

CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall

Monday, May 24, 2010

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, May 24, 2010 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 Mayor Pro Tem Jim Cohen Council Member Steve Freedland Council Member Stuart E. Siegel
Staff:	City Engineer Dirk Lovett City Manager Cherie L. Paglia
Absent:	Council Member Larry Goldberg

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon MOTION of Council Member Freedland, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried, it was resolved that the agenda for the May 24, 2010 regular meeting be approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Weber made the following announcements:

City Hall will be closed and there will be no inspections on Monday, May 31st, in honor of Memorial Day.

Round Meadow School will be closed all this week.

2010 is a census year; if you haven't turned in your census form, you will probably have someone knocking on your door to count those in your household.

The City recently received a certificate of recognition from the LVUSD, which was given to him as the current Mayor; the certificate was for extraordinary dedication and service to our students and community in presenting the "Every 15 Minutes" program; the City contributes funds every year that the program is presented at Calabasas High School.

AUDIENCE

Resident and developer Mike Ashley stated the following:

He wanted to keep everyone up to speed on the Bridle Trail project; they had a meeting with some of the neighbors a couple of weeks ago, and it was brought before the Community Association at their last meeting; he will continue to update everyone as things move along.

PRESENTATION

Las Virgenes Municipal Water District – Water Update

Jeff Reinhardt, Public Affairs & Communications Manager, presented the following update:

He does have some good news; the State Department of Water Resources publishes a reservoir conditions report on a daily basis; of most interest to us is Lake Oroville in Northern California, where our water supply comes from; almost all the reservoirs in the

State had a very good year with the winter, but Oroville did not have a capacity year; still, the Department of Water Resources last week announced they were increasing their allotment to the State water project this year to 45% of what they would do in a normal water year (up from 40% last year); it is not known what Metropolitan will do; we still are limited by restrictions imposed by a judge on pumping in the Delta to protect endangered species; what we think is that we will have conditions no worse than last year, and in some instances, better; Hidden Hills residents should benefit from a better water year; Tuesday night the LVMWD staff is proposing to the Board increases in allocations for property categories 9-12, which should be all of Hidden Hills; the Board could do several things, but will probably increase the allocations; notices will be mailed to residents regarding any change in policies; the Board at its previous meeting authorized refunds in the form of credits on water bills for any payment of penalties for over-budget use since last July; the District as a whole was able to meet its numbers to date from the Metropolitan Water District due to conservation throughout the region; it looks like the District will not have to pay over-use penalties, so the money collected from residents for those penalties will be refunded.

Council Member Freedland pointed out that he and his family relandscaped and removed a lot of their grass, resulting in water usage of less than 50% of their allotted amount. He wondered why those who used over their allotted amounts and were penalized would be getting refunds, as opposed to possible bonuses for those who actually did conserve. Mr. Reinhardt responded as follows:

He has heard that question before, as those who have conserved did make it possible for refunds to others who did not conserve; a new water year starts July 1st, so everything resets and the whole cycle starts over again at that time; if people go over budget, the District will still collect penalties, as the District may not be penalty free over the next year; he would suggest that residents continue to conserve and not overuse water based on any refunds/credits they may have recently enjoyed; in the past, the District has provided an allocation per billing period; however, the Board has now authorized a rollover allocation for the fiscal year from July 1st – June 30th, something along the lines of cell phone minutes that rollover if not used, so usage will balance out for the year.

Mayor Weber felt that was an excellent idea, especially since he received penalties this past year when he twice experienced broken irrigation lines that went undetected for some time. Mr. Reinhardt explained that the District does offer a one-time adjustment/shared credit in a ten year period for just that type of problem (called a leak adjustment), and that residents should call customer service for assistance with such a problem.

Mr. Reinhardt then asked the Council for assistance, stating the following:

He is now switching from the water supply side to the waste water treatment side of the District; every five years the NPDES operating permit for the Tapia water reclamation facility comes up for renewal by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and this is that year; five years ago they had a major investment that came from the NPDES permit that was just recently finished; this was a denitrification facility implementation project at Tapia at a cost of \$10 million to the ratepayers; we anticipate that another \$8 million may have to be invested in further state-of-the-art disinfecting processes at Tapia; they have questions about some of the recommendations in the new permit, like more frequent creekwide monitoring; as a smaller District with only about 15,000 – 16,000 sewer customers, that is not many among which to divide the costs; they are asking residents to sign and send cards to the RWQCB saying that they support the renewal of the permit but would like the RWQCB to carefully consider additional projects that may have no benefits or are not scientifically supported; for example, if the District has to spend an additional \$1 million/year for more monitoring, they're not sure what information that will provide in addition to the data they already have, and will do nothing to improve the water quality; especially in this economy, the District does not want to spend money if there is no beneficial outcome; they have asked the area cities for a support letter; he would like to thank Hidden Hills for providing such a letter this evening; he will leave some of the post cards for the residents with staff; five years ago, the public was very helpful in sending support letters and showing up at the hearing, and there is a better result when the public is engaged; the current hearing is scheduled for June 3rd at the Metropolitan Water District Headquarters downtown, but those planning on attending should check the District's website for any possible scheduling changes; we are trying to tell the RWQCB that we are environmentally oriented, but the District needs to put money where it will do the most good.

Mayor Pro Tem Cohen asked how the budgeted allotment was determined. Mr. Reinhardt explained as follows:

Three factors were used to determine the budgeted amount – indoor use, outdoor use, and the size of the lot; it was not based on historical use; the Board felt it was not fair to cut usage a certain percentage (for example 20%) for all residents, because if someone was already conserving, cutting 20% would be a hardship for them; for those who had not been conserving and were using a lot of water, cutting 20% would have been easy; no system is perfect, but they did the best they could trying to be fair.

As it was too late to put the post cards in water bills, Mayor Weber suggested that some cards be provided to the Community Center, and that a notice be placed on Cable TV channel 3.

Mr. Reinhardt wished to make it perfectly clear to everyone that the drought is not over, and it may still be several years before we see any relief; and since the Metropolitan Water District has pulled from its water reserves, any surplus would probably be used to replenish those lost reserves.

PUBLIC SAFETY

A. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Report - April

The following report was provided by Lt. John Benedict:

During the month of April there was one theft reported from the Community Center, which actually occurred about four months earlier (a cash box was taken); there were four false alarms and one traffic collision in the 5000 block of Round Meadow (property damage only); 18 citations were issued during the month, including 12 hazardous, 6 non-hazardous, and 0 parking; no drivers were reported to the STTOP program; the Click It or Ticket Program started today, and will continue for the next couple of weeks, so he would urge everyone to buckle-up.

In response to questions from Mayor Weber and Mayor Pro Tem Cohen, Lt. Benedict stated the following:

During the Click It or Ticket Program, deputies are out looking for those not wearing seatbelts; the cost of a first offense ticket is \$142, with the cost for a juvenile under 16 being \$445; everyone in a vehicle is required to wear a seatbelt; in the State, compliance is currently around 95%, but they are looking for that 5% not wearing seatbelts, which is about one million people; there are no suspects in one of the cases from four months ago, as there were no prints and very little to work with; the Sheriff's Department is gearing up for graduations as well this month; the car-crash trailer will be out on display, and DUI information is being provided to students.

B. Los Angeles County Fire Department Report - April

As no one from the Fire Department was able to attend this meeting, the report was received and filed.

C. Consideration of Proposed Ordinance Regarding Adoption of Title 10/Animal Control – First Reading

The City Manager provided the following information:

Los Angeles County provides animal control services for the City by contract through its ordinance called Title 10, which has been adopted by Hidden Hills; since Title 10 was last adopted by this City in 2001, we need to adopt the most recent version due to changes and updates that have been made; we adopt Title 10 by reference, but with some changes made to better fit our community, such as: we do not allow kennels for cats and dogs, we allow 7 cats and 7 dogs per property (the County allows way less), we eliminate the regulations for commercial activity and veterinarians, we don't require cats to be kept indoors, we don't require permits for horses, although permits are required for sheep, cattle and goats, we do not allow breeding of cattle (although a cow may be kept as a pet); staff is recommending first reading of the ordinance adopting Title 10 this evening, and then notices will be posted during the next 15 days regarding the second reading of the ordinance which will be addressed at a public hearing at the next Council meeting on 6/14/10.

Upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Freedland and unanimously carried, it was resolved to give first reading by title only to an ordinance entitled: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS ADOPTING BY REFERENCE TITLE 10, ANIMALS, OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE AND AMENDING THE HIDDEN HILLS MUNICIPAL CODE.

D. Consideration of Renewal of Agreement with the County of Los Angeles for Animal Control Services

The following information was provided by the City Manager:

The City usually completes a five year contract with Los Angeles County for animal control services; a contract is currently in place, but the County is asking for a new agreement to be adopted in an attempt to get all cities on the same schedule; the new agreement also removes wording regarding standard services to be provided, and instead offers an Attachment A/Service Level Request which allows each city to choose the level of services it desires; although the contract will be for five years, this Request will be completed annually by each city, but can also be amended during the year if necessary; for example Hidden Hills will choose a standard service plan for field services, meaning calls for service are answered on a 24 hour basis, rather than requesting a certain amount

of hours of field service weekly or monthly; we also choose not to have Animal Control canvass door to door for licenses; if approved, the contract will extend through June 30, 2014.

Upon MOTION of Mayor Pro Tem Cohen, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried, it was resolved to approve the City-County Municipal Services Agreement between the County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control and the City of Hidden Hills, effective upon execution by both parties and extending through June 30, 2014.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. City Council Minutes – April 26, 2010**
- B. City Council Minutes – May 10, 2010**
- C. Demand List**
- D. Disbursement List – April**
- E. Financial/Treasurer’s Report – April**

Upon MOTION of Mayor Pro Tem Cohen, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried on roll call vote, it was resolved to approve items A, B, C, D, and E of the consent calendar as submitted.

MATTERS FROM CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

- A. Report from 5/18/10 Hidden Hills Community Association Board of Directors Meeting**

Mayor Weber congratulated the Community Association and Parks & Recreation Committee on a very successful Welcome Party on May 15th. Board President and City liaison Ron Wolfe then provided the following report from the last Board meeting:

They approved a budget for the children’s welcome party scheduled for June 19th; they continue to discuss Saddle Creek repairs and what can be done in that area; it is an item on every agenda open for discussion, but in the meantime, they are going forward with plans to try to redo the existing arenas and do some grading to allow for future expansion; next year’s budget was approved with an approximate 6% reduction from last year.

B. Report from 5/18/10 Las Virgenes Malibu Council of Governments Meeting

The City Manager informed the Council of the following:

The MTA approved the 30/10 Plan, proposed by the City of Los Angeles Mayor Villaraigosa, to complete transportation projects and obtain funding in the first 10 years rather than over a 30 year period; the COG was asked to support the LA County Strategic Plan for Economic Development; the Board Members felt the Plan applied more to larger cities than our smaller cities in this area, but agreed to table the matter and look at it again in three months; a presentation was made on the new 511 Program, which is supposed to launch to the public on 6/10/10.

Council Member Siegel provided more information on the 511 Program:

The Program appears to be very similar to Sigalert.com and will provide traveler information about traffic, transit, commuter services, and more; you can access the Program at Go511.com, or via toll-free telephone which is voice activated; traffic reports are provided, and you can look at traffic via video cams; the information is to be updated every minute.

C. Report from 5/20/10 Las Virgenes Unified School District/4 Cities Meeting

Council Member Freedland informed the Council of the following:

The meeting was quite depressing, as the State is giving less money to the District, and they are feeling the impact; administration personnel are taking pay cuts; there is no school this week due to furloughs; with those furloughs, the teachers are taking a 5.4% reduction in salaries; on a more positive note, the technology grants from the four cities are being put to good use; 98% of students register online and 87% of grades are provided online at Agoura High School; teachers are using podcasts; some classes are using hand-held devices during testing for immediate feedback to the students; there are blogs, teacher websites and video lessons, all due to the support of the four cities; it appears that the four cities will all be providing support for this upcoming fiscal year, but after that no one is sure what will happen, as Calabasas has already stated they may not participate the following year; the District is in tough shape.

Mayor Weber asked if the cost cutting measures would be enough. Council Member Freedland responded as follows:

No, as they are still projecting deficits; \$4 million given to the District for building a school that is no longer needed will buy the District some time; but for now, a lot of the measures being taken are more like a band aid.

MATTERS FROM STAFF

A. Consideration of Approval of Proposal to Install Parking Lot Fencing at City Hall

The following staff report was provided by City Engineer Dirk Lovett:

The 3-rail fence along the north side of the City Hall parking lot is falling down; according to contractors, most of the fencing is rotted and cannot be fixed; staff obtained bids for three different options to replace the fencing: 1) replace with new 3-rail fencing (as it currently exists) – lowest bid \$4320; 2) replace with 4-rail fencing with anti-climb chain link attached – lowest bid \$5760; and 3) replace with wrought iron fencing to match the fencing along the street side of City Hall and across the upper parking lot – lowest bid \$9950; we have received reports and observed people climbing over or through the current fencing to gain access to the tennis courts and park facilities below; for security purposes, aesthetics, and longevity, staff is recommending the wrought iron fencing; he has discussed with the Manager and Board President the possibility of the Association splitting the cost of the new fencing; their budget has already been approved, but there may be perimeter fencing funds available; however, that will have to be a decision made by the Board at its next meeting.

A short discussion then occurred regarding where exactly the fencing would be placed, and how far it would extend to assure better security. Upon MOTION of Mayor Pro Tem Cohen, seconded by Council Member Freedland and unanimously carried on roll call vote, it was resolved to authorize staff to enter into an agreement with Reliable Fence Co. Inc. to install a 5' wrought iron fence along the north side of the City Hall parking lot (extending from the side of the City Hall building up past the gazebo and connecting to the existing wrought iron fence crossing the upper parking lot) at a cost of \$9950, and to authorize staff the standard 10% contingency (\$995) for any unforeseen costs, with the costs to be paid from this year's budget.

B. Round Meadow/Long Valley Road Utility Undergrounding Project - Update

City Engineer Dirk Lovett gave the following update:

We are almost ready to move forward; all the easements are signed, and he is working with the contractor and utilities to get the final costs, which have gone way up, due to revised plans, designs, and add-ons; all of these costs should be finalized by the next meeting, at which time the Council can review them and give staff direction.

In response to Council Member Freedland, Mr. Lovett and the City Manager stated the following:

The costs are much more than what was originally approved, but less than the amount that the City has set aside for undergrounding; there is not much the City can do regarding those costs, as they are coming from the utilities; if the Council gives the go-ahead at the next meeting, the utilities and the contractor say they are ready; they will need to get materials, and then it involves conduit and trenching.

Mayor Weber asked if there was any advantage in having the City bury its own fiber in the trenches when they are open. A short discussion occurred, during which it was pointed out that the City's contractor could lay extra conduit in the lateral cuts, but it is just that – conduit, not fiber – and it is really a very short distance. Even though it was not clear if this would be advantageous, staff will look into the matter.

C. Charles Abbott Monthly Report - April

The report was received and filed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Freedland and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn the regular meeting of May 24, 2010 at 8:22 p.m.

Larry G. Weber, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cherie L. Paglia, City Manager/City Clerk