

Sebastopol City Council Meeting March 15, 2016 – Synopsis and Commentary

Council Member Jacob was absent.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- No speakers. Where are they and what are they planning?

Consent Calendar: (All were approved without discussion 4:0.)

- The Council appointed Joseph Gaffney, city engineer, to prepare the annual street lighting report. This is a State requirement, so he will assess the system and report back to the Council who will set the rate. A public meeting is scheduled for June 7, 2016. Street lighting is funded by a parcel tax, which would be significantly lower **if the Council could work up the courage to allow installation of LED lighting.**
- The Council adopted a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sebastopol Police Department that is essentially a labor agreement. It's 24 pages long with the [pay rates on the last page](#).
- The Council approved an amendment to extend the City Manager's contract until January 14, 2021 and to up the vacation accrual from 10 to 16 hours per month.
- The Council applied some changes to the flood ordinance for “editorial purposes.”
- The Council agreed to support State Senator McGuire's bill to remove the sunset date on the [Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Agency](#).
- The Council accepted the traffic and air quality study for the proposed Piazza Hotel at [2824 Depot Street](#).

Informational Items/ Presentation:

- A curator of the library pitched her case to hang 10ea 3'x5' banners on the exterior of the library to “encourage creativity in young artists.” The art on the banners will be theirs. The **trial period** will be from about July 1st through the end of the year. At the end of the discussion, **Council Member Eder** whipped out a spec sheet for a **permanent hanging rail** across the front of the library before the **trial period** has even started! It passed 4:0 **without** the rail.
- The [Village Building Convergence](#) (VBC) pitched its plan for an event to be held on April 15-24, 2016. **This was a disaster!** Fifty pages of “place-making” projects were submitted to the Planning Director. Almost without exception, they either arrived late, without sufficient detail, proof of insurance, neighborhood approval, or without required permits—just to cite a few little shortcomings. **Worst of all, this one issue sucked up a full three hours of my life** as the City Council and the Planning Director tried to do their job for them. **The one exception** was a Wild Bee Honey Habitat installation in the Laguna that was so well submitted that the Council only had to decide if they liked the concept. They did and will allow a few others that they had to fix for VBC. (Passed 4:0)

A Parting Shot:

- These VBC projects should not come before the Council until they have met all City criteria—just like everyone else and just as if they **were not** the darlings of the City Council.

Elapsed Time: 3:30 (6:00 – 9:30pm)

Next City Council Meeting is April 5, 2016 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00 pm.

John Necker