



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting September 17, 2019 – Synopsis and Commentary

- Council Member Gurney was absent.

Proclamations/Presentations:

- Fire Department Years of Service awards were given to Alexander Roa (five years), Joseph Aiello (five years), Venessa Mann (15 years), Matthew Senn (15 years, son of the fellow below) and Raymond Senn (**40 years, which translates to over 25K of emergency calls**). Randy Bratton received an award for 25 years with the fire department and 17 years with public works.
- The council proclaimed September 21st International Day of Peace, September as National Senior Center Month, October 2nd as Walk and Roll to School Day and Clean Air Day.

But Wait, There's More:

- Immediately following the presentations, **Council Member Glass asked for an emergency ordinance to prevent PG&E from installing smart meters** at [Fircrest Mobile Home Park](#) as part of upgrading the gas and electrical there. Completely ignoring the facts that the PUC legal counsel has held our existing smart meter moratorium to be illegal, past threats of a suit by PG&E, statements from the city attorney that we have no jurisdiction and the owner and manager of the park wanting the smart meters, she pressed on. Then the Sebastopol Lady Luddite Leader asked that this be considered before other business because the two park residents in attendance were old and couldn't stay up late. What, there were other geezers there, including this one, who made it to 9:45pm! What was their problem – afraid of missing the reruns of the [Loretta Young Show](#)? And then they wanted the city to generate some bad press about PG&E and to pay for the analog meter surcharge if the residents lucked out and got one. Lady Luddite Leader spoke to corruption at the state level as if **that** was news. Of course Mayor Hinton moved it up, in compliance with the the **2nd Amendment of the Sebastopol Bill of Rights**.* But considering the above, all the city could do (on a 4:0 vote) is send a “strongly worded” letter (not a “nasty one”) to PG&E and the owner of the park supporting those who believe evil spirits be jumpin' otta them smart meters. Oi.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- After a too short hiatus, 'ol Mumblin' Mike showed up stylin' in his “It's OK To Be White” T-shirt and mumbled at us every chance he got. To further thwart anyone's interest in what his point may have been, his sesquipedalian remarks certainly did just that. All he said can be summed up by this jewel – **“molecular disassociation.”** Don't ever play Scrabble for money with this guy.
- The next speaker brought to our attention that our sidewalks are uneven and therefore dangerous. Well, that could explain why residents of Sebastopol blithely stroll down the middle of the streets. Or maybe it's to keep out of the range of those smart meters.
- Another speaker, clearly out of touch with the reality of the situation, wanted the same parking

laws and enforcement on Main Street to be applied on Morris Street. On my way in to this meeting, there were at least 13 campers on Morris Street. Maybe a compromise will work. One week they park at Morris Street and the next on Main Street – providing moving isn't too inconvenient for them. Clearly the council doesn't want them at Park Village. Since the more upscale name change, the council seems to think it has miraculously become a high end KOA that chooses not to accommodate those who might be mistaken for bit players in a remake of The Grapes of Wrath.

Consent Calendar: (Consented to 4:0)

- The following [planning commissioners are being termed out](#) on December 31, 2019: Evert Fernandez, Linda Kelley, Colin Doyle (Vice Chair) and Gerald Glaser (Alternate). Staff will begin the recruitment process to fill those openings and **you** may apply then.
- The following [design review board members are being termed](#) out on December 31, 2019: Lars Langberg, Christine Level and Ron Hari. Staff will begin the recruitment process to fill those openings and **you** may apply then if **you are afraid** to be on the planning commission.
- **If you are more artistic in nature**, you may apply for the [openings that will occur on December 31, 2019 on the public arts committee](#). (See, it's a *committee*, not a hard-nosed commission or a board). The seats that are opening are those of Warren Arnold, Jen Vertz (vice chair) and one seat that is currently open.
- [The city sent a form to Cal OES](#) that could result in some funding for the damages that occurred during the flood. It bounced because it didn't get done by a resolution. That was corrected tonight.
- The council approved requesting bids for two RV pads with hookups. The plan is get the \$142,700 needed using a [HEAP grant](#) and not tap your general fund. We'll see what happens when those bids come in. [More detailed information is here](#).
- After repeated requests from residents in the [Valley View area](#), the council approved reducing the speed limit on Bodega Avenue from west of Pleasant Hill Avenue North to the western city limits, from 40 mph to 35 mph. A traffic study conducted by [W-Trans](#) supported this action.
- To celebrate the above mentioned Clear Air Day, the council approved "planting of a large Valley Oak and California Sycamore in Ives Park, a Tupelo-Nyssa sylvatica 'wildfire' tree at the Sebastopol Fire Department and begin a native Valley Oak grove on the natural hillside along Morris Street across from the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center." It's currently budgeted but there was no mention of the actual cost.

Regular Agenda Items:

- W-Trans gave a report on CVS funded traffic synchronization study that was completed this spring, after the installation of the "Green Mile." The cost was covered by a **\$45,000 grant from CVS**. In that settlement, **Small Town Sebastopol, who also sued the city, got \$105,000** for their legal fees from CVS while **Sebastopol lost \$300,000 of its own cash** on legal eagles. Shrewd. [Click here to see the report and suggested changes](#). The summary is on page 11. (Passed 4:0)
- Council Member Carnacchi, with the help of city staff, introduced the idea of imposing a 2% tax on the pot businesses. It seemed like every dealer in town showed up to object to an added tax on their businesses. Their whining about their slim profit margins sounded a lot like my plumber when presenting his work estimate – when he's not at his condo on the Med. The dealers said they feel picked on and suggested taxing alcohol providers instead. What kind of anti-American talk is that? Martinis are already too expensive, even the medicinal ones. Council Member Carnacchi wanted the tax to go to improving Ives Park but the \$100K a year that would be generated would fall far short of what is needed. The number is now well north of the

original \$3.7 million. And the piecemeal approach is out as the ADA requires that any improvements must make the whole park ADA compliant at once. And, because of the timing, this would have to be a “special tax” that needs a 67% voter approval. Mayor Hinton made it clear, and her fellow council members seemed to agree, that while no action would take place tonight, it was likely to happen in the future as we are the only pot town in the county without such a tax.

- Voting instructions were given to the mayor and/or her representatives relating to business of various local and state entities.

A Parting Shot:

- * 2. **Others must defer to you as your concerns are of greater importance than theirs.**
- So if you don't think this town is being run by the [politically powerful in-crowd](#), you are not paying attention.
- **Note To City:** At 12:34pm northbound traffic was backed up past the Fairfield Inn & Suits. Traffic study compliments of SebastopolCitizens.org

Elapsed Time: 3:45 hours (6:00–9:45pm)

Next City Council meeting is October 15, 2019, at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

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

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SebastopolCitizens.org