



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting October 20, 2020 Synopsis and Commentary

- All council members were virtually present.

Proclamations/Presentations:

- Linda Civitello was recognized upon her retirement from the Sebastopol Area Senior Center.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- A speaker urged the council to form a panel to help pick the new chief of police and was concerned about who the police chief would report to. My guess is that it would be the city manager.
- A second speaker hoped the the city would itemize the “non departmental expenditures” in the future budget reports.
- Many speakers praised the above Linda Civitello for her excellent managing of [The Sebastopol Area Senior Center](#) under some very difficult circumstances.

Consent Calendar:

- The minutes for the October 6, 7 and 14 meetings were approved and will appear here shortly. [Scroll down to Past Council Meetings](#). Not all minutes are available on the website.
- The extension of the Emergency Proclamation was agreed to.
- Approval for some street repairs was passed. Two surveys were conducted, one from the professional city employees who are trained to assess street conditions and another from the certainly unbiased public who live on those streets. Several technical elements rank the streets that need repair: cost, can the surface be just be repaired, is total replacement necessary, is any underground work likely to be required in the near future and how many voters live on the streets.
- Park Village Apartment renovations were approved. In brief, the council blessed remodeling the sub-par four apartment building to a compliant two apartment building. But the Council and West County Community Services still won't provide “street camping” there, which would allow those on Morris Street to be legally directed to their new parking places at Park Village. Funding comes “via state CDC/CDBG (\$135,000) and WCCS state grant (\$200,000) for a total of \$335,000”. August - Jaye Incorporated was low bidder and will be awarded the contract for \$202,369.
- The Council approved staff putting out to bid the replacement of selected maintenance hole covers (AKA manhole covers) that will resist storm water infiltration into the sewage system. Sebastopol gets charged for every the gallon of anything it sends to the water treatment plant. Flood conditions in the Morris Street Area during large storms greatly increased our sewage cost because of infiltration of flood water. This \$80,000 project is covered by a \$1.5 million grant that was [presented to the city by Assembly Member Marc Levine](#) on July 16, 2019. Then Mayor Hinton, who had more than a little to do with getting that check, said at the time it was a "team effort" when she accepted it. [The location of those gender neutral covers can be found](#)

[here](#).

Regular Agenda Items:

- The 2020-2021 budget was ratified. It's a shot in the dark. Until this pandemic curse is magically lifted, there is no knowing what revenues are going to be. But with an expected income of \$8.6 million and expected expenditures of \$10.8 million, the expected shortfall will be \$2.2 million.

Vice Mayor Glass lobbied for "the Gravenstein Health Action Coalition (GHAC), a newly incorporated nonprofit organization formed to replace the previous Health Action housed under the Palm Drive Health Care District." Realizing that its pre-pandemic hopes for a \$20,000 grant from the city for a "needs assessment" were now unrealistic, Vice Mayor Glass pushed for and received a sum of \$8,000 for the assessment. Both Council Members Hinton and Carnacchi agreed after some resistance. Council Member Hinton, who said she was "here to represent Sebastopol," was concerned that the county should be picking up more of the expenses since the GHAC will be serving a large part of the west County, not just Sebastopol. She hoped Supervisor Hopkins would give more, considering we are only 8% of the West County population and we are pulling funds out of our reserves for this assessment. Council members also approved a grant of \$2,800 for Rebuilding Together. The Sebastopol Center For The Arts received \$2,000 for Art Trails, \$5,000 for the film festival and \$2,500 for something to do with climate change. The parklets were not only funded but Caltrans has issued a temporary permit for them to be installed.

- Appointments to the Climate Action Subcommittee were considered and appointments were made.
- Expanding the membership of the Public Art Committee was discussed but no changes were made.
- Just in time for the elections, Council Member Carnacchi, perhaps sensing that this might be his last chance to lob a political bomb in the direction of the oligarchy comprised of Mayor Slayter, Vice Mayor Glass and Council Member Gurney, proposed a "Sebastopol City Council Diversification Initiative" as follows:
 1. Term limits for city council members.
 2. Election of the mayor by the people and establishment of an "Office of the Mayor."
 3. Campaign finance legislation (Sebastopol has no limit for donations).
 4. Raise pay for city council members to \$800 per month.
 5. Prohibit city council members and employees from making endorsements using their official title.
 6. Limit in person campaigning at main intersections to one day per election cycle (plus election day).

Well, that perked things up. While several members of the public and council expressed some interest in some of his points, almost all thought his bringing this up now, a few days before an election, was "awkward." It got a little more awkward after Council Member Gurney stated that the timing of this was "unethical", "shouldn't have proceeded", and was "really clear campaigning." Council Member Carnacchi responded that he brought this up because of her and said "you need to go" and "you are to Sebastopol what Mitch McConnell is to Kentucky." My assumption is that it was a political comparison since Mr. McConnell is the only one who has ever tried to sell his soul to the devil, only to be rebuffed. Council Member Hinton then jumped in and calmed things down and we ended the meeting with no virtual fisticuffs.

A Parting Shot:

- To avoid confusion, Park Village should be renamed "Park Somewhere Else Village."

Elapsed Time: 3:50 hours (6:00–9:50pm)

Next regular city council meeting is November 17, 2020 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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