

CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall

Monday, June 27, 2005

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, June 27, 2005 at the hour of 7:33 p.m. Mayor Ronald Berg called the meeting to order and presided thereover after asking Caitlin Goldstein, daughter of Mark and Cindy Goldstein, to lead the Council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Council:

Mayor Ronald S. Berg
Mayor Pro Tem Jim Cohen
Council Member Monty E. Fisher
Council Member Steve Freedland
Council Member Stuart E. Siegel

Staff:

City Engineer Dirk Lovett
City Manager Cherie L. Paglia
Deputy City Clerk Deana Graybill

Mayor Berg thanked Deputy City Clerk Deana Graybill for preparing for and arranging the reception and refreshments for the evening.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Fisher and unanimously carried, it was resolved that the agenda for the June 27, 2005 regular meeting be approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Berg made the following announcements:

He reminded everyone that the Association will be hosting a barbeque Thursday evening (6/30) for both adults and children, with different menus for each at a cost of \$10/\$5; there will also be a magic show followed by a movie; he encouraged everyone to attend as these are very enjoyable evenings.

The Victory Trailhead into Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve (Ahmanson Ranch) will be formally opened at noon on Saturday (7/2) with a ceremony at the site, for anyone who might wish to attend.

City Hall, the Community Center, and Building & Safety will be closed and there will be no inspections on Monday, July 4th; he also reminded everyone that no workers are allowed into the City on holidays.

He thanked Captain Martin for the Ferrari drive event on Mulholland Highway over the past weekend, which was attended by approximately six Hidden Hills residents, including two of the Council Members.

AUDIENCE

There were no questions or comments at this time.

PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Berg announced that the Council was very pleased to recognize and honor youngsters in the community for achievements at their respective schools, and asked anyone to inform the City Hall staff of any other students, besides the ones being recognized this evening, that have been named for achievements or recognitions.

A. City Certificates/Recognition of Hidden Hills Residents Blake Beisswanger and Andrew Steele, Viewpoint Students, for Induction into the Cum Laude Society

Mayor Berg presented City certificates to Viewpoint students senior Blake Beisswanger and junior Andrew Steele, who were both inducted into the Cum Laude Society.

Mayor Berg then introduced the following Las Virgenes Unified School District (LVUSD) dignitaries in attendance: Gordon Whitehead, LVUSD Board President; Dr. Donald Zimring, LVUSD Interim Superintendent; and Steve Rosentsweig, A.E. Wright Middle School Principal.

B. City Certificates/Recognition of Hidden Hills Residents Who Earned the President's Education Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence in 2005 as Las Virgenes Unified School District Students

Mayor Berg read the names and Principal Rosentsweig presented City certificates to the following A.E. Wright students in attendance:

Brittney Black
Harrison Doyle
Aaron Kurland

The following A.E. Wright students were not in attendance, but will be mailed certificates:

Frances Ashby
Michele Grogin
Marissa Maliani
Stephanie Snell

Mayor Berg read the names and Interim Superintendent Dr. Zimring presented City certificates to the following Round Meadow Elementary School students in attendance:

Grace Balsamo-Gillis
Emma Beriker
Veronica Black
Caitlin Goldstein
Jessy Morner-Ritt

The following Round Meadow Elementary students were not in attendance, but will be mailed a certificate:

Paige Pizel
Samuel Vangelos

Calabasas High School student Jonathan Lake will also be mailed a certificate.

Mayor Berg made the following statements:

These students were selected for academic excellence; to be eligible for this award, they have to meet certain requirements including a grade point average of 90 on a 100 point scale; in addition, they must achieve the 85th percentile or higher on achievement tests in math or reading, or be recommended by a teacher plus one other staff member; these are all youngsters who have excelled in their schools, and we are real proud that they are residents of Hidden Hills; they are to be congratulated.

Dr. Zimring made the following comments:

This is such a wonderful gesture, and this Council does not know just how important it is; more importantly, more of this recognition is needed; this Council has always been great about recognizing the community's and the District's students, and as a long time employee of the District, he is very proud to work in a community that does this; he would like to thank the Council on behalf of the District.

Additional comments were made by Board President Whitehead:

Dr. Zimring has said it all; Dr. Zimring is leaving for vacation, and when he returns will continue in his role as Deputy Superintendent, giving up the title of Interim Superintendent since the District will have the new Superintendent on board by that time; it has been a delight and honor to have Dr. Zimring serve the District and the Board in the Interim Superintendent role, and he wished to thank him.

Principal Rosentsweig extended his congratulations to all the students being recognized.

At this time (7:45 p.m.), the Mayor called a recess and invited everyone to congratulate the honorees on their accomplishments and to join them for refreshments. Mayor Berg called the meeting back to order at 8:05 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

Consideration of Minor Accommodation Application for a One Story Addition within the Front Yard Setback, to an Existing Nonconforming Single Family Residence Located at 24924 Jim Bridger Road

City Engineer Dirk Lovett presented the following staff report:

The applicants are requesting a minor accommodation for a proposed one story addition within the required 50' front yard setback; notices were sent to all the property owners within a 300' radius and posted; no comments have been received; the existing building is a two story family residence; they are proposing an addition of 119 square feet to the garage to enclose a front overhang, and an addition of approximately 40 square feet to the northeast corner of the house; both of these additions will encroach into the front yard setback; the Council may grant the request if it finds that the minor accommodation will not have a material adverse impact on the public welfare or adjacent property; the proposed improvements will encroach no further into the setback than the existing encroachment; other houses on the street are as close or closer to the road easement; thus staff feels the finding can be made and would recommend approval.

Mayor Berg and Council Members Fisher and Freedland reported visiting the site, while Mayor Pro Tem Cohen and Council Member Siegel stated they had not.

Mayor Berg opened the public hearing, and as there were no comments, closed the public hearing. Upon MOTION of Mayor Pro Tem Cohen, seconded by Council Member Freedland and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adopt by title only Resolution No. 769 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS SITTING AS THE PLANNING AGENCY, APPROVING A REQUEST FOR A MINOR ACCOMMODATION FOR AN ADDITION TO AN EXISTING NONCONFORMING RESIDENCE LOCATED AT 24924 JIM BRIDGER ROAD.

PUBLIC SAFETY

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

The following report was provided by Captain Tom Martin:

He is very pleased that there were no reportable crimes in May, and no traffic collisions; there were three false alarms; it is nice to report that the streets are safe and people seem to be obeying the law; he is aware that there were still some issues at Round Meadow School; he would ask the public to make sure they are in the appropriate zones before letting children exit their vehicle; this needs to be done for safety purposes and so the children are not endangered; he knows school is now out for the summer, but would still ask parents to think about the safety of their and all children.

Council Member Siegel commented as follows:

A newer resident recently appeared before the Gate Committee with a complaint regarding this exact issue; residents who have children attending Round Meadow School, when driving out of Hidden Hills, just allow their children to open the car door and jump out; they do not pull over and park safely, or park further back in the City and walk their children to the school; next year, when the additional traffic enforcement is provided during the beginning week of school, he would suggest that the Deputies focus not only outside of the gate, but also inside of the gate; residents should also be reminded to use the proper drop off zones and provide better supervision to their children, some of whom are very young.

Council Member Fisher reported seeing more golf carts on the streets with no license plates, with no adult driver, filled with youngsters who are not wearing seat belts, all of which is very dangerous. He wondered if the Sheriff was still enforcing these types of violations. Captain Martin responded as follows:

If the patrol cars see any violation related to golf carts, motorized scooters, or any other dangerous vehicles within the City, the Deputies have been instructed to issue citations; he will mention the problem again to the enforcement Deputies as well as those in the general law cars; the public needs to be put on notice that this is a violation of the law; the vehicles must be licensed, have the proper safety equipment, and have anyone in the vehicle wearing required safety equipment; he would caution those who are illegally driving the carts that if they are caught, they will be cited.

Council Member Fisher suggested that the residents be reminded that the vehicle code is enforced in the City, and that illegally driving golf carts will result in the issuance of citations. The City Manager stated that information can be placed in the August newsletter, and staff can send out an email/fax notification. Council Member Freedland also asked for the information to be placed on cable TV channel 3.

Mayor Pro Tem Cohen asked if there was any update on the recent burglary and car theft within the City. Captain Martin provided the following response:

They are at the mercy of the clinical lab where the DNA was sent; he feels very fortunate that the Crime Lab agreed to send the DNA out, as usually it is only submitted for very heinous crimes such as murder and rape; they are still waiting for the results, and are checking weekly; an individual was arrested in Monterey County in the stolen car, but proof is needed to link that suspect to the crime within the City; absent that, he will be charged solely with driving a stolen vehicle.

B. Los Angeles County Fire Department Report - May

Assistant Fire Chief Reggie Lee presented the following report:

During the month of May there were no structure or car fires, four emergency medical calls, one good intent call, one false alarm, and nine service calls, eight of which were snake removals, with the other being a horse rescue; there was also one pre-plan walk through, and one fire station tour for 33 participants; two inspections were conducted by the Fire Prevention Bureau, and there were two plan checks.

Council Member Siegel stated that just this evening he saw Deputy Chief Dyer speaking on one of the news stations about a decrease in the number of available helicopters due to a problem with mechanics, and that 50% of the City of Los Angeles calls for helicopters were being answered by L.A. County. He wondered how this might affect the Department's ability to respond during what could be a very dangerous fire season, especially with so much brush growth (for example on Ahmanson Ranch). Assistant Chief Lee responded as follows:

The Department has eight airships, which do not all go up at once; at most there are five in the air at one time, with three in reserve; they are helping the City of Los Angeles, as that City is part of the Department's response area; the mechanics issue is political and beyond his control; Supervisor Antonovich is working to resolve this matter; brush clearance was actually pushed back to June 1st for everyone, so inspections started at the beginning of this month; in the Santa Monica Mountains, they have probably the largest group of clearing lots that are developed lots in L.A. County; there are approximately 10,000 lots that the Department's personnel have to inspect, and that is not including the undeveloped lots that brush abatement already targets.

C. Los Angeles County Fire Department Film Desk Requirements

Tim Vanderlip, Inspector, provided the following information:

He is with the Public Safety and Film Unit for the L.A. County Fire Department, working in the Fire Prevention Bureau; he is here to inform the City that any filming done by a film production company within the L.A. County Fire Department's jurisdiction requires a filming permit; this would include still photography, student films, or any major television or motion picture production; the permit can be generated by the individual City when that City issues a conditional use permit (CUP) for any filming; this can be faxed to the Fire Department for review; the Department assigns the appropriate level of fire safety for the filming, should it be required; they will then fax that information back to the City and that would become the filming permit; they will be developing the process with Community Services Representative Maria Grycan; they will keep the City staff up to speed on the process and the requirements; it should be a very simple process.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. City Council Minutes – June 13, 2005**
- B. Demand List**
- C. Disbursement List – May**
- D. Financial/Treasurer's Report – May**

Council Member Siegel questioned the amount of revenue shown on the Financial Statement for "Other Taxing Entities", which shows receipt of a great deal more than expected. The City Manager pointed out that this was the Motor Vehicle In Lieu tax (VLF), which has been almost impossible to predict due to the State budget crisis. She added that the VLF amount was supposed to be greatly reduced for cities this year, so that was reflected in the 2004-2005 budget. Council Member Freedland added that this matter was discussed recently by the budget committee, and everyone agreed since it was not clear what was going to happen with the VLF, that a very conservative amount for expected revenue be placed in the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Upon MOTION of Council Member Freedland, seconded by Council Member Siegel 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 City Budget for Fiscal Year 2005-2006 and Related Resolution

Upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Fisher and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adopt by title only Resolution No. 770 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS TRANSFERRING FUNDS UNAPPROPRIATED AS OF JUNE 30, 2005 TO THE CONTINGENCY RESERVE ACCOUNT, AFFIRMING INVESTMENT POLICY, APPROVING THE CITY'S BUDGET AND ESTABLISHING THE APPROPRIATIONS LIMIT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2005.

B. Report from 6/21/05 Hidden Hills Community Association Board of Directors Meeting

Mitch Jacobs, the Vice-President of the Community Association Board of Directors, was in attendance, and was asked to update the Council on the actions taken at the 6/21/05 Board meeting, which he did as follows:

Ron Heston has a pro-forma budget completed for the remodel of the Long Valley gate, which they are definitely planning on having done before school starts in the fall; the Board approved the slurry sealing of 1/3 of the roads within the City; they plan to do 1/3 every year until finished and then they will not have to do anything for several more years; doing 1/3 at one time allows access via other areas of the City and is not as much of an imposition on the residents; Long Valley is not included in the area to be done this year; Roads Committee Chairman Mike Ashley has obtained one bid and is waiting for at least one other bid, so they are not sure when the work will start.

Council Member Siegel asked if anything was planned for the parkways, which seem to be in bad shape this year. Mr. Jacobs felt the poor conditions were a result of the very heavy rainy season this year, and was not sure what was planned for repairs, but would check and let the City know.

Mr. Ashley provided the following additional information:

They have not yet set a schedule for the slurry sealing; they will be repairing approximately five roads that need more than just the slurry; the work will be done before school starts; when the schedule is determined, notices will be provided to residents so they can prepare for any closures; the roads to be done this year will be in this section of the City, including Spring Valley, Eldorado Meadow, Long Valley to Round Meadow, and a few roads off of Round Meadow; these roads were selected by the contractor, who is obligated to complete more paving if asked, as they are talking about possibly including the parking lots here by City Hall.

The City Manager pointed out that the City staff had also been discussing the slurry sealing of the City Hall parking lot, and would try to coordinate that work with the Association's project.

Council Member Freedland stated the following:

When the Association did some road work several years ago, notices were provided to those who lived on the private roads/driveways; they were invited to contact the Association's contractor if they wanted some work done on their private roads; if so, they were able to schedule their work at the same time that the Association's roads were done, and pay the contractor directly; due to the economy of scale and the fact that the equipment was already in the City, they were able to save quite a bit of money; he would suggest that the same thing be done this time.

Mr. Ashley thought a notice could be put in the Round-Up to let residents know they could call the Association office for information if interested. Council Member Siegel asked the City Manager to contact the Association Manager with a request to put this matter on the Board's next agenda so it could be publicly announced. He also felt notices should be sent to the individual homeowners who lived on any of the private roads. Mr. Jacobs agreed that was a good idea.

C. Discussion Regarding City Attorney Attendance at City Council Meetings

Mayor Berg opened the discussion with the following comments:

As everyone has probably noticed, the City Attorney has not been attending all of the recent Council meetings; he and Mayor Pro Tem Cohen look at each agenda and determine whether or not they feel there are any items on that agenda that would require the City Attorney's presence; if not, he does speak to the City Attorney between meetings to keep him abreast of City issues and activities; he asked the Council Members if they thought this was working, or if this approach should be altered in any way.

Council Member Fisher said the way it was being handled seemed to be working, as long as the Council Members are kept informed and “in the loop”.

Mayor Pro Tem Cohen pointed out that if a situation developed at a meeting for which the Council wanted direction from legal counsel, that item could be continued to the next meeting, which is usually only two weeks later. He also suggested that if a Council Member reviewed the meeting packet after receipt on the Friday preceding a meeting, and felt the City Attorney should be present for a particular item, all they had to do was let the Mayor or staff know, and the City Attorney could be requested to attend.

The City Manager informed the Council that when they receive the packet for a meeting, if the City Attorney has been asked to attend, his name will be on the front page of the agenda. She added that if the City Attorney is not attending a meeting, a packet is still sent to his home on Saturday, so if there are any legal questions, he has all the packet information for reference, and if necessary, could attend the meeting on late notice and still be prepared for the meeting.

Council Member Freedland agreed that it was not necessary to have the City Attorney at all meetings, which also saves the City money, as long as the Attorney is able to attend even if not invited until the day of the meeting. Mayor Berg assured the Council that would be the case – even if the City Attorney was unavailable, an Assistant City Attorney would be there. The Council Members unanimously agreed to continue with the existing practice at this time.

D. Report on 6/17/05 Meeting with Area Mayors and Las Virgenes Unified School District Board Member Terilyn Finders

Mayor Berg informed the Council of the following:

He attended a recent meeting with Las Virgenes Unified School District (LVUSD) Board Member Terilyn Finders and the Mayors of Agoura Hills, Calabasas, and Westlake Village; Ms. Finders wanted to discuss money and how the LVUSD would function under the new Superintendent; sometime after the new Superintendent arrives, Ms.

Finders would like to accompany her to a Council meeting to discuss the programs they will be planning and how the Las Virgenes Education Foundation will function separate from the District; there is really nothing to do at this time other than wait for more information from the District and the new Superintendent.

MATTERS FROM STAFF

A. Lasher Development - Update

City Engineer Dirk Lovett provided the following update:

At the last meeting, staff reported the receipt of the fifth version of the screen check draft EIR from the consultant; since then the City Attorney and staff comments on that latest draft have been forwarded to the consultant (on June 18th); he talked to the consultant this morning, who felt the majority of the suggested changes could easily be made; however, the consultant did express some concerns with some of the Attorney comments; to help resolve any of these outstanding issues, a meeting will be scheduled as soon as possible with the City staff, City Attorney and the consultant, all of whom will then be joined by the developers and their attorney; hopefully the draft EIR will be completed in the very near future.

In response to Mayor Berg, the City Manager informed the Council that the statement read by Mayor Berg at the last meeting, detailing the procedures for the environmental review of the draft EIR, will appear in the City's July newsletter.

Mayor Berg wished to make it very clear that the City Council Members have not been involved in any of the meetings regarding the draft EIR, have not participated in the drafting of the document, have not seen the document, and will not see it until the public sees it for review. Eitan Gonen pointed out that the developers, just as the Council Members, have not seen or been involved in the preparation of the draft EIR.

B. Charles Abbott Monthly Report - April

The report was received and filed.

C. Possible Cancellation of July 25, 2005 City Council Meeting

The Council Members agreed with the City Manager's suggestion to cancel the July 25, 2005 Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Cohen and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn the regular meeting of June 27, 2005 at 8:38 p.m.

Ronald S. Berg, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cherie L. Paglia, City Manager/City Clerk