

Sebastopol City Council Meeting – December 16, 2014 – Synopsis and Commentary

Council Member Jacob was absent.

Proclamations/Presentations:

We welcomed the Ukrainian Open World Friends visitors. Items were exchanged including a Ukrainian banner that translated to something like *Freedom or Death*. Hmm... [Does that remind you of anyone?](#)

Public Comment: (aka open mike)

Another 18 minutes of my life and a little of my soul wafted up into the vapors as one of the most [uninformed people imaginable](#) spoke at every opportunity about her newest crusade – *primary water*. Evidently the government aerial spraying season is over (it's difficult to see those con trails when it's raining) and now Uncle Sam is manipulating this primary water.

Consent Calendar:

The City approved a labor agreement known as a Memorandum of Understanding or MOU. The City is now moving to comply with the required changes the State is making to [CalPERS](#). This change affects the Unrepresented Employee. Two other MOU updates will follow.

Public Hearings

- The City resolved to apply for a \$60,000 block grant from the County to begin the process of bringing ten of our buildings up to ADA requirements. The first will probably be Ives pool, which *is not* filled with primary water. This is a use-it-or-lose-it type of grant, and while virtually any organization may apply, usually only cities do because the process is almost as painful as listening to some open mike speakers.
- The first reading and introduction of an ordinance to **ban drive-throughs** and regulate modifications to existing drive-throughs came before the Council. Existing drive-throughs will not be “otherwise affected.” At the same time, they cannot be expanded or intensified.

Council Member Eder immediately began to worry about **CVS somehow moving blob-like across Petaluma Avenue** and absorbing the West America Bank drive-through. He was informed that would constitute expansion and not be allowed. **Don't ever play poker with City staff folks**, because they can hear your council members say something like that and not even crack a smile while responding.

Council Member Eder showed a real interest in killing off all grandfathered drive-throughs by reducing the time they could suspend operations from one year to zero. Our **city attorney** said that “**could lead to disputes.**” And he said it with a poker face.

During Public Comment, some of the neighbors of Rotten Robbie again complained about the noise, lighting and tree removal at the drive-through facility.

Council Member Glass immediately thought that this might **revoke Rotten Robbie's use permit**. **Council Member Gurney** expressed interest in that too. **Mayor Slayter** mentioned that Rotten Robbie's use permit was issued in 1988, and wondered what the City's liability would be if we tried to revoke that use permit. **Our City Attorney**, his face changing less than those on Mount Rushmore, replied to His Honor that would constitute “**taking property**”

without compensation.”

Is this to become another CVS (*Council Void of Sense*) incident? It might be best if Rotten Robbie, its neighbors, and the Council all followed the law and tried to work it out that way.

- **The first reading for the banning of “Formula Businesses”** was pulled from the agenda – for now.
- Also pulled from the agenda was a request for a variance from the flood damage regulations by the Barlow Development. **The Barlow Development played the last City Council like a cheap fiddle.** It will be interesting to see if their musical skills continue with this Council.
- Committee assignments were also pulled until the full Council could meet.

Discussion and Action Items:

- **The Independent Charter School** presently located at the corner of South Main and Burnett Street is hoping to move to Hurlbut Avenue just outside the city limits. Since primary access to it would affect the City, the County is giving us a chance to comment on the granting of the permit.

Since the school now regularly uses the City-owned Ives Park for a playground, one can't help but wonder how many **tens of thousands of dollars** the City will lose in **use fees**. Then again, maybe Public Works will have less playground maintenance to do.

All Council Members opposed the move, citing traffic as an issue – as if there isn't a colossal traffic jam at the present location when school lets out now. They will send a letter to the County expressing their concerns. **They love the school but hate the move.**

- The Council adopted resolutions to allow Sebastopol property owners to participate in the [CaliforniaFIRST](#) and the [CaliforniaHero](#) programs. And there are more opportunities for **energy independence** here [SCEIP](#).
- By law, if the Mayor cannot attend the Sonoma County Mayors and Council Members City Selection meetings and the Sonoma County Mayors and Council Members and General Membership Association meetings, then an alternate must be appointed. (Close your eyes and try to repeat that!) **Vice Mayor Gurney was appointed**, followed by the remaining Council members if she cannot attend.

John Necker
Duration 2:45