



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 20, 2018 – Synopsis and Commentary

Proclamations/Presentations:

- James Jorgensen was recognized for his 15 years of service with the fire department,
- The council proclaimed [March 24th at 8:30-9:30pm Earth Hour Day](#). For those of you who are afraid of the dark (and who isn't), for that hour you may stand under the energy gulping, mercury filled, high pressure sodium street lights and listen to the confused chirping of the migratory birds being misdirected by the orange glow spewing in all directions from those ancient lighting fixtures. Well, better them than us. Many thanks to the city council for banning LED street lighting even though they have the blessings of the AMA and the International Dark Sky association. What do those right-wing reactionaries know?

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- Engaging in the verbal equivalent of Whack-a-Mole, a speaker accused the council of conflict of interest, violations of constitutional law and a pretty impressive array of other crimes and misdemeanors. Well, when all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a mole.
- The next speaker re-enlightened us about the dangers of EMF and, much like the above speaker, read a long list of medical maladies EMF causes. He also wanted the city to hire a full time **radiation specialist to identify hot spots in the city**. Well, several good brew pubs and restaurants spring to mind. For him though, probably the library.

Consent Calendar: (Passed 5:0)

- The council authorized entering into a contract with [DC Electric](#) that will install a flashing **beacon warning system** at [Bodega Avenue and Ragle Road](#) for **\$117,689** – which is lower than the estimate of \$141,300. The money will come from the **Traffic Impact Fund**.
- The council adopted an ordinance between CalPERS and the city in relation to the cost sharing of the police [department's retirement agreement](#).
- A claim against the city for an [August 25, 2017 crosswalk incident](#) was rejected and forwarded to the insurance provider.
- The city will initiate a public application process to fill a vacated seat on the Sonoma County Library Commission. The application period is from March 29 to May 10.

Informational Items/ Presentation:

- Ives Pool gave its annual presentation. [Some interesting facts can be found here](#).
- The Rotary Learn to Swim program also gave a presentation and asked for volunteers to teach youngsters to swim.

Public Hearing:

- As required by the State of California, certain information about Development Impact Fees

(building permits, **traffic impact fees** et al) must be reported and made public once a year. It was made so.

Regular Agenda Items:

- Armstrong Development, **with attending lawyer**, presented its new design for the proposed new building on the CVS lot. That's because, at the November 7th meeting, the council asked for some design changes. ([You may read about them here](#) in the "Regular Agenda Items.") It would have been clear to even an EMF impaired person that the council did not want to approve this new building – **but the lawyer was sitting right there**. Mayor Slayter said he was **disappointed** with the outcome of the design but it was "OK." **Council Member Glass complained about it not having two stories** and having to look at PG&E's transformer, which is already there. **Council Member Gurney called the drawing "deceptive"** because they "didn't show the ugly parts." Mayor Slayter and Council Members Glass and Gurney all criticized the [settlement agreement](#). **Council Member Glass calling it "crazy"** and **Council Member Gurney** said it "ham stringed" the council, created "terrible ill will" and **didn't understand why CVS was "doing this to us."** After, and continuing to vilify CVS, what did they expect? So, after all, the building was approved 5:0 with only landscaping and signage to be presented later – **with the attorney sitting right here**.
- Citing "lack of applicants to fill positions", **Vice Mayor Hinton proposed making some sweeping changes to the existing planning commission** and how to fill the seats. Her proposal included "decommissioning" the current planning commission, appointing two at-large-members by the entire council and each council member "soliciting" and appointing someone of his/her choosing. This plan would fill the seven existing seats. All members must be from within the 95472 zip code, "and they must identify Sebastopol as their home community". The plan failed on a 4:1 vote (with Vice Mayor Hinton in the minority) but with no acrimony as the majority of the council wants to keep the selection and the applicants closer to home.
- **Vice Mayor Hinton proposed hanging banners** around town of people who have made a **major contribution to Sebastopol**. She did much better on this proposal as it was approved on a 5:0 vote. It will rotate 15 large pole banners and six small ones at the plaza with mug shots of the convicted parties for all to see – [and be a lot more comfortable than being pilloried](#). **Cost will work out to about \$5,000 per year**.
- Clearly alarmed by Verizon's plans to install an array of 5G antennas around town, the council will consider revising the Telecommunications Ordinance. There was a misprint on the agenda that a moratorium would be considered. It wasn't discussed because at this point, it would be legally unwise. But the misprint was, as someone mentioned to me, enough to get "all the nuts loose from the trees." The council approved 5:0 to let the Planning Commission update the Telecommunications Ordinance. Two dangers are here, one bigger than the other and neither having anything to do with EMF. The small one is what do these antennas look like and how big are they? The second, and the larger problem, is the city losing control of what a utility can place in our fair city?
- The council gave direction to the mayor and/or his representative about how to vote on various outside board and committee issues.

A Parting Shot:

- The EMF shock troops left their propaganda placards at the public speakers podium. Shortly before my thinning hair was going to catch on fire about it, Mayor Slayter noticed and had the placards removed. Good for him. Many of the more zealous groups don't seem to be aware it's not **their** council meeting but rather **our** council meeting.

Elapsed Time: 3:20 hours (6:00–9:20pm)

Next City Council meeting is April 3, 2018 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

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

John Necker

SebastopolCitizens.org