

CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall

Monday, August 24, 2015

***MINUTES***

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Hidden Hills was duly held in the Council Chambers at the City Hall, 6165 Spring Valley Road, Hidden Hills, California 91302 on Monday, August 24, 2015 at the hour of 7:30 p.m. Mayor Larry Weber called the meeting to order and presided thereover after leading the Council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Council:

Mayor Larry G. Weber  
Council Member Steve Freedland  
Council Member Marv Landon  
Council Member Stuart E. Siegel

Staff:

City Attorney Roxanne Diaz  
City Treasurer Michael Blazenski  
City Engineer Dirk Lovett  
City Manager Cherie L. Paglia

Absent:

Mayor Pro Tem Jim Cohen

Upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Freedland and unanimously carried, it was resolved to excuse the absence of Mayor Pro Tem Cohen.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Upon MOTION of Council Member Freedland, seconded by Council Member Landon and unanimously carried, it was resolved that the agenda for the August 24, 2015 regular meeting be approved as submitted.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Weber made the following announcements:

We would like to thank our videographer, Perry Wasserman; this is his last meeting, and we wish him the best as he heads for Chapman University.

Congratulations to Bookkeeper Randee Weinberger who will celebrate her 25th anniversary with the City on Monday, 8/31.

City Hall, Building & Safety, and the Community Center will be closed and there will be no inspections on Monday, 9/7, in honor of the Labor Day holiday.

Happy Birthday to Council Member Steve Freedland's wife Susan on 9/8, and to the City's Library Commissioner Britt Aaronson today.

Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown on Sunday, 9/13.

The City Manager reported that the Fiesta brochures, giving all the information and schedules for the event on 9/26/15, have been mailed, so residents should be receiving them soon. She added that volunteers would still be welcomed.

**AUDIENCE**

Linda Menges, who is running for the Las Virgenes Unified School District Board of Education, introduced herself to the Council, providing information regarding her background and qualifications.

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**A. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Reports - June and July**

The following report was provided by Deputy Robert DeSantis:

in the month of June there were two Part I crimes; one was a theft on Hilltop, involving a gift card being compromised by an unknown subject; the incident was just reported in June although it occurred in February; there was a theft of an I-phone from an unlocked vehicle on Round Meadow; one injury traffic accident occurred on Spring Valley near Eldorado Meadow; the vehicle involved was reported stolen from LAPD's jurisdiction; the driver was taken to the hospital for surgery and cited, with the investigation ongoing; a resident of Woodland Hills was arrested for public intoxication on Round Meadow Road; the subject had attended a party in the area; during the month, two adults were arrested, but no juveniles; 30 traffic citations were issued, with 23 of those being hazardous, most of which were failure to stop at stop signs.

In response to Council Member Freedland, Deputy DeSantis confirmed that the majority of the tickets written in the City are for failure to stop at stop signs, rather than speeding. Deputy DeSantis continued his report:

there were no Part I crimes in July, but a Calabasas resident was arrested and cited for driving on a suspended license in the area of Long Valley and Round Meadow; the subject also failed to stop at stop signs in the area; one adult was arrested, but no juveniles; 17 traffic citations were issued, with 13 of those being hazardous; this month, the citations for stop sign violations and unsafe speed were evenly distributed; in relation to the possible purchase of additional V-calm signs, it should be easy enough for the Sheriff's Department to incorporate any pictures and data into the STTOP program; he does not know about the quality of the lighting and pictures, but if good, pictures should be more advantageous than someone just reporting what they have seen (which is how the STTOP program works now); Deputies cannot issue citations unless they actually observe a violation, but if the pictures can identify a driver or plate number, the owner can be identified in order to allow the STTOP Deputy to visit the house for a discussion about the violation and a warning about future behavior.

Council Member Siegel said he would be most interested in determining those who were speeding quite a bit over the limit, not those going ten miles over the limit. Deputy DeSantis pointed out that in this community, with the horseback riders, etc., any speeding can be very dangerous, and in addition, it might be possible to file a reckless driving charge for the horrendous speeders. He added that if the Council had any legal questions about the use of the

V-calm sign, especially in connection with the STTOP program, the Sheriff's Department might be able to have the risk manager attend a future meeting to discuss those questions.

Council Member Freedland pointed out that there are many drivers in line at Round Meadow School in the afternoons around 2:15 p.m. on their cell phones talking and texting, which is very dangerous and also backs up traffic since they are not paying attention. Deputy DeSantis stated that he would try to get one of the Motors out there to address this problem, as he cannot stress enough how hazardous it is to talk or text when driving, which causes many accidents. He also said that the law allows a citation to be issued if the engine is running, even if the vehicle is not moving.

**B. Los Angeles County Fire Department Reports - June and July**

Community Services Representative Maria Grycan provided the following report:

in June there were 16 responses, with 8 of those being medical, 5 snake removals, and 1 public assistance; there was one vehicle fire with a \$150,000 loss, that being to a brand new customized Porsche; the brush summary for both June and July is the same; she has not been able to break out Hidden Hills' brush report, but will try to isolate the Hidden Hills numbers for August; there were 9 responses in July, with 4 of those being medical and 1 snake removal; there was one hazardous condition, a short circuit with smoke (but no fire) caused by defective or worn wiring.

**PRESENTATION**

**Discussion and Consideration of Approval for the Purchase and Installation of New V-Calm Sign(s) and Post(s), and Upgrade and Relocation of Existing V-Calm Sign**

City Engineer Dirk Lovett presented the following staff report:

at the last Council meeting, staff recommended the purchase of one new V-calm sign, and the relocation of the existing sign; at that time, the Council Members had numerous technical questions related to the strobe lights, camera, methods for data removal, etc.; in order to get all the questions answered, the Council continued the item so the company that provides the signs could attend this meeting to answer those questions; in attendance from Fortel Traffic are Emery Dyer, President (and owner of the company with his wife), and Aaron Edwards, Regional Sales Manager.

Mr. Dyer stated the following:

he has a long history with Hidden Hills; Fortel is a 15 year old company based in Anaheim; they have almost twenty different variations of sign models; about 70% of their business is conducted in California, where they are approaching 100,000 signs; the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation has one of the largest numbers of signs in California, with about 180, most of which involve Fortel's specs; they do have competitors, but Fortel can prove their signs are more effective based on the data and type of data that is collected; Fortel's data is unique in that they can show if the vehicle was speeding up, slowing down, or staying the same, and determine where those occur in the detection zone; they collect and store four speeds for each vehicle - the entry, the exit, and both the peak (highest) and low (slowest) speeds in between; the date, the time, the seconds and even milliseconds, and the frequency of the collection of data allows them to do that.

Council Member Freedland then asked about the camera and its capabilities, which lead to a lengthy discussion during which the following issues were raised and points made:

the camera being proposed at this time is a low resolution camera not designed to read the license plates; Fortel does have a partner program to provide a license plate recognition camera that can interface with the Fortel equipment; that camera could be an additional \$3000-\$5000, about the same as a high resolution camera; the Council definitely wants a camera that can at the very least capture the license plate in the daytime, and preferably, if possible, with a low light capability also read the plate at night (since there is no light and it is very dark in the City at night), as that is the only way that the STTOP Deputies can identify the owner of the vehicle; with the darkness at night, the camera would need a strobe or flash; the City would not use the camera photos for ticketing, and does not wish to monitor the speeds in real time, but use the data; the City would perhaps want the camera (24 hours/day) set so that if someone goes a certain amount of speed over the limit (which the Council could decide in the future), the picture would be taken; even if this feature is not used immediately, the sign should have the capability now, rather than having to do a retrofit if needed in the future; the strobe might be offensive to some homeowners, especially at night; however, the strobe can be toned way down with LED lights that are not blinding, and it can be adjusted and set at any threshold; there is a strobe on a similar sign in Mountain View which goes off at a certain speed, and it seems to instinctively slow the speeder down when it suddenly goes off; the placement of any new signs is very important so they don't disturb anyone; the Council was very careful about the location chosen for the first sign that was purchased, but then there were residents who actually called and wanted the sign placed near their homes due to speeders; the STTOP Deputies, besides going to the home of Hidden Hills owners whose cars have been photographed speeding, can also send letters, which can be very effective,

especially if the driver is a minor and the parent responsive (this is definitely useful if the car owner lives outside of Hidden Hills).

Council Member Siegel asked how the data is captured. Mr. Dyer explained the following:

there are two primary methods; one involves the use of a modem (approximately \$650 per sign) and a monthly expense (approximately \$30/month) for a data plan for 5-7 years; this allows access to the data from any computer anywhere with a password; a step below that is the installation of Bluetooth inside the sign (approximately \$450), the purchase of an Android application tablet (approximately \$200 - \$300), and software for \$99; this allows anyone with the tablet to connect and download the data if within 1000' of the sign; this also allows a test of the sign with a real time simulator as opposed to actually having to speed past the sign to test it; the modem does need a cellular connection (an issued raised by Mr. Katz); they usually use Verizon/Sprint, but would assess the location of the sign first to see what cellular service works best; the location of the sign will also impact the power and the size of the solar panels and batteries.

A short discussion then occurred regarding cameras, during which it was pointed out that a license plate recognition camera (which photographs reflective surfaces like the license plate) is different than a high resolution camera, and that Mr. Dyer should look at which one would best do what the Council is looking for, keeping in mind that the photo of the license plate is way more important than seeing the car and the color of the car.

At this point, the Council asked Mr. Dyer to prepare a new proposal that would include the costs for the following: a new sign and its installation; the best camera to get the license plate photos, 24 hours a day if possible; a strobe; modem and monthly data plan; completely upgrading the old sign to include everything that would be on the new sign; relocating the old sign; the purchase and installation of anywhere from 1-6 new posts. Mayor Weber pointed out that the costs for the new equipment would be paid from Measure R funds, not the City's general funds.

Once Mr. Dyer has a new proposal, that proposal will be reviewed by Council Members Freedland and Landon and staff to see if there are any questions or additions/changes to the proposal before it goes to the entire Council.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

- A. City Council Minutes - August 10, 2015**
- B. Demand List**
- C. Disbursement List - July**
- D. Financial/Treasurer's Report - July**

Upon MOTION of Council Member Freedland, seconded by Council Member Landon and unanimously carried on roll call vote, it was resolved to approve items A, B, C, and D of the consent calendar as submitted.

**MATTERS FROM CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

- A. Consideration of Approval of an Agreement with Wells Fargo to Provide Investment Advisory Services to City**

The following staff report was provided by City Attorney Roxanne Diaz:

she had a good conversation Friday afternoon with Janice Burrill, the Wells Fargo Senior Vice President and Philanthropic Specialist who works with non-profits but also cities, and Melody from the Texas office, who is not an attorney but the contracts person; Melody reviewed all the City documents; as they went through the addendum, there were not a lot of issues; in the addendum the City asked for insurance and indemnification (our standard requirement); Wells Fargo is hesitant in relation to the indemnification, which is probably broader than Wells Fargo's requirement under Federal law; from a risk perspective, it is hard to ask such a large company to agree to our indemnification request, as they are already highly regulated by the Feds and would most likely walk away from the City; unless the Council has a problem with this, she is okay with deleting the indemnification request from the addendum; in relation to insurance, Wells Fargo has no problem providing us with proof of insurance, but they are self insured so asked for language to be removed from the addendum so the self insurance would be acceptable; they also asked for language to be removed regarding the waiver of subrogation and a bond, neither of which she would be opposed to; there was also a provision on agency cross authorization, which can also be removed; those were the only issues with the addendum, and they also had no problem with our investment standard; however, they did have some concerns with our investment policy; one problem is in relation to broker/dealers; when Wells Fargo purchases a security, they purchase through a broker/dealer that has passed through their protocol and been put on their list; in our investment policy, if we don't purchase from an issuer, we either have to purchase from an institution licensed by the state as a broker/dealer, from a member of a Federally regulated securities exchange, from a national or state chartered bank, from a savings

association or Federal association, or from a brokerage firm designated as a primary government dealer by the Federal reserve bank; even though these are all "ors", and Wells Fargo believes their list of broker/dealers would meet one of these, they don't want to have to check them, and wondered if there was any flexibility; since our investment policy mirrors state law, and is actually cut and pasted from the state law, there really isn't any flexibility; she did provide to Wells Fargo the state law, and they are reviewing that information; we just need to wait to hear from Wells Fargo, and there may not be a problem, but they do not want to move on to the next level until this issue is resolved; she mentioned to Wells Fargo that we must not be the first city they're dealing with, and so was a bit surprised by these issues; Janice did say that we are not the only city.

Mayor Weber and Council Member Freedland pointed out that we had asked for the names of any cities for whom Wells Fargo invests, but have not been given any names to date. City Treasurer Mike Blazenski suggested maybe they only dealt with cities in other states since Melody's office was in Texas. Council Member Landon reminded everyone that most other investment firms were not interested in handling the City's funds since we are so small, but the rules are all the same.

Attorney Diaz provided the following additional information:

the other two areas of concern for Wells Fargo were the provisions regarding medium corporate notes and commercialized paper; Wells Fargo asked if the ratings in the investment policy were state requirements or the City's preference; with the corporate notes, state law says A or better, while for commercialized paper the law says A or better, or A-1 or better; per Wells Fargo, investment grade notes usually have a lesser rating, but that does not mean they are not viable or worthy; Melody was concerned that if they are packaging investments, there is the possibility that some of the bonds may be in violation of the policy; the City's policy says A-P3, so that can be amended to be consistent with state law.

Council Member Freedland said this is the risk of using someone whose specialty is not dealing with municipalities, and if Wells Fargo can comply with the City's investment policy, then we can move forward; if they can't, then the City is going to have to look to someone else, preferably someone who is California based and is familiar with municipalities per Council Member Siegel.

Attorney Diaz stated that Wells Fargo had one other issue related to collateralization:

she explained to Melody that the City was not asking Wells Fargo to collateralize the investments, but rather the City's intent was that certain investments like repurchase agreements (even though these have been exempted) had to be backed by collateral by a certain percentage; she also informed Melody that we could reword the collateralization provision of the investment policy, and perhaps change the bond rating for medium corporate notes and commercialized paper, to exactly mirror state law; the addendum was just to assure that Wells Fargo would do certain things such as follow the City's investment policy, not invest in repurchase agreements, provide monthly written reports, attend quarterly Council meetings if asked, and state the fixed fee being charged to the City; if all of this moves forward with Wells Fargo, the investment policy can be brought back to the Council for the minor revisions.

Council Member Freedland was concerned that maybe the City was not dealing with the right person. Staff felt Melody was now the correct person, as opposed to Mr. Dietz, who was not familiar with municipalities and had originally provided documents (that the City Attorney and City Treasurer spent time reviewing) that Melody said were the wrong ones (she was going to have Janice send us the correct documents). At this point, the City is waiting to see if Wells Fargo can accept and comply with the City's investment policy so we can move forward to address and resolve the other few remaining issues.

At this point in the meeting, City Attorney Diaz excused herself.

**B. Report from 8/18/15 Hidden Hills Community Association Board Meeting**

The following information was provided by Community Association Board Member and City liaison Bret Katz:

resident Lauren Kessler is coordinating a 5K run in the City; her group has provided insurance to the Community Association, and they, at their own expense, will be hiring three Deputies to assist with the event; the Board discussed and is looking for a way to alleviate the flow rate problem at all three of the gates; they are also looking for a process to assure that contractors' names are at the gates, as well as all the sub-contractors; contractors often do not know where they are going or the name of the resident they're working for, and there are language issues.

In response to several questions from the Council Members, Mr. Katz stated the following:

the official rules of the Association say that visitors who wish to enter the gate must show an ID; personally, he has noticed that a lot of IDs are not valid, and some people have no license; if someone does not have an ID, they are turned away; the Association has looked into ID scanners to help speed up the entrance process; there has been a back-up at the Burbank gate lately, often past the stop sign at Valerie; they now have two guards at the Burbank gate in the morning, with one prescreening those waiting in line to enter; the Association also just hired, on a one month trial, two additional guards for four hours per day for a total of forty hours a week, with one at Round Meadow and one at Long Valley to help with prescreening; the Association is continuing to look at methods to improve the gate admittance process.

Mayor Weber excused himself and left the meeting at this time (8:41 p.m.), asking Council Member Freedland to chair the rest of the meeting.

Mr. Katz continued with his report from the Board meeting, providing the following information and answering several more questions from the Council Members:

the Board approved a Fiesta parade float expense for the Horsemen, the Fiesta pancake breakfast budget, and the Fiesta Hoof & Foot budget (a gymkhana, but with games and activities for both those on horseback and those on foot); they will be changing the irrigation controllers at the gates to smart controllers that adjust to weather conditions and can be controlled through the Internet; this should result in less water usage, and should prove very beneficial in expectation of the El Nino that is being predicted for this winter; Park West has a hydrologist on staff, and that company is making a lot of recommendations and doing a great deal of work throughout the community; they do control the sprinklers outside the Burbank gate in the median (although the City pays the LADWP water bill for that area just outside of the City border); the Board discussed the removal of pepper trees from the parkways, and replacing them with holly oaks, after having an arborist review the trees for safety purposes; however, it was decided to stay with the pepper trees, and to use 36" box replacements, which are more established than the smaller sizes, for those being removed; this is being done in phases, with the worst trees being removed first; they also have a lighting plan for the Community Center and are getting bids to replace a lot of the lights with LED lights and adding shades to protect from the very hot afternoon sun; Mike Ashley was at the meeting asking for conceptual approval of his Bridle Trail project; the Board had a lot of questions regarding what the City was asking for and what exactly "conceptual" approval meant.

Council Member Siegel wished to point out the following in relation to this issue with Mr. Ashley's project:

it seems the confusion in relation to the Community Association's (HHCA) conceptual approval has to do with who benefits from the conceptual approval, and it is Mr. Ashley, not the City; Mr. Ashley handed out a letter at the Board meeting that he received from City Engineer Dirk Lovett (a copy of this letter was also provided to HHCA Board President Rob Raznick and HHCA Manager Shannon Moore when it was sent to Mr. Ashley), and that letter states the following:

"In talking with the HHCA, the HHCA would prefer to withhold their comments until such time as they have reviewed the draft EIR. Obviously the HHCA's input on the conceptual plan is critical to the approval of the project. The City can proceed without HHCA conceptual approval at this time but it should be noted that major changes to the project design, after circulation of the draft EIR, would likely require changes to the vesting tentative map and modifications to the studies, resulting in delays and additional fees and consultant costs."

so the City does not have a problem if there is no conceptual approval now, and it is Mr. Ashley who will have to pay the additional costs if major changes have to be made later; the City is just trying to make it as inexpensive as possible for everyone.

The City Manager added the following comments:

in Mr. Lovett's original letter, he did ask for conceptual approval, as was done with the Gonen project, so it was not an unfair request; but when the HHCA said they preferred to wait until the draft EIR could be reviewed, that's when Dirk revised his letter to what was stated above; the City is not requiring conceptual approval, nor is the City holding up the project waiting for such approval; the only hold-up at this time is that Mr. Ashley has not submitted everything required for his application to be deemed complete.

Council Member Siegel wondered if there was a better definition of "conceptual approval", with Mr. Lovett explaining that his letter does point out the specific things he was looking for, such as comments on the easements, the dog park, the roads, the trails - the common areas over which the HHCA has jurisdiction. The City Manager stated that at the end of the Board meeting, Ms. Moore was directed to draft a letter (with HHCA attorney input) to the City giving conceptual approval of the common areas, but withholding any comments on the grading.

Mr. Katz said there does not seem to be a clear understanding by many of the HHCA Board Members of the City's ridgeline requirements and ordinance. Mr. Lovett will provide a copy of that ordinance, but explained that the ordinance does not prohibit the removal of ridgelines, but gives the Council discretion for approval in certain instances based on information provided during the EIR process and public hearings. Staff also explained that per Ms. Moore, the HHCA is not going to comment (although individual members may certainly comment if they wish) on the grading of the entire tract, but will review each and every grading plan for individual lots if the tract is approved. Mr. Lovett also pointed out that the HHCA can certainly take a formal position on the project and aspects of it, but they want to have all the information first that will be provided in the draft EIR. Mr. Katz stated that he personally has some concerns with the possible removal of the ridgeline.

**C. Report from 8/18/15 Las Virgenes Malibu Council of Governments Meeting**

Council Member Siegel informed the Council of the main issues that were addressed at the meeting:

our District now has a new County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, whose Senior Field Deputy has been attending the COG meetings; he raised the issue with the Field Deputy of the horrible traffic congestion in the area of the Mureau Road bridge crossing the 101 freeway, which is in the County, and affects the entrance to Hidden Hills at the Mureau Road/Round Meadow Road intersection; the Field Deputy said he would have his planning person take a look at this issue, and see if perhaps the County could still request a portion of the Measure R funds provided to our COG to address the problem; the County is planning another ballot measure in November called Measure R2, which if passed, is estimated to provide another \$75 million to our COG cities in the first decade; the COG cities (other than Hidden Hills) have provided a list of priority projects that they would like to do with that money; it appears that the animal crossing over the 101 freeway proposed for the Liberty Canyon area, for which the estimated cost is \$50 million, is on a fast track; the good news is that all of the funding is to be donated, with no government funding to be used for the project; the crossing is approximately 165' wide, and 600' long, crossing over the freeway from the north side, and continuing on to cross over Agoura Road before sloping down on that side; besides being a safe crossing for animals, it should be a very safe and aesthetically pleasing way for equestrians to cross to the other side of the 101 freeway.

**MATTERS FROM STAFF**

**A. Consideration of Approval of a Proposed Ordinance to Provide an Expedited, Streamlined Permitting Process for Small Residential Rooftop Solar Systems - Second Reading**

Upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Landon and unanimously carried, it was resolved to give second reading to and adopt by title only Ordinance No. 353 entitled: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS ADOPTING PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE AN EXPEDITED, STREAMLINED PERMITTING PROCESS FOR SMALL RESIDENTIAL ROOFTOP SOLAR SYSTEMS AND AMENDING TITLE 5 OF THE HIDDEN HILLS MUNICIPAL CODE.

**B. Discussion and Direction to Staff Regarding City Council Meeting Schedule for September**

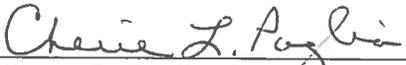
After a short discussion, the Council chose to hold the September 14th regularly scheduled Council meeting, but to cancel the meeting scheduled for September 28th, as that is the Monday of the Fiesta weekend.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Landon and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn the regular meeting of August 24, 2015 at 9:04 p.m.

  
Larry G. Weber, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Cherie L. Paglia, City Manager