

Sebastopol City Council Meeting May 5, 2015 – Synopsis and Commentary

Council Member Jacob arrived fifteen minutes late and missed the proclamations.

Proclamations were made:

- Declaring May as Building Safety Month. Get a permit. [This could happen to you!](#)
- Endorsing the [Community Resilience Challenge](#).
- Proclaiming May 14 [Bike to Work Day](#). ([Click here for proper procedure.](#))
- Declaring May 3-9 Municipal Clerks Month.
- Declaring May as Drowning Prevention Month. ([Learn to swim here.](#))

Public Comment (AKA Open Mike):

(**Mayor Slayter** has been limiting these to 20 minutes, allowing others not heard to speak at the end of the meeting.)

The first speaker complained of many things, one of which was that her neighbor tried to run **over her with a shopping cart**. Another wanted to tell us all about Jasper O'Farrell (no, not [this one](#)). As it turns out, the speaker was hawking his new book and even handed out bookmarks. Another speaker wants all of the business owners to walk out of their shops at high noon and wave at all the passing cars. Motive unknown.

Presentations:

Supervisor Carrillo and County Administrator Ferguson pitched the new County Roads Tax [Measure A](#). They figure it's going to cost about \$1 billion to get county roads back in shape. If passed, it would be a ¼ percent increase in the sales tax and generate about \$20 million a year for five years. The cities will get 56 percent of the revenues allocated by a formula based on road miles and population. [You may be able to spot the devil in the details here.](#)

While **Jacob** said he “was all about potholes,” the other Council members were more focused on **Council Member Glass's** remark “what's in it for us?” But the more they talked, the more it became obvious that these general funds could be spent on things other than road repair. Glass even suggested some of it could be **diverted to bike lanes**.

Consent Calendar:

- A change in zone designations was approved to allow a used car dealership at 885 Gravenstein Hwy. North, and to establish zoning consistency in the affected area. ([See our April 21 Proclamations/Presentation notes.](#)) Passed 5:0

Discussion and Action Items:

- The Feasibility Study for Class A **bike trails** hit a pothole tonight. After the City Planning Director's very thorough presentation, and even with many supporters in attendance, the problem became undeniable. **Jacob** said we don't even have enough money to do the study, so it will be put on hold until the budget gets sorted out.

- In March, **The Design Review Board** rejected two different sign proposals presented by the Barlow. **Barlow appealed** that decision to the Council tonight and lost 5:0. There are two signs, one 116' wide and 16' high and the other at 55'x8'. The proposal was for both to be painted on the Guayaki Yerba Mate building. The Council thought them to be too large and sent the applicants back to The Design Review Board. **Council Member Eder** concurred but then said the proposed signs looked like "a \$1,000 suit with a pair of work boots." Two things: That is no way for a Council member to address an applicant, and **it's been a long time since Eder has bought a good suit.**

A Parting Shot:

Measure A! If our tax money is going to be used for something other than road repairs, just say so and let the votes fall where they may. The ballot language is too vague. To borrow from Sebastopol Citizens' [mission statement](#), we want "transparent government and open communication regarding community issues that affect us all."

There was a closed session as the City negotiates with its employee organizations.

Complete Streets has three vacancies and no one has applied. [Check out out.](#) It may be fun!

Elapsed Time: 4:45 (6:00pm-10:45pm)

John Necker