



CITY OF SIERRA MADRE
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

SIERRA MADRE CITY COUNCIL,
SUCCESSOR AGENCY, AND
PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITY

Tuesday, March 27, 2018 - 6:30 pm

Sierra Madre City Hall Council Chambers
232 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre, CA 91024

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Rachelle Arizmendi called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. City Clerk Sue Spears called the roll.

Present: Mayor Rachelle Arizmendi, Mayor Pro Tem Denise Delmar, Council Members John Capoccia, Gene Goss, and John Harabedian

Absent: None

Also Present: Gabe Engeland, City Manager
Teresa Highsmith, City Attorney
Marcie Medina, Assistant City Manager
Laura Aguilar, Assistant City Clerk
James Carlson, Management Analyst
Vincent Gonzalez, Planning and Community Preservation Director
Miguel Hernandez, Human Resources Manager
Joe Ortiz, Police Chief
Jill Schofield, Acting Library Services Manager
Rebecca Silva-Barrón, Community Services Manager
Sue Spears, City Clerk

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION/INSPIRATION:

In leading the Pledge of Allegiance, Council Member John Capoccia asked the audience to think about the words because they have significant meaning. He reminded the audience that this is the last Council Meeting before the City's Municipal Election in April. Council Member Capoccia stated that the Municipal Election does matter because this is everyone's opportunity to have a say in his or her local government. In addition, he said that our democracy is threatened if we do not take our obligation seriously and vote. Council Member Capoccia expressed disappointment that the number of registered voters in Sierra Madre who actually vote is only around 30% - 40% at times and that he would like everyone in town to exercise that fundamental responsibility, go out, and vote.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AS PRESENTED:

Council Member John Capoccia moved to approve the agenda as presented.

Council Member John Harabedian seconded the motion to approve the agenda.

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

Noes: None

The motion to approve the agenda as presented was passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Arizmendi moved on to the approval of the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of March 13, 2018.

Council Member Gene Goss moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of March 13, 2018 as presented.

Mayor Pro Tem Denise Delmar seconded the motion to approve the Minutes.

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

The motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of March 13, 2018 as presented was passed unanimously.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REPORTS:

1. Mayor Pro Tem Denise Delmar thanked those who attended Saturday's (March 24, 2018) "State of the City" address at the Hart Park House, commended Mayor Arizmendi on doing a wonderful job in explaining the state of the city, and recognized the three students who performed.
2. Council Member Gene Goss added his voice of commendation for the Mayor, who did a beautiful job at the "State of the City" address. He said that he attended the Wistaria Festivities (Sunday, March 18, 2018); saw three of his colleagues there, and it was a great day. Council Member Goss expressed kudos to our Chamber of Commerce, all of the volunteers, and City staff for making it happen again this year.
3. Council Member John Harabedian added that the "State of the City" was really well done by the Mayor, the event was well attended, the tape should be posted soon, and that everyone would be well informed by watching it. He reported that the Clean Power Alliance (Community Energy Choice Coalition) is moving to launch for commercial, industrial, and residential ratepayers soon, but that it will be gradual and phased in. Council Member Harabedian stated that any rate change in Sierra Madre would probably not take place until 2019, but that he will keep everyone posted on the timeline. He announced that Metro will be holding a Telephone Town Hall Meeting on April 4 and April 5, 2018, from 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. regarding budget, the Next Gen Restructure Study, and bus services. Council Member Harabedian said that Metro wants to redefine and re-scope the manner in which bus services are delivered, in an effort to increase ridership. He announced that those interested in participating in the Metro Telephone Town Hall Meeting should call in at (888) 400-1932.
4. Council Member John Capoccia reported that several Council Members attended the *RT Rogers Brewery Company* Grand Opening (Saturday, March 24, 2018) on Montecito Street, that it is a cool new business in town, and encouraged everyone to try it out by giving them their patronage. Council Member Capoccia said that he attended the Kiwanis & League of Women Voters Measure D Forum today to argue No on Measure D and no one from the Yes on Measure D group showed up. This was despite Mike Alexander, TEAPAC President, saying on his radio show that he would send someone to participate. Council Member Capoccia thanked the League of Women Voters for doing the best job possible under the circumstances.
5. Mayor Rachelle Arizmendi encouraged people to find out the facts and challenges facing the city and to view the "State of the City" tape. She commented that there was a great turn out at the Wistaria Festival and thanked the many volunteers and organizations that participated. In addition, Mayor Arizmendi reported that the Huck Finn Fishing Derby and Campout was last weekend and that she has seen pictures of big fish and families having great fun. Mayor Arizmendi announced that the Sierra Madre Kiwanis Club Chili Cook-off will be held on May 12, 2018, with applications to participate due on May 3, 2018. For more information, please contact the Sierra Madre Kiwanis Club.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

Mayor Arizmendi opened for Public Comment on items not on the agenda.

- Michael Paris, 465 E. Laurel Ave., said the following: (1) he is pleased and happy to say that this has been the wisest and finest City Council and City Staff in the 22 years that he has lived in Sierra Madre, (2) he is just so thrilled about the balance, common sense, and wise decisions that have been made by this Council, (3) thanked Council Member Capoccia for bringing up how important it is to participate in the American system, (4) he hopes that we have the largest voter turnout for this election, (5) this election is about what kind of environment and what kind of city we want, (6) there have been hard fought battles in the past to keep our small town village environment and that it is important to consider why you moved here, (7) Measure D needs to go down in flames, is unacceptable, and there is no point in favor of Measure D. (8) UUT funds are important to protect our city, (9) announced that he is proudly posting signs for Arizmendi, Delmar, and Goss on his front yard, and (10) that he hopes that the voters of Sierra Madre keep this group intact because of their great wisdom and leadership.

- Dana Pelsone, 144 S. Hermosa Ave., said the following: (1) she has lived in Sierra Madre for most of her life and at her current address for 16 years, (2) is the Neighborhood Block Captain for Bonita & South Hermosa, (3) has spoken in the past to previous City Councils, but not this current City Council, (4) wanted to express her concern about the excessive vehicle speed on Northbound & Southbound Hermosa Ave., regardless of the day of the week or time of day, as well as people rolling through stop signs, (5) this is particularly important because of the many children, the church on the corner, and the park's proximity, (6) that friendly reminder signs have not worked and that previous studies have not been implemented, (7) this safety issue continues to be a problem, and (8) that she wanted to bring this matter to the Council's attention.
- Barry Gold, 441 Ramona Ave., said the following: (1) the Sierra Madre Kiwanis 2018 Dance the Night Away and Chili Cook-off will be held on May 12, 2018, from 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., at the Recreation Center, (2) plans are taking place to make this event very special, (3) there will be lots of food/chili, DJ, and line dancing, (4) this year's Chili Cook-off should be the best ever, (5) proceeds will be used to support the Sierra Madre Middle School Creative Arts Program, and (6) that tickets go on sale next week at *Savor the Flavor*, where people can also obtain applications to participate.

Mayor Arizmendi asked if anyone else would like to come forward on items not on the agenda. Seeing no one come forward, Mayor Arizmendi closed Public Comment.

PRESENTATION – PROCLAMATION IN SUPPORT ARMENIAN GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY:

Council Member Harabedian thanked Mayor Arizmendi for making this proclamation and recognized Laura Aguilar, Assistant City Clerk, who helps in putting this proclamation together every year. He stated that the City Council has presented this proclamation for the last 5 or 6 years, usually in April, but that the Council is doing it earlier this year. Council Member Harabedian reported that Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day is April 24. He said that, in making this proclamation, it is not a joyous event, but that it is a reminder that those who have suffered injustice of any kind deserve justice, that those in a position of power should not take those positions lightly, and that those in a position of power should take steps to recognize past injustices, such as the Armenian Genocide. In addition, Council Member Harabedian stated that the United States has not recognized the Armenian Genocide, although California, Sierra Madre, and other cities have. He thanked the members of the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) here today to accept this proclamation and said that it was the City Council's honor and privilege to do it this year and every year.

Mayor Arizmendi presented a Proclamation in Support and Recognition of Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day to Boghos Patatian, Board Member, Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), Pasadena Chapter. Mr. Patatian expressed appreciation for this proclamation and said that it means a lot to the Armenian community and organizations. He stated that this is a somber occasion, yet the Armenian Community celebrates it because the Turks failed and that Armenians are here, growing/thriving, and are respectful members of the community who give back. Mr. Patatian stated that it is a courageous thing that the Council is doing by standing on the side of justice. He invited the Council members to attend the commemoration ceremony in Pasadena on April 21, 2018, at 5:00 p.m., at the Armenian Genocide Monument.

Mayor Pro Tem Delmar announced that the Sierra Madre Firefighters will be hosting the Easter Egg Hunt in Memorial Park this Saturday beginning at 10:00 a.m.

1. AGENDA ACTION ITEM: CONSENT CALENDAR:

City Manager England gave the following reports under the Consent Calendar:

- a) ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 18-12 OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SIERRA MADRE APPROVING CERTAIN DEMANDS - Recommendation that the City Council approve Resolution 18-12 for approval of payment of City warrants in the aggregate amount of \$517,663.59; Library warrants in the aggregate amount of \$12,461.72, and payroll transfer in the aggregate amount of \$329,040.11 for fiscal year ending June 2018.
- b) CONSIDERATION OF CONSULTANT SERVICES AGREEMENT – DAPEER, ROSENBLIT, LITVAK, LLP - Recommendation that the City Council enter into an agreement with Dapeer, Rosenblit, Litvak, LLP for code-enforcement legal services and authorize the City Manager to execute an agreement in a form acceptable to the City Attorney.
- c) SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE No. 1396 AMENDING TITLE 17, CHAPTER 17.56 OF THE SIERRA MADRE MUNICIPAL CODE: NON-CONFORMING USES ORDINANCE, AND CHAPTER 17.82 OF THE SIERRA MADRE MUNICIPAL CODE: HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE -

Recommendation that the City Council introduce and approve, for second reading, by title only, and waive further reading of Ordinance No. 1396, amending Title 17, Chapter 17.56 of the Sierra Madre Municipal Code: Non-Conforming Uses Ordinance, and Chapter 17.82 of the Sierra Madre Municipal Code: Historic Preservation Ordinance and direct the City Attorney to prepare a summary of Ordinance No. 1396.

Mayor Arizmendi asked if any Member of the Council had questions on items on the Consent Calendar.

In response to Council Member Capoccia's questions regarding item 1b, Planning Director Gonzalez said that Dapeer, Rosenblit, and Litvak, LLP has represented the City for about 10 years, these are Evergreen contracts that the City wanted to update, the last contract was executed in 2009, and that he was not sure if the rates outlined in the contract are increases from before, but could do research and provide that information to the Council at a later date.

Because of Council Members' questions regarding whether the contract reflected rates were an increase, item 1b was removed from this Consent Calendar and will be included on a future Consent Calendar to be considered at a Regular Meeting on either April 24, 2018, or May 8, 2018.

Mayor Arizmendi opened the meeting for Public Comment. Seeing no one, Mayor Arizmendi closed Public Comment and brought the matter back to the Council for discussion. No additional discussion occurred.

Council Member John Harabedian made a motion to approve Consent Items 1a and 1c as presented.

Mayor Pro Tem Denise Delmar seconded the motion for approval.

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

The motion to approve Consent Calendar items 1a and 1c as presented was approved unanimously.

AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2. SIERRA MADRE PUBLIC LIBRARY: REVIEW OF 2017 LIBRARY SERVICES.

Jill Schofield, Acting Library Services Manager, gave a report on Sierra Madre Public Library – Review of Library Services 2017, which included a PowerPoint presentation.

Mayor Arizmendi commented that it was sad that Ms. Schofield is leaving in a few months and asked if any Member of the Council had questions on the report.

In response to concerns raised by Council Member Goss, Library Services Manager Schofield stated that the weeding of the books in the Library is driven primarily by space and not knowing exactly what is going to happen in the Library in the future, i.e. changes in space/use, need for lower bookshelves, etc. She said that changes to the Library in the future may even create a need for more book weeding, not less. In addition, Ms. Schofield reported that the weeded books are not thrown away; they are either sold or given away.

Council Member Capoccia complemented Ms. Schofield on her presentation and expressed his appreciation that it began with the mission of a public library. In addition, he said that, looking at the operations of the Sierra Madre Library and its programs, it is so consistent with the mission of libraries. Additionally, Council Member Capoccia stated that the Library is doing exactly what it should, in accordance with the State Education Code and the fulfillment of that mission.

Council Member Harabedian echoed the complements for Ms. Schofield and stated that the Library is much more than its footprint. He said that he or his wife are at the Library weekly with their son for Wednesday Storytime for children and that he is always impressed with the staff and just how well the Library is run, including how tidy it is. Council Member Harabedian expressed that it seems that the General Book Section is underutilized, but that the Children's Room is well used.

In response to a question by Mayor Pro Tem Delmar, Ms. Schofield said that the Sierra Madre Library has a large on-line customer base, as the Sierra Madre Library is part of the California Digital Consortium with about 20 other libraries. She stated that the Sierra Madre Library and the other participating libraries all purchase books for on-line use, so there is a bigger pool of books to offer the public. Ms. Schofield reported that it is called "OverDrive," it is becoming more and more popular, and that there is a new App called "Libby." Mayor Pro Tem Delmar reported that she uses the App and is always amazed at the great selection of books that are available.

Council Member Capoccia commented on the great choice of books for the "One Book One City" selections. He reported that last year he read "Rise of the Rocket Girls" and this year's book selection, "In God We Trust: All Others Pay Cash" by Jean Shepherd. Council Member Cappocia said that he found this year's book to be hilarious, the style of writing to be off the charts, and that he highly recommends it.

Mayor Arizmendi said that she is thankful that the late fees have been eliminated, by a decision of the Council. Mayor Arizmendi thanked Ms. Schofield for her presentation and requested that she extend a thank you from the City Council to the Library staff and many volunteers, including the Library Trustees and Friends of the Library.

City Manager Engeland recognized Ms. Schofield for the fantastic job she has been doing since accepting the responsibility last July during this period of change and adjustment, while still providing outstanding customer service.

Mayor Arizmendi opened this item for Public Comment.

- Michael Paris, 465 E. Laurel Ave., said the following: (1) it is an honor to live in a small town with such a great library, (2) his son has been using the Library since he was very young and continues to use the Library every day, even though he is now a senior at LaSalle High School, (3) expressed appreciation for the grace period on Library book late fees, (4) the residents of Sierra Madre should look at the Sierra Madre Library as one of the few great examples of Mid Century architecture in town and that it is worth preserving and maintaining and (5) that he and his family love the Library, its current location, everything about it, and the staff.
- Pat Alcorn, Grandview Ave., said the following: (1) when she was President of the Friends of the Library, she had the pleasure of attending the monthly Sierra Madre Library Trustees' Meetings for a couple of years, (2) was always amazed at the number of people using the Library, i.e. the door/patron count, (3) she is blown away that the number of people who used the Library last year is 84,255, and (4) in our tiny town that is amazing.

Mayor Arizmendi asked if anyone else would like to come forward to speak on this item. Seeing no one, Mayor Arizmendi closed Public Comment and brought the matter back to the Council for discussion. No additional discussion occurred.

The report was for informational purposes only. No action was taken.

3. BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE REVIEW FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007-2008 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018.

City Manager Engeland gave a report on the Budget and Expenditure Review for Fiscal Year 2007-2008 through Fiscal Year 2017-2018, which included a PowerPoint presentation. The last statement in the PowerPoint was "Sierra Madre is good at government."

Mayor Arizmendi asked if any Member of the Council had questions on the Budget and Expenditure Review for Fiscal Year 2007-2008 through Fiscal Year 2017-2018.

In response to questions/comments by Council Member Goss, City Manager Engeland said that Sierra Madre is not as diversified in its revenue sources as other cities in that (1) the Sierra Madre Sales Tax revenue is 2.7% of its total revenue, while the average percentage for California cities is 20% and (2) Sierra Madre relies more on property tax and UUT for its revenue than neighboring cities. In addition, City Manager Engeland stated that, even with Sierra Madre's reliance on property tax revenue, the Council has not passed a special parcel tax, unlike other cities that have passed a special parcel tax even though those cities have greater sales tax revenues.

Council Member Capoccia said that this points to the importance of shopping locally in Sierra Madre.

Mayor Pro Tem Delmar commented that City Manager Engeland's presentation goes against the argument that the City is wasting money and just spending it. Furthermore, she stated that, when you look at the numbers, the City Council and City Staff, including the City Manager, have done an excellent job of running a very efficient government.

In looking at the property tax revenue, Council Member Harabedian asked about the origin/legal mandate of LA County receiving 25% and Sierra Madre receiving 22% and the steps the City needs to take to change that. City Manager Engeland explained that LA County's property tax portion includes any parcel taxes levied, which is similar to the property taxes for public schools that also includes any parcel taxes levied. If the percentage of dollars for those agencies goes up, the percentage of dollars for Sierra Madre is reduced, which Sierra Madre does not control. Currently 78% of the property taxes paid in Sierra Madre leaves the City, which another agency or government entity controls. City Attorney Highsmith explained that CA State Law/statute dictates that 25% of the property taxes go to the County, plus there are also special districts, local taxing districts, and the State takes a percentage to pay for the school system. She further stated that some cities get more than the 22% rate that Sierra Madre gets and that this is determined by a number of factors, such as when the city was incorporated, what the base tax year was, how many taxing entities fall within its jurisdiction, etc.

Council Member Capoccia lamented that, with the advent of on-line shopping, Sierra Madre does not get its fair share of on-line sales by Sierra Madre residents, it all goes to the State.

In response to a question from Mayor Pro Tem Delmar, City Manager Engeland said that any local parcel tax passed by the voters would be a direct tax and remain in the City, i.e. the funds raised from any parcel tax passed in Sierra Madre would stay in Sierra Madre.

Mayor Arizmendi said that the information was very helpful and that it is important and thanked City Manager Engeland for putting the presentation together. In response to questions by Mayor Arizmendi, City Manager Engeland said that the PowerPoint Presentation will be posted on the City's website, social media, and traditional outlets as well.

Mayor Arizmendi opened this item for Public Comment.

- Dee Alcorn, Grandview Ave., said the following: (1) he is impressed with the City reports and it speaks to how well the city operates and is managed, (2) the Council and City staff should be congratulated on doing such a great job, (3) is aware that some steps have been taken to address the infrastructure maintenance issues, (4) is concerned that the retirement system, CalPERS, expenses will only get worse, and (5) that this issue should be addressed and is suggesting that solutions be explored.

In response, Mayor Arizmendi said that there has been an investment in the infrastructure system three times over the last year, for a total of \$990,000, which was due to the refinancing of the Water Bond and resulting savings, and the Water Plan is in place. In addition, Mayor Arizmendi reported that there have been ongoing discussions on ways to address the City's pension obligation and that this topic will be discussed at a future Council Meeting.

Mayor Arizmendi asked if anyone else would like to come forward to speak on this item. Seeing no one, Mayor Arizmendi closed Public Comment and brought the matter back to the Council for discussion. No additional discussion occurred.

The report was for informational purposes only. No action was taken.

NEW ITEMS PLACED FOR FUTURE AGENDA:

Mayor Arizmendi asked the members of the City Council if there are any new items for future meeting agendas.

Mayor Pro Tem Delmar requested that the Hermosa Avenue traffic/safety issues and ways to reduce speeding around town in general be placed on a future Council Meeting agenda.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Arizmendi asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mayor Pro Tem Denise Delmar made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

The motion to adjourn was seconded by Council Member Gene Goss.

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

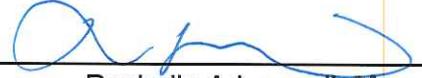
Noes: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

The motion to adjourn was passed unanimously.

THE SIERRA MADRE CITY COUNCIL MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 8:01 p.m. to a Regular Meeting to be held on Tuesday, April 24, 2018, in the Sierra Madre City Hall Council Chambers.



Rachelle Arizmendi, Mayor

Minutes taken and prepared by:



Sue Spears, City Clerk