

Sebastopol City Council Meeting – September 16, 2014 – Synopsis and Commentary

There was yet another closed session today as the City drags its weary self toward what one could only hope is some sort of resolution to the **CVS debacle**.

Then from 4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. you missed a **City Council Meet and Greet** at Ives Park, complete with free food. This was supposedly suggested by someone who thought it would help us all get to know our City Council better. Your Council jumped on that idea with both feet. That this is occurring a few months before three of them are up for **election** may be viewed as pure coincidence.

With full tummies, at 6 p.m., the regular meeting was called to order at 425 Morris Street. All Council Members were present.

Proclamations:

September 20th is [Coastal Cleanup Day](#).

September 21st is [International Day of Peace](#). (Hopefully more folks will get with it this time.)

September 27th is [Russian River Cleanup Day](#).

September 29th is [Cittaslow International Day](#).

Presentations to [Life in Sebastopol Photo Contest](#) winners. (Skate Park/Fireworks finished first.)

Public Comment: (aka open mike)

This was relatively bland, except for the speaker who informed us we are selling water to the Chinese, our [government is putting “chips” in people](#) to track them, and the U.S. Air Force is bragging it will control the weather by 2025. Well then, our fighting forces have improved. The Air Force of my memory couldn't find its collective posterior with either hand.

Consent Calendar:

(All items passed without discussion except numbers 2 and 7.)*

#1. Request by Caltrans to extend the red zone east of Ellis Court to improve traffic visibility.

#2. Extension of the lease with the West County Museum and Gold Ridge Farm.

#3. Extension of the contract for Communications Outreach Coordinator (Holly Hansen).

[Scroll down to page 5 of this link to see what she has been up to](#). (Now that's what I'm talking about!)

#4. Resolution supporting [Pamta](#) and [Para](#).

#5. Establish a [water shortage contingency plan](#).

#6. Reject all bids for slurry seals on selected streets because the **lowest** bid came in 60% higher than the estimate. Staff will go back to the drawing board on this one.

#7. Move forward with [Sculpture Jam 2014 projects](#)—with some conditions.

Informational Item:

#8. This was a presentation relating to the [Compliance Check Program](#) that deals with carding folks who want to belly up to the bar. The police are finding that the carding is getting done in our fair city but the IDs are not getting scrutinized closely enough. Training may soon be required for owners and employees of businesses that serve alcohol.

Discussion and Action Items:

#9. **Waste management issues** were discussed. In 1992, the nine cities in, and the County of Sonoma, formed an agency to deal with waste management. It will expire in 2017, so some changes are being proposed. The City doesn't seem to have any objections to the way the new agency will be formed but we shall see if anything develops when an actual agreement must be debated.

What they said:

***Council Member Eder** pulled items #2 and #7 from the Consent Calendar. Regarding Item #2, he suggested that before the City agrees to a new 10-year lease with [Gold Ridge Farm and the West County Historical Society](#), the City should change the agreement to allow a bike path through the farm. Wow! Talk about sticking your face into a buzz saw! The chair of the farm, and many others, strongly objected to that idea. She said she felt “blindsided” by the suggestion that could have been broached well before this meeting. She reminded Council Member Eder that the farm was donated by Mrs. Burbank in memory of her husband with the understanding it not be significantly altered. Hard words were tossed in Council Member Eder's direction, including “inappropriate” and “unethical” by **Council Member Gurney**. **Council Members Glass and Gurney and Mayor Jacob** all thought no changes at all should be made. **Council Member Slayter** then suggested modifying the length of the lease but backed off quickly when it got hot in the kitchen. It passed unchanged 4:0 with Council Member Eder abstaining. (**Whatever that was supposed to indicate!**)

Even now scorned and scarred, **Council Member Eder** tilted toward item #7, the 2014 Sculpture Jam proposal. He suggested modifying the applicable ordinance to address how many of the “temporary” exhibits have a way of becoming permanent. To his obvious relief, *this* idea was well received. It passed 5/0. He continues to work for an ordinance that will directly address this sort of thing. We have none now.

A Parting Shot!

Ahhh... **Cittaslow** rears its head again. My favorite \$20,000 city agency. There are **STILL** only three cities in the U.S. that are “certified” (Fairfax, Sonoma Valley and us). Well, things happen [slowly](#) in this organization. (**Slow down** and listen to above link to the end. It just gets better and better.)

John Necker

Duration 3:00