MINUTES
LA PUENTE CITY COUNCIL AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2008

A Special Joint Meeting of the City Council and Community Development Commission of the City of La Puente was held in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 15900 East Main Street, La Puente, California, on January 28, 2008, at 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor/Chair Lujan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council Members/Commissioners present: Mendoza, Solis, Storing, Holloway, Lujan

Staff Members present: City Manager/Executive Director Cowley, Assistant City Manager/Deputy Executive Director Yamachika, City Attorney/Commission Counsel Casso, City Clerk/Secretary Giron, Finance Director Kim, Public Works Director Salas, Recreation Director Bistarkey, City Planner Arreola, Senior Management Assistant Ortega, Recreation Supervisor Rojas, Recreation Supervisor Zavala, Community Preservation Supervisor Blakely, Grant & Housing Coordinator Beckman, Senior Accountant Sophia, Management Analyst Ayala, City Engineer Mousavi

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A-1 CONSIDERATION OF CITY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MID -YEAR BUDGETS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007-2008

Finance Director Young Kim provided a summary of the overall mid-year budget. She discussed the various existing funds, fund balances and on-going projects. She noted existing expenditure levels and various revenue projections.

Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway requested that Council be provided with hard copies of power point presentations prior to the start of any City Council/Commission meeting.

City Manager/Executive Director Cowley noted the significant accomplishments made by department staff this year in keeping expenditures down so that the major capital improvement projects could be commenced and/or completed. She provided highlights of the capital improvement projects completed and under construction.

Council Member/Commissioner Solis expressed interest in hiring a consultant to assist in procuring local, state, and federal funds. City Manager/Executive Director Cowley noted that this would be addressed later in the meeting.

City Manager/Executive Director Cowley reviewed costs related to legal and legislative activities.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway, Ms. Cowley noted a survey she conducted to asses various legal service fees paid in other cities.

City Attorney/Commission Counsel Casso explained various attorney services fees related to his firm's proposed contract.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, City Attorney Casso clarified that future increases in City Attorney fees are not automatic and would require future Council action. He further noted the opportunity to assign developer fees as a mechanism for cost recovery.

Ms. Cowley noted that the new proposed City Attorney/Commission Counsel contract for services would go into effect February 12, 2008 pending City Council approval.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, Ms. Cowley noted the methodology utilized to calculate projected City Council travel/training expenses. Mayor/Chair Lujan expressed his interest in seeing costs based upon the new Council Member's actual usage, rather than using the travel habits of previous Council Members.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, Ms. Cowley noted that she would return to the Council with information and options related to a technology stipend and how the usage of any Council Member's existing technology would apply. She further noted that she would also return with information related to the "pooling" of City Council travel/training funds.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Storing, Ms. Cowley noted that all technology equipment purchased exclusively for use of the Council Member as part of their official duties would need to be returned to the City once their term was completed.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway, Ms. Cowley reported that some previous Council Members had utilized their entire budget amount for travel/training and others had not.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Mendoza, Ms. Cowley noted that the travel/training expenses do not "roll over" or accumulate from year to year.

Acting City Clerk/Secretary Giron reported on the various budgeted activities of the City Clerk's Office and noted that the vacancy in the City Clerk's position was projected to be filled by April 1, 2008. Ms. Cowley further noted that the City Clerk's Office also budgets for all required legal notices required pursuant to statutory law.

Council Member/Commissioner Storing requested that "pocket parks" be discussed within tonight's presentation.

Lillian Ayala, Management Analyst provided an overview budget report related to the City's Human Resources and Risk Management services. She included information related to equipment replacement costs and a badge maker machine for employees.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, Acting City Clerk/Secretary Giron noted that she would research the costs related to the production of the agendas and report back to Council.

Finance Director Kim provided an overview of the Finance Department budget, which included GASB 45 information and contract for various accounting services.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, Finance Director Kim noted that operating costs within the City are not increasing significantly.

Management Analyst Ayala described the City's various insurance programs and coverages. She further detailed the City's Public Safety program costs as well as the recent purchase of a license plate scanning device for use on a La Puente law enforcement vehicle.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Solis and Mayor Pro Tem Holloway, Ms. Cowley noted that the license plate scanner will be located on a patrol vehicle that is dedicated to the City of La Puente, however it will be utilized occasionally outside of the City limits.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, Ms. Cowley clarified that thirty-eight (38) percent of the City's budget is related to law enforcement services. She further noted that she will be working with the City Attorney to bring back options related to potential revenue off-sets for these recurring costs.

Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway requested that staff add percentages of the total budget in future budget documents.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway and Council Member/Commissioner Solis, Ms. Cowley reported that she would research costs and arrangements between cities who enter into contractual arrangements with other cities to provide law enforcement services. She would then present the information in relation to costs related to entering into contractual agreements with the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department for law enforcement services.

Public Works Director Salas provided a brief overview of the Public Works Department mid-year budget and activities.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, Mr. Salas provided information related to the City's provision of emergency services supplies in comparison to other cities.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway, Mr. Salas provided information related to the City's water truck and its operational usage.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Storing, Ms. Cowley noted that she was not aware of any existing grant program that provides assistance to residents for removing trees.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, Mr. Salas provided detailed information related to the services provided within the scope of the City's contract with West Coast Arborists and the status of budget funds used to date.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Solis, Mr. Salas noted that if residents were required to provide maintenance for parkway trees located on their property, they could opt to cut them down.

Mr. Salas described the various street and sidewalk maintenance projects underway within the City including efforts to find competitive bids in the market to reduce on-going budget costs.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway, Mr. Salas provided information related to the impact on City services as related to the delay in rehiring a Public Works Supervisor. He noted that staff has been happy to provide assistance; however, as a result in lack of staffing, projects are being managed on a "day-to-day" basis.

Ms. Cowley clarified that over the years, the City as assumed many responsibilities that belong to the citizens themselves and this has presented a burden on existing General, Gas Tax, and other proprietary funds. Staff is involved in an on-going education process with residents to continue to provide outreach related to the distribution of obligations between the residents and the City.

Mr. Salas also provided information related to Proposition C funds and the variety of projects and costs related to their usage.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Solis, Ms. Cowley clarified the "bookkeeping" deficit in the Prop C fund that appears in the budget is related to personnel costs that were not taken out of that fund before, but are now taken out of that fund.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway and Council Member/Commissioner Solis, Mr. Salas detailed the staff services and obligations related to the City's contract with Waste Management services. He further noted the reporting requirements as mandated to the Integrated Waste Management Board.

In response to inquiries from various Council Members/Commissioners on the matter of renovating the park restrooms, Ms. Cowley noted that there were no current funds available to renovate, however this item would be brought back as part of the 2008-2009 budget process.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, Ms. Cowley reported that the City is now more accurately monitoring the County's use of State Gas Tax funds for various maintenance projects in order to keep them from depletion in the future. She also noted that the receipt of Gas Tax money may be delayed until September 2008.

Assistant City Manager/Deputy Executive Director Yamachika presented a detailed overview of the Community Development Department's mid-year budget and activities. He clarified various projects, division costs, contract services, as well as the consultant services utilized in updating the City's Housing Element and Zoning Ordinance.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway, Mr. Yamachika noted that the Housing Element update will be completed this fiscal year, and the remainder of the funding carried over to next fiscal year to complete the Zoning Ordinance update.

Mr. Yamachika provided an overview of the City's Commission and Committee services as well as various CDBG's grant funded programs.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Solis, Mr. Yamachika provided information related to the City's loan programs to businesses and homeowners. He clarified that loan repayment terms and conditions.

Mayor/Chair Lujan requested that staff provide any background information related to the loan assistance programs as necessary.

Mr. Yamachika reported on the City's Community Promotions services and the various City support provided to community social service organizations, student scholarship programs and low-to-moderate income families for youth program registration fees.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Solis, Mr. Yamachika and Ms. Cowley clarified the processes and procedures that staff utilizes to ensure that City funds for these programs go to support activities and residents of the City of La Puente.

Mayor/Chair Lujan suggested the formation of an ad hoc committee composed of Council Members Storing and Solis to work with staff to develop guidelines and policies related to the provision of City support within the scope of the Community Development Department's Community Promotions program.

Mr. Yamachika provided information related to the City's Engineering and Building Safety services.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Solis, Ms. Cowley noted a recent memorandum to Council related to the issue of a stop sign at the corner of Workman Street. Recreation Director Bistarkey provided an overview of the Recreation Department's mid-year budget and activities.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Solis, Mr. Bistarkey noted that staff has made every effort to maintain the senior services program in light of the construction of the Community Center. He further clarified that youth and adult programs are not scheduled during the hours that the facility is utilized by La Puente senior citizens.

Mr. Bistarkey reported on various "name" entitlement programs that Council may want to consider as revenue off-set opportunities for the operation and maintenance of the Community Center and Youth Activity Learning Center.

Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway suggested that staff approach news media organizations for contributions and partnerships, noting that a broadcast facility is planned as part of the Community Center project.

Finance Director Kim reported on various sewer construction projects and costs related to the issuance of bonds. She further noted various vehicle charges as they related to the status of the mid-year budget.

Ms. Cowley reported on various impacts to the mid-year budget related to retiree costs.

City Engineer Mousavi reported on various completed and continuing capital improvement projects. As requested by Mayor/Chair Lujan, Mr. Mousavi listed the projects and the City Council provided inquiries as needed.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway, Mr. Mousavi clarified the Elliot and Hacienda traffic circulation improvement project.

Mr. Mousavi provided information related to projects to be funded by the recent voter-approved Proposition 1B. He provided information as to the potential date of receipt of the funds and how they were to be utilized.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Storing, Mr. Mousavi noted that the project at Sunset and Temple was scheduled to be completed in six (6) months to one (1) year.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway, Mr. Mousavi noted that contractors no longer "stock" traffic poles and that the City has not selected a contractor for traffic pole replacement projects as it is pending final funding.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway, Mr. Mousavi acknowledged that staff could look into the potential combination of similar project "pre-work" in order to benefit from economies of scale. He further clarified the process by which capital improvement projects are brought before the City Council for consideration.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Storing, Ms. Cowley noted that staff would be interested in pursuing possible land donations for the development of a pocket park and clarified the costs involved in such a development. She clarified that the City Council would have to agree to naming the park in honor of the organization or individual who donated the land.

Mr. Yamachika explained the City's interest in pursuing Quimby Parkland Development Fees and clarified the Quimby Act for the Council's understanding.

Ms. Cowley and City Attorney/Commission Counsel Casso further clarified the specific costs and consideration in developing a pocket park and noted that staff would return with a report for Council's consideration during the 2008-2009 budget presentations.

Ms. Cowley expressed her interest in keeping Council updated on the budget constraints caused by the addition of projects and programs throughout the year, especially after the budget has been adopted. She noted the need to be aware of current expenditures prior to taking on any new commitments.

Mr. Yamachika reported on the Redevelopment and Housing mid-year budget and activities.

Ms. Cowley provided a final "wrap-up" of the City Council/Community Development Commission direction pursuant to tonight's direction. She noted that staff would be returning to the City Council with information related to: adding $50,000 to the City Attorney's services, research Council technology stipends and provide information on allowable expenses, keep the City Council's travel/training expenses "as-is" for the remainder of the year, include information on the renovation of park restroom in the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 budget presentation, provide a report on reimbursement loan transfers to the Community Development Commission, work with the ad hoc Committee (Solis & Storing) to develop policies for City-support of various social service organizations and programs.

In response to Mayor/Chair Lujan, Ms. Cowley also noted that staff would include $25,000 as the potential cost for a consultant to review the City's contract services and agreements procedures. She also noted that staff would add $10,000 to contract services for West Coast Arborists for City tree-related services.

In response to Council Member/Commissioner Solis, Ms. Cowley noted that the City would have to determine the specifics related to hiring a consultant to research and procure local, state, and federal funding opportunities for the City. She noted that this item would be included in the 2008-2009 budget presentations.

ORAL COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair Holloway thanked staff for their professional presentation.

Mayor/Chair Lujan noted that the meeting was arranged to provide the public with greater access to information related to the City's mid-year budget status. He thanked staff and residents for staying late and participating in the meeting.

ORAL COMMENTS FROM STAFF

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Noting no further business to come before the City Council and Community Development Commission, Mayor/Chair Lujan adjourned the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

Approved this 8th day of July, 2008

Diana Giron, Acting City Clerk/Secretary

Louie A. Lujan, Mayor/Chair