



Sebastopol Citizens

E d u c a t e - C o m m u n i c a t e

Sebastopol City Council Meeting October 18, 2016 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

Proclamations/Presentations:

- Denise Stinson was recognized for ten years of service to the police department as a dispatcher.
- The **Council proclaimed itself opposed** to the [Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement](#). This agreement appears to be a tad out of the Council's jurisdiction. Maybe they would do better to focus on a [Trans Willow/Jewell Agreement](#). (Scroll down to Regular Agenda Items after clicking.)
- Council Member Slater announced an upcoming event for [Sebastopol World Friends](#).

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- You may have noticed this fellow and his sign Tuesday near the CVS construction. Well he showed up with his sign at the meeting. One side read "Boycott CVS" and the other said "CVS Eats Crap." **He said he didn't know what the latter meant.** What it means is he has no sense of propriety. And his zeal reflects upon others like him whose confrontational tactics failed so miserably when there was so much more to be had with a more nuanced approach.
- The second speaker yet again gave us all a lesson in some sort of strange constitutional law that faulted the Council for problems in Iraq, Yemen and other points east.
- The last speaker is running for a City Council seat and has yet [failed to reply to our website questionnaire](#). Sometimes it is difficult to know if a person is **lying or just so obtuse** he can't comprehend that which is so obvious to others. **But propriety demands we assume the latter.** He stated Jim Horn, who is running for the Sonoma West Medical Center Board of Directors, wants to close the hospital (obtuse). He also said the Council is doing nothing for the hospital and has never offered to help (obtuse). After *Open Mike*, **Mayor Gurney was not obtuse** when she reminded all that the Council had indeed sent a letter to Sonoma West Medical Center offering support and has heard nothing in return. Perhaps the City's scrutiny would have been unwelcome.

Consent Calendar: (Approved 5:0 with no comment)

- Approved was an agreement with the [De Novo Planning Group](#), which will help the city with a zoning ordinance related to the [General Plan Update](#). **Cost: \$107,350 over a two-year period.**

Public Hearings:

- The Council discussed increases in [city fees](#), such as building inspections, sign permits, et al. Council Member Glass reminded us that **law prohibits a city from profiting from fees** and that a city may recover only actual costs. Our city charges far less for fees that it could. (Passed)

5:0)

- The Council approved a first reading of an ordinance fulfilling some requirements between the city, the police, and CalPERS. The short story—CalPERS is requiring all this just so the police can contribute to their own retirement. Yo, CalPERS, if someone wants to give you money don't interfere. (Passed 5:0)
- Some changes to the building codes for the sake of uniformity were discussed. And then we were all treated to another appearance of the [chain-mailed EMF crusader](#). Go to 54:16 **where the improved camera work may shock you**. (Approved 5:0)
- The Council “expedited and streamlined the permitting process for electric vehicle charging stations” in accordance with [Government Code 65850.7a](#). Scroll down to Section 1 for details. (Approved 5:0)

Regular Agenda Items:

- The Council approved a resolution supporting [West County Community Services](#)' intent to **lease the city-owned Village Mobile Home Park** and take over operations there. Eighteen of its 32 sites are vacant. The plan is to move in the **“precariously housed or homeless people”** and make services such as medical and substance abuse available. This is only an initial stage. Much more must be done for an agreement to take place. But since the **City is losing about \$10,000 a month** managing the site, this should be considered.
- **Council Member Jacob initiated a discussion on rent control**. His reasons for it were vague and general in nature. Some points of interest are:
 - Even though he will shortly leave the Council, and maybe even Sebastopol, he **pushed for an Urgency Resolution to freeze rents right now**.
 - Because of state law, there may be **only 88 units** in the city limits that qualify for rent control.
 - Because he just dropped this on the Council at the last minute and without any significant preparation, the city is going to have to **hire an outside attorney** to draft the resolution. **The estimated cost is at least \$10,000.**
 - **Mayor Gurney and Slayter voted against** bringing up the resolution at all and to slow down, take care of already extensive scheduled city business, and approach such an important issue in a more measured fashion.
 - **Council Member Eder voted for** the resolution while saying it really didn't mean he was for rent control.
 - **Council Member Glass voted for** the resolution using “the genie is already out of the bottle” as a rationale.
 - [Read Mary Callahan's Press Democrat article here](#) and compare it to what happened at the Council meeting.

Forgetting about the value of rent control for a moment, does the above look like the sort of well-thought-out procedure we have the right to expect from our Council? So, on **November 1st the Council will lurch forward and vote on the Urgency Resolution to freeze rents.**

- From time to time, the City bestows grant money on deserving organizations that do some good for the community. The Council adopted a resolution that created a detailed and impartial policy that every organization must meet to receive funds. (Passed 5:0)
- The Council gave guidance to the city representative to the [SGMA](#) on some upcoming issues.
- The Council discussed some points it would like raised at the upcoming Mayors and Council

Members Association Meetings.

Closed Session:

- There was a conference with legal counsel about one case of exposure to litigation.

A Parting Shot:

- The new and very much improved city website could be up as early as next week.

Elapsed Time: 5:00 (6:00–11:00pm)

Next City Council meeting is November 1, 2016 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

You can view archived City Council meetings at: <http://livestream.com/accounts/14608643>

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