



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting March 17, 2020 – Synopsis and Commentary

- **From the city’s website:** The City of Sebastopol, in a pro-active measure to help slow any spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) into the community, and to help protect the health of its citizens, workers and staff, has today announced a proclamation of local emergency. Sebastopol Fire Chief Bill Braga, as the city’s director of emergency services, has issued the proclamation, which is expected to be ratified at the March 17 City Council meeting. The proclamation follows similar actions by the State of California, County of Sonoma, and other cities in the county. Such actions include City Council meeting agendas, which will be limited to essential items only.
- All council members were present. **Vice Mayor Glass and Council Member Gurney attended the meeting remotely.** That generally worked very well.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- No members of the public were present.*

Consent Calendar: (Eventually agreed to 5:0 after Council Member Carnacchi settled down.)

- The meeting notes for March 3 were approved.
- New suspects were charged with doing some good and will be publicly exposed as “[Locals Who Make A Difference](#)” and their likenesses will be swinging from a light post near you soon. The lady whose bizarre ideas about aerial spraying and government conspiracies, which she feels compelled to share with the unwilling, was on the list of nominees. Gratefully, she wasn’t even mentioned. But if she practiced social distancing--say moving to and remaining in Grabovac, Yugoslavia--she would be the all-time top vote-getter and a perennial banner of appreciation would forever waft in the breeze over a much saner Sebastopol.
- The council agreed to award a \$34,440 contract to [GHD](#) to digitally map the city water and sewer systems.
- It’s that time again and the council adopted a resolution to authorize Joseph G. Gaffney, engineer, to again produce the annual city lighting district assessment. That report, should it be accepted, will set your tax rate for the pleasure of having street lighting--instead of wandering about in the dark worrying about what is being sprayed overhead at the moment. And worse, who you might find out there with you and is anxious to tell you all about it.
- [The Peace Wall](#) will get four new names. This is much more serious than the Locals Who Make A Difference banners, which are temporary. These name are chiseled into stone. There will be no denying later that they had the unbridled vanity to allow their names to appear, in close proximity, to another honoree much bigger than the wall itself--Nelson Mandela. The names are as follows: Fred Ptucha, Adrienne Lauby, Mary Moore and Joan Baez.
- The council authorized Mayor Slayter to encourage the County of Sonoma to opt in AB 626, the Homemade Food Operations Act. “The bill allows home cooks to prepare and sell food directly

to the consumer from their homes.” At this time, “In order to legally sell food to the public, health regulations require the food be stored, prepared and sold from an approved retail food facility. The approved retail food facility must be located in an area zoned for commercial use and have obtained plan review and permit approval ensuring that health and safety codes are met.”

When Aunt Beulah and Cousin Zeke heard about this, they were overjoyed at the prospect of dumping an overstock of canned green beans and turkey parts that they managed to “requisition” several years ago from a poorly guarded FEMA truck that got stuck in an oil slick during the Deep Water Horizon disaster. (That could account for the cans not being all that rusty.) So Aunt Beulah and Cousin Zeke are going to combine the semi-preserved canned contents with some fresh vegetables that are easily available behind restaurants in the early hours of the morning. They’ll spread it on a slice of Wonder Bread, give it a shot of Cheez Whiz and fold it like a taco – \$1.75 (No returns.) Waste not, want not and make a few bucks. What could go wrong?

- The city **almost** entered into an agreement with M3 Integrated Services to install ADA curb ramps along SR 116. A while ago. The council agreed to do this if Caltrans added **bike lanes** when they repaved SR 116. The estimate for those ramps “was **\$451,920**; contractor price will be \$434,745. The balance of \$16,615 will be for City staff (inspection) and contingency.” **So that is the real cost of the Green Mile.** Council Member Carnacchi pulled this and got the others to agree to table it and take a closer look at the [Fannen Avenue crosswalk](#).
- PG&E is looking to install a 50 MW microgrid generator at its Molino Substation to keep Sebastopol’s lights on during any upcoming blackouts. Of course, Sonoma Clean Power hates the idea and wants Mayor Slayter, who is also the chair of Sonoma Clean Power but did not recuse himself, to send himself a letter supporting his objections. Some of those objections he will send to himself include: the generator will be powered by diesel or natural gas, be noisy, be close to The Laguna, and (this is probably the real issue) PG&E hasn’t prostrated itself before the great and powerful wizards of the city council who feel the need to micromanage even microgrids with the apparent outcome of putting off for a few more decades, large scale backup power for your fair city.
- The council approved Sonoma County Waste Management Agency, now known as Zero Waste Sonoma (ZWS) to “apply for a grant to design, fabricate, install, maintain and service stationary, self-operated CRV recycling kiosks for the program.” This is very ambitious, high tech stuff. [Click here for the details](#).
- The council eventually ratified a proclamation declaring the existence of a local emergency due to the COVID-19 virus. Council Member Carnacchi wanted a “whereas” inserted to prevent evictions and price gouging. Despite the city attorney giving several detailed legal reasons for not doing that now (and already having them on the city books) Council Member Carnacchi remained obtuse to the bitter end. The proclamation, sans the “whereas”, passed and puts the city in position to collect grant funds for the effects if the virus should we qualify.

City Council Reports:

- *The city manager/attorney reported on precautions being taken to protect citizens and staff from COVID-19.

A Parting Shot:

- When the city sent out an email discouraging members of the public from attending this meeting in person, my thoughts were that it was a ruse to just get rid of me. Well, while my suspicions were unfounded, it did work. This meeting was covered by the live feed at the following link: <https://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/City-Meetings-TV> **Try it. You’ll like it.**

Elapsed Time: 1:15 hours (6:00–7:15 p.m.)

Next City Council meeting is April 7, 2020 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

You can view this meeting and others at: <https://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/City-Meetings-TV>

John Necker
SebastopolCitizens.org