

Sebastopol City Council Meeting – February 5, 2013 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were in attendance.

Proclamations

Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to former Design Review Board members Craig Boblitt and Peter Schurch and former Business Outreach Committee members Sue Ungewitter and Carl Kerwick. Also awarded were Steve Salkovics and James Jorgensen for ten years with the Fire Department.

The outgoing Planning Commissioner, Clare Najarian, was also honored and “a special thank you” was voiced by Sarah Gurney.

Public Comments

The usual fears about EMF were expressed. There was an update on the skate park and some ideas about moving a sign to make it clear to everyone that it wasn't a place for bicycles. The Chief of Police indicated that it is already being addressed.

Another speaker brought to our attention that this was the 71st anniversary of Executive Order 9066, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, that effectively interned Japanese-Americans in 1942.

Sebastopolcitizens reminded the Council that we are still awaiting action on our request for a tent at the Mario Savio Free Speech Plaza. It was probably lost on the Council that a few short weeks before, we asked, if the Plaza must be renamed, it should be renamed to honor those who were interned in 1942, and not Mario Savio.

Council Member Announcements

Kyes: Announced he would see what he could do about smart meters.

Jacob: Announced he was working with Occupy to “move forward.”

Eder: Announced he was working on setting up office hours.

Gurney: Announced that she was “...the first mayor in history to have office hours.” She then went on to state that Occupy had made an offer to sebastopolcitizens.org to share the tent. She was corrected by me on this. She then restated the same idea in different words and was again corrected. She dropped the idea. We are not interested in that at all!

Kyes Again: Stated to me directly that we can't have an overnight tent because no Council Member will place it on the agenda. We can apply with a Special Events Permit but it will be denied. We can then appeal that denial. He didn't indicate if that would be summarily denied too.

Informational Presentations

Ricardo Freitas, nine years as director of Ives Pool, gave his Yearly Report. The pool opened in 1940 and is profitable. It is the only public pool in Sonoma County, and sports a 29 year Learn To Swim Program. A personal note: this is a great place to swim laps or exercise. Check it out at: <http://www.ivespool.org/>.

Terry Kelly, director of the Senior Center, gave his report too. As Terry said, “This isn't your grandfather's Senior Center.” Another personal note: This is an upbeat place with plenty to do at or away from the facility. Check it out at: <http://www.sebastopolseniorcenter.org/>.

Discussion and Action

A wonderful but a far too long presentation was given about plans to renovate the landscaping at the library and city hall. This idea may have been first introduced by former Council Member Shaffer but is now being lead by Council Member Gurney.

Caltrans gave a much shorter presentation on the bridge replacement that has been underway since 2003. (A perfect storm of Caltrans and Sebastopol politics!) This project must be initiated before the end of February or it will be scrubbed by Caltrans. Keeping that in mind, you may be astounded to learn that when a single member of the public didn't like the location of the entry structure on the east side of the bridge, no Council member rejected his idea and are now trying to find a way to move it to the west side of the bridge. This is a large structure supported by larger columns that will require some serious engineering, the success of which the Caltrans rep seemed to be very doubtful. What is the Council thinking?!?

There was a long and circuitous discussion about a Biotic Survey for the proposed Laguna Vista project. As it droned on you could see the fear mount in the eyes of the Council until they all agreed to say nothing until after a closed session with the City attorney. Maybe dealing with two major law suits is enough. We shall see.

At 11:45 PM, the Mid Year Budget Adjustment was approved. Expected revenues will be \$246,000.00 less than anticipated. After that was established, Kyes immediately gave \$4,000.00 to a supporter who wants to clean up the blackberries on a portion of the Joe Rodota trail. The supporter stated he was expecting \$5,000.00 but Kyes, the hard-nosed fiscal conservative that he is, held to \$4,000.00. It passed 5:0

At least, the pool and the Senior Center are run well!!!!

--John Necker