

Sebastopol City Council Meeting – November 5, 2013 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

Closed Session

Mayor Kyes had nothing to report out of the closed session, which was about existing litigation with Longs Drugs/CVS that may be going on for a long time.

Just when you think it's safe to attend a meeting... the Council managed to drag this one out for 4.5 hours while still getting very little done in the process.

Consent Calendar

Approved without discussion was the installation of a police captain. This is not a new employee but rather an increase in rank for administrative reasons more than anything else. Adopting the California Fire Building code and creating a yellow zone in front of the UPS store also breezed through without further discussion.

But **Council Member Eder** had some questions about the Assistant Planner position and the small remodel of a section of City Hall. The rationale for the **\$50,000.00** remodel is "providing better customer service," so the City leveraged its limited resources to accomplish it. That's \$50K here and another \$20K for **Cittaslow**—two things that could have easily been deferred.

Mayor Kyes wanted to discuss the waste management joint powers agreement. Basically, this involves banning plastic bags. We will align ourselves with the County and so be able to write our own rules about plastic bags.

Mayor Kyes also wanted to discuss awarding the contract to [De Novo Planning Group](#) as the General Plan consultant.

In any discussion regarding an update of the General Plan, it's interesting to watch the Council direct virtually all of their comments to one person in the front row. Like the EMF and aerial spraying alarmist, she seems to be burdened down with one potential conspiracy after

another when it comes to the General Plan. Often allowed to speak whenever she chooses, even though public comments have been closed, the Council clearly defers to her. The politics are easier to understand if you think of her as, simply, **The Supreme Leader**.

Discussion and Action Items

This week's award for turning on a dime goes to **Vice Mayor Jacob**. While trying to decide if council members should sit on the General Plan Advisory Committee, it looked for sure like there were three votes for “no they should not.” **Council members Slayter and Eder** spoke strongly against it, arguing that it should remain purely a citizens' group and it would be quite capable of doing the job without the “help” of the Council. They made their point so well that **Vice Mayor Jacob** strongly concurred and it went to a vote. When **Vice Mayor Jacob's** turn came to vote, there was this long pause (seriously, probably over 15 seconds) and then he voted with **Mayor Kyes** and **Council Member Gurney** who clearly want to keep control of that process. **The Supreme Leader** didn't vote—or did she?

So after over an hour of “discussion,” the matter was deferred and will rise yet again on December 3rd where it will surely stalk zombie-like through the meeting, consuming all rational thought and a good deal of time too.

[The Business Outreach Committee's](#) days may be numbered. They have six months to come up with a plan to justify their existence. They now get precious little support from a Council that appears to favor **Cittaslow** in all things business. A better solution would be to shut down Cittaslow and split the **\$20,000.00** proceeds between the BOC and the [Chamber of Commerce](#)—two organizations that see Sebastopol as it really is, the good, the bad and the ugly.

Informational Items

We were presented with a very good [Quarterly Financial Report](#) (good in the sense that it's readable). Both **Vice Mayor Jacob** and **Council Member Eder** cautioned that we still need to be very careful with our revenues. **Council Member Eder** also made it clear that “his” newly built steps at the pool were paid for by Ives Pool and not the City. Unfortunately, the pool can afford spending \$11,800.00 even less than the City. **Mayor Kyes** spoke to scenarios involving

a .25-cent sales tax measure vs. the utility tax. **Council Member Gurney** worried that the sales tax would make “more news” than the “hidden” utility tax. **Council Member Slayter** kept a low profile.

Public Comments

These were more of the same with EMF, aerial spraying, government zombie-like assassins, and distasteful and poorly stated attacks on the Planning Director. The winner of the contradiction-in-terms award was the person who made the statement about a “fascist cabal with all the trappings of the communists.”

City Council Reports

She did it again! Unlike her peers, **Council Member Gurney** appears to be physically unable to avoid giving Council reports, even when the meeting has already run 4.5 hours. At 10:30pm, there was staff, the Council and three members of the public left in the room. Have mercy!

Duration 4.5 hard hours

John Necker