



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting October 6, 2020 – Synopsis and Commentary

- All council members were virtually present.

Proclamations/Presentations:

- October was proclaimed [Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#).

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- A speaker urged the council to apply for a [Sustainable Transportation Grant](#).

Consent Calendar: (Eventually passed 5:0)

- The minutes for the September 15, 2020 meeting were approved and will appear here shortly. [Scroll down to Past Council Meetings](#). Not all minutes are available on the website.
- The council received notice of upcoming openings for the planning commission that will occur on December 31, 2020. The affected commissioners are as follows: Patrick Wilson and Paul Fritz.
- Likewise for the design review board. The affected board members are as follows: Ted Luthin, Gregory Beale and Cary Bush.
- The Facade Improvement Program was amended. [The details are listed here under the “Discussion” section](#). Council Member Carnacchi pulled this item because he didn’t like some of the wording relating to eligible projects already underway. The council managed to soothe his fears.
- Since the city engineering manager has announced he will retire on January of 2021, the council authorized the city manager to approve new classifications and salary ranges for the position of Principal Civil Engineer and Senior Civil Engineer. The changes to the classification will be “non-substantive.” Council Member Carnacchi pulled this item because he felt that the applicants should possess a higher certification than stated – specially flood management. The city manager said that because of the impending retirement of our engineering manager, it was imperative to move forward on this. Any flood management issues could be handled by existing consultants for the time being. The good council member, who at times appears to be willfully obtuse, persisted. When he finally realized that the rest of the council was willing to let staff resolve this issue, he accepted the explanations that the classification changes, as stated, would save the city money and time. The city manager did concede to review the pay scale that will be offered.
- The council agreed to receive, in the future, a report from Gravenstein Health Action and schedule an appointment for a “liaison” to the city council.
- A modification to the city loan program was approved. The Tier 1, a \$5,000 limit loan program received only one application. However, \$60,000 was set aside for it. The approval of this item

moved the unused funds in Tier 1 to Tier 2. Tier 2 was limited to a total funding of \$90,000. Tier 2 received 12 requests totaling \$115,000 so this action will be able to cover all 12 applicants. [You can see more detail and a list of those applicants here.](#)

Regular Agenda Items:

- Many places where art is shown and sold are shuttered because the pandemic isn't paying attention to the hype about it disappearing. The Public Arts Committee proposed a lottery that would provide four \$500 grants to professional artists in Sebastopol. "Should the PAC receive, as is expected, more entrants than the number of gifts offered, then a simple bingo-style lottery draw will be conducted to randomly select winners during the November 4 public (via Zoom) PAC meeting." The PAC funds come not from direct taxes but rather in lieu funds paid by developers and specifically aimed at art. But the PAC still has to ask the council for permission to do something like this. They also want the council to match the \$2,000 – presumably using General Fund money. Whoopsie! All council members, of course, laid bare their all but insatiable urges for more public art. But they also questioned using General Fund dollars to satisfy that urge. Mayor Slayter could see no "quid pro quo" for the city in such a lottery and Council Members Hinton and Gurney agreed. Council Member Carnacchi stated that the in lieu funds, while not being direct taxes, were collected "on behalf of the residences" of Sebastopol. Vice Mayor Glass was ready to grant the matching funds and just "go for it." While the original \$2,000 was approved 5:0, Vice Mayor Glass' motion for the extra \$2,000 failed, supported only by Council Member Gurney. However, all agreed (5:0) to take up the extra cash consignment during the budget discussions on October 14. If you want to see who is in and who is out of favor with the council, watch that meeting.
- The council will submit an application to Caltrans for parklets to be setup downtown during the Holiday Season. Council Member Gurney and the Vice Chair of the Planning Commission, Paul Fritz, are leading this effort. Council Member Hinton is trying to outflank Caltrans by making a direct appeal to our legislators. The Mayor is in contact with the governor's office. Four parklets were approved tonight 5:0.
 1. In front of Screamin' Mimi's on Sebastopol Avenue's north side
 2. At North Main Street on the west side of the block between McKinley St. and Bodega Ave., south of the McKinley crosswalk
 3. On South Main Street's west side, mid-block between Bodega Avenue and Burnett Street.
 4. One at the end of North Main Street closer to Bodega Avenue was added tonight.

The budget is set at \$8,500. \$7,500 will be for the [water-filled plastic K-Rail barriers](#) and \$1,000 for the always dreaded unexpected. [If you want the gory details you may click here.](#) (The Caltrans specifications aren't as lengthy as [War and Peace](#) but it sure looks as if it was translated from the Russian by an underpaid part-time clerk with who tried to improve his skills with the help of [Czar's Gold](#).) It came as no surprise that Council Member Carnacchi wanted the megaton concrete K-Rails even though the city has no equipment heavy enough to install them. He fretted about [something like this](#). When he asked the city attorney who would be liable if a driver crashed though the K-Rails the reply was, ahhh...the driver. With that surprising but indispensable information in hand, the council agreed to discuss funding the parklets at the October 14 meeting that you'll be watching.

Public Hearing:

- A hearing was held for FY 2020-2021 capital improvement plans. These plans are non-repetitive and involve projects like sewer, wastewater, parks, to name just a few. Tonight staff recommended to council, considering our lack of funds, to choose one of the three plans that follow:

1. Continue with the Bodega Corridor work, using \$450,000 ADA Curb Ramp budget to stabilize project funding
2. Postpone the Bodega work and choose critical streets to receive repairs utilizing the \$450,000 available instead of doing ADA Curb Ramps
3. Explore bond financing for a longer term, comprehensive pavement repair plan.

[At the September 15 meeting](#), the council directed staff to provide its priorities for street repairs. At that time Vice Mayor Glass expressed her hopes that the council would not engage in “micromanaging staff” recommendations. Her hopes were dashed tonight. Largely at the urging of Council Member Gurney, staff will probably succumb to her wishes to pave [Michael Place](#), Kathleen Court and Hansen Lane. Council Member Hinton and Vice Mayor Glass were clear that they were in favor of letting staff make the decisions about what streets should get priority. So the CIP was passed (5:0) as presented with the \$450,000 going to local street repair. Staff will return with their recommendations on October 14 where it will be made clear just who is running this town.

City Manager Reports:

- Taking guidance from the state, the city has opened playgrounds. The city manager said the restrictions are strict and they can be viewed on [page one of the city’s website](#). Follow the rules lest your children become a disease vector and everyone blame you!

Elapsed Time: 4:50 hours (6:00–10:50pm)

Next regular city council meeting is October 20, 2020 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

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

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