



# Sebastopol Citizens

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

## Sebastopol City Council Meeting February 6, 2018 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

### Proclamations/Presentations:

- Cordelia Holst, Executive Director of the [Sebastopol Cultural Community Center](#) was introduced.

### Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- We endured the same EMF warnings from the same speaker accoutered in a style that did not bear the label of any fashion designer on *this* planet.
- Another speaker showed up with several teenagers in tow to ask the city for a “place for young people.”
- Then a speaker encouraged the city to have closer ties with the West Sonoma County Union High School District.
- A representative from the [Boy Scout Troop 27](#) offered his apologies for neglecting to put out the flags on Main Street on [Martin Luther King Day](#).

### Consent Calendar: (Passed 5:0)

- The budget subcommittee meeting schedule was approved.
- Main Street will be closed for the 72nd annual [Apple Blossom Festival](#) on April 22nd. Some fees were waived. Street vendor licenses will be suspended to foil those who try to avoid the fees that support the event. But it’s never too soon to pick up a vendor’s license through the [Chamber of Commerce](#).
- At the request of Mayor Slayter, a letter to support [SB 705](#) to phase out polystyrene food containers was approved.
- Lars Langberg was appointed as the Design Review Board Representative to the Public Arts Committee.
- The community will be notified of the need for a citizen to sit on the [County-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee](#) that is mercifully referred to as the CBPAC.
- Two claims against the city for money were rejected—one for a damaged tire and a more serious one regarding the death of a pedestrian on Hwy. 116 in August of 2017.
- At the request of Council Member Gurney, the city agreed to sponsor and help with the publicity for [Sebastopol Walks](#)

### Informational Items/ Presentation:

- There was an update on the [Petaluma-Sebastopol Trail](#). This is far, far away and about \$30 million dollars short. Two speakers, one of them a former council member whose proficiency in the high art of hyperbole has not suffered over time, criticized the proposed trail for not really

being a trail. **Council Member Gurney** thanked the presenting engineers for correcting the perception that the trail has no recreational value. **Council Member Glass** wanted the trail to be renamed with Sebastopol's name appearing first. The look on the faces of the two engineers when she said that was priceless.

### **Public Hearing:**

- Starting in 2016, the police agreed to start contributing more to their CalPERS retirement, which will benefit them as well as the city by avoiding the CalPERS method. For details, look for headings [“Background”](#) and [“Discussion”](#) and ignore all my previous explanations of this which were all wrong.

### **Regular Agenda Items:**

- The quarterly financial report was given.
- Mid-year budget adjustments were discussed.
- 19 years ago, a sculpture was placed at the fire station but found to be “inappropriate” there and was rehung at the Mario Savio Free Speech Plaza, which was then named, and still is referred to by some right wing reactionary rabble, as just the “Plaza.” Anyway, for a while, the artwork was very controversial and even made the national news. Now the sculptor of what was dubbed “The Door To Hell” wants to hang it somewhere else unless the city cares to purchase it for a cool \$20,000. The Council, following the negative recommendation of the [Public Arts Committee](#), gently closed the door on that expenditure, agreeing that its purchase would set a bad precedent. The exception was Council Member Glass who thought it was “part of our history” and compared it to the works of Auguste Rodin. [This one](#)? So, it looks as if the Council will try to hand it off to [Sebastopol Center For The Arts](#) in hopes *they* can raise the money to purchase it. [And should we be wondering what is going on behind that door?](#)
- Various board and committee voting directions were given.
- On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the Council drafted a letter of support for Daily Acts and committed \$9,000 in matching funds in hopes of a grant to erect playground equipment at Park Village, formerly known as The Village Mobile Home Park. That grant application was unsuccessful because of restrictions on how the grant money could be spent. To improve the chances of a successful grant application, tonight the Council made the same commitment but for **\$14,000 to gain another \$15,000** in grant money.

### **City Council Reports:**

- The city manager/attorney reported that on this next phase of the Hwy. 116 overlay, Caltrans has committed to cease the grinding before midnight. It couldn't do that before because of existing contractual agreements with the contractor doing the work. The ADA sidewalk portion of the work has been dropped and the curbs and driveways part has been put off for at least 20 months. Replacing the flashing in-street crosswalk lights with rapid flashing beacon lights is on hold because of a federal patent suit. The suit has been resolved, so things may change again.

### **A Parting Shot:**

- The yearly loss of savings because of the Council's noble commitment to protect us from the dangers of LED street lighting would be more than enough to fund both the door and the playground equipment.

Elapsed Time: 3:45 hours (6:00–9:45pm)

Next City Council meeting is February 20, 2018 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

You can view this meeting and others at: <http://bit.ly/sebcctv>.

**John Necker**

**[SebastopolCitizens.org](http://SebastopolCitizens.org)**