financing Authority (PFA) Meeting	$ -	$ 250	$50 pp	$ -		$ -	
TOTAL PERSONNEL			**$ 38,411**	**$ 38,202**		**$ -**		**$ -**	
EXPENSES (NON-PERSONNEL)									
Collect & Admin Services	**101-1010-52110**	LAFCO Annual Fee	$ 8,240	$ 9,284	Set by State Law (FY19 actual + 3%)	$ -		$ -	
Misc. Prof. Services	**101-1010-52190**	Library Hours	$ 109,270	$ 101,108	$9270 for Pinole TV moved to 54990/Library hours (average of last 4Q = $101,108 annually)	$ (101,108)	No library hours	$ -	
Telephone Expenses	**101-1010-54210**	(GQ)	$ 309	$ 480		$ -		$ -	
Mobile/Wireless Expenses	**101-1010-54220**	IPad charges (GQ, GL, RPO, PF)	$ 515	$ 1,920		$ -		$ -	
Printing and Binding	**101-1010-54410**		$ 155	$ 90	(2 year average)	$ -		$ -	
Travel & Training	**101-1010-54610**	League Events (Annual Conf., policy mtgs, caucus Exec Forum, Adv. Leadership, New Mayors Conf.); local liaison appt. expenses	$ 8,240	$ 12,950		$ (12,950)	No covered costs	$ (2,750)	1 attendee @ League Annual; $1750 each annually
Dues & Subscriptions	**101-1010-54910**	League of Ca Cities	$ 10,300	$ 11,002	FY20 actual +3%	$ -		$ -	
Events & Field Trips	**101-1010-54920**	Mayor's Conference Hosting Expense; Commissio Dinner, Mayor Conf. Dues and meals, East Bay Dues and meals, Chamber and other misc. events.	$ 18,540	$ 18,657		$ (10,039)	No commission dinner, reduce event attendance to delagates	$ (7,890)	Commission social event only, cover East Bay delegate, GQ as chair of Mayor's conf.; and 1 attendee at Chamber monthly; $20(each annually
Other Administrative Services	**101-1010-54990**	Livestream, closed captioning, AV/TV Broadcast, radio broadcast of Council Meetings	$ 4,120	$ 26,700	**$17,970 moved from other department budgets/accounts, $4,700 increase to Pinole TV**	$ (26,700)	Cut all services	$ -	
General Office Supplies	**101-1010-55110**	Business cards, dais plaques, lapel nametags, council meals	$ 1,133	$ 1,058		$ (636)	No meals provided	$ -	
Photocopying Charges	**101-1010-55130**		$ 206	$ -		$ -		$ -	
TOTAL NON-PERSONNEL			**$ 161,028**	**$ 183,250**		**$ (151,433)**		**$ (10,640)**	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES			**$ 199,439**	**$ 221,452**		**$ (151,433)**		**$ (10,640)**	
TOTAL BUDGET			**$ 195,439**	**$ 216,952**		**$ (151,433)**		**$ (10,640)**	
					Net reduction from FY21	**-69.80%**		**-4.90%**	
					Net reduction from FY20	**-77.48%**		**-5.44%**	

CITY OF EL CERRITO

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL

FROM: KAREN PINKOS, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON LIBRARY HOURS – CITY COUNCIL BUDGET AGENDA ITEM

DATE: 4/22/2020

City staff received an update regarding the library hours from the Contra Costa County Librarian, Melinda Cervantes. This was going to be reported during the staff report for Agenda Item 7D at Tuesday's City Council Meeting, but since the item was moved to the Special City Council Meeting on April 25, 2020 I am providing you this memorandum which will be posted as a supplemental attachment to Saturday's agenda.

Last week, Ms. Cervantes spoke to the Public Managers Association (PMA), which is the group of all City Managers in Contra Costa County, to discuss the County library services and operations. She indicated to the PMA, and confirmed in writing on Monday afternoon, that the following information will be recommended to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors at their May 12, 2020 meeting:

Effective July 1, 2020:

1. Elimination of Sunday operations at all libraries operated by Contra Costa County
2. Continue to provide 35 base hours to all cities, although they will look to revise the schedule of open hours for most cities to reflect new Tues. – Sat. schedules for libraries open 35 base hours per week and funded by the County
3. County to pay for City's obligation for Extra Hours from April 8 through June 3, 2020 due to closure of all libraries

Therefore, the options regarding library hours for El Cerrito are revised to the following:

46 Hours **$111,399**	**39 hours (no Friday)** **$86,946**
M 12-8	M 12-8
T 12-8	T 12-8
W 10-6	W 10-6
Th 10-6	Th 10-6
F 10-5	F closed
Sa 10-5	Sa 10-5
Su closed	Su closed

If the City Council chooses not to fund additional library hours, the El Cerrito Library would be open 35 hours per week.

Ms. Cervantes also indicated that she expects to hear from cities that will continue or discontinue funding extra hours by April 30, 2020. Following the City Council's action, I will plan to notify her of the City's decision on Monday, April 27.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Public Comment on Agenda Item 7-A by Jim Dolgonas, El Cerrito Resident

Mayor Lyman, Mayor Pro-Tem Fadelli, and Council members Abelson, Pardue-Okimoto, and Quinto:

I am writing to you about the City's $100K+ annual expenditure that supports 15 hours of staffing and therefore hours of library operation. This funding, as you know, provides an additional 15 hours to the 35 that the County funds, permitting our library to be open 50 hours per week. I realize that the City is planning to reduce overall spending by approximately 4% or $2M and that there are proponents for every line item in the City's budget. I know you all also are aware of the important role libraries play in our society so I won't repeat that here. Instead I'd like to concentrate on how to maintain the library hours we now enjoy.

I would like to propose several alternatives to reducing the hours the library is open, while at the same time reducing City funding for the library. First, I have looked at the County's approved 19-20 budget and the 18-19 financial statements. Unlike El Cerrito, the County has sufficient reserves and a AAA bond rating. It is in a very strong financial position. The size of the County's budget, $1.7B, is such that it should be able to assume El Cerrito's $100K share of the City's library staffing cost without a major impact. Transferring this staffing obligation to the County would help the city achieve the 4% average budget reduction target. I urge the City to request that the County assume these costs, as of 20-21. Also, I'd recommend that this request be in writing, to document this action. Should this request not be approved, then I would request that the City ask the County Librarian, from the budget she controls, to contribute the library's share of El Cerrito's average budget reduction. For example, should the City's average budget reduction be 4%, this reduction of approximately $4K should be sought from the County librarian to permit continued 50 hour operation of the El Cerrito library.

Thank you for considering these suggestions for maintaining access to our library.

From:	Al Miller
To:	City Clerk
Subject:	Public Comment for March 17 City Council Meeting Agenda Item7A.
Date:	Saturday, March 14, 2020 1:23:57 PM

Public Comment on Agenda Item 7-A by Al Miller, El Cerrito Resident and President of the El Cerrito Library Foundation:

Mayor Lyman, Mayor Pro-Tem Fadelli, and Councilmembers Abelson, Pardue-Okimoto, and Quinto:

I strongly support the *Public Comment on Agenda Item 7-A* submitted by Michael Fischer. He has made an eloquent case for continued funding of seven-day per week operation of the El Cerrito Library.

I will end my comment as Michael did his, *"Our library represents a tremendous investment of city and council capital. Every hour that it is not open is an hour that this resource is wasted. A libraries costs more than an umbrella, but like an umbrella, it (only) works when open.*

"In conclusion, I urge you to continue the important investment in our community that is the funding of adequate hours for our library and move that item to the regular city budget. It is one of the most important, most rewarding, and most effective use of city funds."

Thank you.

Al Miller, [redacted], EL Cerrito, CA 94530.[redacted]

From: Gary and Jean Pokorny
To: Holly Charléty
Subject: Please add the Following Public Comment to the record for the March 17, 2020 Council Meeting
Date: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 10:18:31 AM

Public Comment on Agenda Item 7-A on the March 17 City council meeting agenda.

Mayor Lyman, Mayor Pro-Tem Fadelli, and Council members Abelson, Pardue-Okimoto, and Quinto:

We strongly support the *Public Comment on Agenda Item 7-A* submitted by Library Commissioner Michael Fischer. He has made an eloquent and persuasive case for continued funding of seven-day-per-week operation of the El Cerrito Library. As you consider City operations for the balance of the current year and for the upcoming two-year budget we urge you to maintain the current level of seven-day-per-week library open hours.

We end our comment as Michael did his, *"Our library represents a tremendous investment of City and Council capital. Every hour that it is not open is an hour that these resources are wasted. A library costs more than an umbrella, but like an umbrella, it only works when open."*

Thank you,

Gary & Jean Pokorny
[redacted]
El Cerrito

From: Sue Hansen
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment re Library Hours
Date: Monday, April 13, 2020 11:51:41 AM

I watched the recording of the most recent City Council meeting and heard the City Manager say she plans to recommend that the council eliminate the funding for the 15 additional library hours provided by the city. Although I recognize that the city is facing serious budget problems, and agree that the services provided by our first responders are vital and must be protected, I do not believe that the library hours should be cut 100% as suggested.

The library is a significant resource for the whole community, from senior citizens to pre-schoolers. More than just a big room to check out books, the library is a quiet place to do homework, to sit in peace with the community, and to experience the joy of reading. Because of the hours funded by the city, the library has had 48,000 additional patron visits year-to-year, a 50% increase in programs, and 9,000 additional attendees at programs (an increase of over 120%).

In addition, the additional library hours produced more than a 50% increase in computer logins. By increasing access for students and others who do not have computers or internet capability, the city has helped to bridge the digital divide.

Especially now, libraries are a necessity, not a luxury, for a well-functioning democracy. As an El Cerrito resident and voter for nearly 24 years, I urge you to maintain funding for additional library hours. Thank you.

(As an aside, please know that I have sent email to Senators Feinstein and Harris, urging them to provide funding for small local governments such as El Cerrito.)

Sue Hansen

From:	MARLENE KELLER
To:	Greg Lyman; Paul Fadelli; Janet Abelson; Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto; Gabe Quinto
Cc:	Karen Pinkos; Alexandra Orologas; City Clerk; eclibrarycommissioner@gmail.com
Subject:	Public Comment on Library Hours
Date:	Thursday, April 16, 2020 10:51:00 AM

Dear Mayor and Council members,

I urge you to continue funding 15 library hours beyond the 35 weekly hours funded by the county. Budgets represent a statement about our values and priorities. Now, more than ever, we should be focused on city services that provide a significant benefit to the greatest number of our residents, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged. We all understand the value of fire and police protection. But, unlike us, every other community in the Bay Area also seems to understand the value of their library and funds it appropriately.

When the question of funding library hours was last considered by the council, public comment established that El Cerrito offered among the least library hours among Bay Area cities: a mere 35 hours per week. Moms and Dads complained that they never knew when the library was open and that young people could not depend on the library being available every day after school.

Since the library was built in the 1940s, the city has allowed library hours to be funded entirely by the county, contributing no city money, apart from building maintenance. The council heard voters in 2016 voice their opinion that they would have voted for the Measure B library bond if the city had demonstrated a commitment to the library and added enough hours to give the residents of El Cerrito a chance to use their library. When the city listened and put Measure V on the ballot in 2018, the Real Property Transfer Tax was described as making it possible to provide funding for fire, police *and* library services. Since the council approved the funding of 15 weekly hours, you have seen the data on how library usage has dramatically increased and how these added hours have enabled library staff to provide many additional, community-valued programs.

The city certainly needs to be on a more prudent financial path. But reductions in the city's budget must also weigh what services provide the best return on the public's investment. Educators attest that a library is an important extension of our schools, providing a nurturing place where young people can gather and enjoy learning at their own pace--and that a library is a lifelong learning center for people of all ages. Urban planners appreciate a library as an investment in the economic development of city residents by being a location where individuals can readily acquire knowledge and skills that promote job opportunities and economic stability. Public safety professionals understand that a library provides a place where everyone can safely gather--and that keeps young people from becoming disconnected from their community . We know that a library also provides critical access to the internet for those who lack computers and a broadband connection at home--a disparity between the "haves" and the "have nots" made abundantly clear to us during this pandemic. Thus, a public library is the one city resource that can help defeat income inequality and provide tangible and significant benefits to all city residents.

The city claims that you face the tough choice of paying "county staff" versus paying "city staff." This is disingenuous. For a tiny price--less than the cost of one FTE's salary and benefits out of approximately the 178 FTEs that the city funds-- we will experience a robust return on our investment from a library that is widely used by city residents. Reducing library hours to 35 per week abdicates any financial support from the city for this essential service to its residents, leaving library hours, once again, to be entirely supported by the county. By contributing no funds for hours, the city would break a promise to the community at large. This should not be the council's legacy--particularly in these trying times. Please support keeping the 15 hours that you have already thoughtfully funded--and that voters have repeatedly said they need.

Marlene Keller

From:	Cordell Hindler
To:	Holly Charléty
Subject:	7 D, City Council Division Budget Discussion
Date:	Thursday, April 16, 2020 8:58:33 PM

hello Holly, i have a couple of ideas on how the city can save money

1. having one council member to attend the Luncheons on a rotating basis

2. also to host the Contra Costa Mayors conference at the Community Center

Sincerely
Cordell

Holly Charléty

From: Irene Kiebert [redacted]
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2020 11:35 AM
To: Greg Lyman; Paul Fadelli; Janet Abelson; Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto; Gabe Quinto; Karen Pinkos; Alexandra Orologas; City Clerk
Subject: Public comment re library hours

To Mayor Lyman, Mayor Pro-Tem Paul Fadelli, the City Council, City Manager, and City Clerk:

I strongly urge the City Council to maintain the current hours our much-beloved library is open, rather than cutting 100% of the city funding for the library. Considering what a resource the library is for the *entire* community, and especially for low income families and people experiencing homelessness, this is the last place we should be cutting funding! Since the City started funding a small portion of open hours, the community's use of the library has increased disproportionately. It's clear people need the library open as much as possible!
Until we are able to increase library hours—not to mention build a new library—please let's at least maintain the current 50-hour access. As a minimum, there is no justification for cutting library funding more than the 5-10% that other programs will be cut.
--Thank you, Irene Kiebert

Holly Charléty

From: City Clerk
Subject: FW: Public Comments - Agenda Item 7D

I oppose cutting citizen access to the council or council meetings. More than ever before, citizens need to be watching how the staff and the council are spending our tax dollars.

I oppose cutting library hours. I oppose cutting the compensation of those people making less than the 2018 citizen median wage of $73,690.

The city seems to be intent on cutting those activities which most benefit the taxpayers and which help a lot of taxpayers for a relatively small amount of money.

The citizens have repeatedly agreed to increases in taxes that have basically gone to much higher wages for management.

I support cutting the wages of management down to $73,690. I support laying off several managers. We have too many. I also believe managers should pick up more of their health insurance and pension costs.

I also support cutting about $2 million from the fire department budget by reducing overtime and reducing the number of managers and using non-uniformed staff for inspections and for paramedic work. The city should consider using paramedics at one station during the midnight to 8 AM period. The city also needs to renegotiate the mutual aid contract as El Cerrito's fire stations go to more building fires in Richmond than in El Cerrito and Kensington combined.

If El Cerrito cannot control runaway fire department expenditures, then El Cerrito needs to consider letting Contra Costa County take control of the fire department.

So maintain library hours while reducing wasteful spending elsewhere.

Ira Sharenow
El Cerrito, CA

Holly Charléty

From: John Stashik [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, April 18, 2020 1:20 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comments -- Agenda Item 7-D

This letter is in support of the staff recommendation to reduce city-funded library hours. At $129,104, which is close to a 30 percent increase over the 2016 agreed rate, our city clearly can no longer afford to subsidize the additional operating hours.

As I recall, it was the City Manager who brought this up at the previous council meeting. It must kill her to suggest cutting library funding as she has been the most vocal advocate for the library at City Hall for years. But the numbers don't lie and the city is having a financial meltdown.

A positive solution would be to have Contra Costa County step up and fund the El Cerrito library to maintain 50 operating hours a week. It's basically the county's operation anyway and they're in better financial shape than El Cerrito at this time.

So cut the library subsidy. Contra Costa County should do the right thing and extend their service in El Cerrito. This City can no longer afford it.

John C. Stashik
El Cerrito

Holly Charléty

From: Peter Smith [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, April 18, 2020 4:53 PM
To: Greg Lyman; Paul Fadelli; Janet Abelson; Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto; Gabe Quinto
Cc: Karen Pinkos; Alexandra Orologas; City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment re Library Hours

I have been reading with concern about my city's financial crisis. In my view, however, the most important city services other than the police and fire departments are library services. Everyone I know in our fair city shares a desire to at least maintain the current level of library services, specifically including the current library hours.

I have been doing some reading on the recent history of our library's hours. I see that the current city-funded hours were passed by the council following the defeat of the library bonds in 2016. At some point, I hope that the City is in a position to again fund a new library, but to have a credible position for that, I do not see how the council can return to the minimum 35 hours per week. I have read that the city's funding an extra 15 hours per week have resulted in greater value of the library for all of us — 48,000 additional patron visits year-to-year, 50% increase in library programs, 9,000 additional attendees at library programs (an increase of over 120%), increased funding to the library from the Friends of the El Cerrito Library of $6,800 (170%), and increased donations to the Permanent Endowment Fund of the El Cerrito Library Foundation of nearly $25,000.

I understand that the council is seeking a 5 to 10% budget reduction citywide, but the elimination of the city-funded library hours would represent a 100% reduction. A ten percent reduction would reduce hours by 1.5 per week. If you feel that hours must be cut, I hope that it can be kept in that range.

Our library is a good community investment and a valuable community resource. Please do what you must to deal with the city's financial crisis, but don't go back to the days of 35 hours a week for our beloved library.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter H. Smith
[redacted]
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Holly Charléty

From: Ruth Sasaki [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 5:57 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public comments-agenda #7D

I am writing to oppose any cuts to the El Cerrito Library hours of operation. I live a few blocks away and visit often (in normal times), sometimes several times per week.

Every time I am there I see it providing books, activities, computer access, or just a place to study/read for children through seniors. It's a lifeline for those who do not have internet or books at home or a decent place to do homework.

Any place that encourages people to read, keeps kids out of mischief, and gives seniors a way to escape isolation is an important enough community asset that some other way to save money should be explored first.

Ruth Sasaki

Sent from my iPhone

Holly Charléty

From: It Is From Shayla [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, April 19, 2020 8:49 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: public comments – agenda item #7D

Please, please, please do not cut the hours of our library here in El Cerrito. They are already limited enough and we rely on the library too much to lose it. We need it for our seniors, our children, our hopeful and our forgotten. It is where we go to find help for ourselves and where we go to provide it to others. It is irreplaceable. Alternatives for cutbacks must be designated instead.

Please.

Sincerely,

Shayla Jacobsen

From: Melanie Proctor [redacted]
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 9:19 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Budget Cuts

Dear City Council:

I understand that El Cerrito is in financial distress. I am deeply concerned that it appears the City will reduce library services to gain a few pennies. The expanded hours allowed my family to access the library more than we were able to in all of our time in El Cerrito. My children appreciated being able to stop by after dinner, or on Sunday. Cutting library hours is inconsistent with the City's goal of eventually building a new library facility. There would be no need for a new building if the City's residents cannot use it.

Sincerely,
Melanie Proctor
Resident since 2008

Holly Charléty

From: Barry Koops <[redacted]
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 12:09 PM
To: pfadell@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us; Janet Abelson; Greg Lyman; Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto; Gabe Quinto; Karen Pinkos; AOrelogos@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us; City Clerk
Cc: Michael Fischer
Subject: Public Comment re Library Hours

I understand that our city faces a serious financial crisis. This was true even before coronavirus pandemic cast a pall over our economy and public confidence in the future. I understand, too, the burden that our financial situation places on the Council, as our representatives, to make Solomon-like decisions regarding services and personnel.

With many other El Cerrito residents I applaud the visionary leadership by the mayor, council, and city manager by increasing library hours from 35 to 50, thereby providing seven-day services. I think you are familiar with the amazing consequences of your action: more than doubling the number of library attendees, a 50% increase in the participants in library programs, a 50% increase in library computer use, and significantly greater support for Friends of the Library and EC Library Foundation.

I anticipate that the Council will face pressure to consider all line items, even that of the El Cerrito Library, to reduce expenditures by about 10%. I urge you not to erase your support for library hours. If you must make a reduction to this expenditure, I ask you to make it in line with 10% cuts to other city departments and services.

Please keep in mind the very important asset our Library is for all of us, but especially for the least privileged among us. Bring to mind the 48,000 additional patron visits year as a result of the city-funded hours. As you do what is necessary for fiscal viability, I trust you will keep on pointing fellow residents to a bright future for our city, including an expanded, appropriate Library, an essential component of El Cerrito's strategic plan.

Respectfully,

John Barry Koops
Alternate Library Commissioner representing El Cerrito

Holly Charléty

From: City Clerk
Subject: FW: Funding for the EC Public LIbrary

El Cerrito City Council and staff,

First, I want to thank you all for your time and dedication to the residents of El Cerrito. You all make living in El Cerrito pleasant.

I specifically respect the approach and tone demonstrated by the Board in response to the city's fiscal deficits. This situation is not good but it could be made worse by a city administration that is defensive and attempts to hide the facts.

And now the hard decisions have to be made to cut costs. I worked in large corporations for forty years and routinely watched this done, sometimes well and often poorly. At this point I imagine you have intimate knowledge of where the money is spent and who benefits.

I am writing to defend the cost of extending the library hours to 35 per week.

The El Cerrito library is a jewel of our community. The building is old and inadequate to the need but the staff has created a welcoming and lively atmosphere and stellar programs that have broad appeal to children and adults. The computers are all used every time I am there, during the week and on weekends. These computers will become more important as residents face the fall out of the stay at home order and economic recession. Returning to the base reduced hours would negatively impact the culture, programs and services of the library.

Please continue to fund the extended hours at the library.

Pam Austin

Compassion is one of the principal things that make our lives meaningful.

—H. H. the Dalai Lama

Holly Charléty

From: City Clerk
Subject: FW: El Cerrito Library hours cutbacks

> Dear Mayor Lyman,
> I have been an El Cerrito homeowner for over 22 years and want to let you know that I truly appreciate our library. It may not be a glamorous building but it is homey, central and the people who work there and come there make it a pleasant & beneficial visit every time. I use the library on a weekly (sometimes daily) basis. I go there to get books for pleasure reading, books for travel and information and I get most of my video entertainment via their extensive movie and documentary collection. The recent increase in the hours has been a tremendous benefit to me and many others because it allows opportunities to visit on Sundays and at more times of the days.
> The library is a treasured community resource for so many people please find a way to keep the extended hours or at the very most only cut them back the same 5-10% as other citywide departments.
> Thank you,
> Tom Adams
> [redacted]
> El Cerrito CA

From: Valerie Snider
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment-Agenda Item 7D
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 8:27:58 PM

I am opposed to the El Cerrito City Manager's proposal to cut library hours. Ms. Pinkos' proposal is an insult to the residents and taxpayers of our city. Her scheme is comparable to an individual living beyond his means in a McMansion cancelling his Netflix subscription to save money, rather than downsizing to a more modest home.

Valerie Snider
El Cerrito, CA

From: Caroline Smith
To: City Clerk
Subject: public comments - library - 7D
Date: Monday, April 20, 2020 9:43:32 PM

Hello,
The El Cerrito library, as small as it is, is such a joy and we are so thankful for it. My autistic son and I go there and choose books regularly. The staff is amazing - always willing to help with a smile. I understand the pressure of budget cuts - believe me I do. But, cutting out the library is a terrible option. Consider fund raisers, private donations, book raffles, etc etc. There are many ways to raise money. Or do what my company is doing now - ask every employee to take a temporary pay cut. It would be terrible to lose our wonderful source of books.

I ask you to reconsider for the sake of a healthy, engaged community.

Kind Regards,

Caroline Smith
(510)[redacted]

From:	Michael Fischer
To:	City Clerk
Cc:	Greg Lyman; Paul Fadelli; Janet Abelson; Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto; Gabe Quinto; Karen Pinkos; Alexandra Orologas
Subject:	Public Comment - Agenda Item 7D
Date:	Tuesday, April 21, 2020 12:22:49 AM

I have made a number of arguments over the past several months concerning the need for the council to continue to fund the 15 hours a week that permits our library to be open 50 hours a week, 7 days a week. I'm not going to rehash all those points although I incorporate them here by reference. Instead I will focus on a couple of points including some new points raised by the city manager in her report to the council.

Before doing that, however, I want to address an issue that causes me far greater distress than would the loss of all 15 city-funded library hours. That is the treatment of our City Manager by some of the members of our community. The causes of our financial crisis are many and some of them are in dispute. But it is both untrue and unfair to attempt to place it all at the feet of Karen. And, even if she were to have some responsibility for what has happened, the tireless and exhausting efforts she has undertaken to both explain and propose solutions to the problems we're facing has been heroic. We could not have asked for a better response from city staff in this situation than we have had from her. I call on all my fellow El Cerritans to stop the name-calling and attempts to scapegoat this issue. We are better than this. The language addressing the Covid-19 is apt here. We will get through this together

I also want to emphasize that my opposition to the proposed cuts in library hours are a matter of a policy disagreement with Karen. She represents the city and has presented her version of the city-wide perspective on this issue. I have been honored by you with representing the perspective of the library and have presented to you my version of the library perspective on this issue. While these perspectives are in conflict, it doesn't mean that Karen and I are personally in conflict. I respect her view and believe she respects mine. You, our council, now have the unenviable task pf making the ultimate decision on this and many other difficult and painful issues involving our city budget.

I want to raise five issues here tonight:

1. Cutting library hours is putting the burden of solving our fiscal crisis on the backs of the poorest among us. This is not consistent with our values as a community. In the proposed letter I drafted for council action tonight on the consent agenda urging Congressional action to provide emergency relief for libraries during the coronavirus pandemic is the following language: “Our libraries serve as refuges for people experiencing homelessness and are perhaps the most effective resource in overcoming the digital divide.” But these services are only available during hours the library is open.

While I have emphasized the impact of a significant cut in library hours will have on the poor, the council is also aware of the effect it will have on all El Cerritans. I won’t repeat the significant increase in usage and support that been engendered by the additional library hours cutting across all sectors of our city. These figures appear in previous material I’ve submitted to the council.

2. The city council has sought a reduction in various budgets citywide at the level of 5%. Reduction in number of hours funded from 15 to 0 is a 100% reduction. Reduction in lesser amounts are as follows:
From 15 to 11 hours is a reduction of over 26% (elimination of Sunday hours)
From 15 to 4 hours is a reduction of over 73% (elimination of Friday and Sunday hours)
I acknowledge that I am focusing on the number of hours rather than the cost of those hours and that the cost of the hours has risen since they have first been adopted but only in accordance with general increases in labor costs. I would note so has nearly every other item in our budget. Absent a fiscal crisis the council would have done for Fiscal 2020-2021 exactly what they did in 2019-2020, authorize the increased amount as set forth by the county which is based on the cost of the personnel needed to keep the library open. I am also informed that the actual amounts spent generally tend to be less than the agreed upon amounts.

There has also been some confusion about the cost of the library hours. When the council voted, on June 6, 2017, to fund the additional 15 hours for the library, the amount stated was $127,000. this was, I imagine, based on the County Librarian’s estimate. Obviously, since library hours in FY 2017-2018 didn’t start until April, 2018, the actual amount spent in 2017-2018 was much less. The estimates from the County Librarian for 2018-2019 was $118,888, the estimate for 2019-2020 was $121,042, and the estimate for 2020-2021 is $129,104 or $98,304 if Sunday hours are eliminated. As noted above, the actual costs are almost always less. Comparing the estimated cost for FY 2020-2021 without Sunday hours against the amount the council initially budgeted in June, 2017, constitutes a reduction of over 22.5%.

3. There has been concern expressed that the city must make a decision before the end of the current fiscal year concerning reaching an agreement with the county for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Obviously, it is best for the library system to know as soon as possible about what the council intends to do in regard to paying for library hours. But, as was learned when these hours were first established, the hours do not have to start or end with the start of a fiscal year. If the city were to decide to cut hours at any time, the county would then institute a process to ensure that any employees who would lose a position because of the city cutting hours would be offered other vacant positions. If no such positions are available, then layoff proceedings need to be undertaken which can take up to 3 months.

4. I recognize that our city is in a severe financial crisis. As one who supported Measure V from when it was first proposed, and was an officer in the Yes on V campaign, I have sought other revenue sources for the city. A financial crisis forces us all to accept difficult decisions. My definition of a difficult decision would include elimination of the Sunday hours for our library. My definition of an unacceptable tragedy would include any more hours than this. I want to make it clear that I am not supporting the elimination of Sunday hours and I would actually urge the council not to take that step without thoroughly exploring all other options. As is the case with all library hours decisions, the amount saved is small and the loss to El Cerritans is great. I also understand that the county may decide no longer to have Sunday hours at any location, thus taking that part of the decision away from us. But in that even I would especially urge the city not to cut hours any more.

However, if the city does decide to eliminate Sunday hours, the biggest impact will be on our attempts to overcome the digital divide. In that regard I would ask that the council undertake efforts to lessen the damage caused by this elimination. I would ask that the council engage with our State Superintendent of Public Instruction (and fellow West Contra Costan) Tony Thurmond who has recently established a task force to address issues of the digital divide statewide. With the Covid-19 pandemic we are having increasingly to rely upon the internet for many things, and it is likely that this will continue, either because of a continued need for physical distancing or because we have learned how it is easier to do things that way. But it is not easier for those without access to the internet. If the library is to be closed on Sunday, some other means will have to be developed to provide internet access to those who depend on the library.

In conclusion, I've shown the tremendous support for our library and that the library has already suffered greatly in our financial crisis. To cut anything further would be undesirable. To cut anything more than just Sunday hours would be tragic.

I have worked with both the council and city staff since my appointment as Library Commissioner over three years ago. I know you are all strong supporters of our library and have the best interests of all El Cerritans at heart. Thank you for what you do.

Michael A. Fischer
[redacted]
El Cerrito City Designated Library Commissioner
Vice Chair, Contra Costa County Library Commission

Working for an Affordable and Appropriate 21st Century Library for El Cerrito

From: Google Voice <voice-noreply@google.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 10:20 AM
To: EC PCV
Subject: New voicemail from (510) [redacted]

Public comments on agenda item seven d as in David Library. My name is glennis. Lion l e e n n i s l y o n. I live in El Cerrito. My comment is please do not cut off City portion of the of the El Cerrito Library, please look for other funding for this percent of life is so important to people in our community, especially low-income people who have access to a free computer to look for jobs. And also, please do not cut the food for families and children in the summertime. I have noticed the library it's used by teenagers and even younger people to study after school to have a safe and quiet place to go. If there is a funding cut. Please keep the programs I mentioned and please keep the library hours after school for these children. Thank you very much. And I regret that we're having such a difficult time with funding our budget for a wonderful City by.

PLAY MESSAGE

YOUR ACCOUNT   HELP CENTER   HELP FORUM

Holly Charléty

From: Al Miller [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 10:37 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment on 4/21 Council Meeting Agenda Item 7.D

Good Evening Mayor Lyman, Mayor Pro Tem Fadelli, and Councilmembers Abelson, Pardue-Okimoto, and Quinto;

My name is Al Miller and I am an El Cerrito resident.

I strongly agree with and support the comments submitted by Michael Fischer for your consideration on this agenda item.

That agreement and support includes both his comments concerning library hours and his support for our City Manager.

Thank you.

Al Miller

Holly Charléty

From: Ms. Michelle BAPTISTE [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 11:14 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: public comments -- agenda item 7D

To the City of El Cerrito
As an 11-year resident, I can say we frequent the library weekly and love it--the librarians and resources are tremendous considering the small size! My children and I emphatically call on the city to continue funding at current levels. Reading books, accessing information, engaging in neighborhood programming ... they are all at the core of what it means to be community--and exceptionally crucial as we go into potentially months more of some form of shelter-in-place. We use the library for fun reading, school assignments, knowledge building, and enrichment classes.

El Cerrito voters want to fund the library at current rates -- or better!

Thank you,

Michelle Baptiste

"The love of one's country is a splendid thing. But why should love stop at the border?" - Pablo Casals

[redacted]

Holly Charléty

From: M H Conklin [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 11:48 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: public comments –agenda item 7D

Cutting the city-funded 15 library hours is a poor idea. This country has a "digital divide", with many low income families without internet access. The public library helps to reduce that by providing digital access to El Cerrito residents. In this time of uncertainty, when access to information is essential when the econony restarts, limiting library hours adversely affects the lower income families in El Cerrito.

Martha Conklin

Professor, UC Merced.

Holly Charléty

From: Jan Woo [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 12:04 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public comments-agenda item #7D

$129,000 spent on library services for all citizens is more just than $230,000 spent on one city manager.

Janice Woo
[redacted]

From: Mike Cunningham
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public comment - agenda item #7D (April 21 City Council)
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 1:35:53 PM

Given that El Cerrito needs to come up with millions of dollars of new cuts, the ongoing fixation on the miniscule Council budget is baffling. Still, it keeps coming back, so let's dispense with it. Leaving aside the library funding that doesn't belong in the Council budget, you have about $100,000 of expenses. You can easily cut 15% or more by (1) eliminating ceremonial events and dinners, (2) eliminating travel and conferences other than essential training, (3) cutting radio and TV broadcast of Council meetings, and (4) training city staff to operate the internet live streaming system, in lieu of paying Pinole.

As for library funding, the expanded hours are literally the only new service that the city has provided to its residents in exchange for the four new General Fund taxes that they generously approved in the past ten years. The highest local tax rates in the entire state, and just this one new service. It's a terrific service, though; with regular daily hours and a dedicated staff of permanent employees, the library has become the most active public space in town, welcoming and serving all segments of our community. It's a tiny expenditure — one quarter of one percent of the General Fund budget — and it should be the last dollar cut, not the first. Ideally you'd deal with the big stuff first, and only if every possible avenue of savings is exhausted, come back later to consider library hours. If that's not possible, if you need to decide today, just decide to not cut this small expenditure that is so valued by El Cerrito residents, and plan to make your cuts from the remaining $40 million of the General Fund budget.

Mike Cunningham
El Cerrito resident

From: Cathy Hanville
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment Agenda Item 7D
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 3:16:18 PM

I cannot believe that with a almost 4 million dollar deficit this year and a 4-8 million dollar deficit next year that what the City Manager decided to cut right now is city council expenses. This line item is paltry as are the cuts. Sure stop paying for past mayors to go to dinners but that is not going to solve this.

Two points.
1. To cut access to city council meetings at this time is egregious and perhaps illegal. Staff has decided to not have staff trained to complete this task and instead outsource this and now it costs. But we are now stuck with the cost because these live council meetings and their subsequent recordings are the only way in which the public can monitor what is going on and do their jobs of holding staff and council accountable.

2. To cut the library hours when no other real cuts have been made is a travesty. With this economy only destined to get worse we need the library more than ever. Even a small cut will harm a significant number of people. The proposed Sunday cut for example will eliminate access to those who work 6 days a week. Which is not an unsubstantial number of people. Please remember the library is not just books but computers, food, and shelter for some of our citizens. I was rather stunned last meeting when the city manager said this cut would be cutting a county job not a city one. As if that is what matters here. What matters is protecting and providing services to our city's most vulnerable citizens which is what the library does. We need all of the additional 15 hours and the 7 day a week library services.

Thank you
Cathy Hanville
El Cerrito

From: Sherry Drobner
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comment 7.D
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 3:35:42 PM

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,
Why are the library hours part of the discussion of the City Council Division? Why is Council being offered a piecemeal approach to making budget decisions? Both Fire and Police have budgets of approximately 10 million dollars each. Cannot the City Manager ask the Department Heads to create a 10% reduction in their budgets with impact on services along with the Recreation Department and City Council Division.? I'm not sure why this wasn't done a month ago when the Council reviewed projections and discussed the possibilities of a 5% or 10% reduction. Having worked in a city with limited resources, it was very common for managers and Department Heads to provide this information with a very short turn around and time. Perhaps I'm wrong and Departments have engaged in this budgeting exercise -could it be that the information is not being shared? I just keep being surprised, week after week as the City Manager punts the ball to the Council and Council punts back. Unfortunately, our budget is not a sporting event and the politics are frustrating and insulting. City Manager, do your job. City Council do your job. Residents are paying attention, residents are investigating and residents clearly understand that we are heading for a trainwreck. The Library hours are simply a distraction from much larger issues. This is not the moment to argue over $129,00 dollars when there is a 3.8 million dollar deficit. Please, stop looking at the shiny penny.

Sincerely,

Sherry Drobner

From:	Barbara Chan CMC
To:	City Clerk
Cc:	Paul Fadelli; Greg Lyman; Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto; Janet Abelson; Gabe Quinto
Subject:	Agenda Item 7D - Library/El Cerrito April 21 Council
Date:	Tuesday, April 21, 2020 4:31:20 PM

I have been horrified since the State Audit report came out last year showing our city to rank 7th from the bottom of financial risks. I have been shocked to learn how former and current city managers and their staff and hired consultants convinced elected officials to approve high salaries, pensions and benefits without having cash or even reserves to pay them into the future. I feel betrayed that people we elected and trusted to oversee our city, did not scrutinize thoroughly the words and work of the city managers before approving expenditures.

Your actions will indicate whether El Cerrito residents can begin to trust its elected council in the future.

On the matter of Agenda Item 7D

The El Cerrito library provides a place for people of all ages from toddlers to senior citizens to grow and learn. The library offers inclusive, accessible programs and services that include maker workshops, literacy programs, reading and writing programs, computers, computer tutors, homework help, read alongs with a dog, knitting groups, FixIt Clinics, preschool reading, and much more.

The library is filled with users every one of the 7 days it has been open. It may be small and outdated, but people love and benefit from visiting the library.

Why? Because the staff is knowledge, professional, courteous and helpful. Because they can help visitors access materials from across the county and beyond, both in print, audio, and visual.

You may think saving $130K in the short term is worthwhile, but the challenge and costs of finding good library staff in the future will be higher than if you keep them working.

Why does a city of barely 24,000 people need 3 top managers who actually mismanage the funds? We have three city managers (Manager, Assistant Manager, and Assistant to the Manager) whereas Richmond, with 110,000 residents, has one City Manager and one Assistant to the City Manager.

Fifty hours of library staffing provide for much-needed services for the community. Before you decimate every community building and community-supportive service, I urge you to look at the bigger picture of where costs need to be cut—firstly in the mismanagement that has been conducted by city managers past and present on unsuspecting residents of this city.

El Cerrito does not need 3 top managers! Eliminating just the El Cerrito Assistant Manager position would pay for the library staffing hours.

Cutting access to learning has longterm consequences—libraries support future workers and teachers, as well as engaged citizens.

Eliminating library services and staff before cutting top mis-managers and their hefty pensions and benefits is a travesty.

I urge you to consider your actions very carefully; El Cerrito residents are watching and counting on you.

Barbara Chan
[redacted] El Cerrito, CA 94530

From:	Elizabeth Thorsnes
To:	City Clerk
Subject:	Public Comment, Agenda Item 7D
Date:	Tuesday, April 21, 2020 5:21:26 PM

El Cerrito Staff and Council members,

Library hours are a tiny part of the budget and among the most beneficial items to residents and they shouldn't be the first thing that you cut. The library is an essential link to the world for so many seniors, people with limited income, and students, so many students. It is the one place place in the city that can easily be reached by public transportation, is wheelchair accessible, and is free and safe for all who use it. Leave the library alone. Cut salaries, as many others have mentioned tonight. We have many salaries that are just plain bloated.

Sincerely,
BJ Thorsnes

From:	Irene Rojas-Carroll
To:	City Clerk
Subject:	public comments- item 7D and 7A
Date:	Tuesday, April 21, 2020 6:08:46 PM

from Irene Rojas-Carroll of El Cerrito

Dear Mayor and Council,

Regarding the city's budget shortfalls: the threat to cut library hours before expensive management positions is wildly misguided.

The El Cerrito library offers critical services to our neighborhood and now more than ever, we need to protect the library hours and its services. From seniors and English learners to young families and students, the library is there for us and we need to continue to make it more accessible, not less. It's a computer lab, a seed library, a resource center, study hall, a place for entertainment and learning and community. It's packed whenever I go.

Yes, you'll need to make cuts somewhere. Please dig deep in your consciences and cut first from management rather than from critical city services like the library.

Sincerely,
Irene Rojas-Carroll

From: Leah Carroll
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public comments -- items # 7D and 7A
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 6:16:53 PM

Dear Mayor and Council,

I'm writing to express my dismay about the reduction of the library hours. This is a key service, especially so now that so many El Cerrito parents are homeschooling their kids. Meanwhile, the El Cerrito city government is notoriously top heavy, with many more top-level (highly paid) administrators than larger nearby cities. Please reassess your priorities!

Leah Carroll
[redacted]

--
Please excuse brevity of this email and random capitalization.. Both hands are injured and I'm using cheap voice recognition.

Leah Carroll
Pronouns: she/hers
Haas Scholars Program Manager and Advisor
[redacted]
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-2940
[redacted]

Directions to get to my office are here.

From: Gustavo Rojas Rojas
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public comments -- items # 7D and 7A
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 6:19:41 PM

Dear Mayor and Council,

I'm writing to express my dismay about the reduction of the library hours. This is a key service, especially so now that so many El Cerrito parents are homeschooling their kids. Meanwhile, the El Cerrito city government is notoriously top heavy, with many more top-level (highly paid) administrators than larger nearby cities. Please reassess your priorities!

Gustavo Rojas
[redacted]

From: Diana Lyons
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item # 7D
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 7:37:27 PM

Good evening,

My name is Diana Lyons and I am an El Cerrito resident. Of all the public services in any community, I strongly believe the public library is one of the most necessary. As a life-long library patron, I choose to frequent the El Cerrito library specifically because it has open hours 7 days per week -- and I was thrilled to learn that the City Council began directly funding the additional library hours in recent years. The library provides crucial, dependable, community services, including many benefits to people who can't otherwise afford access to shelter, education, literature, socialization, and the Internet.

I urge you not to reduce the library hours and their funding.

Thank you,

Diana Lyons

SUPPLEMENTAL PUBLIC COMMENT INDEX
(Revised 4/27/2020)

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
April 25, 2020

The following Public Comments were **received by 4:00 p.m. 4/24/2020**, were provided directly to City Councilmembers in advance of the meeting, and were posted online as supplemental materials at www.el-cerrito.org/CouncilMeetingMaterials.

Public Comments – on Policy Item #2B:

1. Michael Fischer
2. Al Miller

The following Public Comments were received and read into the record during the meeting.

Public Comments Read into the Record – on Policy Item #2B:

1. Cathy Hanville
2. Barbara Chan
3. Sherry Drobner

From:	Michael Fischer
To:	City Clerk
Cc:	Greg Lyman; Paul Fadelli; Janet Abelson; Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto; Gabe Quinto; Karen Pinkos; Alexandra Orologas
Subject:	Public Comment on Agenda Item 2-B, April 25, 2020 City Council Meeting.
Date:	Thursday, April 23, 2020 11:24:08 PM

It should come as no surprise that with a situation as complex and changeable at the Covid-19 pandemic that the facts and deadlines keep changing. I will detail those affecting the library hours decision later in this email. However, these changes do not change the underlying merits of keeping library hours except for Sunday hours. (The county has already made a decision not to have libraries open on Sunday.)

The number one reason to keep our library open for 46 hours is that the Covid-19 pandemic will make the need for our library greater, not less. The extra hours will not merely make our lives more pleasant, although for some of the more fortunate of us it will have this effect. For others, the neediest, it could literally make the difference between whether they can continue to live and work in the Bay Area in the era of Covid-19. The same economic impact that is negatively affecting the city's finances is negatively affecting the finances of many El Cerritans. The flip side of the loss of sales tax revenue is the numbers of people in our city who have lost their jobs, or have lost some of their pay. In considering what services to cut in response to reduced revenue, the city needs to focus on the needs of El Cerritans that have been most adversely affected by the pandemic.

Libraries generally are an inverse indicator, meaning that when times are tough, the need and demand for our libraries goes up. People can no longer afford to pay for the internet, so they come to the library. They can't afford to repair or replace the broken computer, so they come to the library. They lose their job, so they come to the library to research alternatives.

Our library is small. While it may have been adequately sized for the city when built in the late 1940s, it is now clearly inadequate in normal times for a city whose population has grown over 42% since then. Now, add the pressure that will be placed on that building by the increased needs of the population caused by the pandemic and add the need for more hours created by the need for physical distancing once the library reopens. This is not a time for reducing library hours. To do so is a gross disservice to El Cerrito. Without adequate hours we might be in the position of literally turning people away from using the invaluable resource that is our library.

In the past I have opposed cutting hours on the ground that it solves our financial problems in part on the backs of the neediest. The pandemic has dramatically increased the ranks of the neediest in our city and will continue to do so. This is not the time for a cut in one of the most important services to the great numbers who have been or will be badly hurt by the pandemic. Because of decisions by the county, we have already lost our Sunday hours district wide. Removing additional hours is not merely pouring salt on a wound, it's throwing a drowning person a lead anchor.

In the past I've noted that the city did not need to reach a decision on hours by the end of April. It turns out that that information was correct when stated but now is wrong. The county library staff this week informed cities that if they wish to reduce city funded hours at all for the coming fiscal year, they must notify the county by April 30. It is unfortunate that the city must make the decision on hours in the absence of a consideration of other items which can be cut. But the need to make the decision should not overcome the strong disservice we would be doing to our population by cutting library hours more than the 4 hours normally open on Sunday.

The cost of the library hours, present and future, has also been in question. The figures I'm quoting here were verified in a telephone conversation with the County Librarian on Thursday, April 23. As noted in the City Manager's memorandum, the estimated cost of keeping our library open during fiscal year 2020-2021 an additional 11 hours per week (i.e., six days a week) is $111,399. It should be noted that this figure is an estimate. The city does not pay the estimate but, rather, pays the actual cost which is almost always less. This is an 8% reduction in the estimate for the current (2019-2020) fiscal year of $121,042, and it is a 12-¼% reduction from the amount of $127,000 for funding library hours that the council originally adopted. (The council's action was taken at its June 6, 2017 meeting as item 7-A on the agenda.) The actual cost for the current fiscal year is less and also includes the elimination of added hour costs starting April 8 for the time the library will be closed under the County Health Order. Library staff, like much of city staff, have not been furloughed during this time but render other services while working from home.

I would urge the council to accept the largest number of hours estimated by the county as that overwhelmingly provides the least expensive per hour cost. The estimate for four hours a week comes to $21,736 per hour. The estimate for 11 hours a week comes to $10,127 per hour for an incremental cost of $3,493 per hour for the additional 7 hours. The extra hours are and will be desperately needed by our patrons and we should provide the largest, and least expensive, number of additional hours.

As I have noted, I have the greatest respect for our city staff and our city council. I would not want to be in their stead in determining what services to cut of the many wanted and needed by our population. But I do know that near the top of any list of services to keep is the moderate availability of our library that would be provided by being open 46 hours a week.

I have cited many figures in my previous comments showing the effects of the additional hours on library usage. In conclusion, though, I want to emphasize one – the over 50% increase in computer logins seen in the period the library has been open 50 hours a week. This increase is unique to El Cerrito and correlates directly with the period of added hours. It is not a system-wide increase; usage in the rest of the county was actually flat over the same period.

The most likely conclusion from this data is the computer logins – the number one tool in overcoming the digital divide – are more or less at capacity given the number of hours the libraries countywide are open. Opening the library additional hours provides additional time when people can use the computers. A 43% increase in open hours results in an over 50% increase in computer logins. The need for library computer usage will only grow in the era of this pandemic. It is essential to what we should expect from our city in even the direst of circumstances; do not take it away.

Michael A. Fischer
[redacted]
El Cerrito City Designated Library Commissioner
Vice Chair, Contra Costa County Library Commission

Working for an Affordable and Appropriate 21st Century Library for El Cerrito

Holly Charléty

From: Al Miller [redacted]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2020 10:04 AM
To: City Clerk
Cc: Greg Lyman; Paul Fadelli; Janet Abelson; Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto; Gabe Quinto; Karen Pinkos; Alexandra Orologas
Subject: Public Comment on Agenda Item 2-B, April 25, 2020 City Council Meeting.

My name is Al Miller and I live in El Cerrito.

Mayor Lyman, Mayor Pro-Tem Fadelli, Councilmembers Abelson, Pardue-Okimoto, & Quinto:

I strongly concur with the public comments sent to you by Michael Fischer on April 23, 2020 at 23:23:13 PDT. I believe all of his comments offer compelling reasons why you should not reduce hours of operation for the El Cerrito Library.

However, because our library is the only El Cerrito location that offers free computer use and instruction, including internet access, i repeat the following portion of Michael's comments for emphasis:

"I have cited many figures in my previous comments showing the effects of the additional hours on library usage. In conclusion, though, I want to emphasize one – the over 50% increase in computer logins seen in the period the library has been open 50 hours a week. This increase is unique to El Cerrito and correlates directly with the period of added hours. It is not a system-wide increase; usage in the rest of the county was actually flat over the same period.

The most likely conclusion from this data is the computer logins – the number one tool in overcoming the digital divide – are more or less at capacity given the number of hours the libraries countywide are open. Opening the library additional hours provides additional time when people can use the computers. A 43% increase in open hours results in an over 50% increase in computer logins. The need for library computer usage will only grow in the era of this pandemic. It is essential to what we should expect from our city in even the direst of circumstances; do not take it away."

Since the County will be closing all of the branch libraries on Sundays, the 11 hours of funding you are considering cutting, might be the only hours that some library users have available to gain needed computer and internet access. Cutting those 11 hours, whenever they might be, would be cutting 100% of this valuable access for some. Please do not do this.

Al Miller

From: Cathy Hanville
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public comment agenda item 2B
Date: Friday, April 24, 2020 5:27:06 PM

I watched some of the meeting Tuesday night and felt more confused at the end of the meeting than before the meeting. I recognize that council was trying to give us clearer information but it felt like everything became less clear. I would like to request the following.

The city manager/finance director issue a one page update which clearly states
1. The projected deficit for 19/20 and the assumptions used to come up with that.
2. The projected deficit for 20/21 and the assumptions used to come up with that. I understand that number is a moving target but I would like to know what the current number is. I would also like a clear explanation as to why the Finance Director's number is so different from the consultants number. I also would love to know how the deficit for 19/20 will affect 20/21. If we come into 20/21 with a 3-4 million dollar deficit doesn't that mean additional cuts for that amount have to be made in top of the 4 million in proposed cuts?
3. List of cuts made or proposed (being clear which are which) for 19/20
4. List of cuts made or proposed for 20/21
5. Explanation as to why substantive cuts have not been made for FY 19/20
6. Explanation as to when newly proposed cuts will occur given that the budget process has changed
7. Answer the question as to what the current interest rate for the 9 million dollar loan is and define that in dollars cost. Answer the same question as to what interest rates are projected if we get the next loan and translate into dollar cost.

i would like to request that the city manager be required to put all of this information into her next report.

I would also suggest that council and staff stop saying we were on the right track before the pandemic. We may have ended 19/20 without a deficit before this. That is uncertain but within the realm of possibility. But if we were on the right track we would have had at Minimum a 10% reserve which could have been helping us now. That did not happen. There are years worth of CAFRS that saying that there is a going concern as a material issue or stating it as a pending issue. Clearly we were not on the right track.

Thank you
Cathy Hanville
El Cerrito

From: Barbara Chan CMC
To: City Clerk
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #Budget
Date: Saturday, April 25, 2020 9:59:12 AM

Dear City Council Members:

For transparency, the city manager and finance director should issue a concise page update that clearly states (without the preamble about covid-19 and any other excuses for why El Cerrito finances are in shambles)
1. The projected deficit for 19/20 and the assumptions used to come up with that number.

2. The projected deficit for 20/21 and the assumptions used to come up with that number. What is the current number?
Why is the Finance Director's number so different from the consultant's number.

How will the deficit for 19/20 will affect 20/21?. If we come into 20/21 with a 3-4 million dollar deficit doesn't that mean additional cuts for that amount have to be made in top of the 4 million in proposed cuts?

3. List of cuts made or proposed (being clear which are which) for 19/20

4. List of cuts made or proposed for 20/21

5. Explanation as to why substantive cuts have not been made for FY 19/20
Explain why the city manager has accepted no responsibility for the financial situation our city is in.
Explain why the city manager and senior staff, who earn high salaries, have not taken pay cuts

6. Explanation as to when newly proposed cuts will occur given that the budget process has changed

7. What is the current interest rate for the 9 million dollar loan and how much does that actually mean in dollar cost.

What interest rates are projected if we get the next loan and translate into dollar cost.

i would like to request that the city manager be required to put all of this information into her next report.

If the City Manager past and current had been doing their job, El Cerrito would have had a 10% reserve and our bond rating would be higher. The CAFRS says that there has been a going concern. Clearly we were not on the right track and it's time for city management to own up to it, take responsibility, be accountable, and share in the burden of resurrecting this city.

Barbara Chan
[redacted]
El Cerrito, CA [redacted]
[redacted]

From: Sherry Drobner
To: City Clerk
Subject: Library Hours PUblic Comment
Date: Saturday, April 25, 2020 11:18:45 AM

Dear Mayor and City Council,
I'm listening to the discussion and want to applaud Council Member Pardue-Okimoto for the support of library and her deep understanding of the need for all Departments to do their job. An interfund loan seems like another mistake, and appreciate the City Manager for pointing this out to the City Council members.

Sincerely,
SHerry Drobner