

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the La Mesa City Council
Thursday, March 23, 2017 at 8:00 a.m.
Emergency Operations Center, Fire Administration Building
8054 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, California

Mayor Arapostathis called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Arapostathis; Vice Mayor McWhirter; Councilmembers Alessio, Baber and Sterling.

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: City Manager Garrett; City Attorney Sabine; Assistant City Manager Humora; City Clerk Wiegelman.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jonathan Gonzalez, resident, spoke regarding the Sun Valley Golf Course.

Michael Brown, resident, spoke regarding the Sun Valley Golf Course.

John Schmitz, resident, spoke on what he likes about the City of La Mesa and the need for a new library.

ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS, AGENDA AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

City Manager Garrett welcomed everyone and made opening comments.

Vice Mayor McWhirter thanked staff for their efforts in preparing for the workshop.

II. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF CITY STRATEGIC VISION AND DIRECTIONS

City Manager Garrett provided a brief overview of the purpose of the workshop. She gave an overview of the history behind the City's strategic visions and directions. City Manager Garrett reviewed the City's strategic directions which include partnerships, economic development, infrastructure, citizen participation, organizational development, communications, and

financial stability. She also presented the five-year goals for the City and the two-year strategic planning process.

A discussion ensued between Council regarding adding an additional goal to the City's five-year goals.

ACTION: Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to direct staff to add a goal to the City's five-year goals related to ensuring that there are safe and affordable homes for all of La Mesa's current and future residents.

III. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

a. CALPERS CHANGES TO DISCOUNT RATE AND CONTRIBUTION METHODOLOGY

Finance Director Waller-Bullock provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the CalPERS changes to the discount rate and contribution methodology. She gave background on the City's CalPERS plans, the process in which annual contributions are determined, CalPERS funding, significant events that impacted CalPERS funding and contribution rates, and the City's actions to address the CalPERS costs. Finance Director Waller-Bullock presented the historical and projected PERF contributions and investments for benefit payments, the ratio of actives to retirees, the projected total PERS contributions (all funds) from 2017 through 2023, and the next steps in addressing the unfunded liabilities.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding the City's CalPERS tier system, the change by CalPERS to a fixed contribution rate, CalPERS return on investment, the City's financial state, and the consequences if the CalPERS fund reaches fifty percent (50%).

b. 6-YEAR FORECAST

Finance Director Waller-Bullock presented the six-year financial forecast for the City's General Fund. Finance Director Waller-Bullock discussed the national, state and local economies and the State actions impacting the City's budget. She also discussed the base forecast for revenue and expenditure assumptions, the impact property taxes have had on the City's revenue, inter-fund transfers, and a revenue sensitivity analysis. Finance Director Waller-Bullock presented 'what if' scenarios to address forecasted financial issues and provided policy questions for Council consider.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding the City's property tax revenue, the general fund financial forecast regarding fringe benefits, the City's obligation to pay its debt to the County, the City's expenditures as a result of the changes to the CalPERS rates, the City's reserve fund policy, solutions to address the impact the CalPERS changes will have on the City's reserves, and the value of keeping funds

in the Section 115 Retirement Trust fund versus the General Fund Reserves.

Councilmember Baber requested staff to look at the City's property tax base and return to Council at a later date with their findings.

ACTION: It was the consensus of the Council to approve the request.

ACTION: Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to request staff to research revenue opportunities and expenditure solutions including the possibility of paying CalPERS once a year rather than on a monthly basis and placing the cost savings into the Section 115 Retirement Trust Fund.

ACTION: Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to request staff to analyze the most favorable contribution amount to the Section 115 Retirement Trust Fund.

Mayor Arapostathis recessed the meeting at 9:41 a.m.

c. CALIFORNIA FISCAL OUTLOOK

This presentation and discussion was combined with sub-item b.

d. TARGETS FOR ACTION

The meeting reconvened at 10:10 a.m. with all members present.

City Manager Garrett introduced the City's targets for action and stated that each department director would provide an overview of their department's targets for action.

Mayor Arapostathis left the meeting at 10:13 a.m.

Community Development Director Dick provided an overview of the targets for action for the Community Development Department. She stated that the targets for action include the Climate Action Plan, updating the historic resource inventory, improvement of services, and the implementation of new permit software.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding the Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) goals, creating a culture of yes for businesses and projects within the City, the explanation of conditions to prospective business/project applicants, improving the business/project application process, and the progress of the Grossmont Center.

ACTION: Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to request staff to initiate efforts to solicit feedback from the business community on issues with the City's business and project application process.

Police Chief Vasquez provided an overview of the Police Department's

targets for action. He stated that the targets for action include community outreach and social media, youth leadership camp, increased presence at the schools, updating the City safety handbook, continuing community events, and intelligent led policing. He also discussed the Police Department's body worn cameras budget item.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding school resource officers, linking the Police Department's Twitter and Nextdoor accounts to the homepage of the Police Department's website, body worn cameras, a strategic plan to improve recruiting and retaining of police officers, expanding the ways the Police Department provides information to the public, and the impact Measure U will have on the City's police force.

Fire Chief Stowell provided an overview of the Heartland Fire Department's performance measures and targets for action. He stated that the Fire Department's targets for action include disaster preparedness, improvement of infrastructure technology in the EOC, implementation of a web EOC, enhancing the partnership and relationship with neighboring public safety and disaster response agencies, continuing communication through social media, conducting disaster preparedness community workshops, updating and improving the department's technology and software, and looking at conventional ways the Fire Department responds to calls.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding the amount of resources expended for response calls, the recruitment and retention of fire personnel, and the areas of the JPA that could be improved.

Community Services Director Richardson provided an overview of the Community Services Department's targets for action. She stated that the targets for action include aligning the department guides with the City's branding, revision and expansion of the active recreational programs, and minor renovations at the Aging Community Center.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding adding air conditioning to a recreational facility and the potential of businesses donating their services or products to complete small renovations or projects.

Assistant City Manager Humora gave a presentation on YourGov and provided data on the usage of YourGov and the type of issues that are being reported.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding the process of reporting issues on YourGov and the City's contract with Cartegraph.

Vice Mayor McWhirter recessed the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

IV. DISCUSSION ON COMMUNITY OUTREACH

a. COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The meeting reconvened at 12:48 p.m. with Vice Mayor McWhirter and Councilmembers Alessio, Baber, and Parent present and Mayor Arapostathis absent.

Timothy McLarney from True North Research provided a PowerPoint presentation on the community opinion survey results. He discussed the purpose of the study, the methodology of the study, and the results of each survey question. He presented results for the overall satisfaction of La Mesa residents, the satisfaction of the residents with the various City services, citizen ranking of City services by importance, areas of concern for citizens, and the perception of public safety, traffic, and parks and recreation facilities. Mr. McLarney reviewed the key conclusions from the community survey results and stated that resident satisfaction continues to be high.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding the survey results, the data collected from community surveys versus data collected at town hall meetings, the positives and negatives of the methodology of the survey, the City's communication efforts, the increase in concern of homelessness, and the process of determining which questions to use for a community survey.

The Council thanked staff for their efforts in continuing to keep resident satisfaction high.

John Schmitz, resident, spoke regarding the community survey not including questions concerning a new library.

Joe Glidden, resident, submitted a written statement regarding the community survey not including questions concerning a new library.

b. TOWN HALL UPDATES

City Manager Garrett stated that the updates for the two Town Hall meetings were provided in the agenda packet.

V. DISCUSSION ON MAINTAINING VITAL CITY SERVICES

a. INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES

Assistant City Manager Humora provided a PowerPoint presentation on the City's Capital Improvement Projects. He provided an overview of the projects which include the West La Mesa/Junior High Drive/University Avenue Phase II, North Spring Street Phase I and II pedestrian and bicycle improvements, Alvarado Trunk Sewer upgrade, replacement of concrete sewer pipes, and Vista La Mesa Park Improvements. He also provided information on the Capital Improvement Projects of other agencies that impact the City of La Mesa which include the SDG&E

PSEP Civic Center area, San Diego County Water Authority pipeline relining, and the City of San Diego Mid-City pipeline.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding the City and other agency projects, the safety improvements as a result of the planned pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects, and the timeline for the improvement projects.

VI. DISCUSSION ON FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

a. VISTA LA MESA PARK AND WALKABILITY PROJECT

Community Services Director Richardson provided a PowerPoint presentation on the progress of the City's walkability project and the grant funds the City of La Mesa has received for planning, infrastructure, education, and outreach relating to walkability. She gave an overview of the walkability assessments that were completed by student groups, the Vista La Mesa Safe Routes project locations, the improvements that have been completed, the existing conditions of Vista La Mesa Park, and the planned improvements for the park.

A discussion ensued between Council and staff regarding the student involvement in the walkability surveys and the community usage of the City parks.

CLOSING DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS

The Vice Mayor and Members of the City Council made closing comments, thanked staff for their efforts and thanked members of the public for attending the meeting.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS: PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance Measures were discussed in conjunction with sub-item d of Item III, Targets for Action.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Mayor McWhirter adjourned the meeting at 2:22 p.m.

Megan Wiegelman, CMC
City Clerk