



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting December 20, 2016 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

- There was a closed session at 3:00pm to discuss existing litigation. [SHARP](#) is suing the City over the approval of the KOWS antenna.

Proclamations/Presentations:

- Years of Service awards were presented to police department officer David Ginn (10 years) and dispatcher Christopher Mooney (20 years). It has been my great pleasure to have so far escaped the attention of these two.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- A speaker from Junior League talked about an upcoming fundraiser, [Heroes in Heels](#).
- Two other speakers, armed with charts of junk science, warned of the dangers of smart meters without mentioning how those meters can assist in saving energy.
- [Then there was this again at 4:28:56](#). If you listen carefully, you may hear her say, “I want to get out of here before I get too goofy.” Uh-huh.

Consent Calendar: (All eventually received consent 5:0)

- The Council rejected a claim by someone who was struck in a crosswalk by a driver **who is not** a city employee. The matter will be handed over to the City’s insurance company.
- The Council authorized staff to request bids for the paving of Willow Street between High Street and Jewell Avenue. **Council Member Carnacchi** worried that some of the material used could somehow get into the water table. He was eventually **reassured by engineering**.
- Also approved was a **\$12,000 agreement** with [Bartel and Associates](#) to study the problem of the City’s increasing unfunded liabilities in regard to CalPERS. Since the City does not have the expertise on hand to research possible remedies, perhaps this consultant can provide them.
- Approval was given for a revised request for bids for the ADA work at Ives Pool. The last bids that came in were **way too high**. This modified version may get the bid price down.
- The Council approved the required AB1600 report to the State. The report informs the State of how Sebastopol’s developers’ fees are used.
- A \$4,000 one-month “bridge budget” adjustment for the fire department was agreed to. It will provide an increased stipend for our volunteer fire fighters through January 2017 and get this item to the mid-year budget adjustment where a more permanent request for funds will be submitted. In June of 2016, the Council approved a \$25,000 budget increase to add more shifts Monday through Friday from 7:00am–5:00pm. The en route time dropped from 6–7minutes to just under six minutes. The national average for volunteer fire departments is 4–6 minutes.
What the City needs is a full-time fire fighter Monday through Friday from 7:00am–

5:00pm. This year, the Council spent a sizable amount of money on things of questionable value to the community at large. Just sayin’.

Informational Items/Presentation:

- An application by **Traditional Living, Inc.** (another **marijuana store**) to do business in town at [785 Gravenstein Highway South](#) was heard. [Here’s some background on the subject from Amie Windsor of the Sonoma West Times and News.](#) The applicant pitched his business by stating it is locally owned and operated, taxes will go to the City, and he will pay sustainable wages. He stressed that it will not be a hangout for “stoners” and that anyone breaking the rules will be banned from his business. Well, we’ll see. This is West County where (probably because of EMF) rules usually apply only to others and seldom to the first person singular. All Council members expressed admiration for the presentation. **Council Member Hinton** had some concerns about the changes to the code that would allow a **25% square foot expansion administratively** without going to Council. It was agreed to reduce it to a one-time 10% expansion and it **passed 5:0**. The City will also review its marijuana laws. They better also start regulating all the Cheetos and Goldfish shops that are going to spring up.

Regular Agenda Items:

- There was a report by staff on ways to increase affordable housing and implement rent control and tenant protection that the Council will consider. This was followed by a rent control report from an outside attorney the City had to hire because rent control was dropped on the Council in such an unthoughtful manner. For the latter report, Council members Carnacchi and Hinton had to recuse themselves and were required to leave the room. The Council heard the report and then sent it off to the usual place—a sub-committee.
- The State has mandated various changes to accessory dwelling units (aka Granny units) some of which are elimination of off-street parking, setbacks, and water and sewer fees. The State is requiring this by January 1, 2017 or the City’s few discretionary options may not apply. **Vice Mayor Slayter** was understandably critical of the Governor for waiting until this fall to sign the bill and then expecting it to be enacted locally so quickly. The City will initiate those and other changes. [More detail here starting on page 3.](#) (Find more meeting details in the [Agenda Packet on the City website](#). Click Meetings and then December 20 in the Calendar.)
- Appointments were made to vote on behalf of Mayor Glass when she’s unable to attend various County and other meetings.
- City staff and Council member committee assignments for 2017 were made. There are about 30 of these. **Your Council does a lot of work away from the actual meetings.**

City Council Reports:

- Yep! Anyone who feels compelled to give an oral report after 10:00pm should be obliged to buy drinks for everyone in attendance.

A Parting Shot:

- [Merry Christmas!](#)

Elapsed Time: 4:30 hours (6:00–10:30pm)

Next City Council meeting is January 3, 2017 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

Your can view this meeting and others at: <https://livestream.com/accounts/14608643>.

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