



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting March 7, 2016 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

Proclamations/Presentations:

- [Jacques Levesque](#) was recognized for 10 years as a police officer.
- Zina Keeran was recognized for 15 years as a dispatcher and reserve officer.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- The first speaker covered a great deal of ground but her point escaped me.
- The next speaker reminded us of the [10th Annual Sebastopol Film Festival](#) screening from March 23–26.
- The third speaker, much like many of our national elected officials, objected to many things while offering no solutions.

Consent Calendar: (Eventually approved 5:0.)*

- The goals and priorities of the City Council were formalized.
- The Council authorized Joseph Gaffney, City Engineer, to prepare the annual lighting district assessment report. Maybe that assessment will provide a **rational explanation** as to why the Council has rejected the PG&E offer to install LED street lighting that could [save the City as much as \\$54,000 a year](#).
- [Argonaut Construction](#) was awarded the contract to repair [Willow Street from High to Jewell](#). The cost of **\$257,401** will be covered by Measure M funds plus our own local sales tax.
- The Council approved bids for the **ADA upgrades at Ives pool**. They are:
 - A path from the Vet's building to the bath houses by [Schaefer Engineering](#) @ \$41,750.
 - Modification of doors and signs by [A.E. Nelson](#) @ \$45,600.
 - Installation of gates and handrails by [Golden Bay Fence](#) @ \$26,684. The **total cost of \$114,034** is covered by a block grant that the City already won.
- Approved was a small deck at the [Little League Park at 390 Morris Street](#). It will be an announcer and scorekeeper deck dedicated to the memory of longtime umpire Les Thayer.
- [A claim against the City](#) for a tree falling on a vehicle at Willow street was rejected.
- Also rejected was a [trip and fall claim](#).

Public Hearings:

- There was more of the interminable CalPERS/Police Officers Association compliance grind.
- The Council discussed conforming to new state laws regarding ADUs, or Accessory Dwelling Units that were once known as Granny units. Also discussed were JADUs, which are (wait for it...) Junior Accessory Dwelling Units. At first glance, it appears that Granny is going to be out

on the street but the upside is that you will have plenty of room to store your leaf blowers and other accessories. Much to my surprise, it was only a name change but turned out to be one good example of **why Council meetings last so long**. In September, the State made changes in the laws governing ADUs and expected the cities to comply by January 1, 2017. Staff and the Council agreed that to be in compliance, only **approval was now needed**. Later, when all have had time to give some thought to the details, they may reconsider and make changes. But oh no, the Council got down into the **weedy details for about an hour** and then approved it without changes in less than a minute. So when it comes back, as it should, we will all come together [one more time](#).

- The Council approved a request to rezone the property at [160 Pleasant Hill Road](#) to “high density residential multiple family,” which would make it consistent with our new general plan.

Regular Agenda Items:

- Various parking zone changes were approved—most of them having to do with Brook Haven and Parkside schools.
- **Council Member Carnacchi proposed, dare it be said, a bypass**. Based on a recent Caltrans report, he made it sound almost possible. He suggested forming a subcommittee and, in addition, he and the engineering manager would [sally forth to the kingdom of Caltrans](#) to joust for more facts. The other four council members thought it wiser to simply have the engineering manager contact Caltrans on his own, since he has the contacts and Caltrans has a bit of an aversion to politicians. **The Council member was not amused**. However, after digging his heels in, making some unkind remarks directed at Council Member Gurney (for which he later apologized) and reserving the right to call Caltrans as a “private citizen,” he acquiesced and agreed the engineering manager will make official contact with Caltrans.

City Council Reports:

- Short enough at 10:00pm to be bearable.

Closed Session: Exposure to litigation.

A Parting Shot:

- On a roll, **Council Member Carnacchi** pulled item number one from the consent calendar because he thought spending \$50,000 on a consultant to produce some long-term solutions to the fire department’s volunteer staffing problems was not a good idea. He said the department felt some “disconnect with the Council.” **Mayor Glass** said the use of a consultant was not meant to be “scrutiny” but to help in finding that long-term solution. **Vice Mayor Slayter** said it will produce the “best information for the safest possible community.” Carnacchi seemed ready to take on this problem by himself, but was gently informed that dealing with City departments is the job of a city manager and not a Council member. **All Council members voiced their support of the fire department.**

Elapsed Time: 4:10 hours (6:00–10:10pm)

Next City Council meeting is March 21, 2017 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

You can view this meeting and others at: <https://livestream.com/accounts/14608643>.

John Necker

SebastopolCitizens.org