



# Sebastopol Citizens

E d u c a t e - C o m m u n i c a t e

## Sebastopol City Council Meeting June 2, 2020– Synopsis and Commentary

- An applicant for the Sonoma County Library Commission was interviewed at 5:30.
- All council members were virtually present for the 6:00 pm meeting.

**Proclamations/Presentations have been suspended until further notice.**

### Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- Several comments came in that were critical of the police: their pay scale, lack of oversight and behavior. It wasn't clear if that all applied to our local police. But the comments themselves gave off a faint whiff of guilt about many of us not being an oppressed minority. Although that is not something anyone should strive for, here's a solution. Our police could eschew the blues and attire themselves in military camouflaged fatigues and jackboots, goose step about, and, with a three foot baton, occasionally whack upside the head any white male that has the temerity to sport a gray pony tail of any length whatsoever.
- Another speaker bemoaned the fact that the city council displayed little, if any racial diversity and asked the council to do something about it. She seemed unaware that virtually no one (other than the five we have now) of any racial group, is willing to subject themselves to the slings and arrows of being a council member. But we are looking forward to her throwing her hat in the ring in the upcoming election.

### Discussion and Action:

- **Joel Neuberg** was appointed to the [Sonoma County Library Commission](#).

### Consent Calendar:

- The minutes for the May 19 meeting were approved and will appear here shortly. [Scroll down to Past Council Meetings](#).

### Informational Items/Presentation:

- The city's annual audit for the year ended June 30, 2019 was given. (Spoiler Alert: No one is going to jail.) Unlike many cities, the council and staff have managed to squirrel away enough cash to keep us going for another 12 months. According to the auditor, that makes Sebastopol an exception to the rule. [Here is the 199 page report](#). The bar charts start on page 175.

### Public Hearings:

- Tonight a chance was given to property owners who wish to protest having to remove fire dangerous weeds on their property. None showed. So now if they don't remove them the City will and then present them with a bill. (Passed 5:0)
- The passing of the interim 2020-2021 budget was discussed. It looks as if there is going to be a 19.2% decrease in revenues. That translates to \$1.64 million loss in income. Most of the hurt

comes from insurance increases and the financial impact of COVID-19. At this point in time the impact cannot be fully accounted for. So in September it will come back for a more informed look. (Passed 5:0) Note: The city manager did mention that Sebastopol, by percentage, has the lowest staffing of any city in the county. Cuts, if needed, are not going to be easy.

- An interim 2020-2021 Capital Improvement Plan and Budget was also discussed. These are usually projects involving city streets, bike paths, crosswalks, water, sewer, and storm water infrastructure, and city facilities including offices and parks. Some projects are in progress but others are being put on hold. [You may view the chart on page seven of this report.](#) (Passed 5:0)
- If you wanted to protest the public lighting assessment, you missed your chance when this item was gaveled into law. This year's assessment for a typical single family dwelling will be \$31.00, down \$2.13. (Passed 5:0)

### **Regular Agenda Items:**

- Allowing outdoor dining on sidewalks and public and private parking areas was discussed. [The guidelines for that are listed in this report.](#) (Passed 5:0) By necessity, staff is playing this one by ear. There are going to be a few bumps, and they don't want to do anything that will awaken the sleeping giant – Caltrans.

### **City Council Reports:**

- **Vice Mayor Glass** reported that she is working to save [Gravenstein Health Action](#), which is a committee of the Palm Drive Health Care District that funds it. According to the vice-mayor, Gravenstein Health Action has, over the last five years, distributed \$70,000 to \$200,000 a year on their projects, including a trailer and a building at Park Village. The health care district is set to self destruct on July 1. The funds will also cease and the vice-mayor wants to use the “left over” funds from dissolution to seed a new Gravenstein Health Action. No matter what one may think of the appropriateness of these health projects, there are at least two flaws in her thinking. One: There can't be any “left over” money for a district that is \$20 million in debt. Two: We voted to fund a hospital with an emergency room, the failure of which has been painful for many. We didn't vote to support Gravenstein Health Action. Support for that should appear on a ballot measure. [Here's more information.](#)

### **A Parting Shot:**

Elapsed Time: 3:30 hours (6:00–9:30pm)

Next City Council meeting is June 16, 2020 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

You can view this meeting and others at: <http://bit.ly/sebctv>.

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