



Sebastopol Citizens

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

Sebastopol City Council Meeting June 6, 2017 – Synopsis and Commentary

All Council members were present.

Proclamations/Presentations: (18 minutes)

- Sean MacRae, Timothy Leach and Lou Castleberry were all recognized for 25 years each of service with the fire department. The department handles around 1,200 calls a year—700 of which are medical.

Public Comment (aka Open Mike):

- The first speaker railed at the Council about her sewer and water bill, obstruction of justice and doing something about the [War Powers Resolution](#) and President Trump. Come on, **Mayor Glass**, tweet him! Her Honor will, however, shortly be sending a letter to **Mayor Khan** of London, apologizing for our president's hurtful remark toward him. Well, Khan is handling it a lot better than she is. He is, after all, **a mayor**.
- The next speaker reminded us of the ongoing [Open Studios](#).
- One of the more **irascible** members of our community (he has honed that skill to a high art over the years) rose to ask the Council to notice the many present for the Pine Grove Square presentation and to please move it forward on the agenda. The Mayor, [feeling a great disturbance in the force](#), or certainly looming on the horizon, made it so.
- **Vice Mayor Slayter** gave a short tribute to Mark Sell, the passing of a generous man who will be difficult to replace—should anyone even try.

Public Hearing:

- If you are on [this weed abatement list](#), the Council has adopted a resolution that will allow the city to remove the weeds on your property and bill you. Okay, since Roundup is frowned upon, you might consider a light dusting of a little uranium 235. It has a long half-life so you may not have to sweat out that resolution next year—one way or another. Oh, wear one of those little paper masks while applying. (Passed 5:0)
- The annual lighting assessment was passed. It will cost a typical single family dwelling \$28.91 this fiscal year as opposed to \$20.16 last fiscal year. Mayor Glass wondered why the costs have gone up. The finance director said it was because we've used up our surplus funding. **While the mayor was worrying about that \$8.75**, she was mute on the fact that the City is **losing \$40,000** a year by not taking PG&E's offer to replace our stone-age street lighting with LEDs. (Passed 5:0)

Regular Agenda Items:

- In 2010, **then Mayor Gurney** and Vice-Mayor Wilson launched the idea of building a new City Hall/Civic Center downtown in the big parking lot between South Main and Petaluma Avenue. **They called it Pine Grove Square.** But tonight, we got the time-honored political move known as **bait and switch.** No longer does Council Member Gurney desire a City Hall/Civic Center but rather buildings with commercial space below, affordable housing above—at the expense of parking. When questioned by **Council Member Carnacchi** about the appropriateness of this change, **Council Member Gurney and the city manager started laying down a smoke screen** claiming that it had been determined in open session that the civic center was not viable and so something else was being considered. If it was in open session, it must have been [some sort of mind meld](#) session because no one else got it! The room was packed with folks who said so and decried the loss of parking and the negative impact it would have on business in the area. **Mayor Glass** said she didn't "want another CVS." Well, she's likely to get one because she, **Council Member Gurney** and **Vice Mayor Slayter** all clearly plan on pushing this forward. But there will be resistance. **Because of Council Member Hinton's dogged insistence, with the support of Council Member Carnacchi, nothing will go forward until a \$30,000 parking study takes place.** But there are only two of them and they face formidable opposition from Council Member Gurney who usually gets what she wants. (Passed 4:1 with Council Member Carnacchi in the minority.)
- The 2017–18 city budget was adopted. It's 191 pages but the graphics provide a good overview. [Click here to see them.](#) (Passed 5:0)
- [The Capital Improvement budget](#) was also adopted. This is the city program that funded the paving on Willow Street, among other things. (Passed 5:0)
- Council Member Carnacchi proposed creation of a liaison with Sebastopol school boards and hoped that some of the AP students might submit an agenda to the Council. Wouldn't it be interesting if it would have been a request for free Wi-Fi downtown? Because of no support from the other council members, **Council Member Carnacchi withdrew his proposal.**
- **The League of California Cities** asked the council for a letter of **opposition to [Senate Bill 649 \(Hueso\)](#).** This bill would allow the installation of "small cell" antennas anywhere within the city limits, even without City approval. Of course, this just freaked out the EMF wonks. They sent the council an amendment to the letter. **Council Member Hinton**, who actually attended the League meeting, cautioned against the amendment because it wasn't what was agreed to and many cities opposed the bill for other reasons. **Mayor Glass**, as in the past, stated "a considerable number" of our citizens are concerned about EMF. She has no idea what that number is. It's probably over six, if you count all the multiple personalities. Question: There are about 4,300 voters in Sebastopol. How many oppose this bill because of EMF? **Council Member Gurney** then said we could "sneak it in there without any consequences." **Sneak it in there?** And then there are some (number unknown) who believe local governance, even such as it is, is better than enduring a poorly thought-out mandate from afar. (Passed 5:0)
- The Council approved targeting their initiative funds to specific projects they can agree upon. There is \$1,500 in the fund now. \$500 will be allocated for a defibrillator at the Sebastopol Community Center. We could also use one of those at Council meetings, like tonight, which almost brought us to a **near-death experience.** (Passed 5:0)

Consent Calendar:

- City pay rates were formally approved again to make Governor Brown happy.
- A claim for \$1,517 was rejected by the City for a tree that fell and damaged private property. [See details here.](#)
- Dang, the [Council meeting on July 4th was canceled.](#)

- Notices of Completion were filed for the work at Ives Pool and also Willow Street.

City Council Reports:

- Of course, there were some. It was only a few minutes after midnight!

A Parting Shot:

- Although **Vice Mayor Slayter** and then Council members **Glass** and **Gurney** voted “**yes**” to **the CVS project**, they said they did so only to avoid more litigation. But up to that point, they used every device at their disposal to block a project of which they disapproved. It will be interesting to see if they do the opposite with something they favor—**Pine Grove Square**.

Elapsed Time: 6:25 hours (6:00pm–12:25**AM**)

Next City Council meeting is June 20, 2017 at the Teen Center, 425 Morris Street at 6:00pm.

You can view this meeting and others at: <https://livestream.com/accounts/14608643>.

John Necker
SebastopolCitizens.org