



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting April 21, 2020 – Synopsis and Commentary

- All council members were virtually present.

Proclamations/Presentations have been suspended until further notice.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- One comment came in via email praising the council and also asking them for funds for the homeless. Hopefully she stayed tuned long enough to hear about how the pandemic is going to sicken the city's finances.

Consent Calendar: (Approved 5:0 without discussion.)

- The minutes for the April 7 meeting were approved and will appear here shortly. [Scroll down to Past Council Meetings.](#)
- The resolution to levy the annual street lighting assessment was approved. This year's assessment for a typical single family dwelling will be \$31.00, down \$2.13. (LED lighting?)
- The council approved the plan to provide 18 ADA curb ramps around town. The bidding process is complete but nothing is going to happen until it's safe to do so.
- Forming The Climate Action Sub-Committee has run into a few problems. The City has not received applications from the following areas: youth (ages 17-23), Sebastopol Business owner, or a "rights of nature" environmental justice/equity background person. And then this pandemic showed up. So the council voted to extend the application period to three weeks after the "Shelter In Place Order" expires on May 3 – if it happens even then. (Hmmm... "Rights of Nature." Momma seems to be exercising hers rights now.)

Regular Agenda Items:

- TOT revenue makes up 6% of the City's General Fund source. On average, the city receives approximately \$135,000 to \$175,000 per quarter in TOT revenues from the two hotels located within its boundaries. The revenue is usually submitted to the city once a month. The council approved the deferral of those Transit Occupancy Tax payments as long as they are made before June 30. (It can be extended past December 2020 but not without council approval.) Council Member Gurney said she could understand the deferral for March and April but not May and June when there is likely to be little if any TOT generated. Vice Mayor Glass said there would still be overhead and feared a hotel failure would allow it to be scooped up by a corporation. Other council members tended to agree and it passed 5:0.
- No action was taken on the waiving of fees for property owners who provide some relief to their tenants. Many legal complications must be studied first. A big one is it's illegal to use public funds to benefit one group over another without showing an overriding public benefit to do so.
- The annual initiative funds were approved. Council Member Gurney had already committed her \$500 to [Sebastopol World Friends](#), Council Member Hinton will use hers to support Analy

High School Graduation efforts and Council Member Carnacchi will send his to the [Downtown Business Association](#) for advertising. Mayor Slayter and Vice Mayor Glass will use theirs for the purchase of reusable cloth masks for businesses to hand out to customers who have forgotten theirs. [Sonoma Health Action](#) has kicked in \$2,000 and the assistant city manager/city clerk has directed \$1,000 of her training budget to the effort. 500 masks will be made, maybe even with a Sebastopol logo, for \$8.00 each. (Passed 5:0)

City Council Reports:

- The city is just about ready to sign a contract with a Community Vitality Consultant. Maybe the first thing to do is arrange for some virus testing. That would perk me up.

A Parting Shot:

- OK, if you are out for a walk and maintaining social separation and it puts you in a traffic lane that has traffic moving in the same direction, you don't have to be sweating out the COVID-19 virus.
- The city parks are closed but, of course, that doesn't apply to you. You may blithely stroll along undisturbed by those who are not special, your West Sonoma County saccharine smile shining through your free-range mask, sustained by the knowledge that your status shields you from social responsibility and bugs.

Elapsed Time: 1:30 hours (6:00–7:30pm)

Next City Council meeting is May 5, 2020 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

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

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