

## Sebastopol City Council Meeting – April 16, 2013 – Synopsis and Commentary

Mayor Kyes was absent.

Vice Mayor Jacob presided.

### **Proclamations/Presentations**

Before the proclamations, Council Member Slater read a statement about the Boston bombing and asked for a moment of silence.

Council Member Slater also read Mayor Kyes' proclamation that April 14-20 was the [Week of the Young Child](#), April 21-27 is [National Crime Victims' Rights Week](#), and April 26 is [Children's Memorial Flag Day](#).

### **Public Comments**

One speaker asked that we not be divided over the Farmers' Market while another said there should be only one Farmers' Market and it should be at the Barlow location. It seems that some issue *is* growing and already dividing.

Another speaker wants to build a [cob gazebo](#) at the Mario Savio Free Speech Plaza to honor the Occupy movement that was once there. Don't be surprised if our elected representatives find something even more ostentatious to erect.

Speaking of ostentatious, one speaker brought not one, but two bottles of dog ticks and presented them to the Council. Council members developed a few facial ticks of their own as the bottles were passed to left field where Council Member Slater sits. Slater made the speaker take them back.

Another speaker supported the Council idea of creating an outreach position with the City. To some, it may have sounded like a response to a job interview question. He ended by reaching out to swipe PG&E, CVS, and smart meters.

### **Consent Calendar**

*Village Park Improvement Project* (This is basically a conversion of part of Village Park into a small open space park.)

**Council Member Gurney** pulled from the calendar the approval to issue requests for bids for the project. She wanted to talk about it—and talk she did. After stating that she actually supported the authorization, she went on at length and listed several points she thought important.

**Council Member Eder** commented that the City should have uniform regulations for projects like this and the Railroad Park project. (He's right. Some adult supervision at Railroad park might have helped to avoid some of the problems we now face there.)

**Vice Mayor Jacob** opposed going ahead with the project because he wanted to allow camping there. Not learning from the Occupy Movement, which dug in like a tick, he failed to mention just how long he thought people should be allowed to camp there. He also stated the City is losing \$70,000.00 to \$90,000.00 a year on Village Park. Wow! It's gonna take a lot of campers to make up that loss.

During Public Comments on this, the fellow that organized the [Railroad Forest](#) project said that the past hearing on this matter was inadequate and “dominated by the Village Park people” and that he wanted it reviewed. **Council Member Gurney** disagreed.

Long suffering Planning Director Kenyon Webster brought to our attention that the City had entered into a commitment with the Open Space District to do this work and it might be a good idea to honor it.

We might have *just* dodged another lawsuit as the authorization was passed 3:1 with Jacob in the minority.

#### **Discussion and Action**

**Council Member Slater** requested consideration to name the above new park Tomdachi Park.

(The translation was never really made clear but it sounded something like “friendship.”) It was clear, however, the whole Council thought this was a good idea. The last Council thought naming the plaza “The Mario Savio Free Speech Plaza” was a good idea while not even giving a nod to the notion that it could be named to honor the Sebastopol Japanese-American families that had been interned during WWII.

**Council Member Gurney** felt compelled to the suggested sign include her ideas of what it should look like. They were politely ignored. She may not have known how insulting that really was.

**Council Member Eder** had a better idea of erecting an interpretative sign away from the naming sign. He had an even better idea when he said that the City needs a process when it comes to handing out names to City properties. He evidently has been getting some negative feedback about the Mario Savio Free Speech Plaza. Council Member Eder wasn't on the Council when that embarrassment occurred.

## **City Council Reports**

City Manager/Attorney Larry McLaughlin discussed the [Railroad Forest](#) issue with a brave face as he put the City in the best position he could in relation to what the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District may do next.

Well, thanks to people who like the sound of their own voices, this exercise in democracy took four hours. The good news—no new lawsuits.

John Necker