

CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall

Monday, August 9, 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, August 9, 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 Larry Goldberg
Council Member Stuart E. Siegel

Staff:

City Engineer Dirk Lovett
City Manager Cherie L. Paglia

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 August 9, 2010 regular meeting be approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Weber made the following announcements:

He would like to extend Happy Birthday wishes to his lovely wife Nanette on 8/15.

The next HHCA Board of Directors meeting will be Thursday, 8/17.

Friday, 8/20, is the last day for the summer beach bus.

The next City Council meeting scheduled for Monday, 8/23, has been cancelled.

Happy Birthday to HHCA Board President Ron Wolfe (8/23), and to Council Member Freedland's wife Susan (9/8).

The last day of the HHCA summer camp is Friday, 8/27.

The Public Safety Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 8/31, has been cancelled.

The first day of school will be Wednesday, 9/1; try to avoid the Round Meadow gate area that day, and the rest of the week.

City Hall, Building & Safety, and the Community Center will all be closed on Monday, 9/6, in honor of Labor Day; there will be no inspections that day.

Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown on Wednesday, 9/8.

AUDIENCE

Wes Myers, of Ashley Construction, Inc. (ACI), provided a friendly reminder that they would be discussing the Bridle Trail project, for anyone interested in attending, at the Board of Directors meeting on 8/17/10 at the Community Center.

PRESENTATIONS

A. City Certificates/2010 Student Achievement Recipients

Mayor Weber offered his congratulations, on behalf of the Council, and presented City certificates to the following Hidden Hills residents: A.E. Wright Middle School students Colin

Glavin and Sean Glavin (who was not in attendance), and Calabasas High School student Emily Glavin.

B. Request from the Las Virgenes Unified School District for Continued Funding and Support for Technology Initiatives

As Dr. Donald Zimring was not yet in attendance, the Council opted to address this item later in the meeting.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Fire Department Report on 8/1/10 Brush Fire Near Hidden Hills

The following report on the 8/1/10 Mureau incident was provided by Assistant Fire Chief Gary Burden:

The call came in at 11:52 a.m.; Station 68, which is just across the freeway, had a quick response; they saw a few spot fires along the side of the northbound 101 freeway, which became one fire of about 24 acres; arriving resources then saw another fire next to the freeway on the other side of Mureau Road, raising suspicions; but after an investigation, the fires looked consistent with an automotive or vehicle hot part going into the brush; you see this a lot along the 5 or 14, like a loose chain under a tractor trailer sparking; they couldn't find any points of origin or incendiary devices; they did have one person come forward that was interviewed, and it was consistent with that kind of a start; a second alarm was called immediately; a lot of notifications go out, and he was paged, arriving quickly as he lives in the area; they were able to get a handle on the fire rather quickly, and it was fully contained at 3:00 p.m.; the active fire front was knocked down quickly with air resources; this was just a single agency fire; when he arrives at a fire, he gets a briefing and then calls cities to determine jurisdictions; this was a bit confusing as to whose property it was, but it ended up being a state responsibility area along the freeway; he called the State, Jim Doran, and Calabasas just to let everyone know what was going on; wind driven fires are more of a concern in relation to evacuations; this fire was topography driven, with no need for any evacuations; for this second alarm fire, they had 12 engine companies and 2 additional strike teams (5 more engines each), resulting in a total of 22 engines, along with 2 paramedic squads, as there were some injuries (they get a lot of bee stings); they also brought to the fire 11 camp crews (14 inmates and paid kids), 6 water-dropping helicopters, 5 superintendents, 2 dozers, 2 water tenders, 5 patrols, 2 safety officers, a PIO, 3 investigators, and 6 Battalion Chiefs; they take these

fires very seriously and throw everything at them to keep them small; a 24 acre fire in a grass environment (as was the case here) is considered a pretty small fire.

Mayor Weber expressed the Council's appreciation for the quick support from the Fire Department. He was at the airport receiving emailed pictures from his son, and could tell that the fire was not wind driven.

Chief Burden had the following additional comments:

Fires are very concerning in the beginning; he understands there was a question about the possible use of either the Fire Department's or City's notification system; these systems are great if used correctly; he called to say there was no need for notifications, as no evacuations were required; if these systems are used too readily or too often, they don't carry as much importance; they don't like to use the systems for negative reporting, such as telling residents there is a fire, but they don't need to do anything; if that is done, you may not get the response you want in the future; of course, cities can use their systems whenever they want, but a command post is set up, and personnel there can give advice on the use of a notification system.

Council Member Freedland commented as follows:

He was at the site and wondering about evacuations, so called Community Services Representative Maria Grycan; Ms. Grycan was out of town, but he received a call back from Stephanie, who was taking her place at the time; Stephanie said it was almost over with the fire being well under control; there was a question of the proximity of the fire to some horses in the area; there were a lot of Sheriff personnel in the City, and he is aware that if there were to be evacuations, the Fire Department would coordinate with the Sheriff's Department to have Deputies drive through the City to notify residents of any necessary evacuations; since the City does have so many horses, residents do want to get their horses out as soon as possible in case of a fire, not wanting to wait until an actual evacuation of the residents is ordered; he just wondered what communication and procedures the Fire Department might have for an earlier evacuation of the horses.

Chief Burden responded with the following statements:

The community in general should use this as a wake-up call to make sure there is a plan in place; each person individually should have a plan; he cannot get Animal Control to come in and move all of the horses, as that would take too long; people should know if there is a fenced arena close that the horses could be walked to; the Fire Department knows that when there is a large fire, Hidden Hills and the other area cities (Calabasas, Agoura Hills, and even Malibu) have a large component of large animals; those animals

need to be moved as quickly as possible so the animals and the large trailers are out of the way and not interfering with the emergency responders; a close safe area should be identified, and then when it is safe to move the animals, they will give direction to take them to other locations such as Pierce College and the Ventura County Fairgrounds.

Council Member Freedland asked if the Hidden Hills Horsemen (HHH) had some type of plan in place, and if so, through whom it was coordinated. Association Board Member Marv Landon replied as follows:

From Bliss Wendelburg (the head of the HHH, who also happens to be his daughter) and Eric Toeg (Equestrian Services Committee Chairman), he understands that they would move the horses to the Spring Valley arena to get them out of harms way, and then evacuate from there (or vice versa); they do need a staging point, because if fires come from out of the area (Bell Canyon for example), Pierce College may be full; they have planned to use their office parking lot in Westlake Village if necessary, but if anyone has an available facility to offer, they would love to know about it; this is coordinated through the HHH in conjunction with the Equestrian Services Committee (ESC).

In response to Council Member Freedland, Emergency Services Director Jim Doran stated the following:

Most of our City's problems come from the Simi Valley area; Bell Canyon is a trigger point for us, and when a fire gets there, that means we order the evacuation of the horses first; after that, the residents would probably be notified to get ready to evacuate, and then if necessary, the Fire Department would tell us to evacuate; one of the biggest problems we have is that people don't always want to evacuate their animals, as the fires often bypass us; if nothing else, residents should use the horse evacuation as a drill; the Association has done a very good job in planning with the ESC, and this has helped greatly; they are doing a wonderful job of developing a plan for inside the City and in having a temporary staging area; Animal Control does a good job, but the volunteers come from all over, so it takes them awhile to get here to help; and it is true that Pierce College fills up quickly, especially during a major fire when it can be full before Hidden Hills even gets an evacuation notice.

Mayor Weber commented that the longer our residents wait to evacuate their horses, then the further away they end up having to take them.

Council Member Cohen expressed his opinion:

He would like to commend the Fire Department on the way the fire was handled, but the fire occurred on property immediately next to the City; he lives in that area, and was in the Round Meadow School parking lot for awhile; part of the problem was that no one knew anything about the fire – whether or not it was contained, where it was going, etc.; his concern is with the City's and Association's notification system; he thinks they should have been used to give residents information about where the fire was, whether or not it was contained, what resources were in place, and that there was no need for an evacuation; he read in the paper and heard that the fire was at Las Virgenes and the 101 freeway, but it wasn't there, plus there were two fires; the helicopter had a siren going off; maybe there was no need to notify residents since the fire was not wind driven and was contained, but the people who live in that area did not know and panicked; how did the fire end up on both sides of Mureau Road; if the winds would have shifted, the fire could have blown in our direction; he doesn't think that the residents get too many notifications to become immune to them, although there are a lot of notices sent about non-emergency matters (the City Manager pointed out that the City only uses its notification system for emergency situations); he thinks it is the City's and the Association's job to notify the residents; we should have received a notification that there was a fire, and then received another notification that it was contained.

Chief Burden explained the following:

The most expeditious way the Fire Department has to notify residents of a fire is to have the Sheriff's Department knocking on your front door, and announcing over loudspeakers; the helicopter does use a siren when dropping water as an alert process; if the City wants to send someone to the Command Post, which he would recommend, personnel there will give information and the City can activate its notification system if it so chooses; but they're only going to use a notification system when the concern is greater and evacuations might be necessary; he does call emergency personnel in the City to let them know what is happening; ever though there were numerous fires, they were not at all wind driven – they all came from the freeway, as explained earlier.

Mayor Weber, who was at the airport getting ready to leave town, said he did receive a call from Mr. Doran, and was told that there was no need for him to cancel his trip.

The following information was provided by the City Manager:

During an emergency situation such as this fire, the Sheriff and Fire Departments are constantly in touch with City personnel; anyone can call City Hall, as she is always there during the emergency and will answer the phone even if it is not during regular hours, or

anyone can call Mr. Doran; Assistant Emergency Services Director Gabe Nussbaum was monitoring the fire from its very beginning on the ham radio; emails were sent to the Council Members and Public Safety Commissioners to give them updates; staff saw no need to notify the residents at the time as there was no danger; residents should feel comfortable that the City staff and emergency personnel are constantly monitoring any emergency situation; our notification system is not to tell residents that there is no problem, but to let them know when there is a problem, and for example, when they should either start evacuating the horses, get ready to evacuate themselves, or actually evacuate; and if the situation comes to that, there will be Fire and Sheriff personnel going through the City using loudspeakers and in yards to protect the areas.

PUBLIC HEARING

Consideration of Approval of 2010 Congestion Management Program (CMP) Self-Certification Resolution and Adoption of Local Development Report

The City Manager explained that every year the City has to track new development activity (debits), implement transportation improvements (credits), and adopt by resolution a Local Development Report (LDR).

Mayor Weber opened the public hearing. As there were no comments, the hearing was closed. Upon MOTION of Mayor Pro Tem Cohen, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adopt by title only Resolution No. 833 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS FINDING THE CITY TO BE IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (CMP) AND ADOPTING THE CMP LOCAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 65089.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. City Council Minutes – July 26, 2010**
- B. Demand List**
- C. Disbursement List – June**
- D. Financial/Treasurer’s Report – June**

Mayor Weber pointed out that the minutes from July 26, 2010 were not yet completed, so would be pulled from the consent calendar and brought back to the next meeting for consideration.

Council Member Siegel commented as follows:

The financial/treasurer’s report is the last statement of the year; with two exceptions, everything was very close to what was budgeted; the interest rate at LAIF was very low, as were the property taxes; even with those shortages, there was still only a \$50,000 difference on a \$1 million budget; so the process was very accurate, except for those items that the City cannot control.

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

MATTERS FROM CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

- A. Request from the Hidden Hills Community Association for a Community Assistance Grant for the Saddle Creek Project - Update**

Association Board President Ron Wolfe addressed the Council:

He wished to thank Mayor Weber and Mayor Pro Tem Cohen for meeting with the Association and looking at the property; there is still some information that the City is waiting for, so he is aware that a decision will not be made tonight; they walked the area to see the difference if the project could be fully funded and the property prepared for future use with a grass area, etc., rather than simply replacing the arenas; they will continue to meet with the City if that is the desire, to see if something can be determined in the month before the next City Council meeting.

Mayor Weber agreed that there were two good meetings, and that they could continue to meet and then place the item back on the next agenda for further discussion.

Ron Gonen addressed the Council, stating the following:

He has ridden at Saddle Creek, and it is not a Hidden Hills quality place and does not match what we wish for the community; he does not understand the money arrangement, but this seems like a very worthy project; by doing the grading, it would serve the entire community, not just the horsemen, by creating a grassy area; he was very disappointed the original project did not get passed by the community using Association funds; so this would be a good opportunity to overcome that two vote issue and create something in the future that could be developed to be more beautiful; it does not make sense for the Association to do tenant improvements now if the landlord doesn't want to spend money to grade that land and create a better facility for the whole community.

B. Discussion Regarding the Possible Landscaping of Round Meadow Road/Mureau Road Northwest Corner

Council Member Siegel informed the Council of the following:

He asked for this item to be placed on the agenda; he does not want to see general funds used for a possible project in this location, but if there is other funding, he would like to have something done here; this corner looks really dismal, especially since the other corner looks so good with the City project completed there; there is some parking that occurs near the road, so he is not talking about that area, but doing just a small mini-plan.

Council Member Freedland thought that was a great idea, although since there is no water there, that could be an issue, as well as the fact that most of the property is owned by the School District – although he did not think that would be a problem, especially since he believes the City could do a project with restricted monies as opposed to general funds.

The City Manager added the following comments:

She is assuming that Council Member Siegel is referring to a fairly small area from the corner over to and including the yucca plant, and then from the fencing down to the bottom of the hill (he confirmed that was the case); with the placement of a bicycle rack for the school children, along with a pathway up to the school grounds, this would most likely qualify the project for TDA pedestrian/bicycle funds, of which the City receives \$5000/year; gas tax funds could also be used in the right-of-way area; most of the area is owned by the School District, but she is sure the District would work with the City; staff will contact the School District, and also get some rough design and construction estimates before bringing this matter back to the Council for further discussion.

Mayor Weber expressed his support for such a project, as did the other Council Members, with Mayor Pro Tem Cohen suggesting that fake grass and cacti be considered in the design.

MATTERS FROM STAFF

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

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

Construction has finally started; this week they are putting in subterranean vaults, and hopefully by the end of the week they will be trenching and laying pipe; this will take about six weeks, and then the utilities will be putting in cabinets, pulling wire, and removing poles.

In response to Council Member Freedland, staff reported that there have been no complaints, but there has been positive community feedback through emails and phone calls, with some asking when the overhead utilities in their areas will be undergrounded. Mayor Weber also pointed out that he has not seen any traffic issues.

B. Consideration of Approval of Proposal from Helm & Sons Amusements to Provide the 2010 Fiesta Games and Rides, and Payment of Deposit to Reserve Date of October 2, 2010

The City Manager pointed out that this was the same company that provided all the games and rides last year, and that the proposed amount was within the budget. Upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Goldberg and unanimously carried on roll call vote, it was resolved to approve the proposal from Helm & Sons Amusements to provide the games and rides for this year's Fiesta at a cost of \$34,000, with a \$14,000 deposit to be paid immediately to reserve the October 2, 2010 date.

C. Consideration of Approval of Proposal from Bernard's Wine Gallery to Provide Wine and Beer for 2010 Fiesta

The City Manager explained that this is the same company, run by Hidden Hills residents, that provided beer and wine at last year's Fiesta, and that they do not pay the City anything – they

just sell directly to anyone wishing to purchase their product. Council Member Freedland added that they sell a better (and good) wine to the residents at a discounted price, instead of adding an additional cost to each glass that would then be given back to the City. Upon MOTION of Council Member Freedland, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried, it was resolved to approve the proposal from Bernard's Wine Gallery to provide wine and beer at the Spring Valley location for this year's Fiesta.

At this time, even though no one was in attendance from the Las Virgenes Unified School District, the Council addressed Item No. 6B.

B. Request from the Las Virgenes Unified School District for Continued Funding and Support for Technology Initiatives

Mayor Weber reported that this is something the City has supported every year, and that the District was told last year the Council would provide support again this year if the City's financial position so allowed. Council Member Freedland added that the amount is based on \$55 per Hidden Hills student in the Las Virgenes Unified School District, and that this would be money very well spent. Upon MOTION of Council Member Freedland, seconded by Council Member Goldberg and unanimously carried on roll call vote, it was resolved to approve the expenditure of \$17,875 from the City's community assistance grants to support technology initiatives for the Las Virgenes Unified School District.

Mayor Weber also informed the Council that he would be attending a Las Virgenes Municipal Water District Board meeting to lend moral support for two other proposed Las Virgenes Unified School District projects. He explained those projects as follows:

The School District is asking the Water District and other utilities to place a box on their bills for a voluntary donation to the School District, which could then be done either through the paper billing or online; secondly, the Water District has an annual budget for advertising; the School District is asking that some of that advertising budget be given to the School District, which would then advertise on its website and through other methods

used to reach parents on behalf of the Water District; these are very creative ideas that involve no additional costs and no requests for a parcel tax, etc.; he suggested a year or so ago that the School District push for private funding, and it looks like they are starting to think outside the box.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, upon MOTION of Council Member Freedland, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn the regular meeting of August 9, 2010 at 8:22 p.m.

Larry G. Weber, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cherie L. Paglia, City Manager/City Clerk