



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting November 1, 2016 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

3:00pm Meeting

Regular Agenda Items:

- This special meeting convened at 3:00pm to discuss the traffic and safety issues on Bodega Avenue, **those real and imagined at Willow and Jewell Avenues**, and the installation of various bike lanes. But because of the long agenda, **Mayor Gurney** stated that Willow/Jewell would not be discussed now. It's not quite final yet, but [this excellent report from W-Trans](#) will do a better job than me of explaining what will likely take place.

6:00pm Meeting

Proclamations/Presentations:

- Shawn-Paul O'Dell was recognized for 15 years of service in the fire department.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- They're back. The fellow from north of town who is full of conspiracy theories and other things showed up with equally afflicted friends and [spanked the Council in tag team fashion](#). They mumbled and ranted from a prepared script, one starting where the previous ended. Because none of them were paying attention in High School Civics, they believe the Council is responsible for almost every national and international problem. [\(Click here and drag the slider to 26:46 to see how boring it was.\)](#) Although, on rare occasions, my comments about the Council might be construed as a little abrasive, it's pretty clear to me that the Council can't fix the U.S. Congress. We are going to have to do that ourselves.
- **A speaker who did not appear delusional** advised us of an upcoming [Sebastopol World Friends event](#).

Consent Calendar: (Passed 5:0 without comment.)

- The Council authorized staff to advertise for two upcoming openings on the Planning Commission and three on the Design Review Board. All seats terminate on December 31, 2016.
- An amendment to the CalPERS and the Police Officers Association agreement was approved.
- Adjustments to the building codes to align them with State codes were approved.
- Streamlining the permit process for electric vehicle charging stations was approved.
- [KASL](#) was approved to design and produce a bid package to repair three water and three sewer

pipes. The cost of **\$38,630** will be covered by your water and sewer payments.

- In the past, the State of California, through AB 114, granted \$85,000 to the Sebastopol Police Department to support programs that encouraged the avoidance of alcohol in our high schools. Not all of that was spent and the Council approved the expenditure of the remaining \$34,110 of that grant money.

Regular Agenda Items:

- **Rent Control: With the exception of Council Member Slayter**, the rest of the Council bemoaned the need for the Urgency Rent Moratorium, all while pushing it forward. It needed a 4/5th vote to succeed. There were two choices (retroactive and not) and here's how the voting went:
 - First vote failed: No retro with Slayter and Eder voting no.
 - Second vote failed: Retro with Slayter and Gurney voting no.
 - Third vote: Jacob calls for reconsideration of the no retro version. (5:0 on consideration only)
 - Fourth vote: **No retro passed 4:1 with Slayter in the minority.**

In all the votes, Slayter thought the Council was moving too quickly. Although Gurney eventually voted yes, she felt that the legal requirements and the imposition on the new incoming Council made the retroactive choice a bad one. Eder's final yes vote was made with "great anger," which was corroborated by the color of his face. Glass and Jacob clearly were for any yes vote from the get-go.

[More details from Mary Callahan at the Press Democrat here.](#)

- The Council discussed going ahead with the repairs to the flashing lights in the crosswalk at Bodega Avenue and High Street—aka the library crosswalk. Core samples were to be taken but the cost has given staff pause. It's a bit of a dice roll. The repairs will go ahead without the samples but with hopes that the condition of earth below is adequate. But as the City Manager stated, it's a safety issue and must be done in any case.

Informational Items/ Presentation:

- A while ago [KOWS](#) applied for a low-wattage radio antenna at the City-owned water tanks on Pleasant Hill Road. It was appealed by a group of residents ([SHARP](#)). There were appeals and denials and appeals of the denials and **tonight the Council approved the antenna**. From the cheap seats, it appears that SHARP's only real legitimate point was that they didn't want to look at it, even after KOWS reduced the height by half. (Denial of the appeal by SHARP passed 5:0.)

A Parting Shot:

- While the housing situation in Sebastopol needs to be discussed, the way the Council is going about it is disturbing. Instead of a well-thought-out process, they again blindly lurched ahead in their never-ending quest to be the most "progressive" city in the U.S. So we shall see where this road leads, as **they don't even know how many units will be affected by the ordinance**. Let's hope they start to [think, think about the consequences of their actions](#).

3:00pm meeting elapsed time: 2:10 (3:05–5:15 pm)

6:00pm meeting elapsed time: 5:15 (6:15–11:30 pm)

You do the math!

Next City Council meeting is November 15, 2016 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

You can view archived City Council meetings at: <http://livestream.com/accounts/14608643>

John Necker

SebastopolCitizens.org