

Sebastopol City Council Meeting January 5, 2016 – Synopsis and Commentary

Council Member Jacob was absent.

- **At 6:00** pm, interviewing for openings on the **Public Arts Committee** began. The applicants were **David Gordon, Alexis Persinger, Robert Brent, Warren Arnold, and Jennifer Wertz.**
- **At 7:30** pm, the regular business meeting began. Council Member Jacob was absent. The first order of business was the discussion and selection of members for the above committee. **Selected unanimously were:** David Gordon, Warren Arnold, and Jennifer Wertz. Ms. Wertz, eminently qualified for the position, is one of those young folks who give crusty old geezers like me a little hope for the world. Could this be the beginning of Sebastopol's [Cretaceous period](#)? One can only hope!

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

There were two speakers, both of whom warned of corruption and criminal conduct in the police department. This was very alarming until it became clear they must have been speaking about the police from their home planet of Outer.

Consent Calendar: (All consented to without discussion 4:0)

- [Keating Avenue](#) reconstruction was completed on July 7th. The contract price was \$165,960 but when the old pavement was removed, other issues arose, **bumping the cost to \$187,390.63.** Happily, that was **well within the \$249,000 budget in the grant award.**
- Improvements to the [Sebastopol Community Center](#) were completed. At **\$117,863**, it came in a little **under budget** because some of the original items in the plans were dropped. However, the work exposed some flood damage that did get repaired within that price. In 1997(?) when the waters rose, folks ran down to the center, pulled up the parquet floor and stacked the pieces on tables. It sure seemed like a good idea at the time. But water rose to about six feet and ruined the floor anyway. So this year, keep your rubber boots close to the door. [We may have to try it again!](#)

Informational Items/ Presentation:

There was a report by the City Manager/Attorney on the number of items the Council has reviewed and/or acted upon. That number is 197 with 43 resolutions and 624 pages of minutes (very close to last year's numbers). [To see all of 2015 click here.](#) **Vice Mayor Glass** brought to our attention that it is also "searchable."

Public Hearings:

There was a first reading of an ordinance that will amend our Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance to reflect that of Governor Brown's Drought Executive Order of April 1, 2015. (Passed 4:0)

Regular Agenda Items:

- There was discussion of the City's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) that will expire at the end of 2016. This was a 1996 ballot initiative ([Measure 0](#)) that was approved by the voters to limit expansion and promote growth within the City. The Council decided to let a citizens group try

to qualify the renewal as a ballot measure in the upcoming election. If done by a citizens group, the City can avoid [CEQA](#) entanglements. But time is short and the Council has a stopgap plan should the citizens group fall short. (Passed 4:0)

- The Council discussed a letter from Teri Shore of the [Greenbelt Alliance](#), asking the Council to support the County in efforts to protect greenbelts between the cities. They are specifically concerned that the voters must approve any change to greenbelts. Think of that green belt between Santa Rosa and us. Like fences, greenbelts make good neighbors. (Passed 4:0)
- The City's grant application for \$800,000 to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for bike lanes on Hwy. 116 was not successful. So now, what to do with the \$200,000 from Sebastopol's Traffic Impact Fund that it budgeted for this project? **Vice Mayor Glass** agreed with our Engineering Director that it might be wiser to hold onto the money and reapply for a grant now that we better understand the process. **Council Member Eder** wondered, even if the bike paths are built, *would they come?* (It takes a brave soul to cycle in this town.) **Mayor Gurney** thought the local streets (not Highways 12 & 116) should be developed first and some money put aside for the larger plan to be pursued later. But **Council Member Slayter** carried the evening by convincing the others to spend probably **\$50,000** to produce the larger plan and put aside the remainder of the funds for other bike/pedestrian improvements. (Passed 4:0)
- The above failed to pass on December 1st because of [Jacob's resistance](#). **Tonight, he was absent** and evidently provided no information to other Council members regarding his current position, now that he's had an opportunity to peruse the old Class 1 feasibility study that he earlier felt was so important.
- The saga of the Laguna Management Plan also [continued](#) and, after much discussion, passed on a 3:1 vote. **Council Member Eder was in the minority**, even though earlier he said he supported the plan.
- The calendar for the regular meetings of the City Council was approved.

A Parting Shot:

Evidently in a snit because his colleagues rejected his small but last-minute addition to the Laguna plan, **Eder voted against it**. As a past Council member once said to me, "You never get everything you want in politics." It looks as though Eder hasn't learned that yet.

Elapsed Time: 5:45 (6:00 pm–11:45 pm) *This is not a typo!*

Upcoming Council Meetings:

- On January 11th, a **Special City Council Meeting** is being held to interview Design Review Board and Planning Commission applicants at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street, at 6:00 pm.
- On January 12th, a **Joint City Council/Planning Commission** meeting (GPAC items) will be held at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street, at 7:00 pm.
- On January 19th, a **Regular City Council meeting** will be held at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street, at 6:00 pm.

John Necker