

Sebastopol City Council Meeting – March 19, 2013 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

Proclamations/Presentations

Mayor Kyes proclaimed March 23rd, from 8:30PM to 9:30PM, Sebastopol's [Earth Hour](#). He encouraged us all to turn out the lights at that time and that should turn out to be “Happy Hour” for the EMF groupies. Lock your doors!

He also proclaimed March 17th-23rd National Surveyors Week. There doesn't seem to be a lot of votes here so why he did that is a mystery. Of interest though: Three out of the four people that are [Mount Rushmore](#) were surveyors. Teddy Roosevelt was not – probably because he could not stand still long enough.

Council Member Announcements

Council member Eder voiced great concern over a proposed State law that is being proposed by a Central Valley politician that could affect animal cruelty laws. While laudable, we would be better served if he focused on problems here in Sebastopol.

Council member Gurney advised us that they are still working on the “Goals Draft.” Hopefully one of them is avoiding litigation for a few months.

Council member Slater reminded us to buy your gas in town. You will pay the tax anyway but if you buy gas here the tax stays here.

Consent Calendar

The Council approved a consultants list and will ask the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for funding to design bike lanes on State highways in Sebastopol.

Informational Presentations

Council member Gurney arranged for two folks to present a slide show about their trip to Pakistan. It focused on drone strikes in the area. That is a serious issue but what it was doing on the agenda is beyond me. Did Gurney and the presenters think the rest of us so parochial that we weren't aware of it?

Public Hearing

The Council wants to pass an ordinance to require photo-voltaic panels on all new construction and remodels over a certain percentage. As written, it was fraught with language that was going to cause problems, such as what is to be done when shading makes the panels virtually useless. Council member Jacob was ready to pull the trigger right then. Fortunately it was sent back to committee for a clean-up.

As written, this may be the most restrictive ordinance of its kind in the State. A speaker from sebastopolcitizens.org (who has solar panels installed) offered some good ideas and rationales for using incentives instead of mandating. Yet, in another example of the Council bending to the will of the vocal one percent, it will probably proceed without making any real effort to poll the community at large. It will be back.

Discussion and Action

Council member Jacob read a resolution praising Occupy Sebastopol for, among other things, “focusing on issues of free expression” (the focus is less sharp at City Council meetings) and conducting “assemblies in a peaceful and respectful” manner (that didn't happen at this meeting). He went on to read “that a government should be responsive to the people”. (Now, that would be refreshing!)

Another part of the resolution read: “...*that Occupy Sebastopol will remove the Occupy Sebastopol information tent on or before April 8, 2013 and that the City of Sebastopol and Occupy Sebastopol will work together to replace the tent in the Mario Savio Plaza with the*

creation of a designated area with permanent items such as a circle of benches, kiosk; etc;”

OK, benches might be nice, kiosk less so and etc...ahhh. What is that exactly? Is Occupy going to open up a used car lot on the Plaza? Let's hope it means something else.

Closed Session

There is no way for us to discover what this is about except from its title which is **“Significant Exposure to Litigation.” (Two Cases)** Well, things like that can happen if you use “etc” when conducting City business.

Note: The City attorney has been getting a lot of grief about our exposure on this smart meter issue. For the record, when asked by Council as to what might happen if the ordinance was adopted, he presented them with a very detailed scenario which has come to pass. Why the Council ignored that information is beyond understanding.

John Necker