

## Sebastopol City Council Meeting – December 17, 2013 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

### **Proclamations:**

After a proclamation honoring two firefighters for their 20 years of service, it was time for “open mike.”

### **Public Comment:**

This is the most painful section of the meeting because the Council has no control over the topics and is required by law to let the gadflies buzz for up to three minutes each. They may be buzzing less in the future as **Mayor Jacob** announced he might start limiting the public comment session to 20 minutes in total. Those who don't have a chance to speak in that window of time would be allowed to do so at the end of the meeting—after City business has been completed.

And the rationale for his thinking was obvious tonight as 15 people, many of whom bore a strong resemblance to certain cast members of “Breaking Bad” burned up 45 minutes of our time. Big brother plots, land grabs and lectures on the national debt and constitutional law—it was all there. One quoted the bible and finished with a song. (She should NOT give up her day job!) Another continued to demonstrate she would never be able to pronounce a Latino name correctly. But the winner is.... The EMF lady who showed up wearing what looked to be a bicycle helmet covered with aluminum foil. And she wore it all night! Stylin'.

Two rational people also spoke. The Ives pool manager thanked the City for its help in upgrading Ives Pool. Another person thanked the city staff, and especially our long-suffering Planning Director, for their excellent work.

### **Presentations:**

Annually, the City has an independent audit performed and the results this year were better than expected. The CPA reported that we are now in the black and improving due to a combination of factors—the economy, taxes, and containment of spending levels.

### **Consent Calendar:**

One item moved faster than a clam through a seagull. There was a quick call for a vote and then it was approved 5:0. The topic? Approving an extra **\$150,000.00** to defend the CVS drive-through lawsuit. [See this article in the Press Democrat.](#)

The other item took a little longer. It seems our Planning Director has found that Sebastopol is eligible for more than **\$75,000.00** in State money if we spend it on a park-like project. And we have one ready to go in our very own Skate Garden Park on Laguna Park Way. The plans are for more green space and not more skating area. What's not to like?

Well, it wasn't good enough for the person who is instrumental in the CVS debacle and second lawsuit brought against our fair city. She wanted the money spent elsewhere. It wasn't clear if she just disliked the project or was driven more by her dislike of the Planning Director. In any case, our Council showed a little backbone and voted 5:0 against her wishes. A rare vote indeed! [Click here to see what she didn't like.](#) It's worth watching to the end. It will make you feel better about young people and the music is good too.

### **Discussion and Action Items:**

The language for the **General Plan Advisory Committee** application was adjusted. The City Council seems to be serious about "no experience necessary," so give the City a call and tell them you want to apply.

Committee assignments were formalized and so we moved on to.....

### **City Council Reports:**

There seems to be tacit agreement among the Council members to email these reports to each other in order to shorten the meetings. An agreement among all save one. After Mayor Jacob thanked **Council Member Gurney** for printing and distributing her reports to the rest of the Council, she spent ten minutes telling them, and all five of the public left standing, about what she had just handed them.

At the end of the mind-numbing minutia, she tossed us a pearl. So heads up! Caltrans is clearing trees at the bridge on Highway 12 and is on schedule to start construction on it this coming summer.

Duration 3:00 hours

John Necker