



# Sebastopol Citizens

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

## Sebastopol City Council Meeting January 19, 2021 – Synopsis and Commentary

- All council members were virtually present.

### Proclamations/Presentations:

- Engineering Manager Henry Mikus (whose name has been spelled correctly by me this time) was recognized upon his retirement.
- Gregory Beale, who chose not to seek another stint on the Design Review Board, received a Certificate of Appreciation for his past service to the community.

### Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- The first speaker seemed terrified about the fees embedded in the Water Upgrades Save Program (see Consent Calendar below) and the city having “full control over the employment and the performance of services.” And he had a few hypothetical fears too. Anyway, they were long ago discussed in agonizing detail at a [May 5 meeting](#), which he was lucky enough to miss.
- Another speaker cleared up his remarks at an earlier meeting regarding [ranked-choice voting](#).
- The last speaker listed his ills caused by electromagnetic sensitivity. Perhaps a radiologist or an electrician could help.

### Consent Calendar: (Approved 5:0)

- The minutes for the January 5 and 13 meetings were approved and will appear here shortly. [Scroll down to Past Council Meetings](#). Not all minutes are available on the website.
- The council accepted completion of the bathroom renovation at the Sebastopol Community Center. The initial quote was \$11,108 but the total came to \$14,789 when dry-rot was discovered that required framing and baseboard replacement. And so was validated the first rule of remodeling : “If anything can go wrong, it will.”
- The city manager was authorized to sign the Water Upgrade Save Master Agreement and set the fee schedule for the [Water Upgrades Save Program](#). The **voluntary** program states that “participating municipal water utility customers can install water conservation improvements with no up-front cost — using an on-bill charge that is significantly lower than the estimated savings.”

### Informational Items/Presentation:

- The annual audit of the City of Sebastopol was presented for the fiscal year 2019-20 (ending June 30, 2020.) Nothing to see here folks, move along.

### Regular Agenda Items:

- [Co-Mission reported](#) on its activities. They stated that “the resulting data is not an exact representative sample of the entire residential community.” Ya think? There were “over 1,179 total participants” in the survey (how far over that number remains a mystery.) The population within city limits at 7,440 as of February 2016 and Sebastopol’s greater “sphere of influence”

(surrounding population served by the city) at approximately 40,000 to 50,000. [This started out as a \\$40,000 expenditure](#) that would run to the end of December 2020. [On September 1, 2020](#), another \$60,000 got thrown at Co-Mission to keep them in beer until the end of 2020. They are billing at the rate of between \$94 to \$211 an hour – and may have been doing that tonight. When the council started discussing just what to do with the report, Council Member Hinton asked the presenter how much was left of the \$100,000. The answer was \$43,000. She then made it clear she was not in favor of having them collect anymore data at this time. The rest of the council also displayed a little curiosity about what they got for their money. The council then dropped it on staff for recommendations and it will come back at a later meeting.

- The council will send a letter to the county board of supervisors supporting the West County Transient Occupancy Tax Measure B. It states: “To address tourism impacts on West County communities and paid only by guests, shall the measure be adopted to increase the transient occupancy tax in West County by 4% for hotels and short term rentals, to support sustainable paramedic emergency medical and rescue services provided by local fire agencies, and to support West County schools and education, raising approximately \$2.7 million annually, with all funds exclusively used for West County, effective until amended/repealed?” By some miracle, right up there with the loaves and fishes, no TOT will be levied upon hotels or short term rentals within our city limits. (Approved 5:0)
- The Housing Sub-Committee gave a report on many things including the county’s promise of \$335,000 grant to the city Sebastopol. But as mentioned before it’s not a lock and so far talk is all that has been heard. [Keep your eyes on that \\$335K city council, if you can.](#)

#### **A Parting Shot:**

- There is more information on Measure B here. [Sonoma County Voter Information Guide.](#)

Elapsed Time: 5:00 hours (6:00–11:00pm)

Next regular city council meeting is February 2, 2021 via ZOOM  
You can view this meeting and others at: <http://bit.ly/sebcctv>.

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