

Sebastopol City Council Meeting – November 18, 2014 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

There was a closed session at 5:00 pm to deal with some unknown threatened litigation.

Proclamations:

Honored for their years of service to the City were:

- Randall Bratton - 20 years
- Zina Keeran - 25 years
- Police Chief Jeffrey Weaver - 25 years

Public Comment: (aka open mike)

- Sebastopol World Friends are looking for a few more friends. [Click here.](#)
- Other speakers wanted us to **boycott CVS** and congratulated the *entire* Council for supporting the boycott movement. (Really, *all* of them?) Another speaker informed us there was no water shortage. Evidently there is a lot of [cool, pure water](#) way down there - wherever that is.
- The Occupy bench is still clinging to life. Gratefully, no “**Save Our Bench**” signs have yet appeared!

And kudos to Mayor Jacob. At the end of the bike lane comments, the EMF lady tried to hijack all that energy to advance her agenda. Hizhoner shut her down like Madison Bumgarner shut down the Kansas City Royals.

Consent Calendar: (Passed without discussion 5:0)

- New storm [water runoff standards](#) were adopted that will get us in step with [North Coast Regional Water Board](#).
- All bids for the remodeling of the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center (390 Morris Street) were rejected because **we don't have the funds** to do the job as proposed. A more modest proposal may be in the works.
- There are ten City buildings that need accessibility improvements. The City has received a \$50,000 grant to have an architect provide design services that will lead to putting these projects out to bid.
- The City Hall roof has been repaired and the City will now sign off on the work.

Presentations:

- The Complete Streets Advisory Committee gave a report on their efforts.

Discussion and Action Items:

In 2011, the City completed a **\$58,000** bike lane feasibility study. The preliminary estimates were **\$700,000** for the State highway lanes and **\$800,000** for the City street lanes. This year's budget has **\$120,000** allocated for a consultant who is working on plans that will improve chances of getting a grant for [Class 2 bike lanes](#). These are the kinds of lanes that protect the cyclist with a white line that a vehicle will dare not cross!

However, tonight's discussion was about [Class 1 bike/pedestrian lanes](#) and it was standing room only. The Apple Blossom (East-West) and the Sebastopol/Petaluma (North-South) planned trails could easily

exceed **\$1.4 million** and there were a whole host of folks who don't like parts of the plan—including the Laguna Foundation, Burbank Heights, Burbank Farms, many of the residents of Eleanor Avenue, and those abutting the Joe Rodota Trail that parallels Gravenstein Highway North. No one objected to bike lanes in general, but there were many objections as to location and how little time and notification the public received before this meeting.

Well, it's not surprising. Much of the proposal and the routes were the fruits of five years of labor by the same fellow who brought us the Railroad Brier Patch fiasco that ran amuck of two regulatory agencies. Which ones will it be this time? My guess is NASA and the AMA.

Anyway, despite **Council Member Eder's** continued efforts to cultivate this germ of an idea into something more advanced, it was rejected 4:1. The Council went with a motion by **Vice Mayor Slayter** that will start off [much more slowly](#) and with much more public input. We can't afford to start throwing money at something that is still in the bacteria stage of life. Let's see what develops.

The Council also passed a resolution to support the County in moving to ban genetically engineered organisms.

Because of the length of the bike trail issue, several other items were postponed.

A Parting Shot!

Councilman Eder, in his attempt to gain support for his bike trail motion, implied that several people at Burbank Heights had been coerced into signing a petition of opposition to the trails. Yeah, well, the [Gray Panthers play rough!](#)

John Necker
Duration 4:30