

**SUSANVILLE CITY COUNCIL**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**April 18, 2018– 6:00 p.m.**

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Mayor Garnier.

Roll call of Councilmembers present: Brian Wilson, Kevin Stafford, Joseph Franco, Mendy Schuster and Kathie Garnier.

Staff present: Dan Newton, Interim City Administrator; Jessica Ryan, City Attorney and Gwenna MacDonald, City Clerk.

**1      APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Mr. Newton requested that Item 9D be considered prior to Item 9A, as there was expected to be a number of parents with children in the audience to speak about the Riverside Park Project design.

Motion by Mayor pro tem Franco, second by Councilmember Schuster, to approve the agenda with the amendment requested; motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Franco, Schuster, Stafford, Wilson, and Garnier.

**2      PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING CLOSED SESSION ITEMS: None.**

**3      CLOSED SESSION: At 6:04 p.m. the Council entered into Closed Session to discuss the following:**

- A      PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT – Pursuant to Government Code Section §54957
  - 1      City Administrator
- B      CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS - pursuant to Government Code Section §54957.6
  - 1      Agency Negotiator:    Dan Newton  
   Bargaining Unit:        Professional/Technical
- C      CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNCIL – EXISTING LITIGATION – Pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9 of the California Government Code regarding two cases

**4      RETURN TO OPEN SESSION:**

At 7:00 p.m. the City Council reconvened in Open Session.

Staff present: Dan Newton, Interim City Administrator; Jessica Ryan, City Attorney; James Moore, Fire Chief; Dan Gibbs, Acting Public Works Director; Quincy McCourt, Project Manager and Gwenna MacDonald, City Clerk.

Mr. Newton reported that prior to Closed Session, the City Council approved the agenda with an amendment to consider Item 9D prior to Item 9A. The Council met in Closed Session, and there was no reportable action taken, direction was provided to staff. The Council would be reconvening in Closed Session at the conclusion of Open Session.

Chief Moore provided the Thought of the Day.

**5      BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:**

An unidentified member of the public spoke on behalf of members of the MOPS Group, or Mothers of Preschool Children. She stated that the parents and grandparents were very much in favor of the splash pad feature as part of the Riverside Park project. It provides a safe option for toddlers and younger children, particularly for those parents who are not able to afford visits to the community pool.

**6**      **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

- A      Approve minutes from the City Council's March 6, 7 and April 4, 2018 meetings
- B      Approve vendor warrants numbered 200867 through 200933 for a total of \$197,155.35 including \$98,880.51 in payroll warrants
- C      Receive and file Monthly Finance Reports: February and March 2018

Motion by Mayor pro tem Franco, second by Councilmember Schuster, to approve the Consent Calendar; motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Franco, Schuster, Wilson, Stafford and Garnier.

**7**      **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** No business.

**8**      **COUNCIL DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Commission/Committee reports:

**9**      **NEW BUSINESS:**

**9D**      **Consider approval of Riverside Park Project Design Workshops and Final Project Element selection** Mr. McCourt distributed information to the City Council that illustrated the original layout and features of the Riverside Park Rehabilitation Project, and a current rendering of the suggested features and improvements was displayed for everyone in attendance to view. Mr. McCourt explained that the City had held community workshops and provided survey forms to community groups and at locations throughout town in an effort to solicit as much feedback as possible from the public. The feedback, comments and suggestions were compiled and prioritized and then incorporated into the final design plan prepared by Melton Design Group. The number one priority, which was not listed on the suggested improvements but had ranked the highest, was improvement to the bathrooms. Another high priority listed was the installation of a basketball court. He noted that relocating Peggy's Playground did not score particularly high, however it was suggested in order to accommodate the installation of a basketball court at the Northwest corner of the park. He explained that he had received a number of emails and feedback from parents of small children, who were interested in seeing a water feature at the park in the form of a splash pad. Based on the existing design, it would be located in the center of the park in lieu of the existing suggested fire pit feature.

Mr. McCourt continued by explaining that in addition to the grant funding received for the project, an additional \$375,000 of CDBG Program Income has been allocated to the program, and with the additional capital and based upon the Engineer's cost estimate, a large percentage of the features as identified and prioritized through the public outreach process could be constructed. The next step in the process is to prepare biddable construction plans and obtain contractor's cost estimates. At that point, based upon the hard costs identified, Council would be asked to finalize the plan and remove or add elements based upon the available budget. Mr. McCourt noted that the recent acquisition of a parcel located at the east side of the park has provided an opportunity to construct onsite parking, thereby eliminating the need to create ADA accessible diagonal parking along the north side of the park. Mr. McCourt requested questions and comments from the City Council.

Mayor pro tem Franco asked if there would be barbecue pits so that people could cook, and if the fire pit was intended to be used for anything of that nature.

Mr. McCourt responded that there were barbecues located at various places that would allow for people to cook food at the park.

Mayor Garnier requested that Mr. McCourt identify on the diagram the proposed new location of Peggy's Playground, and asked if the existing swings would be kept.

Mr. McCourt identified the location of various features on the diagram, and stated that the existing swings would be kept.

Councilmember Schuster had three questions regarding the park design. She asked if the existing trees would be left in place, if the trail around the perimeter of the park was included, and if it would be possible to have a portable fire pit, since the splash pad would be inoperable in the winter months, and the opportunities for camp fires in the summer are usually something that people enjoy at the lake or during camping trips.

Mr. McCourt explained that the existing trees are going to be retained with the exception of a few at the Southeast corner of the park, and those may have to be removed to accommodate the relocation of the ball field. He pointed out the location of the decomposed granite trail that would be located around the perimeter of the park, and that the design could potentially accommodate a portable fire pit feature.

Mayor pro tem Franco asked staff if an official announcement had been made regarding the recent acquisition of the property to the east that allows an expanded footprint for the project. The timing of the acquisition is impeccable.

Mr. McCourt responded that a formal announcement had not been made, and he explained to the members of the audience that the City Council voted to acquire the small piece of property that allowed for a full right field on the relocated ball field, and the additional space would provide the necessary parking so that the park can accommodate a full soccer field as well as two baseball diamonds.

Councilmember Stafford commented that he was not in support of the basketball courts at all.

Mr. McCourt explained that the proposed design is a reflection of the feedback received through the workshops and public outreach efforts. The basketball court feature scored the highest, next to the new bathroom facility.

Councilmember Wilson stated that the relocation of Peggy's Playground could potentially impact some of the existing trees, whether or not the intent is to leave the trees or remove them. He asked if an engineer's estimate had been received regarding the cost of relocating the playground.

Mr. McCourt responded that he did not have that number available, and did not want to provide the wrong information.

Mayor Garnier opened the floor and requested comments from members of the public.

Four unidentified members of the public spoke regarding the features and improvements that they would prefer to see. One gentlemen provided several suggestions throughout the discussion, including his belief that the money should be spent on improvements to be enjoyed by the children of the community. He

was not in favor of the proposed location of the basketball court as it was near the features provided for toddlers and small children. In addition, it would be located right next to the apartment complex, and more likely to result in loud activity that would disturb the neighbors. He suggested moving the basketball court to the East side of the park, near the parking lot, and furthest away from the neighbors. Three of the unidentified women who spoke were parents of small children, who indicated that they had the support of their friends and neighbors in requesting that the City include a splash pad feature for children. Many expressed their frustration at trying to bring their small children to the swimming pool, and being unable to adequately supervise them in that environment. The community has a lot of activities and sports opportunities for the youth, but these are geared towards older school age children. There is limited recreation activities for those with toddler and pre-school age children that is also affordable for families. A suggestion was made to remove the wading pool at Memorial Park, and create a splash pad at that location. Mayor Garnier clarified that the City had received grant funding for improvements to Riverside Park, and she does support that improvement at Memorial Park, however the funding is not available at this time.

There was a general discussion among the City Council regarding the location of the basketball court, and the fire pit feature that was included in the design. Chief Moore explained that the fire pit does not pose a threat from embers, as it is a gas fired flame that is generated through a medium such as lava rock or glass. It does create hot surfaces and he is not generally in favor of that feature.

Mayor pro tem Franco discussed lighting and the importance of security lighting that is not intrusive to the neighbors, but that aids in keeping undesirable people from hanging out or congregating at the park after hours and engaging in activity that nobody wants to have in their neighborhood.

It was the consensus of the City Council to direct staff to move forward with obtaining cost estimates for the park improvement project, with the relocation of the basketball court to the east side of the park as suggested, and the Council was unanimous in their support of removing the fire pit feature entirely, and including a splash pad in its place.

Motion by Mayor pro tem Franco, second by Councilmember Wilson, directing staff to amend the park design to relocate the basketball court to the east side of the park, to remove the fire pit and substitute a splash pad feature, and directing staff to proceed with obtaining cost estimates. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Franco, Wilson, Stafford, Schuster and Garnier.

Mayor Garnier thanked those in attendance for providing their feedback and suggestions.

Mr. McCourt advised that the City Council and public would have a final opportunity to view the project design and prioritize features based upon cost estimates.

**9A Consider sponsorship request from Lassen County Fair for the 2018 Susanville Bluegrass Festival scheduled for June 22 – 24, 2018** Mr. Newton reported that the Lassen County Fair has requested a \$5,000 sponsorship from the City of Susanville to help support its annual Blue Grass Festival. This year's event is scheduled for June 22 - 24, 2018. There is currently \$4,724.58 in Civic Promotions and last year's event brought in approximately 800 people to the community. Mr. Newton turned the floor over to Jim Wolcott, Lassen County Fair Board President, to speak about the event.

**Jim Wolcott**, Lassen County Fair Board, discussed highlights of the event and provided statistical data regarding the dollars spent in the community by the attendees. He explained that many of the people

camp for a week at the Fairgrounds, and spend the majority of their money in the community for food, going out to eat, and many of them also stay in the area for a few days after the event to enjoy other activities in the region. Mr. Wolcott commented that he understood money is tight for everyone, and he thanked the City for being supportive of the event in the past, and of the annual Lassen County Fair.

Councilmember Schuster stated that she attended the 2017 Bluegrass Festival, and was surprised at the number of people in attendance. She said it was a very enjoyable event.

Mayor pro tem Franco asked if there were a lot of vendors providing food and selling goods to the attendees.

Mr. Wolcott responded that they do not have a huge variety of vendors, and the majority of the dining opportunities and money spend by the people from out of the area is spent off the fairgrounds.

An unnamed representative from the Lassen County Fair Board spoke from the audience and described the system to encourage guests and visitors to the community to participate in a raffle. They are instructed to turn in any receipt that they have which shows money spent at a local business, and once per day, a drawing was held to give away free tickets. There were 39 businesses who participated in the receipt box drawing, and approximately 11 percent of the 800 attendees who turned in receipts and were eligible for the drawing. In this manner, they are able to track how much money overall is being spent in the community due to the visitors for the event.

Councilmember Wilson explained that he understands the sentiment in the business community regarding the City's Transient Occupancy Tax, and what the money generated by TOT should be spent for. The reality is that over the years, the General Fund has utilized the money for other expenses. The City has other groups and non-profits who approach the Council every year and ask for monetary contributions to support their events, and it could be that the amount budgeted each year is not enough to cover what the Council would like to be able to spend. He mentioned several events that the City has supported, with the Junior Fishing Derby being the most protected event, as the City has contributed for many years to the event. Councilmember Wilson would like to see an item brought back to discuss the City's priorities in donating to these types of organizations.

Mayor pro tem Franco agreed, adding that the topic deserves to be discussed and the City should recognize what it spends annually, develop a meaningful budget, and recognize the importance of having these types of events in the community.

Mayor Garnier commented that having to spend money to make money is a very true statement. She discusses the quilting community and participants who also are in attendance at the Bluegrass Festival. Quilters from around the area would be drawn to an event such as this, and quilters are willing to invest a lot of time and money into their craft. She stated that Susanville has to become a place where people come to, and not just through. As a 45 year resident of the community, she is dedicated and committed to bringing back the community to the way it used to be, and supporting these types of events is an important part of that process.

Councilmember Wilson requested that the subject be brought back at a future meeting as a discussion to include economic development goals, the amount of money that the Council decides to budget each year for civic contributions, and to formulate guidelines for making the contributions. He stresses the importance of having the discussion apart from a request for contributions, or fee waivers, since the

Council does not want to dismiss or deny those requests for support from any of the community groups. As a Councilmember, he would love to say yes to everyone, but the Council has a fiscal responsibility and the topic needs to be addressed with rules established so that it is understood what the parameters are for making those contributions.

Motion by Mayor pro tem Franco, second by Councilmember Schuster, to approve the contribution of \$5,000 to the Lassen County Fair 2018 Bluegrass Festival; motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Franco, Schuster, Wilson, Stafford and Garnier.

**9B Consider approval of Resolution No. 18-5484 approving street closure request for a portion of Sunkist Drive on May 19, 2018 and approve Riverside Park use fee waiver request for the CASA Superhero Fun Run** Mr. Newton explained that the City received a fee waiver request for the use of Riverside Park for the annual Superhero fun run. The event raises money for the CASA, or Court Appointed Special Advocate program. The CASA program recruits, screens and trains community volunteers to become advocates for children who have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. There are currently 19 CASA volunteers who served 73 children in our community last year.

Mayor pro tem Franco asked if the runners would be crossing the street where the trail intersects Riverside Drive.

Jennifer Hoffman, Lassen Family Services, advised that they would, however those participants who were just walking would be turned back at that point and return the way that they came, back down the River Trail.

Motion by Councilmember Wilson, second by Councilmember Stafford, to approve Resolution No. 18-5484; motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Wilson, Stafford, Franco, Schuster and Garnier.

**9C Consider approval of Resolution No. 18-5499 terminating Airport Hangar Land Lease Agreement, Lot #13 with Virgil D. Buechler and executing Airport Ground Lease Agreement for Hangar #13 with Steve Datema** Mr. Newton reported that the City Council declined to exercise the right of first refusal for the purchase of Hangar #13. The owner has sold the hangar to Steve Datema who now has to execute a Ground Lease Agreement for Hangar #13. The annual revenue generated by the lease is \$812.44.

Councilmember Wilson asked if there was a limit on how many hangars that Mr. Datema was allowed to own.

There was a general discussion regarding the policy for ownership of hangars at the Airport and the requirement to utilize the hangars for aircraft related storage and activities. It was the consensus of the City Council to revisit the item if there was a policy to limit the number of aircraft owned by one individual.

Motion by Mayor pro tem Franco, second by Councilmember Schuster, to approve Resolution No. 18-5499; motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Franco, Schuster, Wilson, Stafford and Garnier.

**10 SUSANVILLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY:** No business.

**11 SUSANVILLE MUNICIPAL ENERGY CORPORATION:** No business.

**12**     **CONTINUING BUSINESS:** No business.

**13**     **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORTS:**

**13A**    **Upcoming City Council Meeting and Budget Workshop Schedule** Mr. Newton explained that staff was requesting feedback regarding scheduling the annual budget workshop, which is typically held at 3:00 p.m. on regular meeting dates. This year, it is proposed that the workshop be held on May 16<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. In addition, this year the first regularly scheduled meeting in July falls on the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. A special meeting could be scheduled for that meeting if there is a need to conduct business, or the option to go dark and not hold the meeting could be considered. Mr. Newton requested Council feedback regarding the meeting schedule.

The City Council discussed options and it was the consensus that the meeting schedule would be revisited at the June 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, and a determination made at that time, depending on scheduled business matters.

It was the consensus of the City Council to schedule the annual Budget Workshop for May 16, 2018 at 3:00 p.m. to discuss the Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Budget.

**14**     **COUNCIL ITEMS:**

**14A**    **AB1234 travel reports:**

Councilmember Schuster shared a concern that she has been informed there are individuals who are reading the obituary section in the newspaper, and then breaking into the home of the person who passed away. She requested that staff follow up with Acting Police Chief Merritt to determine if that is accurate.

**15**     **ADJOURNMENT:**

At 8:46 p.m., Mayor Garnier called for a five minute recess prior to reconvening in Closed Session.

At 8:50 p.m. the City Council reconvened in Closed Session. The City Council adjourned Closed Session at 9:40 p.m.

Mr. Newton announced that no reportable action had been taken.

Meeting adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

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Kathie Garnier, Mayor

Respectfully submitted by

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Gwenna MacDonald, City Clerk

*Approved on: May 2, 2018*