



# 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 7 , 2019 – Synopsis and Commentary

A closed session was held at 3:30 pm dealing with two issues: labor discussions and a possible lawsuit against the city.

Mayor Hinton was absent.

### Proclamations/Presentations:

- The city's budget committee, consisting of **Mayor Hinton, Council Member Glass, City Manager/Attorney Larry McLaughlin, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk Mary Gourley and Finance Director Ana Kwong** won, for the third year running, a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the [Government Finance Officers Association](#).
- The above mentioned **Assistant City Manager/City Clerk Mary Gourley** was recognized for winning the [State of California 2019 City Clerk of the Year Award](#). And it happened on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Municipal Clerk Week – what are the odds! And in another first the council broke with tradition and presented her with flowers for the first time in memory. They are a tough crowd.
- May was ordained Building Safety Month.
- The [Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce](#) was honored for giving us the **73<sup>rd</sup> annual Sebastopol Apple Blossom Festival**.
- May was declared Drowning Prevention Month.
- May was also declared Lyme Disease Awareness Month. Then, inexplicably, the council presented the proclamation to the EMF lady who, in the distant past, represented herself to be an expert on ticks. Lyme disease is a serious business and it's only diminished by an association with someone whose attire is more suitable for a Wes Craven movie – and scarier.
- [Polish-up your Harley as May 9 is bike to work day](#) and the 6<sup>th</sup> through the 10<sup>th</sup> is Bike To Work Week. Just watch out for all the [peddle-pushers moving through the Green Mile](#).

### Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- The Sebastopol Community Center was recently underwater (physically) and a speaker urged more attention to design when making repairs to address the possibility of that happening again.
- Another speaker addressed climate change.
- There was a worry about the city's approach to ground water management.
- And, of course, the EMF gadfly was there. And even though my briefcase was loaded with burner cell phones filling the air with enough EMF to punch a hole in the ozone layer, she didn't seem to notice.
- Although he didn't sport his usual baseball chapeau with the brim pulled down to his eyebrows, instead stylin' with a reversed newsboy cap, this speaker's patter was the very definition of stream of consciousness thinking. It's just that the stream he was in had some serious Class 10 rapids. [However, this fellow can explain the speaker's main point.](#)

- And then came the 7<sup>th</sup> grader who spoke about problems with food waste. By any measure she was the most poised, polished and on-point of any of the above and many followed throughout the night – including a few council members who have a tendency to start riffing after they have made their point.

**Consent Calendar:** (Consented to 4:0)

- [Weeds are a fire hazard](#) and if they are on your parcel the city says: “If the weeds on these parcels are not removed by June 18, 2019, the City will abate the fire hazards and bill the property owners for the cost of abatement plus administrative costs.”
- **Sebastopol Gravenstein Lions Club, Sebastopol Sea Serpents and V.F.W. Post #3919, as in the past, have applied to sell fireworks this year.** All three are fine organizations but there is going to be a lot of dry fuel out there this July. Do you really want to take that chance this year? There is some talk about banning sales in the future, but a reliable source has informed me that “it’s not a done deal.” Several members of the clubs were present. All drifted away except the vets. True to their training, they dug in and held their positions until the final gavel at 11:00 pm.
- Ives Pool Bath House renovation is deemed complete.
- The Local Emergency Declaration has been terminated. The City now qualifies for reimbursement for damages for certain expenditures required during the storm.
- The Telecommunications Ordinance was adopted in an attempt to stop the cell phone companies from nailing up their butt-ugly equipment on any power-pole in town they choose. [Click here and scroll down to “Public Hearing” for more info.](#)

**Presentation:**

- [Sebastopol World Friends](#) gave a presentation about a recent visit from some folks from [Takeo, Japan](#). What is it with these people? The whole slide presentation, done in just over 10 minutes, was interesting, well organized and, unlike many presenters, they knew how to operate the computer and projector. And they threw in a bunch of cute kids that mercifully chose not to publicly criticize the assembled geezers for the planet we are leaving them.

**Urgency Item:**

- A 10-inch water main on First Street is leaking. It runs under several pieces of private property. The city will install a bypass that will run under the street. (Passed 4:0)

**Public Hearings:**

- In August of 2018 the City received an application for the [Davis Townhomes project](#), proposing development of eighteen (18); 1,180 square foot, 2-bedroom, 2.5 bathroom, 2-story town homes. The proposed development would occur on a vacant lot located at the end of Morris Street, south of Sebastopol Avenue/Hwy 12. [Click here for details and drawings \(262 pages.\)](#) Even though the council sheds tears about not having enough affordable housing, they still felt compelled to jerk this guy's chain a little.

**Council Member Gurney, for a little too long:**

Fretted about how this project would affect the escape route for Village Park residents should another flood occur and suggested a driveway be cut through the bike path and on to the Coffee Catz property. She gave little credit to the property owner for having opened his property up to the Village Park residents during the recent flooding or that he actually helped tow trailers to a safe location. Worrying about water levels, parking and maybe a little about votes, the council member said, "How do we justify to the public putting homes there?" (The architect replied it's

at 78 feet and has, and will in all likelihood, remain dry during upcoming storms.) The council member also noted a list of agencies may have not been made aware of the project and have not received notification in writing.

**Council Member Carnacchi:**

Was concerned about the signal control entering Hwy. 12. (Fixed) What color are the LED lights (2700k) and wondered if there were EV charging stations in the parking lot (4) and was the project solar ready? (Yes) Can you dredge material out of the Laguna to raise the project a few more feet. (Nope) Would the owner hire some of the homeless living in the nearby Railroad Briar Patch to work around the place. (At this point the owner's hair caught on fire so that's probably a no.)

**Vice Mayor Slayter:**

Said current ordinances require eight EV spaces. (Agreed). He also said the design looked "generic" then tried, probably unsuccessfully, to sound less condescending by saying it was a matter of taste. (The architect quietly accepted the fact that she has no taste.)

**Council Member Glass:**

Wanted low "bumps" in the showers so old folks can get over them. (Agreed but now the architect's hair started smoking but was quickly tamped out.) Council Member Glass also wants an escape route to Coffee Catz.

So then, fearing a general conflagration of the hair of the assembled and mumblings from the vets that sounded like a planned pincer movement on the council, it was approved 4:0.

- The council discussed replacing an old food packaging ordinance with a new, and improved one. (Passed 4:0)

**Regular Agenda Items:** (Passed 4:0)

- Council Member Carnacchi requested to be removed from the Zero Waste Sub-Committee.
- Vice Mayor Slayter and Council Member Gurney proposed the establishment of a "City Council Pedestrian, Bicycling and Public Transit Sub-Committee."
- Agreement was reached on how to vote at an upcoming Mayors and Council Members meeting.

**A Parting Shot:**

- While the Coffee Catz is a fine place for a cup of "Joe", this obsession with getting there during a flood is difficult to understand. Under those conditions, most would want to be sipping something with a little more muzzle velocity.

Elapsed Time: 5:00 hours (6:00–11:00pm)

Next City Council meeting is May 21, 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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