



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting March 3, 2020 – Synopsis and Commentary

- All council members were present.
- Mayor Slayter assured us, while there is little the City of Sebastopol can do regarding the COVID-19 virus, the city is staying in close contact with the county and state and will soon get relevant information up on the city website. In the meanwhile, [this CDC website might be helpful](#).

Proclamations/Presentations:

- March 15-21 was proclaimed National Surveyor’s Week. A surveyor showed up to collect the proclamation and thanked the council. [The following surveyors did not show up](#): George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Daniel Boone, Henry David Thoreau, Benjamin Banneker, Abraham Lincoln, William Clark, and Meriwether Lewis, as they had previous commitments.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- Zero, nada, zip. And there was no public comment on **ANY** agenda item. (You can’t lose them all.)

Consent Calendar: (Approved 5:0)

- The minutes for the February 18 meeting were approved.
- A letter to the County of Sonoma expressing concerns about the mini-storage project at 1385 Hwy 116 was approved. While not within the city limits, it is within our “Sphere of Influence.” To the surprise of probably no one, there was plenty the council didn’t like about it, including: discrepancies in documents, scale of the project, “a fortress-like design”, lack of vines on buildings (vines?), traffic to and from the site and no multi-use path across the front of the property. The council also wanted assurances that nearby property owners (who actually have something to say about the project) are notified. If the council can’t kill it, maybe they can find friends that will. [Click here to see more in the February 18th summary](#).
- The council discussed replacing the playground equipment at Libby Park. It’s a \$130,000 project paid for by park funding taxes. \$30,000 of that sum was donated by the [Rotary Club of Sebastopol](#) and the [Rotary Club of Sebastopol Sunrise](#).

Regular Agenda Items:

- The council agreed to amend its agreement with Sonoma County Energy Independence Program (SCEIP) – which covers “programs to fund an array of conservation and renewable energy projects proposed by property owners.” In 2011, the State of California passed the Seismic Safety Act which allows SCEIP to finance seismic strengthening of structures needing it. There are a lot of old homes in Sebastopol that aren’t bolted to their foundations and [this program can assist in accomplishing that](#). And there are residents who aren’t bolted down too well themselves, having, a long time ago, drifted off the foundations of reality without noticing the change – although others have. They are on their own. But wait, there's more! Siding,

- roofing, vents, gutters may also qualify. (Passed 5:0)
- The developers of [Hotel Sebastopol](#) have yet to break ground. They were granted (5:0) a one year extension of their design review approval, which is set to expire on March 7. But no further extensions after this one are possible without starting the whole design review process over. So that means that construction would need to begin this year. The slowdown can be attributed an outside third party that has been slow in reviewing the plans. The city and the developer are ready to go now.
- The Phase 1 report on the **\$70,415 Hwy. 116 traffic safety study** of critical intersections was given. It consisted of “data collection, analysis, and recommendations.” ([You can view those recommended changes on page two of this agenda item.](#)) The Phase 2 original bid was \$31,500. But Phase 1 came in about \$20,000 under budget so Phase 2 can be accomplished for \$11,450. That will present concepts remedying some of the problems. A high priority with the council is [Gravenstein Hwy S & Burnett St.](#) where Darwin's law of natural selection is on prominent display daily. (Passed 5:0)
- The council discussed and approved (5:0) hiring [Wood-Rogers](#) “to prepare the designs and other items in the scope of work for the **Bodega Corridor Reconstruction Project**” at a cost of \$199,060. A Community Block Development Grant of \$146,500 and \$52,560 from the city’s traffic impact fund is to be used to cover the cost of the project’s design. This is the start of an estimated \$5,000,000 project to actually upgrade Bodega Avenue between High Street and Pleasant Hill Rd. that will include “eliminating three sidewalk gaps, shoulder stabilization, repaving, some possible widening, and restriping to include bicycle lanes.” This is another Darwinesque area, especially for pedestrians, as around 24,000 vehicles pass through this corridor each day.
- There was a discussion as to what the council members want to do with their Initiative Funds. Each member receives \$500 a year to spend on a pet project – as long as it meets certain legal requirements. Council Member Gurney was ready and committed her money to the Sebastopol World Friends scholarship fund. The other members of the council will make their decision at a future meeting. All of that was approved 5:0. Maybe this year the proposed SebastopolCitizens.org whining wall will receive some funds from a sympathetic council member . If not, you can always contribute yourself. Green cash only please, as that will avoid any IRS entanglements.

City Council Reports:

- Mayor Slayter informed us that because of the COVID-19 virus, this year’s [Sebastopol World Friends Exchange](#) has been canceled.

A Parting Shot:

- 24,000 vehicles a day! Yo, toll booths.

Elapsed Time: 2:00 hours (6:00–8:00pm)!!!

Next City Council meeting is March 17, 2020 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

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

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