



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting May 21, 2019 – Synopsis and Commentary

- All council members were present

Proclamations/Presentations:

- May 19-25 was proclaimed National Public Works Week. Reading a proclamation is something that provokes patience since every paragraph begins with a capitalized and bolded “**WHEREAS**” and whereas it’s made even more irritating by adding an “AND” in front it. After sloughing through it, my suspicions were not confirmed. It has nothing to do with getting Zeke, my 36 year old nephew a job and out of my sister’s house so visitors can go over there for a cup of coffee and not feel creeped-out by his wandering around the place in that dingy, ill fitting bathrobe that my sister bought him when he was 12. Au contraire! This proclamation honors our stoic public works crew who, while forced to wear tee shirts that make them look as though they are part of a prison work crew, keeps the water flowing from your faucet, sewage flowing downhill, and the parks free of debris (if not gophers) and doing it all without the help of leaf-blowers, Roundup, dynamite for the gophers or those deplorables, probably friends of my nephew, who fill up the public waste containers with their household garbage.
- And another proclamation was launched recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Senior Center. The significance of that landmark may have been lost on some of my peers who, like me, have a whole drawer stuffed full of socks that are older than that. Still, whereas, Sebastopol Senior Center was the first and therefore oldest senior center in Sonoma County--that’s an impressive record. And [still rockin’ after all these years.](#)

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- A speaker asked the city to consider installing crosswalks at Sunset Avenue and Johnson Street as well as at the skate-park.
- A speaker from the Fircrest Mobile Home Park was pleased PG&E is going to upgrade the electric and gas feeders, but they’re worried about PG&E “running rough house over them” by installing smart meters. (Before the speaker gets too worked up, maybe she might check out what the World Health Organization has to say about this sort of “problem.”)

Consent Calendar: (Approved 5:0)

- The approval of the minutes of the May 7 meeting were agreed to even though the word “minutes” should have read “hours.” Way back when my socks were new, the Giants were playing ball at that concrete black hole called Candlestick, a locale that seemed to capture all the cold and fog within a fifty mile radius, along with your hopes of a pennant, never letting anything escape but a well-struck ball by [Willie McCovey](#). If a night game went into extra innings and you remained, while ignoring the signs hypothermia, you qualified for a [Croix de Candlestick](#). Should not the council award a **Croix de Council** for anyone whose night life is so wretched that they will stay to the end of a meeting that goes past 9:30 pm? Send us your

thoughts and a design. (No snails!)

- The Davis Townhouses got the rezoning approved.
- A Polystyrene Foam container ban was approved.
- An approval of a resolution to improve the city's chances of getting some SB1 grant money (\$451,920) for ADA curb ramps at 18 locations along SR 116.

Public Hearing:

- The council considered an appeal of the Planning Commission's approval (on a 4:1 vote) of a use permit for a non-hosted, whole house vacation rental of more than 30 days per year at [361 Johnson Street](#). And consider it, it did, micromanaging that use permit right out of existence. **The appeal was brought by the dissenting Planning Commissioner who is a former city council member.** Say what? OK, from time to time you may catch me stretching a point but this actually happened. The lady who applied for the permit clearly felt she had the rug jerked out from under her. Rug burns notwithstanding, she made a strong argument that, given the city has no clear guidelines on this matter, she felt poorly served by a rejection at this late stage of the process. The council, terrified by the thought of allowing this, thereby leaving the rest of us to empty our houses, rent them out and move to Bullhead City, Arizona and live out our lives as fat-cat absentee landlords renting our Sebastopol property to Russian rock bands with questionable attitudes regarding attire and using various illegal drugs. The council also could have followed the commission's recommendation to grant the permit for two years. Then it could have passed an Urgency Ordinance to halt more applications, giving it time to clarify the procedure and to review this one and only permit after two years passed. **(Passed the appeal 4:0 with Mayor Hinton recused.)**

Regular Agenda Items:

- Every year the planning department generates a [Level of Service Report](#), a kind of "How We Doin' Here?" report and presents it to the council, who in turn presents it to the State of California so the State can figure out new ways of sucking money out of us and our retirement funds and spending it on [bullet trains that go to die](#) somewhere between Merced and Bakersfield and/or piping our water down to southern California to keep the grass green at Dodger Stadium in hopes of quenching a World Series thirst that was last slaked in 1988. And we are doin' OK.

City Council Reports:

- By this time, still suffering from the effects of the below, my efforts to stagger out to the foyer and self-administer the defibrillator that hangs on the wall there, were successful and a lot less painful than what had just occurred. So the reports were missed.

Closed Session:

- Labor issues were discussed.

A Parting Shot:

- **Council Member Glass**, after making it clear in her opening statement that she would overturn the planning commission's vote on the Johnson Street issue, unleashed a torrent of verbiage on us that fell only 1 minute and 14 seconds short of the Sermon On The Mount. (Our technical staff is never wrong about these things.) It dropped not like the gentle rain from heaven but rolled over us like a Tsunami, unfiltered, mighty, carrying the flotsam and jetsam of our hopes for brevity and scattering them upon the cruel rocks of repetition. [Mercy, mercy, mercy.](#)

Elapsed Time: 3:50 hours (6:00–9:50pm)

Next City Council meeting is June 4, 2019, 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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