



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting June 4, 2019 – Synopsis and Commentary

- A closed session at 4:30 pm dealt with labor negotiations.
- All council members were present for the regular 6:00 pm meeting.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- Two speakers addressed the [removal of the swallow nests](#), the second of whom seemed less forgiving of a regretful city worker who only made a mistake. She wants him to “voluntarily” give up part of his salary for a year and is suspicious about what happened to the material that was removed – the implication being that there is some sort of cover-up. Maybe it would soothe her suspicions if she took to heart what an [English guy said a long time ago](#): “The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest: It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.”

Consent Calendar: (Approved 5:0)

- From time to time the planning department uses outside consultants when the work to be done is beyond capacity of the staff. Below is the approved list of those consultants:
 - [Prunuske Chatham, Inc.](#) (located in Sebastopol)
 - [LSA](#) (located in Richmond, CA)
 - [M-Group](#) (located in Santa Rosa, CA)
 - [De Novo Planning Group](#) (located in El Dorado Hills, CA)
 - [\(AES\) Analytical Environmental Services](#) (located in Sacramento, CA)
 - [Garcia and Associates](#) (located in San Francisco, CA)
 - [Rincon Consultants](#) (located in Oakland, CA)

Public Hearings:

- The proposed 2019-20 budget was discussed. It will return on June 18 because the council didn’t get through it all. One reason they didn’t finish was that **Council Member Gurney** kept throwing wrenches into the works, all the while complaining about how slow it was moving, worrying about a global climate catastrophe, not having the council’s goals ready, how well the meeting was managed and generally not liking anything Mayor Hinton was trying to accomplish. My guess is that Mayor Hinton and Council Member Gurney were in a poker game, and the mayor hit an inside straight, and Council Member Gurney is still steamed about it. There’s no other explanation.
- The street lighting assessment was approved. The assessment is \$33.14 per dwelling, down from last year’s \$36.50. The total assessment comes to \$131,417. (Passed 5:0)
- The council was to discuss the 2019-20 Capital Improvement Program. Part of it reads, “These projects normally are non-repetitive stand-alone work involving city streets, bike paths, crosswalks, water, sewer, and storm water infrastructure, and City facilities including offices

and parks.” (Tabled. Back on June 18.)

Regular Agenda Items:

- The council again confronted the dreaded idea of [joining the GSA](#). The vote tonight was whether or not to pay the entry fee for joining an organization that would have the effect of legally removing us from controlling our own source of water. (The GSA wanted us to come in for a fee of \$119,000 for the first two years. But our staff and city council beat them down to \$71,400 and the GSA magnanimously will allow us to pay in installments.) Because of state laws and rulings, resistance was thought to be futile and tonight it looked like we were about to be digested and [absorbed in the bowels of the GSA](#). Just when the last drop of salvation was slowly disappearing into the depths of the aquifer, our resident Don Quixote, **Council Member Carnacchi**, who has vigorously opposed this from the beginning, floated ideas why we should not capitulate. He said when we “moved out” of the Wilson Grove Formation, the State lowered its rating to where it was before all this started. If we could “move back” without raising the rating we would be in control of our own water and *NOT* have to form our own expensive GSA. [But there are some dangers and you can read them in our staff’s report here](#). Scroll down to Basin Re-Prioritization. In any case, the council understandably has no confidence in the GSA and tabled this until they can get an expert or two to give them some answers to basic questions they can’t seem to wring out from the minions of the GSA.
- Every year each council member is allotted \$500 of mad money to spend on a pet project – as long as it is legal and conforms to city regulations and policies. So far, unlike “higher” levels of government in our republic, it appears they have behaved themselves, avoiding any scrutiny by a special counsel, grand jury or calls for impeachment by Sebastopolcitizens.org. Distributions were as follows: **Mayor Hinton and Council Member Glass** will apply theirs to an outdoor shower at the pool to accommodate the homeless, **Vice Mayor Slayter** will direct his to [Sebastopol World Friends](#) (and man, do we need ‘em), **Council Member Carnacchi** will send his to the [Sebastopol Downtown Association](#) and **Council Member Gurney** will give hers to the [Madrone Audubon Society](#). (Now that was a swift move and should to be worth some future political support.)
- The mayor was given direction by her peers on how to vote on various county issues at the upcoming Council Members Association Meeting. (Wrenches continued to fall into the works here.)

A Parting Shot:

Elapsed Time: 6:00 hours (6:00–12:00 am.) For the council members (who receive \$300 a month for their efforts) it was 7 ½ hours. For staff, and maybe some council members, it came after a full day’s work.

Next City Council meeting is June 18, 2019, at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00 pm.

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

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