



# Sebastopol Citizens

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

## Sebastopol City Council Meeting December 5, 2017 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

### Proclamations/Presentations:

- For 30 minutes, outgoing Mayor Una Glass reflected upon her term as mayor, and then nominated Vice **Mayor Slayter** to succeed her. Council Member Gurney seconded her nomination. The Council made it so with a 5:0 vote. Council Member Gurney then nominated **Council Member Hinton for Vice Mayor** and former mayor Glass seconded that. And it too was made so. Don't expect much to change but the meetings *may* move more briskly.

### Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- The first speaker, in a marvelous display of her ignorance of electrical theory, explained how the seven-layer aluminum hat she was sporting was protecting her from EMF evils.
- Two speakers encouraged the council to speed up the plans for correcting the traffic conditions at Bodega Avenue and Ragle Road.
- The third speaker was allowed to speak on an agenda item that segued to a pitch for her business.

### Public Hearing:

- It's block grant time again. And since the county has made it clear that it will smile upon projects that address housing over other improvements, this year the city is wisely asking the county for \$135,636 to make livable two of the four apartments at Village Park. (It was once known as Village Mobile Home Park but the Council, at the urging of Council Member Gurney, and reasons known only to itself, decided to gentrify the name.) And, in two literal strokes of genius, our engineering manager ticked not one but two boxes on the grant application. That unprecedented action virtually doubles our chances of receiving the grant from one agency or another.

### Regular Agenda Items:

- The Council discussed awarding a \$5,000 grant from the general fund to [SHARE Sonoma County](#), which until recently matched people with unused accommodations with those who had a need. Now, after the fires, the need for housing is even greater and the Council wished to address that need. (Passed 5:0)
- **In what appears to be a compromise**, PG&E has now offered to replace our street lights with “warmer” (3000 Kelvin) LED lights, different from the 4000 Kelvin light first proposed. The original PG&E proposal burned out at a [September 15, 2015 council meeting](#). The public works superintendent reported that the old high-pressure sodium fixtures were now obsolete and repair costs were likely to raise. The HPS lamp contains metallic sodium and mercury and consumes

70 watts compared to 28 watts of an equivalent LED lamp. There are approximately 560 PG&E owned streetlights that would be included in this program if approved. And while the HPS lamp has a life that can exceed three years, the LED is in the 10-15 year range. By 2018, the city would be saving \$26,000 a year on PG&E lighting costs. The 3000 Kelvin lamps are also supported by the [AMA](#) and the [International Dark Sky Association](#). These facts were not enough to overcome **Council Member Gurney's and Glass's** thinly disguised hostility toward PG&E and **they were in no mood to compromise**. They and the other Council members sent it back to staff with even more hurdles to clear. **So we will remain, for the time being, the city lighted by Luddites.**

- The Council directed staff to draft an Urgency Ordinance for the December 19<sup>th</sup> Council meeting regarding the use of marijuana. The goal here is to get our licensing requirements codified before January 1, 2018 so the State of California won't be tempted to do it for us.
- Another Urgency Ordinance was discussed—this time with the intent to provide some temporary relief for fire victims. Following the lead provided by other cities, it would allow recreational vehicles on improved driveways or in back yards but not closer than three feet to the property line. A \$75.00 administrative permit would be required as well as electrical, plumbing or building permits that may be needed. It allows for a one-year stay with a possible six-month extension if approved by the Planning Director. It will be modified and come back.
- The Council reaffirmed its intent to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

#### **City Council Reports:**

- While out and about the other day, our city manager spied signs and equipment that indicated **Caltrans** was about to get something underway. Their plan was to grind and repave Highway 116 from Mill Station Road to McKinley Street from **7:00pm to 7:00am** lasting about five days—**starting Monday evening the 4<sup>th</sup>**. (This is not a typo!) They didn't bother to notify the city or any of the residents who would be affected by the noise and activity. So, after battling mightily with Caltrans, the city manager got them to give notification to residents. But it's now going to start on the evening of Monday the 11<sup>th</sup> and go through the 15<sup>th</sup>. It's going to be repeated with permanent paving in the spring (What!?!). But the city manager is trying to get that to happen during daylight hours. [Good luck, Mr. Phelps.](#)

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

- **Council Member Glass** suggested, and **Mayor Slayter agreed**, to send a letter to our state representatives asking them to support us in criticizing Caltrans's actions. Hopefully we can also reach a **compromise** with the State Road Warriors.

Elapsed Time: 4:30 hours (6:00–10:30pm)

Next City Council meeting is December 19, 2017 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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