



CITY OF SIERRA MADRE
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

SIERRA MADRE CITY COUNCIL
SUCCESSOR AGENCY AND
PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITY

Tuesday, October 27, 2020 - 6:30 pm

City of Sierra Madre Memorial Park Bandshell
222 W. Sierra Madre Boulevard
Sierra Madre, CA 91024

As part of the City of Sierra Madre's COVID-19 Transmission Mitigation Efforts, this City Council Meeting was held at the City of Sierra Madre Memorial Park Bandshell.

The meeting was streamed live on the City's Website at www.cityofsierramadre.com.

The public was provided with the opportunity to make comments by (1) emailing comments to PublicComment@cityofsierramadre.com by 6:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting or (2) in person at the meeting to provide their comments.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Mayor John Capoccia called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. City Clerk Sue Spears called the roll.

Present: Mayor John Capoccia, Mayor Pro Tem Rachele Arizmendi, and Council Members Gene Goss and John Harabedian

Absent: None

Also Present: Gabe Engeland, City Manager
Aleks Giragosian, Deputy City Attorney
Laura Aguilar, Assistant City Clerk/Administrative Services Manager
Rodrick Armalin, Chief of Police
James Carlson, Management Analyst
Christian Delgado, Senior Network Administrator
Vincent Gonzalez, Planning and Community Preservation Director
Lawren Heinz, Recreation Coordinator
Sophia Kownatzki, Management Analyst
Oscar Milan, IT Manager
Jen Peterson, Administrative Analyst
Rebecca Silva-Barrón, Community Services Manager
Sue Spears, City Clerk

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INSPIRATION

Council Member Harabedian led the Pledge of Allegiance and, with tonight's Game 6 of the World Series involving the Los Angeles Dodgers after a 32-year slump/curse/drought, said "Go Dodgers."

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Mayor Capoccia asked for approval of the agenda.

City Manager Engeland announced that Public Hearing # 3 – "*Ordinance 1432 Amending Chapter 17.68 (Parking) of Title 17 (Zoning) of the Sierra Madre Municipal Code*" was being removed from the agenda to be sent to the Planning Commission for further review.

Council Member Harabedian moved to approve the agenda as amended.

Mayor Pro Tem Arizmendi seconded the motion.

City Clerk Spears called the names of each City Council Member to determine their individual vote on the meeting agenda.

Ayes: Mayor John Capoccia, Mayor Pro Tem Rachelle Arizmendi, and Council Members Gene Goss and John Harabedian
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

The motion to approve the agenda as amended was passed by a unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Capoccia asked for approval of the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting of October 13, 2020.

Council Member Goss moved to approve the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting of October 13, 2020 as presented.

Mayor Pro Tem Arizmendi seconded the motion.

Ayes: Mayor John Capoccia, Mayor Pro Tem Rachelle Arizmendi, and Council Members Gene Goss and John Harabedian
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

The motion to approve the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting of October 13, 2020 as presented was passed by a unanimous vote.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor John Capoccia did not make a report.

Mayor Pro Tem Rachelle Arizmendi congratulated the Sierra Madre Playhouse on its newly refurbished marquee, with special thanks to David Gordon, Estelle Campbell, and Christian Lebano.

Council Member Gene Goss did not make a report.

Council Member John Harabedian did not make a report.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Capoccia opened the meeting for Public Comment on items not on the agenda. There were no Email comments received on items not on the agenda.

In-person comments on items not on the agenda were made as follows:

- Robert Parkhurst, Sierra Madre – recommended that Agenda Item #3 – Parking not be brought back until December 8, 2020 with the new City Council in place.
- Gary Hood, Sierra Madre – expressed concern that a Planning Commissioner was asked to resign without notice and asked that the City Council not accept his resignation.
- Pat Alcorn, Sierra Madre – requested that the City Council reconsider the resignation of Joe Catalano and reinstate him to the Planning Commission.
- Deb Sheridan, Sierra Madre – (1) expressed concern regarding the City Council's previous decision to reduce the Planning Commission from 7 to 5 and Mayor Capoccia's request for the resignation of Joe Catalano and (2) urged the City Council to reinstate Joe Catalano, categorizing it as unconscionable.
- Matt Bryant, Sierra Madre – stated that he was disappointed that Joe Catalano was asked to resign from the Planning Commission and requested that Mr. Catalano be reinstated.
- Anne Chesterman, Sierra Madre – expressed concern regarding Joe Catalano's resignation from the Planning Commission at the direction of Mayor Capoccia and requested that Mr. Catalano be reinstated.

No other in-person comments on items not on the agenda were made. Mayor Capoccia closed public comment on items not on the agenda.

Mayor Capoccia responded that (1) he did not threaten Mr. Catalano regarding his tenure on the Planning Commission, (2) it was Mr. Catalano's choice to resign if he wanted to avoid public discussion of the matter, (3) the decision was made in the best interest of Sierra Madre, and (4) there was a good reason for the decision, but will not elaborate.

AGENDA ACTION ITEMS:

CONSENT

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

City Clerk Spears gave the following reports under the Consent Calendar:

- a) CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 20-68 APPROVING CERTAIN DEMANDS – Recommendation that the City Council of the City of Sierra Madre approves payment of City Warrants in the aggregate amount of \$359,025.86 and Payroll Transfer in the aggregate amount of \$403,643.42; for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021.
- b) CONSIDERATION OF THIRD AMENDMENT TO CITY MANAGER'S EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT – Recommendation that the City Council adopt the Third Amendment to Employment Agreement for the City Manager, as negotiated by the subcommittee of the City Council. The City will incur an additional \$23,702 annually in salary and benefits paid to the City Manager as follows: salary \$10,500 and benefits \$13,202.
- c) TREASURER'S REPORT – QUARTER ENDING JUNE 30, 2020 – Recommendation that the City Council receive and file the Treasurer's Report for the cash and investment portfolio for quarter ending June 30, 2020.
- d) CONSIDERATION OF NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE – Recommendation that City Council approve the cancellation of the regular City Council meeting of November 24, 2020 and December 22, 2020 and direct Staff to pay all necessary expenses during that time.
- e) AUTHORIZATION TO BEGIN 218 PROCESS FOR DOWNTOWN ASSESSMENT DISTRICT- Recommendation that the City Council authorize Staff to return at the November 10th meeting with a Resolution of Intent to initiate the 218 process to form the Downtown Landscaping and Lighting Maintenance District.
- f) CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 20-65 CONTINUING THE LOCAL EMERGENCY DUE TO THE BOBCAT WILDFIRE – Recommendation that the City Council adopt City Council Resolution 20-65 proclaiming the continuation of the local emergency due to the Bobcat Wildfire.
- g) CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO AMEND KAREN WARNER ASSOCIATES PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE CEQA ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND UPDATING OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE GENERAL PLAN AS PART OF HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE 2021-2029 AND AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR, AND RECEIPT OF LOCAL EARLY ACTION PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM – Recommendation that the City Council amend professional services agreement with Karen Warner Associates, and approve Resolution 20-67 for authorization to submit a 2020 Local Early Action Planning Grant program application and to authorize the receipt of program funds if the application is approved.

Regarding Consent Item 1b - Deputy City Attorney Giragosian stated that the effective date of the Third Amendment to the City Manager's Employment Contract is October 23, 2020.

Mayor Capoccia asked if any Council Members had questions on any of the Consent Items 1a – 1g. There were no Council Member questions.

Mayor Capoccia opened Public Comment on the Consent Items. No Email comments were received or in-person comments made on the Consent Items. Mayor Capoccia closed public comment on the Consent Items and brought the matter back to the City Council for a motion.

Council Member Harabedian made a motion to approve Consent Items 1a – 1g as presented.

Council Member Goss seconded the motion.

Ayes: Mayor John Capoccia, Mayor Pro Tem Rachele Arizmendi, and Council Members Gene Goss and John Harabedian
Noes: None

Absent: None
Abstain: None

The motion to approve Consent Items 1a – 1g as presented was passed by a unanimous vote.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. PUBLIC HEARING - CONSIDERATION OF CITIZENS OPTION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY (COPS) GRANT FUNDING FY 2020-2021

Mayor Capoccia opened this item for Public Hearing.

Police Chief Armalin reported on this item with the recommendation that the City Council accept the grant funds from the COPS/SLESF grant program and authorize appropriations and expenditures as proposed below, including increasing the revenues and expenditures in the current year budget to \$150,000.

<u>Foothill Special Enforcement Team (FSET)</u> – FSET costs include equipment, uniforms, training, and backfill for a SMPD Officer to participate on the team.	\$ 20,000
<u>Helicopter Services</u> – payment to the Foothill Air Support Team (FAST) for annual Police Helicopter Services in the community.	13,135
<u>ICI Radio System</u> – annual payment for the annual subscriber cost to be on the countywide radio system.	12,810
<u>Supplemental Officers (LAPD Experienced Officers Part-Time)</u> – Supplemental Officers’ salaries.	78,555
<u>Supplemental Services</u> – as needed to expand and improve front line law enforcement services to the City and may include expenditures on supplemental personnel, training, equipment, or other services that support front line police operations.	25,500
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 150,000

Mayor Capoccia asked if any Council Members had questions on this item. Chief Armalin and City Manager Engeland responded to Council Member questions.

Mayor Capoccia opened Public Comment on this item. No Email comments were received or in-person comments were made on this item. Mayor Capoccia closed the Public Hearing and brought the matter back to the City Council for a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Arizmendi made a motion to accept the grant funds from the COPS/SLESF grant program and authorize appropriations and expenditures as proposed in the Staff Report, including increasing the revenues and expenditures in the current year budget to \$150,000.

Council Member Goss seconded the motion.

Ayes: Mayor John Capoccia, Mayor Pro Tem Rachele Arizmendi, and Council Members Gene Goss and John Harabedian

Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

The motion to accept the grant funds from the COPS/SLESF grant program and authorize appropriations and expenditures as proposed in the Staff Report, including increasing the revenues and expenditures in the current year budget to \$150,000 was passed by a unanimous vote.

2. PUBLIC HEARING - CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE 1431 AMENDING CHAPTER 17.08 (DEFINITIONS), CHAPTER 17.36 (COMMERCIAL) CHAPTER 17.60 (VARIANCES AND DISCRETIONARY PERMITS) OF TITLE 17 (ZONING) OF THE SIERRA MADRE MUNICIPAL CODE AND APPROVING RESOLUTION 20-62 (COMMERCIAL ZONE USES LIST)

Mayor Capoccia opened this item for Public Hearing.

City Manager Engeland reported on this item with the recommendation that the City Council introduce, waive reading in full, and authorize reading by title only of Ordinance No. 1431, amending

Chapter 17.08 (Definitions), Chapter 17.36 (Commercial) in its entirety, and Chapter 17.60 (Variances and Discretionary Permits) and approving Resolution 20-62 Commercial Zone Uses List. He summarized that, at the last City Council meeting, the City Council revised the threshold for retail establishments to allow them for use by right for up to 7,500 square feet and eliminated the minor conditional use permit, which reduced cost times in bureaucracy quite substantially and make it easier to open a business in Sierra Madre.

Mayor Capoccia asked if what is being presented are the changes that were discussed at the last City Council meeting. City Manager Engeland confirmed that the changes were substantial enough that the Public Hearing was republished and to make sure that all of the changes that the City Council suggested were addressed.

Mayor Capoccia asked if any Council Members had questions on this item. There were no Council Member questions.

Mayor Capoccia opened Public Comment on this item. No Email comments were received on this item.

In-person comment on this item was made as follows:

- David Gordon, Sierra Madre – (1) commented that he is observing a breakdown in the relationship between the City Council and the Planning Commission in which the recommendations of the Planning Commission have been criticized, rejected, or tweaked by Staff at the direction of the City Council, (2) quoted from a letter dated 10-10-20 from Planning Commissioner John Hutt sent to the City Council, (3) advocated that the recommendations of the Planning Commission be followed or that consideration of this issue be deferred to the new City Council, and (4) suggested that the new City Council take emergency measures to repair the relationship between the Planning Commission and the City Council, to include a joint meeting to establish a joint philosophy.

There were no other in-person comments made on this item. Mayor Capoccia closed the Public Hearing and brought the matter back to the City Council for discussion.

Discussion occurred and there was consensus that the Staff Report aligns with the direction provided by the City Council at the last City Council Meeting.

Council Member Harabedian made a motion that the City Council introduce, waive reading in full, and authorize reading by title only of Ordinance No. 1431, amending Chapter 17.08 (Definitions), Chapter 17.36 (Commercial) in its entirety, and Chapter 17.60 (Variances and Discretionary Permits) and approve Resolution 20-62 Commercial Zone Uses List.

Council Member Goss seconded the motion.

Ayes: Mayor John Capoccia, Mayor Pro Tem Rachelle Arizmendi, and Council Members Gene Goss and John Harabedian

Noes: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

The motion that the City Council introduce, waive reading in full, and authorize reading by title only of Ordinance No. 1431, amending Chapter 17.08 (Definitions), Chapter 17.36 (Commercial) in its entirety, and Chapter 17.60 (Variances and Discretionary Permits) and approve Resolution 20-62 Commercial Zone Uses List was passed by a unanimous vote.

3. ~~PUBLIC HEARING – ORDINANCE 1432 AMENDING CHAPTER 17.68 (PARKING) OF TITLE 17 (ZONING) OF THE SIERRA MADRE MUNICIPAL CODE~~

4. PUBLIC HEARING - AMENDMENTS TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE TO STREAMLINE THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

Mayor Capoccia opened this item for Public Hearing.

Deputy City Attorney Giragosian provided a presentation on the legal aspects of the Design Review process and changes in CA State Law. As part of his report, Deputy City Attorney Giragosian stated that the options for the City Council to consider (assuming that the design review findings are not amended) were: (1) amend the existing Object Development Standards, (2) amend the Design Thresholds (Planning Commission's Recommendation), and (3) amend the Reviewing Authority (Staff's Recommendation). He said that these decisions can be made without the City losing its discretionary findings.

City Manager referred the City Council to the 10 alternatives listed in the Staff Report and noted that any involved discussion of the Planning Commission is tracked, with an effort to show what the discussion was as an alternative available for the City Council.

Mayor Capoccia asked if any Council Members had questions on this item. Deputy City Attorney Giragosian, City Manager Engeland, and Planning Director Gonzalez responded to Council Member questions.

Mayor Capoccia opened this item for Public Comment. No Email comments were received on this item.

In-person comments on this item were made as follows:

- Bob Spears, Sierra Madre, Planning Commissioner – expressed that the Planning Commission is frustrated with the communication problems between the City Council and Staff and the need for the three to work together.
- Robert Parkhurst, Sierra Madre – expressed opposition to Alternative #6 – *Approve Resolution 20-15 with Staff's proposed Design Review Findings*, support for Alternative #4 – *Approve PC Resolution 20-14*, and support for Alternative #5 – *Approve PC Resolution 20-14 with Reviewing Authority's recommendations*.
- Deb Sheridan, Sierra Madre – questioned (1) why the City Council would not accept the expertise of the Planning Commission's recommendations to tighten the design review standards and instead go with the Staff's recommendations and (2) with two City Council members leaving in a month, what is the rush to make a decision tonight.
- Gary Hood, Sierra Madre – recommended that the City Council reconsider any changes to design review and that any decision should be evaluated as to what is in the best interest of the community and not rushed.
- Alex Soriotta, Sierra Madre – recommended strongly that the City Council not make any decisions that will have a substantial long-term impact to Sierra Madre now and wait until the new City Council is seated.
- Matt Bryant, Sierra Madre – commented about the consistent conflict that he has observed over the years between what City Staff recommends and what the Planning Commission recommends and expressed that the Planning Commission is looking out for the residents of Sierra Madre.
- David Gordon, Sierra Madre – said that this is not a good time for the City to change its existing design review standards and that those recommended by Staff are weaker and recommended that the City Council keep things as they are, keep the existing design review standards, trust the recommendation of the Planning Commission, or leave the decision to the next City Council.
- Tom Denison, Sierra Madre, Planning Commission Chairperson – spoke in support of the Planning Commission recommendations regarding Design Review and cautioned against irreversibly changing the design review process as the first CA city as a legal test case.

There were no other in-person comments made on this item. Mayor Capoccia closed the Public Hearing on this item and brought the matter back to the City Council for discussion.

City Council discussion took place and there was consensus for Alternative #8 – *Approve Resolution 20-16, keeping the code as current codified and amending design review authority subject to Administrative Design Review by Staff with Appeal to the Planning Commission and City Council*. Staff was given direction regarding the appeal process to be no fee to an applicant for appeal to the Planning Commission and \$500 for other appeal of the Staff's decision, to be provided in a resolution for consideration at the next City Council meeting.

Council Member Harabedian made a motion to approve Alternative #8 - Resolution 20-16 amending design review authority subject to Administrative Design Review by Staff with Appeal to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Council Member Goss seconded the motion.

Ayes: Mayor John Capoccia, Mayor Pro Tem Rachelle Arizmendi, and Council Members Gene Goss and John Harabedian
Noes: None
Absent: None

Abstain: None

The motion to approve Alternative #8 - Resolution 20-16 amending design review authority subject to Administrative Design Review by Staff with Appeal to the Planning Commission and City Council was passed by a unanimous vote.

DISCUSSION

1. DISCUSSION - ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE 1435 AMENDING TITLE 3, 8, 12, 15 AND 17 OF THE SIERRA MADRE MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING CITY COMMISSIONS

Admin. Analyst Peterson reported on this item with the recommendation that the City Council introduce and give first reading to Ordinance 1435, therein amending Title 3, 8, 12, 15 and 17 of the Sierra Madre Municipal Code sections regulating City Commissions. As part of Staff review of the Sierra Madre Municipal Code, the recommendations include the removal of references to committees and commissions that have disbanded or whose duties have been absorbed by another.

Mayor Capoccia asked if any Council Members had questions on this item. Admin. Analyst Peterson responded to City Council question that Ordinance 1435 is cleaning up the current language referring to City Commissions.

Mayor Capoccia opened Public Comment on this item. No Email comments were received or in-person comments made on this item. Mayor Capoccia closed public comment on this item and brought the matter back to the City Council for a motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Arizmendi made a motion that the City Council introduce and give first reading to Ordinance 1435 as presented.

Council Member Harabedian seconded the motion.

Ayes: Mayor John Capoccia, Mayor Pro Tem Rachelle Arizmendi, and Council Members Gene Goss and John Harabedian

Noes: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

The motion that the City Council introduce and give first reading to Ordinance 1435 as presented was passed by a unanimous vote.

2. DISCUSSION – CONSIDERATION OF INCORPORATION OF “WILDLIFE WATCH” PROGRAM

Mgmt. Analyst Carlson reported on this item with the recommendation that the City Council provide direction regarding the concept of introducing a “Wildlife Watch” Program developed by California Fish & Wildlife to better manage human/wildlife interactions in the City. *Wildlife Watch* is designed to: (1) support the City in all aspects of wildlife management, (2) reduce wildlife conflicts with humans, and (3) increase respect between the community and city government.

Mayor Capoccia asked if any Council Members had questions on this item. Mgmt. Analyst Carlson responded to Council Member questions.

Mayor Capoccia opened Public Comment on this item. No Email comments were received on this item.

In-person comments on this item were made as follows:

- Robert Parkhurst, Sierra Madre – expressed support for the City’s participation in the “Wildlife Watch Program” and suggested that the item be referred to the ENR Commission.
- Gary Hood, Sierra Madre – said that Sierra Madre is a wildlife sanctuary city and that there is a need to do what is necessary to make it safer for residents and wildlife as well.

There were no other in-person comments made on this item. Mayor Capoccia closed public comment on this item and brought the matter back to the City Council for discussion.

Discussion occurred and there was consensus that this is a safety issue and to refer the issue to the ENR Commission for further consideration and recommendation to the City Council.

NEW ITEMS PLACED FOR FUTURE AGENDAS:

Mayor Capoccia asked the Council Members if there are any new items for future meeting agendas. No new agenda items were suggested.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Capoccia asked for a motion to adjourn.

Council Member Harabedian made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Goss.

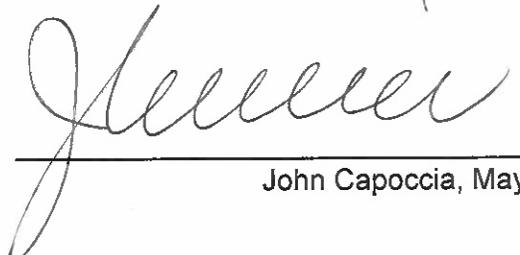
Ayes: Mayor John Capoccia, Mayor Pro Tem Arizmendi, and Council Members Gene Goss and John Harabedian

Noes: None

Absent: None

The motion to adjourn was passed by a unanimous vote.

THIS SIERRA MADRE CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 8:37 p.m. to a Regular Meeting to be held on November 10, 2020.



John Capoccia, Mayor

Minutes taken and prepared by:



Sue Spears, City Clerk