

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
SIERRA MADRE CITY COUNCIL**

*Robert Parkhurst, Mayor
Kristine Lowe, Mayor Pro Tem
Edward Garcia, Council Member
Gene Goss, Council Member
Kelly Kriebs, Council Member*

Sue Spears, City Treasurer

**Thursday, January 21, 2025
5:30 pm**

**City of Sierra Madre
City Council Chambers
232 W. Sierra Madre Boulevard
Sierra Madre, California 91024**



The Brown Act provides the public with an opportunity to make public comments at any public meeting; As an alternative to attending the meeting in person, public comment may be made by e-mail to PublicComment@SierraMadreCA.gov by 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting. E-mails will be acknowledged at the Council meeting, filed into public record, and scanned onto the City website for public review.

The meeting will be streamed live on the City's website at www.SierraMadreCA.gov, on Foothills Media website at <http://www.foothillsmedia.org/sierramadre> and broadcast on Government Access Channel 3 (Spectrum).

CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of a City Council meeting is to conduct City business. Members of the public that behave in a manner that interrupts or obstructs the Council's ability to conduct City business may be asked to leave the meeting. Any and all demonstrations that disrupt, interrupt, or obstruct the Council's ability to conduct City business are prohibited. No signs, posters or other large objects shall be brought into the Council Chambers or other meeting place if doing so would disrupt, disturb or otherwise impede the orderly course of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe, Council Member Garcia, Council Member Goss, Council Member Kriebs

Mayor Parkhurst called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m. City Clerk Aguilar called the roll.

Present: Mayor Robert Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Kristine Lowe, and Council Members Edward Garcia, Gene Goss, and Kelly Kriebs.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Jose Reynoso, City Manager
Miguel Hernandez, Assistant City Manager
Aleks Giragosian, City Attorney
Laura Aguilar, Deputy City Manager/City Clerk
James Carlson, Senior Management Analyst
Brent, Bartlett, Fire Chief
Gustavo Barrientos, Chief of Police
Clare Lin, Planning Manager
Joshua Wolf, Senior Planner
Arnulfo Yanez, Public Works Director
James Carlson, Senior Management Analyst
Steven McGee, Water Superintendent
Oscar Millan, IT Manager

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INSPIRATION

Mayor Pro Tem Lowe led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Pro Tem Kris Lowe began the meeting with reflections on recent events, including the impact of the Eaton Fire and Martin Luther King Jr. Day. She expressed gratitude to Sierra Madre residents and acknowledged the challenges faced by neighboring cities like Altadena and Pasadena, which have been more severely affected. She highlighted the historical significance of these neighboring cities in advancing desegregation and inclusivity, tying their efforts to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She offered prayers for their rebuilding efforts and expressed hope that they would maintain the values of inclusivity.

Mayor Pro Tem Lowe then read a poem titled *After the Fire* by Steve Emig, which she found relevant to the community's experience following the fire. The poem vividly depicted the emotional aftermath of a devastating fire, symbolizing loss, resilience, and hope for renewal, embodied by a single green blade of grass that survived the destruction. She emphasized the poem's message of perseverance and rebuilding, encouraging the community to find strength and inspiration to move forward together.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Vote of the City Council to proceed with City business.

City Manager Reynoso asked that agenda be amended to pull the introduction of the new Police Department staff members from the agenda.

Council Member Garcia asked that Consent item (C), with consideration to award consulting services contract for furniture, fixtures, and equipment services for the Library Meaningful Improvement Project to TSK Architects be listed in the amount to not exceed \$25,000.

Council Member Kriebs made a motion to approve the agenda as amended.

Council Member Goss seconded the motion.

Mayor Parkhurst called for a vote of the Council:

Ayes:	Mayor Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe, and Council Members Garcia, Goss, and Kriebs.	
Noes:	None.	None.
Absent:	None.	
Abstain:	None.	

The motion to move to approve the agenda as amended was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

COUNCIL REPORT OUT FROM CLOSED SESSION

City Attorney Giragosian reported on the Closed Session meeting, held at 4:30 pm on January 21, 2025.

1. Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release (G.C. 54957). No reportable action.
2. Conference with Legal Counsel Existing Litigation (G.C. 54956.9(d)(1)) prejudice the position of the City in the litigation. Case Name: Project Sierra Madre v. City of Sierra Madre et al. Case No. 24STCP01652. No reportable action.
3. Conference with Legal Counsel; Initiation of Litigation (G.C. 54956.9(d)(4)). Number of cases: 1. No reportable action.
4. Threat to Public Services or Facilities (G.C. 54957). Consultation with: Fire Chief Bartlett and Police Chief Barrientos. Reportable action: Council Member Kriebs recused due to conflict of interest.

APPROVAL FOR READING RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES

Vote of the Council to read all ordinances and resolutions by title only and waive the reading in full.

A motion to approve the reading of resolutions and ordinances was made by Mayor Pro Tem Lowe.

Member Garcia seconded the motion.

Mayor Parkhurst called for a vote of the Council:

Ayes:	Mayor Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe, and Council Members Garcia, Goss, and Kriebs.
Noes:	None.
Absent:	None.
Abstain:	None.

The motion to approve the reading of all ordinances and resolutions by title only, and waive the reading in full, was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approval of the December 10, 2024 City Council meeting minutes.

Approval of the January 9th, 2025 Special Emergency City Council meeting minutes.

Council Member Garcia asked that the January 9th, 2025 Special Emergency City Council meeting minutes reflect consideration of Resolution 25-07, proclaiming the existence of a local emergency caused by the Eaton Fire.

Council Member Kriebs made a motion to approve minutes as amended.

Council Member Garcia seconded the motion.

Mayor Kriebs called for a vote of the Council:

Ayes: Mayor Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe, and Council Members Garcia, Goss, and Kriebs.
 Noes: None.
 Absent: None.
 Abstain: None.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Reporting of Council Members' activities related to City business.

Council Member Garcia:

- He attended the Candlelight Walk in December.
- He participated in the ending of the Blessing of the Menorah event, which was well attended, with over 100 participants.
- The Senior Community Commission meeting, scheduled for the Thursday after the fire began (January 9th, 2025), was canceled due to the emergency, so there were no updates from that meeting.
- Council Member Garcia attended multiple incident meetings for the Eaton Fire virtually and visited the YMCA several times during the response efforts.
- He received regular updates from City Manager Reynoso throughout the process but noted the timeline of events and meetings he attended as of December 10, 2024 was complex due to the nature of the emergency.

Council Member Kriebs:

- She attended the Candlelight Walk in December, describing it as an inspiring and community-building event.
- Her focus in recent weeks has been on ensuring the public received timely information, including recirculating updates through Facebook Live, Nixle, and other communication platforms.
- She visited the YMCA multiple times and expressed gratitude for the partnership with the YMCA as well as the efforts of individual citizens who organized relief efforts immediately after the fire. She specifically commended Fred Thomas and Russ Meek for their consistent contributions and dedication.
- Along with Council Member Garcia, she toured the Auburn water tanks and highlighted the city's efforts in maintaining defensible spaces, which helped protect the tanks from fire damage despite active flames being nearby. She praised the city's proactive mitigation measures that safeguarded critical assets.

Council Member Goss:

- While he did not attend the Candlelight Walk, he highlighted the Rose Float, recognizing its impressive display at Kersting Court and during the Rose Parade. He commended the Rose Float Association, its volunteers, and the committee for their excellent work, expressing pride in the community's annual accomplishment.
- He noted the postponement of two meetings due to the Eaton Fire:
 - The Library Project Ad Hoc Committee meeting, originally scheduled for January 13.
 - The Foothill Employment Training Consortium Policy Board meeting, which has yet to be rescheduled.

- Goss attended the Council of Governments (COG) meeting in Monrovia, where:
 - A new third vice president, Michael Allawos, a Council Member from Glendora, was elected. Goss cast his vote in favor, aligning with the majority.
 - A significant policy was passed to create an affiliate program for non-voting agencies, allowing them to participate in committees, policy discussions, and pay dues. Goss supported this initiative.
- He emphasized the City Council's continuous involvement and coordination during the Eaton Fire:
 - All five council members remained in constant communication with each other, the City Manager, and the Mayor throughout the emergency, even during the early hours of the night.
 - Goss acknowledged the importance of stepping back to allow professionals to handle the crisis while supporting them from the background.

He praised the Mayor for his leadership and representation during the events.

Mayor Pro Tem Lowe:

- She participated in the Rose Float decoration, enjoying the experience with her mother-in-law. She noted that volunteers for the float come not only from the local community but also from out of state. She encouraged residents to consider hosting out-of-town volunteers during the holiday season to support their efforts.
- She attended the Candlelight Vigil, highlighting its inclusive and collaborative nature, with many religions represented. She expressed appreciation for the community's participation.
- Lowe praised the volunteers who organized relief efforts at the YMCA following the Eaton Fire. She recognized individuals who devoted significant time to these efforts, including Alana Thomas, Mary Pines, Andromeda Liberata, Heidi Hartman, Matt Fellows, Liz Nuccio (who donated time despite personal losses in Altadena), Casey Clark, Troy High, and Natalie Turco.
- She acknowledged the work of neighboring fire chiefs, Chief Richard Oishi (a Sierra Madre resident) and Chief Tom Devlin, who coordinated with the Sierra Madre Fire Department to respond effectively to the fire. She commended their knowledge of the city and their quick action in fighting the fire.
- Lowe also expressed gratitude to the Sierra Madre Police Department for ensuring a safe and efficient evacuation process, praising their efforts in keeping residents safe.

Mayor Parkhurst:

- Community Events:
 - Attended the Transportation Committee meeting on December 11, where progress was made on refining the city bus schedule. Final approvals are expected in upcoming meetings.
 - Stopped by the Historical Society Christmas gathering, celebrating the group's dedication to preserving the city's history.
 - Participated in the 75th anniversary celebration of Jim Plumbing at the Chamber of Commerce's new offices on December 12.
 - Attended the Sierra Madre Museum open house on December 14, which included carolers, and later joined the Santa parade from the YMCA to the firehouse.

- Fire Response and Support:
 - Expressed gratitude for the overwhelming community and statewide support during the Eaton Fire. He highlighted outreach from Assembly Member Chris Holden, Senator Susan Rubio, Supervisor Kathryn Barger, and Congresswoman Judy Chu, who offered assistance and resources to aid the city's recovery.
 - Recognized the collaborative efforts of neighboring police departments (e.g., Arcadia, Baldwin Park, Monrovia, and others) and fire departments from as far as Arizona, Nevada, and Northern California.
 - Praised city staff and leadership, including Bob Spears for managing the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), library and community services staff for communication efforts, and the fire and police departments for ensuring safety and effective coordination during the fire.
- City Contributions:
 - Commended the YMCA for its ongoing recovery work, including hosting a distribution center for water, food, and supplies. He encouraged donations of nonperishable items, bottled water, and volunteers to support their efforts.
 - Noted City Hall's role in providing water, N-95 masks, and other assistance, as well as the library's provision of emergency services during the fire.
- Other Notable Updates:
 - Shared that First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom visited the YMCA on Martin Luther King Jr. Day to highlight recovery efforts and engage with the community.
 - Announced upcoming events, including a craft workshop at the Hart Park Senior Center and opportunities to volunteer for trail repairs led by Bob Spears.
 - Highlighted the importance of donations to the Fletcher Fund to further recovery and community support. (www.sierramadrefoundation.org 501(c)(3) organization – EIN-45-1489623)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CODE OF CONDUCT

Your participation is welcomed and invited at all City Council meetings. The Council requests that participants refrain from making personal, slanderous, profane, or disruptive remarks. A person who continues to disrupt the orderly conduct of the meeting after being warned by the Mayor or designee to cease the disruption may be precluded from further participation in the meeting. No signs, posters, or other large objects shall be brought into the Council Chambers or other meeting places if doing so would disrupt, disturb, or otherwise impede the orderly course of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Council will listen to the public on any item on the agenda. In addition, the Council will devote time for public comment on items not on the agenda. Addressing the City Council from the audience is not permitted; all comments addressing the Council must be made from the podium. Only public comments made from the podium will be recognized by the City Council and entered into public record.

Providing Public Comment for Items on the Meeting Agenda

Persons wishing to speak on any item on the agenda will be called during the designated comment period. Persons wishing to speak on closed session items have a choice of doing so either immediately prior to the closed session or at the time for comments on items at the open session.

Provide Public Comment for Topics not on the Meeting Agenda

Time shall be devoted to provide public comments for items not on the agenda. Under the Brown Act, Council is prohibited from taking action on items not on the agenda, but the matter may be referred to staff or to a subsequent meeting.

Providing Public Comment

1. Any person wishing to provide public comment is asked to complete a comment card. Each speaker will be limited to up to three continuous minutes, which may not be delegated or deferred.
2. Comments addressed to the Council shall occur from the podium during the appropriate time on the agenda and should not be construed as an opportunity for dialogue

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Parkhurst opened the meeting for public comment.

Jean Richardson, 575 N Hermosa Ave: Jean Richardson, a resident of 575 N. Hermosa, expressed gratitude to the firefighters for saving her home and preventing further damage after the fire at 585 N. Hermosa. She raised concerns about the lack of a time frame for demolishing the burned structure next door, citing safety and health hazards. She suggested the city assist homeowners by coordinating with demolition companies and establishing a reasonable timeline of no more than three months.

Additionally, she proposed the city hold an open forum with experts from institutions like Cal Poly Pomona or UC Riverside to provide guidance on replanting vegetation to prevent soil erosion and mudslides. She emphasized the need for the city to offer support and clear information to help homeowners recover and restore the community. She concluded by thanking the firefighters and police for their efforts.

David Gordon: expressed gratitude to the City Council, staff, and the fire and police departments for their efforts during the recent fire.

As president of the Sierra Madre Playhouse, he announced that programming, which was temporarily canceled, would resume with a Lunar New Year festival. Highlights include:

- A youth program on Saturday featuring a play about Patsy Mink, the first Asian-American congresswoman.
- A screening of the first known Chinese-American feature film from 1916, directed by Marion Wong.
- Performances by the Bob Baker Marionettes, including a lion dance and children's workshop.
- Various cultural events such as a concert by the Asian American New Music Institute, a Philippine folk arts celebration, and a jazz series performance by Eric Ching.

He emphasized the diversity and cultural significance of the upcoming events and invited the community to participate.

Seeing no one else come forward, Mayor Parkhurst closed public comment and brought the matter back to Council for further discussion or a motion.

PRESENTATIONS **EATON FIRE UPDATE**

City Manager Reynoso:

City Manager Jose Reynoso began the Eaton Fire update by expressing gratitude to the City's 100 employees for their extraordinary efforts during the emergency. He specifically thanked individuals and teams, including YMCA staff, communication support personnel, and key members of his executive team, such as Fire Chief Brett Bartlett, Police Chief Barrientos, and other department heads like the Deputy City

Manager, Public Works Director, City Librarian, and Water Superintendent Steven McGee, who ensured hydrants remained pressurized.

Reynoso also acknowledged the contributions of the Community Services team, Finance Department, and dedicated police and fire personnel, highlighting that Sierra Madre's strength lies in its people. He expressed pride in the collective efforts of all involved.

Fire Chief Bartlett:

Chief Bartlett detailed the fire's containment status, noting that 89% has been contained, with 37 structures threatened and 15 destroyed in Sierra Madre. He commended the department's immediate response, including mobilizing nine personnel for 36 continuous hours until additional resources arrived. Mutual aid from nearby agencies, such as Arcadia and Santa Fe Springs, was instrumental in maintaining services and ensuring firefighter safety.

He emphasized community engagement in fire prevention through programs like the Fire Safe Council and Fire Wise Communities, which offer education and potential funding opportunities for mitigation efforts. Chief Bartlett recommended creating a Community Risk Reduction Officer position to improve public education and compliance with fire codes.

During the Q&A, Chief Bartlett discussed the department's use of pre-planning measures, such as red-flag parking restrictions, which provided critical access during the fire. He highlighted the rapid evacuation timeline and addressed the importance of partnerships that ensured resource availability. The council inquired about future prevention strategies, including community involvement in fire-safe initiatives and potential benefits such as insurance rate reductions. Chief Bartlett encouraged residents to contact the fire department for more information on joining these programs.

Police Chief Barrientos:

Chief Barrientos expressed gratitude to the Sierra Madre Police Department, supporting law enforcement agencies, city staff, the fire department, the National Guard, and volunteers for their collective efforts during the fire. He highlighted the police department's pivotal role in evacuating two-thirds of the city north of Sierra Madre Boulevard and their swift activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which coordinated over 50 officers from neighboring cities to assist in the evacuation.

After the evacuations, the department transitioned to securing evacuated areas through fixed posts and extra patrols to deter criminal activity and ensure property safety. The National Guard supplemented these efforts, and the department maintained maximum deployment until the situation stabilized. The repopulation process was conducted in phases to ensure safety, and the department continued to support recovery efforts, such as aiding the YMCA and ensuring public safety.

During the Q&A, Chief Barrientos emphasized the effectiveness of early evacuations, clear communication through Nixle and Genasys systems, and door-to-door notifications. Council members commended the department for their professionalism and the community's high compliance rate with evacuation orders, which contributed to the overall safety. Discussions included exploring additional emergency communication tools, such as a halo siren, and enhancing existing systems like Nixle and AM 1630. The department's collaboration with external agencies and the community's cooperation were credited as critical factors in the successful response.

Public Works Director Yanez:

Public Works Director Yanez provided updates on the department's efforts in response to the fire, including debris flow mitigation, sandbag distribution, and dam maintenance. He outlined plans for installing K-rails in the northern parts of the city to mitigate mudflows, with 28 K-rails already placed and an additional 25 arriving soon. The city has 3,000 filled sandbags ready for emergency use, with another 10,000 expected shortly. Sandbags and sand are available for residents at the city yard and firehouse.

Yanez highlighted the collaboration with LA County Public Works, the Army Corps of Engineers, and former Public Works Director Chris Cimino to address potential mudflows and debris clearance. He detailed plans to clear debris from the city dam starting January 27, with operations expected to take 2–3 weeks. A traffic route for the debris removal process is being coordinated with law enforcement.

During the Q&A, Yanez and council members discussed:

- **Mudflow Hotline:** Residents can contact LA County’s 24/7 hotline (1-800-933-0930) to request property assessments by county engineers within 48 hours.
- **K-Rails:** Efforts to anchor K-rails securely are underway, though Yanez cautioned that severe pressure from debris could still move them. He urged residents to avoid relying on K-rails for personal safety during mudflows.
- **Resident Safety:** There is a need for public education on what to do during a mudflow. Yanez committed to working with LA County and the fire department to develop or distribute safety guidelines.
- **Evacuation Plans:** The council emphasized the importance of having clear evacuation plans and educating the community about mudflow risks.

The presentation highlighted the department’s proactive measures and collaboration with regional partners to protect the city and residents from mudflow hazards.

Senior Management Analyst Carlson:

Senior Management Analyst James Carlson provided updates on trash services, wildlife activity, and coordination with LA County Public Works regarding flood control and recovery efforts.

- **Trash Services:** Residents and commercial owners are urged to continue using Athens Services. Despite delays in some areas, Athens maintained regular schedules to avoid confusion. Spoiled food bins remain available at Sierra Vista Park, with pickup being closely coordinated.
- **Wildlife Update:** Wildlife behavior after the fire was discussed. Coyotes are expected to behave unpredictably, while larger mammals like deer, bears, and mountain lions are likely to avoid the area for 3–4 weeks before returning in search of food. Resources from the Wildlife Disaster Network and UC Davis Wildlife Team will be shared with residents.
- **Flood Control Coordination:** Carlson attended a watershed meeting and noted that localized flood flow maps for the Eaton Canyon fire area will be available on Friday. These maps will provide critical information for flood phase forecasting (Phase 1, 2, and 3) aligned with readiness protocols (Ready, Set, Go). LA County will issue 72-hour, 48-hour, and 12-hour precipitation notices with forecasts for specific areas of Sierra Madre.
- **Q&A Highlights:**
 - Residents should not feed or provide water to wildlife.
 - The small amount of rain forecasted for the weekend may help identify areas at risk of sliding, providing useful insights for future mitigation.
 - Public Works coordinates private debris cleanup and works with LA County engineers on priority areas.

Carlson emphasized ongoing efforts to manage waste, wildlife, and flood mitigation, as well as the importance of community patience and cooperation during recovery.

Water Superintendent McGee:

Superintendent Steven McGee updated the council on the city’s water system status and efforts following the fire:

- **Water System Preparedness and Response:**
 - Ahead of the wind event, reservoirs were filled to maximum capacity to ensure sufficient water for city needs and fire suppression, even in the event of power loss.
 - Despite the fire's impact, the city's water system maintained pressure and showed no signs of contamination or infrastructure compromise.
 - A "Do Not Drink, Do Not Boil" water advisory was issued on January 14, 2025, for Zone 3 due to the presence of burned structures connected to the city's water system, following state directives.
- **Testing and Monitoring:**
 - The city worked with Water Quality Treatment Solutions (WQTS) to draft and implement a comprehensive monitoring plan focused on assessing potential contamination, particularly for benzene and volatile organic compounds (VOCs).
 - The plan was approved by the State Water Resources Control Board, and sampling began immediately. Testing includes a full VOC panel beyond the required benzene tests.
 - Initial lab results are expected within 5–7 days, with additional bacteriological sampling conducted to ensure safety.
- **Hydraulic System and Redundancy:**
 - The city's three water zones—each served by different reservoirs—operate on a gravity-fed system. Zone 3 relies on the Auburn Reservoir, while Zones 1 and 2 have added redundancy to maintain pressure even if reservoir levels drop.
 - During the fire, staff ran additional pumps (boosters) to sustain pressure, showcasing expertise and system flexibility.
- **Proactive Measures:**
 - Staff took immediate steps to collect water samples from affected areas, including burned structures, even before state directives.
 - The city is committed to transparency and resident safety, ensuring all results are reviewed by both the city and the State Water Resources Control Board.
- **Q&A Highlights:**
 - **Distinction Between Zones:** Residents were informed about the difference between Genasys zones used for evacuation and water zones based on reservoir connections.
 - **VOCs and Fire Contamination:** VOCs can enter water systems through burned materials like PVC pipes and synthetic products if pressure is lost. However, the city maintained consistent pressure throughout the event, minimizing risk.
 - **Timeline for Restoring Water Use:** The city expects to resolve the advisory once test results are reviewed and approved by the state, with no anticipated delays from additional testing.
 - **Emergency Preparedness:** Coordination with the state and robust system design, including strategic pressure valves, ensure water safety during emergencies.

IT Manager Millan:

Oscar Millan, the city's IT Manager, shared his experiences and insights from managing technology during the recent emergency:

1. **Challenges Faced During the Event:**
 - **Power Loss:**
 - The city's Achilles heel during the event was power outages, particularly at the city yard.
 - Batteries typically provide 6–8 hours of backup, but extended outages required quick improvisation, including repurposing equipment from City Hall and utilizing generators.
 - IT staff worked overnight to maintain critical infrastructure, such as water system controls, ensuring continuous operation.

- Technology-Dependent Systems:
 - Systems like the SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) for water management, computer-aided dispatch for fire and police, and communications infrastructure (e.g., radio systems) were vital and required constant monitoring and adjustment.
2. Collaboration and Staff Efforts:
 - Cross-department collaboration was critical, with staff wearing multiple hats to respond to challenges in real time.
 - The teamwork and dedication of all city departments were noted as inspiring and effective.
 3. Infrastructure Successes:
 - Redundancy and Backup Systems:
 - The IT team prepared extensively, deploying resources like satellite internet (Starlink), dual broadband providers (Spectrum and Frontier), 5G hotspots, and battery backups.
 - Despite power fluctuations and outages, IT maintained connectivity and operational continuity throughout the event.
 - Proactive Measures:
 - Batteries were reinforced ahead of the event, allowing for extended uptime of critical systems.
 - A portable Starlink system provided additional redundancy.
 4. Reflection and Future Improvements:
 - Power Resilience:
 - Millan emphasized the need for improved power solutions, such as large-capacity lithium-ion batteries paired with solar panels, to enable days or even weeks of backup power.
 - Existing solar infrastructure (e.g., 110 kW battery at the city yard) could potentially be expanded for greater backup capacity.
 - System Redundancy:
 - IT continues to explore ways to enhance system reliability, including additional power filtration systems to prevent issues from “dirty power” generated during outages.
 - Technology as a Lifesaver:
 - Millan highlighted the critical role of technology in saving lives during the emergency and underscored the importance of continued investment in IT infrastructure.

Q&A Highlights:

1. Improving Power Infrastructure:
 - Councilmembers discussed the potential for solar-powered battery systems to address power issues long-term.
 - Millan noted that while the city currently uses portable batteries and generators, a large-scale investment in solar and battery storage would provide the most robust solution.
2. Lessons from Past Outages:
 - Reflecting on the 2011 outage, the city has made significant upgrades to battery capacity and backup systems. However, further investment is needed to ensure resilience against simultaneous outages at multiple locations.
3. Critical System Sensitivity:
 - IT systems, including SCADA, require clean and stable power. Backup power systems, such as advanced battery filtration devices, are crucial to protect sensitive equipment.

4. SCADA System Access and Continuity:

- The SCADA system is accessible remotely through VPN, enabling offsite monitoring and adjustments. However, all supporting infrastructure (servers, batteries, etc.) must remain operational for the system to function.

5. City Hall Power Resilience:

- City Hall is equipped with a turbine generator tested before the event. It provides reliable backup power without the issues associated with "dirty power."

6. Future Contingency Planning:

- Councilmembers discussed integrating emergency power from sources like Tesla batteries and leveraging solar infrastructure through Clean Power Alliance programs.
- Millan noted that City Hall's solar and battery backup plans are in progress, with a focus on powering critical systems like the EOC, dispatch, and essential offices.

Council recess taken at 8:15 p.m. during the presentation and reconvened at 8:25 p.m. to continue the Eaton Fire Update.

Assistant City Manager Hernandez:

Miguel Hernandez commended staff for their dedication and effectiveness during the emergency. Many employees participated in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the first time and performed exceptionally well.

EOC Operations and Emergency Proclamation Timeline

- The EOC is currently operating at Level 3 (remote), focusing on cost collection for recovery.
- Emergency proclamations must be issued within 10 days of the EOC activation, ratified by the City Council within seven days.
- For this incident, the proclamation was ratified on January 9, beginning a five-day timeline to gather and submit initial damage estimates.

Initial Damage Estimate (IDE)

- Staff compiled costs across several categories:
 - Roads and bridges
 - Water control facilities
 - Public utilities (e.g., water and sewer pipes)
 - Parks and trails
- The IDE team, including members from finance, H.R., planning, and other departments, submitted a \$1.9 million estimate ahead of the January 14 deadline, later moved up to January 13.

Next Steps for Cost Recovery

- A public assistance request has been submitted to FEMA. A call from FEMA is expected within two weeks to begin the audit and review process.
- Ongoing tasks include:
 - Collecting invoices from departments
 - Including costs for protective measures (e.g., police, fire, emergency activities) and debris removal in future estimates.
- Recovery efforts will continue for months, with FEMA and Cal OES providing guidance.

After-Action Reporting

- The city will begin an after-action reporting phase, which involves soliciting feedback and creating a comprehensive event overview. This resource-intensive process will aid future emergency preparedness.
- Hernandez noted that while contracting a third party for after-action reporting may be possible, FEMA reimbursement for such costs is limited to about 5%.

- Overtime for staff working on the after-action reporting is recoverable under FEMA guidelines.

Discussion and Questions

- **Mudflows as a Continuation of the Incident:** There's uncertainty whether mudflows will be classified as part of the same incident or a separate one. Items purchased for mudflow preparation may be partially included in the recovery effort.
- **Staff Workload and Cost Recovery:** Hernandez clarified that overtime costs for staff involved in after-action reporting are recoverable.

Deputy City Manager / Public Information Officer Aguilar:

Deputy City Manager Laura Aguilar: Communication Efforts During the Crisis

Laura Aguilar detailed the city's communication strategy during the emergency, emphasizing the rapid response and teamwork involved to keep residents informed.

Initial Communication and Alerts

- First Nixle alert issued at 1:06 PM on January 7, warning of high winds and red flag restrictions.
- 6:43 PM: Nixle alert about a fire in the Eaton Canyon area.
- 7:23 PM: Evacuation warnings issued for Genasys Zones 1 and 16, within 40 minutes of the fire report.
- 8:08 PM: Expanded evacuation warnings to areas east of Grandview Avenue and north of Grove.
- 9:33 PM: Evacuation orders for Genasys Zones 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 15, and 16.

Collaboration and Public Assistance

- Aguilar and City Librarian Regan led the communication efforts, with critical support from city departments.
- City Hall and the library served as key hubs, collectively managing over 2,400 phone calls and 600 in-person visits from January 9–15.
- Library provided charging stations and a safe space for displaced residents.

Communication Channels

- Ten Facebook Live videos featuring updates from city officials, including City Manager Reynoso and Fire Chief Bartlett.
- 70 infographics created and shared to disseminate critical information.
- Published updates in Mountain Views News editions on January 11 and 18.
- Distributed FEMA resource packets, flood preparation guides, and N-95 masks to residents.
- Extended City Hall and library hours to provide additional support.
- Challenges with AM 1630 radio station noted due to outdated technology; improvements are being explored.

Support from Neighborhood Watch and Assistance Centers

- Neighborhood Watch captains helped relay information and check on neighbors.
- Staff worked 12-hour shifts at PCC Local Assistance Center, providing critical resources such as DMV services and disaster relief guidance.

Challenges and Future Improvements

- Communication was managed alongside regular duties and emergency response efforts.
- Addressed community feedback about audio quality in early Facebook Live videos and enhanced subsequent videos.
- Proposed improvements include better promotion of official city communication platforms (e.g., social media handles on the website) and expanding outreach through additional platforms like

YouTube.

Key Statistics

- 70 infographics created.
- 10 Facebook Live videos produced.
- Over 2,000 phone calls and 400 visitors at City Hall.
- Library served an additional 400 visitors for resources and charging stations.

Council Discussion

- Council members commended Aguilar and city staff for their exceptional efforts under resource constraints.
- Suggestions included:
 - Hiring additional communication staff to enhance future responses.
 - Improving accessibility by leveraging tools like YouTube and ensuring official communication handles are visible on the city's website.
- Recognized the teamwork across departments, with multiple staff wearing "different hats" to manage the crisis.

Planning Manager, Lin:

Planning Manager Lin provided an update on the Planning Department's role in the ongoing recovery efforts following the fire incident, focusing on structural assessments, debris removal, and coordination with partner agencies.

Structural Damage Assessment

- Completed damage assessments on 60 structures, with:
 - 26 red-tagged structures (15 primary residences and 11 accessory structures).
 - 34 structures categorized as damaged (combination of red- and green-tagged).
- Ongoing efforts to identify additional damaged structures; residents are encouraged to report damage via the city's email at damage.report@sierramadrecity.gov.

Debris Removal and Recovery Coordination

- City is part of a joint task force with federal, state, and county agencies, including:
 - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
 - US Army Corps of Engineers.
 - California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) and Los Angeles County Public Health.
- Recovery involves two key phases:
 - Phase 1: Hazardous material removal by the EPA to ensure safety before other work begins.
 - Phase 2: Fire-damaged debris removal and utility work, managed by the Army Corps of Engineers, including capping/removing damaged service lines.
- Property owners will need to sign a "right of entry" form to allow debris removal; the form is under review by the city attorney.

Federal Support and Local Coordination

- Efforts are being conducted at no cost to residents.
- EPA has established a staging site in Irwindale and is preparing to deploy 40–60 crews for cleanup.
- A public "story map" website and toll-free number will be provided by the EPA to update residents on cleanup progress.

Community Outreach and Challenges

- Coordination with residents who own red-tagged properties remains ongoing.

- Efforts to gather contact information include counter visits, past permit records, and collaboration with other departments.
- EPA and public health agencies will issue guidelines for residents regarding proximity to debris piles and safety measures.

Key Issues Discussed

- Concerns about displaced families and how to prioritize properties for cleanup.
- Lack of personalized communication with all affected property owners so far; only a small number have reached out to the city.
- Potential health hazards from toxic materials (e.g., lead, arsenic, asbestos, VOCs, and lithium-ion batteries).

Council Feedback and Next Steps

- Council emphasized the importance of tailored outreach to affected residents and requested updates on cleanup timelines.
- The Planning Department will remain engaged with partner agencies and provide regular updates to the council and community as new information becomes available.

City Attorney Giragosian:

City Attorney Alek Giragosian provided updates on federal, state, and local orders relevant to the city's response to the fire incident and its aftermath.

Federal Updates

- The Angeles National Forest is closed until the end of the month, with a prohibition on flying drones over the area due to interference risks with firefighting activities. Violators may face civil penalties of up to \$20,000.

State Updates

- Rebuild Process:
 - CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) requirements have been waived or suspended to fast-track rebuilding and debris removal efforts.
 - Fast-tracked approvals are in place for rebuilding single-family homes and ADUs damaged in the fire.

Emergency Protections:

- Price gouging (inflated prices for goods or contractor services) is illegal during emergencies.
- Unsolicited offers to purchase property below fair market value are prohibited for three months.
- Evictions are restricted, particularly for residents housing individuals displaced by the fire.
- Residents experiencing price gouging, eviction issues, or unsolicited purchase offers are encouraged to contact the California Department of Justice's Disaster Relief Task Force at 1-800-952-5225 or through their website.

Local Updates

- The LA County Public Health order prohibiting the use of leaf blowers remains in effect countywide. Residents are encouraged to report violations to local code enforcement.
- The city declared a local emergency, allowing for three executive orders issued by the City Manager (as Director of Emergency Services). Although the executive orders have expired, the local emergency declaration remains in effect and will be reconsidered at the next city council meeting.

Relevant State and Local Financial Relief

- State relief programs include proposed bills for financial aid, such as \$100 million allocated for small businesses affected by the fire.
- Discussion of additional funding proposals, including \$1 billion for wildfire response and \$1.5 billion for statewide climate resilience, is ongoing in the legislature.

Eviction Moratorium and Insurance Protections

- A moratorium on fire-related insurance cancellations ensures coverage for affected residents.
- Protections also extend to residents hosting displaced individuals, preventing evictions based on occupancy limits during the emergency.

Key Takeaways

- Residents affected by the incident are encouraged to report damages to the city through damage.report@sierramadrea.gov.
- The city continues to monitor legislative developments to ensure access to financial and recovery resources for residents and businesses.

The City Attorney highlighted the coordinated efforts across federal, state, and local agencies to protect residents' rights and facilitate recovery.

ACTION ITEMS

Regardless of staff recommendation on any agenda item, the City Council will consider such matters, including action to approve, conditionally approve, reject, or continue such item.

CONSENT

The reports were presented by City Clerk Aguilar.

a) **CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 25-01 APPROVING CERTAIN DEMANDS**

It is recommended that the City Council approve Resolution 25-01 approving payment of Ratified City Warrants in the aggregate amount of \$326,921.49; Ratified Sierra Madre Library Warrants in the aggregate amount of \$18,666.94; and Ratified Payroll Transfer in the aggregate amount of \$1,200,510.03; for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

b) **CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 25-02 APPROVING CERTAIN DEMANDS**

It is recommended that the City Council approve Resolution 25-02 approving payment of City Warrants in the aggregate amount of \$840,474.22, Sierra Madre Library Warrants in the aggregate amount of \$295.00, and Payroll Transfer in the aggregate amount of \$575,901.75; for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

c) **CONSIDERATION TO AWARD CONSULTING SERVICES CONTRACT FOR FURNITURE, FIXTURES, AND EQUIPMENT SERVICES FOR THE LIBRARY MEANINGFUL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT TO TSK ARCHITECTS**

It is recommended that the City Council award a Consulting Services Contract to TSK Architects in an amount not to exceed \$25,500.00 to oversee the programming/meetings, selection, quoting, ordering, delivery, installation, and final walk-throughs of furniture, fixtures, and equipment for the Library Meaningful Improvement Project.

d) **CONSIDERATION TO SIGN A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE CITY OF ARCADIA'S APPLICATION FOR THE CALTRANS SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING GRANT**

It is recommended that the City Council approve and authorize the City Mayor to sign a letter of support endorsing the City of Arcadia's application for the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant to support their Active Transportation Plan (ATP).

e) **FINAL SUBDIVISION MAP APPROVAL FOR PARCEL MAP NO. 83267, A LOT SUBDIVISION AT 91 E. ORANGE GROVE AVE.**

It is recommended that the City Council review and approve the final subdivision map for Parcel Map No. 83267 and authorize the City Clerk to certify Parcel Map No. 83267.

f) **CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 25-04 AMENDING RESOLUTION 23-21 FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXTENDING THE EXPIRATION DATE OF A CONDITIONALLY APPROVED TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP FOR A CONDOMINIUM PROJECT LOCATED AT 182 SOUTH BALDWIN AVENUE IN SIERRA MADRE**

It is recommended that the City Council adopt Resolution 25-04 approving a twenty- four month time extension of the tentative parcel map approval for Parcel Map No. 83920.

g) **CONSIDERATION RESOLUTION 25-03 TERMINATING THE CITY OF SIERRA MADRE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND WITHDRAWING FROM THE 5-CITIES ALLIANCE REGARDING THE PROPOSED 710 FREEWAY EXTENSION.**

It is recommended that the City Council adopt Resolution 25-03 terminating its participation in the Memorandum of Understanding and withdrawing from the 5-Cities Alliance regarding the proposed 710 freeway extension.

h) **CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING AMENDMENT NO. 1 EXTENSION OF SERVICES FOR THE PROFESSIONAL AGREEMENT FOR LANDSCAPE SERVICES TO MERCHANTS LANDSCAPE SERVICES, INC. IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$125,100 FOR THE REMAINDER OF FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025**

It is recommended that the City Council approve amendment No. 1 extending landscaping services to Merchants Landscaping Services, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$125,100 for the remainder of fiscal year 2024/2025

i) **CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING AMENDMENT No. 1 EXTENSION OF SERVICES FOR THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR EXTERMINATION SERVICES TO EXTREME PEST CONTROL, IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$6000 FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2024/25.**

It is recommended that the City Council approve amendment No. 1 extending pest control services to Extreme Pest Control in an amount not to exceed \$6,000 for the remainder of the fiscal year 2024/2025

j) **CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 25-08 TO ACQUIRE THE RIGHT-OF- WAY FOR THE OFFSITE IMPROVEMENT OF CARTER AVENUE FROM THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

It is recommended that the City Council adopt Resolution 25-08 to acquire the right- of-way for the offsite improvement of Carter Avenue from the County of Los Angeles and to determine that the acquisition is exempt from CEQA under 14 CCR 15182(c).

Mayor Parkhurst brought the matter to the City Council for questions.

Mayor Parkhurst opened Public Comment.

Seeing no one come forward, Mayor Parkhurst brought the matter back to the City Council for further discussion and/or a motion.

Council Member Goss made a motion to approve Consent Items A-J, as presented.

Council Member Garcia seconded the motion.

Mayor Kriebs called for a vote of the Council

Ayes: Mayor Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe, Council Members Garcia, Goss, and Kriebs.
 Noes: None.
 Absent: None.
 Abstain: None.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 25-05 AUTHORIZING THE ALLOCATION OF FY 2025-2026 CDBG FUNDS TO CONTINUE THE SENIOR MINOR HOME REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Presented by: Planning Manager Lin

It is recommended that the City Council open a Public Hearing, receive testimony and consider adoption of Resolution 25-05 authorizing the allocation of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Community Block Grant Funds and prior year's unallocated funds to the Senior Minor Home Rehabilitation Program.

Mayor Parkhurst brought the matter to the City Council for questions.

Mayor Parkhurst opened Public Comment to receive testimony.

Seeing no one come forward, Mayor Parkhurst brought the matter back to the City Council for further discussion and/or a motion.

Council Member Kriebs made a motion to introduce for first reading of Resolution 25-05, Authorizing The Allocation of FY 2025-2026 CDBG Funds To Continue The Senior Minor Home Rehabilitation Program.

Mayor Pro Tem Lowe seconded the motion.

Mayor Kriebs called for a vote of the Council

Ayes: Mayor Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe, Council Members Garcia, Goss, and Kriebs.
 Noes: None.
 Absent: None.
 Abstain: None.

The motion to introduce for first reading of Resolution 25-05, Authorizing The Allocation of FY 2025-2026 CDBG Funds To Continue The Senior Minor Home Rehabilitation Program was approved by unanimous voice vote.

DISCUSSION

1. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON APPOINTMENTS AND CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS 25-03, 25-04, AND 25-05 RELATING TO APPOINTMENTS TO THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS, AND THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT

Staff recommends that the City Council approve City Council liaisons and/or voting delegates to serve on various boards, commissions, and associations. It is also recommended that the City Council approve Resolution 25-03 designating a Voting Delegate and Alternate Voting Delegate to the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments; Resolution 25-04 designating a Voting Delegate and Alternate Voting Delegate to League of California Cities; and Resolution 25-05 designating a Voting Delegate and Alternate Voting Delegate to Southern California Association of Governments.

Mayor Parkhurst brought the matter to the City Council for questions.

Mayor Parkhurst opened Public Comment to receive testimony.

Seeing no one come forward, Mayor Parkhurst brought the matter back to the City Council for further discussion and/or a motion.

Council Member Kriebs made a motion to designate Council Member Garcia as the voting delegate for the League of California Cities and to designate Mayor Parkhurst as the primary voting representative for the Los Angeles County Sanitation District, with Mayor Pro Tem Lowe as the backup representative. Additionally, Council Member Kriebs moved to approve Resolutions 20-5-03, 20-5-04, and 20-5-05 to formalize these appointments.

Mayor Pro Tem Lowe seconded the motion.

Council Member Goss called for a vote of the Council.

Ayes: Mayor Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe, Council Members Garcia, Goss, and Kriebs
 Noes: None.
 Absent: None.
 Abstain: None.

Following this motion, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe made a motion to approve Resolution 25-03, appointing Council Member Goss as the voting delegate for the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments and Council Member Garcia as the alternate.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Kriebs.

Mayor Pro Tem called for a vote of the Council.

Ayes: Mayor Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe, Council Members Garcia, Goss, and Kriebs
 Noes: None.
 Absent: None.
 Abstain: None.

2. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 25-06 ESTABLISHING A LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY POLICY AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER OR DESIGNEE TO TAKE POLICY POSITIONS ON PENDING LEGISLATION OR REGULATION

Staff recommends the City Council consider adoption of Resolution No. 25-06

establishing a legislative advocacy policy and authorizing the City Manager or designee to take policy positions on pending legislation or regulation.

Council Member Kriebs made a motion to continue consideration of Resolution No. 25-06, establishing a legislative advocacy policy and authorizing the City Manager or designee to take policy positions on pending legislation or regulation.

Mayor Pro Tem Lowe seconded the motion.

Mayor Parkhurst called for a vote of the Council.

Ayes: Mayor Parkhurst, Mayor Pro Tem Lowe, Council Members Garcia, Goss, and Kriebs
 Noes: None.
 Absent: None.
 Abstain: None.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- **Streamlining the Permitting Process for Rebuilding:** Council Member Garcia recommended adding a discussion to streamline the permitting process for destroyed or damaged structures, ensuring applicants with resources ready for rebuilding are prioritized to avoid bottlenecks.
- **Staffing for Permit Processing:** Council Member Kriebs requested an analysis of whether additional staff is needed to process a potential influx of permit applications and whether such staffing costs could be included in the city's recovery costs.
- **Community Risk Reduction Officer:** Council Member Garcia proposed exploring the addition of a Community Risk Reduction Officer position to enhance city preparedness and resident education, following the Fire Department's recommendations.
- **Motorized Bikes and Scooters Safety Regulations:** Council Member Garcia suggested reviewing city codes related to electric motorbikes and scooters, including enforcement of existing state laws, police education, and potential code updates to improve safety for children and the community.

AVAILABILITY OF AGENDA MATERIALS

Materials related to items on this agenda are available for public inspection on the City's website at www.SierraMadreCA.gov

LIVE BROADCASTS

Regular City Council meetings are broadcast live on Cable Channel 3 and rebroadcast on Wednesday and Saturday at 5:30 p.m. Additionally, meetings are streamed live on the City of Sierra Madre YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@3SMTV/streams..>

MEETING ASSISTANCE

If you require special assistance to participate in this meeting, please call the City Clerk's office at (626) 355-7135 at least 48 hours before the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The City Council will adjourn this meeting to a Regular meeting on January 28, 2025.

Mayor Parkhurst asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Council Member Goss made a motion to adjourn the Regular meeting to a Regular meeting on January 28, 2025.

Mayor Pro Tem Lowe seconded the motion to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:11 p.m. to a Regular meeting to be held on January 28, 2025.

Robert Parkhurst, Mayor

Minutes taken and prepared by:

Eric Lozick, Administrative Analyst

Minutes edited by

Laura Aguilar, City Clerk