



# 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 3, 2019 – Synopsis and Commentary

All council members were present.

### Proclamations/Presentations:

- **Emily Threadgill** was recognized for her five years of service with the police department.
- **Glenn Schainblatt** was equally honored for his 15 years with the building department.
- **Mayor Hinton** pledged to work with the [Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation](#) to restore habitat for Monarch butterflies in the Laguna by planting milkweed. And that's not the only habitat in the Laguna.

### Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- Four speakers from the lower reaches of Palm Avenue, where it meets The Laguna, reported on their ongoing problems with the expanding homeless population there who may be attracted to a different weed. One speaker has made it his job to pick up the trash, needles and excrement – the last item probably not in one of those cute dog-dump bags. His wife and other ladies in attendance said they feel threatened by some of the men in the area. Another speaker had one of the nomads flutter onto his property and howl that he, the property owner, was a terrorist. That speaker also suggested that a better place for these migrants would be in front of the homes of city council members. Eyes narrowed at the table in front of the chamber. (NIMFY)
- Appropriately, the next speaker wanted the council to decriminalize a class of plants with a name that sounded like some sort of [Serbian tongue twister](#). Those plants might be a kind of psychedelic, which leaves out milkweed, and would account for her believing the council had the authority to do what she asked.
- And just when we thought it was over, **Vice Mayor Slayter** had something to say. It was a rambling response that was probably directed at the strange fellow who *may* be smoking milkweed and thinks the vice mayor wants to burn the Constitution. This fellow also inundates the council with emails telling them all about the shortcomings of the vice mayor. But Vice Mayor Slayter protested too much and in the process broke an important rule of politics: Never let them know they are getting under your skin. He touted his understanding of the Bill of Rights, his literacy, his brain function, even his eyesight and then happened to mention his IQ test score which sounded like it might have aligned his systolic blood pressure at the moment. You may hear that and more here. [Move the progress button to 38:40](#).

### Consent Calendar: (Consented to 5:0)

- Some language in the agreement between the city and the police officers' union was clarified.
- The city's rules for dealing with employees were updated to reflect current laws and practices.
- A contract was awarded to [Zero Energy Associates](#) of Sebastopol for the removal and replacement of the existing solar panels and HVAC components at the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center. The cost is not to exceed \$149,063.20 but with some luck it could come in at

\$135,512.00.

- The city will also seek bids to repair the damage to the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center. The estimated cost is between low of \$282,768.00 and not to exceed cost of \$311,550.00. Of the \$311,550.00, currently \$130,194 is unfunded (It's proposed to be funded using General Fund/Flood Projects.)

**Public Hearings:** (Passed 4:0 with the mayor recusing herself.)

- The council discussed extending the urgency ordinance that created a moratorium banning non-hosted vacation rentals of more than 30 days a year. The moratorium does not apply to the following:
  - Non-hosted vacation rentals that are currently registered with the city.
  - Non-hosted vacation rentals of less than 30 days per year.
  - Hosted vacation rentals of any length in time (both existing registered rentals and new applications for hosted rentals). As expressed at the May 21, 2019 hearing, the Council was not concerned with these rentals, as they maintain a long term residential use.

This will extend the ordinance about a year while the planning commission and the council figure it out.

- On April 8, 2019, the City received a request from Element 7, a cannabis company located in Hollywood, California, to open a new head shop. The council, wanting to keep the head shops local, rejected this application 5:0. They will revisit the applicable ordinance at a later date to see if changes are warranted.

**Regular Agenda Items:**

- The council considered changes to the parking situation on Florence Avenue, and it seemed as if every resident on the north end of The Florence Avenue Bypass was there with harrowing tales about just getting out of their driveway as traffic zips by toward Bodega Avenue. The police had some fixes in mind. But for the short term the city will put up a "Yield to Oncoming Traffic" and "No Commercial Vehicles of 3 tons" because there are drivers out there who would try to take a three ton vehicle up that road. (Some things are beyond the reach of Darwinism.) At the urging of the police, the city will hire a traffic engineer to assess the situation. Changes for two parking spaces at the library to 24 minutes for book drop offs were made. And at the request of the owners of the A&M Mail Center at 321 South Main Street, the city will paint a 20 minute yellow curb although a green one would be more appropriate. The store owners hope that the change will induce scofflaws to obey the parking laws. This is what the store owners might not understand: Sebastopol is chockablock with precious and entitled people to whom many laws do not apply. What they should be asking for is a green curb WITH an underfed, non-vegan pit bull on a very long chain. (All approved 5:0 – sans dog)
- Since last year, an Economic Vitality Group has been meeting to discuss economic and vitality issues within the City of Sebastopol. They recommended that the council hire a "Business Outreach Adviser" who will, in the first year, assist with assessing the priorities of the business community and creating a full job description for an Economic Vitality Coordinator." You may find the details of that proposal here. This proved way too complicated for the council to grasp, let alone agree upon. So they went to Plan S. Staff will distill information and ideas discussed and bring it back to the council with recommendations. Stay tuned. (Approved 5:0)
- Mayor Hinton forged ahead with her "Paperless Agenda and Use of Electronic Device for Official City Business." The estimated cost of electronic device would be \$1300 per device purchased for those city council members requesting a city furnished device. (The total

estimated cost for five electronic devices is \$6500.00.) Reimbursement would be \$600.00 per council member who uses a personal device. Again, and at least showing consistency if not good judgment, **Council Member Gurney** objected to everything about the proposal except the color of the ink on the paper. Launching hypotheticals at any alarming rate, she battled on until she finally realized she was alone in her opposition, looking like homo erectus, standing out in an ancient snow storm and grudgingly saying, “OK, maybe fire isn’t such a bad idea.” She agreed after staff told her she could keep her computer and that documents could be searched using Adobe. One wonders though, does she think that smearing mud and straw a la Father Junipero Serra on her computer will accomplish the search? (Passed 5:0)

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

Next City Council meeting is September 17, 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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