



# Sebastopol Citizens

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

## Sebastopol City Council Meeting January 21, 2020 – Synopsis and Commentary

- All council members were present and in apparently good health.

### Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- Sebastopol World Friends announced its upcoming “Sister City Friendship Dinner – Where SUSHI meets BORSCH”. Food and entertainment from Japan and Ukraine will be available. It makes you proud to be living in the USA. It’s happening Saturday the 25th. [Click here for more information.](#)
- The next speaker informed us she was new to the community and wanted to get involved and gave us a long list of her accomplishments.

### Consent Calendar: (Eventually all passed 5:0)

- [The minutes for the January 7 meeting were approved.](#) You may click on the preceeding link to see them and others. Scroll down the page.
- The fire chief declared the emergency proclamation terminated. It was declared because of the Kincade fire. No longer will the city have “extraordinary police powers; immunity for emergency actions; authorize issuance of orders and regulations; activate pre-established emergency provisions.” So you can start raising hell again.
- The Libby Park Playground and the procuring of bids was authorized. [You may click here to see the designs.](#) **Council Member Gurney** pulled this for discussion. She convinced the council, that although the city was about \$14,000 short of everything wanted, the city should put it out to bid with the whole package and then dig around for the money instead of doing it piecemeal. It is currently budgeted with \$100,000 coming from the park in-lieu funding account. That’s combined with a \$30,000 donation from the [Rotary Club of Sebastopol](#) and the [Rotary Club of Sebastopol Sunrise](#).
- Parking permits for post office employees who use the parking lot behind the Chamber of Commerce were rescinded. At a December 3, 2019 meeting they were granted a no time limit parking but requests from other business have caused the city to rethink that exemption, noting plenty of parking was available at the Post Office Annex and the CVS parking lot. The three hour limitation was to deal with security issues. “The main security issue was the parking lot being used by people living in vehicles and their associated bad behavior.”
- The council approved the mayor writing a letter to the Sonoma County Airport regarding the noise from the current flight patterns. Years ago, while a member of a local service club, a former much beloved Sonoma County Supervisor who was speaking to us, heard me ask him about that very subject. His reply was dismissive. Well, he lived west of the more active pattern. And now here we are with even more fights that should be making their approach over Highway 101 when practical. It’s noisy there already and most fliers certainly come from east of the highway.

### Informational Items/ Presentation:

- Mayor Slayter, who is also the city’s representative to and vice chair of Sonoma Clean Power,

gave the annual report of how it's doing. It started with a multimedia presentation that failed a few minutes after starting. Had PG&E hacked into the system? Much to my disappointment, no. After we all [stared at the spinning wheel of death](#) for too long, the city clerk summoned the wizard from behind the curtain that hides the meeting recording equipment and crew. He casually walked out and click, click click it was fixed. Pay attention to the man behind the curtain! Anyway, it was the usual indictments of PG&E and tribute to Sonoma Clean Power that delivers its power though dastardly PG&E's hardware. **Council Member Gurney** wondered if there was some way to **regulate small generators** that are used during power failures. (Guess who doesn't have one.) **Mayor Slayter** thought not but **suggested installing solar cells with batteries for backup power**. That might work if you can afford a lot of solar cells and a battery system about the size of a clothes closet. Oh yeah, and if you are going to heat and cook electrically on that system, you're not going to have time to boil an egg before the battery goes flat.

### Regular Agenda Items:

- After hearing a presentation, the council bestowed its sponsorship upon Sebastopol Walks and the new Sebastopol Runs programs – the latter for those of you who are hell-bent on sporting rickety knees in your old age.
- Caltrans wants to eliminate three crosswalks along [SR116/Petaluma Avenue \(Scroll down to page five\)](#) and build a new one with “[pedestrian activated lighted warning system across Petaluma Avenue at the Weeks Way entrance to the Downtown Plaza](#) .” After an hour and fifteen minutes, this went back to the sub-committee who will do battle with Caltrans.

The consensus of the council seemed to be this: **yes** with removing the crosswalk at Screamin' Mimi's because of right hand turning traffic off Hwy 12 that looks to the left for an opening and not to the right where the crossing is, **no** changes to the northwest crosswalk at CVS with the island because it will make the crossing too long, **no** to the removal of the crosswalk at the northeast corner of the Mario Savio Free Speech Plaza that goes east to the Barlow, **yes** with the elimination of the crosswalk from the CVS north corner that parallels Petaluma Avenue going north toward the proposed hotel, and **yes** with a crosswalk going east from Weeks way.

Got all that? Don't worry about it. You'll get to hear it all again. And it will be interesting to see how this eventually goes as all of this property belongs to Caltrans and it can do as it pleases.

- Council Member Carnacchi asked the council for its support of the [74<sup>th</sup> Apple Blossom Parade and Festival](#) and his ideas to combine that with a commemoration of the [19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which gave women the right to vote 100 years ago](#). Council Member Carnacchi better get moving on this. A lot of laws are getting changed lately.

### City Council Reports:

- The city manager informed us that the permits for the new hotel are likely to be pulled sometime before the first week in March.

### A Parting Shot:

- As for aircraft noise, maybe the council can do something about that jackass who is bound to show up this spring and start buzzing the town again – fulfilling a Sky King fantasy. ([Oh, that needs some explanation, doesn't it?](#)) The plane is so low you can almost hear a voice yelling, “Hey, look at me everyone. I'm a pilot!”

Elapsed Time: 3:00 hours (6:00–9:00pm)

Next City Council meeting is February 4, 2020 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

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

**John Necker**  
[SebastopolCitizens.org](http://SebastopolCitizens.org)