



# 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 17, 2020 – Synopsis and Commentary

- All council members were virtually present.

### Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- A speaker bemoaned Sebastopol providing so many parking places for vehicles at the expense of expanding bike lanes. More bike lanes sounds like a good idea to me. We could finally rid ourselves of all those deplorables who, through their own ignorance or maybe even genetic inferiority, so offend us by not only working but having to drive there to do it. Then there is the geezer group, who instead of tastefully dying off, insist on driving to the markets to shop for food. A couple of weeks of peddling back and forth to the markets and home with gallons of Ensure lashed to the handlebars should thin out their ranks. For the infirm, we can condescend to provide them with electric bikes and let the potholes around town validate the Darwin effect. These, and a few other social engineering tweaks, will, at last, deliver us, the privileged, a more perfect town, insure traffic tranquility and secure our blessings from those who ain't us.

### Consent Calendar: (Approved 5:0)

- The minutes for the November 14 and 20 meetings were approved and will appear here shortly. [Scroll down to Past Council Meetings](#). Not all minutes are available on the website.
- The council approved the next *Local Who Makes A Difference*. The name will not be mentioned here less the object of the council's attention decides to make a break for it to avoid having to wear the scarlet letters LWMAD while out in public. (Spoiler Alert: It is NOT Hester Prynne.)
- A contract with Schaefer Engineering to construct two concrete pads, extend sewer and water laterals and install electrical service hookups at Park Village was approved. The cost will not exceed \$89,610.
- A contract with De Nora Water Technologies to replace the arsenic filter at well 7 was also approved. Fremouw Environmental Service will remove the sludge and backwash the vessel. As mentioned here before, the arsenic occurs naturally. It isn't the doing of some delusional fringe bicycle group that just got tired of standing by waiting for more bike lanes.
- The council was asked to fund handguns and to approve a uniform allowance for reserve police officers. "The City of Sebastopol had a standing practice of providing a uniform allowance annually to all reserve police officers." A "recent examination of the practice revealed" they were not entitled to such a benefit. One wonders who brought that to light.
- The classification of what a police officer is and does, was last revised on January 1, 2002, was updated.
- An easement deed was granted to PG&E to trench along the north side of Libby Park from near the tennis courts to Pleasant Hill Avenue. This will allow the existing transformer near the courts to service the upgrades at Brook Haven School. Council Member Gurney spotted a paragraph in the "boiler plate" deed that would allow PG&E the "right, from time to time, to trim and cut down trees and brush along each side of said easement area." Well, because it's an underground installation it probably wasn't going to be an issue [but it was a good catch](#). The paragraph will be modified.

- The low bid for upgrading the ADA ramps along SR116 was rejected because it was about \$110,000 over the city engineer's estimate.
- \$12,995 was allocated to cleanup and remediate the fire damage that occurred on September 20, 2020 at Park Village. The fire started at a privately owned trailer and spread to another, destroying both trailers and adjacent trees. A contribution by West County Community Services bought the cost to the city down from \$19,450. [See more details here.](#)

### **Regular Agenda Items:**

- Our insurance company, Redwood Empire Municipal Insurance Fund (covering fifteen cities in this area), proposed to partner with the Public Agency Risk Sharing Authority of California (another insurer of cities) to form the California Intergovernmental Risk Authority. This will increase the insured pool to fifty cities and give us more geographical diversity. That diversity makes it much more unlikely that fires, floods, earthquakes or lawsuits will strike the whole area at once and deplete the fund's pool of cash. We don't have a workable option here because moving to another insurer would mean moving to a much larger one where we would have little or no influence. And influence, not risk management, is what Vice Mayor Glass, Council Member Gurney and, to a lesser extent, Mayor Slayter seemed to value the most, making it clear that they wanted their progressive values be allowed to "shine a light on the policies of the other cities." In the end, instead of focusing on saving people from themselves, they made a business decision and agreed to support the Redwood Empire Municipal Insurance Fund proposal (5:0). [You may see a list of the proposed member cities here.](#) Scroll down to page 35.
- Staff asked for direction from the council regarding AB 571 that will go into effect January 1, 2021. AB 571 will apply campaign contribution limits to candidates in cities and counties that have not set their own limits. The proposed limit is \$4,700 per person to a candidate, although it will allow a "small contributor committee or political party committee" to shovel cash in the direction of a person who may soon win a position that will allow them to return the favor. The council thought the \$4,700, which is the state campaign limit, way too high. But if the city sets limits it also takes on enforcement of those limits on January 1. So, it will not set limits, default to the state \$4,700 limit, leaving the state to enforce it. That still leaves the option of the council modifying that decision after January 1 but before any upcoming elections, which is what they decided to do (5:0). That will give them time to figure out the best way of doing this while taking on the burden of enforcing it. So send your \$4,700 to [SebastopolCitizens.org](http://SebastopolCitizens.org) now! Small bills only please.
- Every year each council member is allocated \$500 to apply to a project they feel is worthy. Council Member Carnacchi brought forward this item to request he be able to distribute his \$500 council initiative funds to the [Sebastopol Downtown Association](#). Granted (5:0). Council Member Hinton also got her wish to apply hers to the scholarship fund of the [Sebastopol Firefighters Foundation](#). The other council members are holding their cards close to their vests. They may also send small bills to a group that they hold dear in their hearts.

### **A Parting Shot:**

- [The "Unofficial Partial Results" of the election are here.](#) They show a total vote count of 8,387 and 100% reporting. The city website shows our population at 7,397. Call Giuliani and let the investigations begin!!!! (Spoiler Alert: Don't look at the 2010 US Census. It will ruin all the fun.)

Elapsed Time: 3:30 hours (6:00–9:30pm)

Next regular city council meeting is December 1, 2020 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

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

**John Necker**  
**[SebastopolCitizens.org](http://SebastopolCitizens.org)**