



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 15, 2019 – Synopsis and Commentary

- All council members were present.

Presentations:

- Nathan Sutton was recognized for 20 years of service with public works.

Proclamations:

- October 13-16 was declared Freedom From Workplace Bullies days. The rest of the time you are on your own.
- October 24 was made World Polio Day. When the Rotary recipient of the proclamations drifted off into “herd immunity” and the low rate of vaccination for measles in Sebastopol, muffled and ominous rumblings rippled across the room. He stopped just short of having a vial of smallpox thrown at him. [Read more about Rotary and its history with polio here.](#)
- The month of October was set aside as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.
- And October was declared for Chamber Awareness and Pomo Honoring month, the two not necessarily connected.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- Astounding – even though everybody and your uncle was there to support the rescue of the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center (SCCC) that was to appear later on the agenda, no one spoke. Public comment at the opening of the meeting is only for issues **NOT** on the agenda. And while, at this time, many speakers, bring forward pertinent points, it often presents a platform for other carbon-based beings who are somewhat less than comprehensible in this galaxy.

Consent Calendar: (Passed 5:0)

- A resolution was approved for maintenance of Ned Kahn’s art that will be installed at the bridge on Highway 12 just east of town.
- The City of Sebastopol is eligible for Prop 68 funding program. One project will replace the playground equipment at Libby park. The other two are a pathway at Ives park to access the picnic tables on the southwest corner and, for some reason, an outside shower at Ives pool. Undoubtedly the use of that last project will be watched closely.
- Residents of Flynn Street asked the city to create a red zone on the east side of Flynn Street, starting at the driveway entrance to the City Park and going 60 feet north to deal with a bottleneck there.

Regular Agenda Items:

- The council discussed how best to use the \$1.5 million the state has granted to Sebastopol to relieve some of the burden for the recent flood damage. There are also FEMA and insurance payments in the pipeline. These funds are specifically marked for "flood", and can only be spent

on "flood recovery." And this is why your uncle and everyone else was here – to support funding for the SCCC that was severely damaged by the flood. To a certain extent they succeeded. On a 5:0 vote, the council will give them \$44,000 for expenses that the SCCC has already paid out, \$45,000 for lost revenue (like canceled events) and earmarked \$250,000 for a water dam of some sort – more on that later. But there are some big hurdles to clear.

There is no interest in restoring the SCCC to its stone age glamour. The push is to build something that will attract people. Even before the flood, groups couldn't legally cook in the kitchen because it wasn't certified and the whole building was generally ah...ugly. [So here is the plan.](#)

Another hurdle is that the building is still going to be in the floodplain. There were nineteen speakers all of whom received applause for their remarks except number 15. She is a brave soul. After she suggested bulldozing the site and building the SCCC someplace else there was that eerie silence that often follows someone voicing a diverse opinion. Even though Council Member Carnacchi expressed some serious concerns about the water dam, the other council members seemed to favor an "Aqua Dam" to part the waters of the Laguna and protect the SCCC. Coming so close after the failures at the Barlow, it certainly needs some close scrutiny. [If you click here and scroll down to page 22](#) you will find more information than you probably want about the dam.

Yet another problem is the FEMA funds. Before they will be released, a flood mitigation plan must be submitted to and approved by FEMA. Some sort of dam must be part of that plan. Even then, approval could be nine to twelve months away. And while the plan is made and FEMA ponders, this year's rainy season is on its way. Yikes!

City Council Reports:

- Mayor Hinton was the first 5th District Appointee Supervisor Lynda Hopkins made to the Sonoma County Fair Board.

Elapsed Time: 3:45 hours (5:00–8:45pm)

Next City Council meeting is at 6:00 pm on October 29, 2019, at the Sebastopol Youth Annex, 425 Morris Street at 6:00 pm.

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

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