

**SUSANVILLE CITY COUNCIL  
Special Meeting Minutes  
July 10, 2018 – 6:00 p.m.**

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Stafford.

Roll call of Councilmembers present: Brian Wilson, Mayor pro tem Joseph Franco, Brian Moore, Mendy Schuster and Mayor Kevin Stafford.

Staff present: Dan Newton, Interim City Administrator; Daniel Gibbs, Acting Public Works Director, James Moore, Fire Chief and Gwenna MacDonald, City Clerk.

**1 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

Motion by Mayor pro tem Franco, second by Councilmember Schuster, to approve the agenda as submitted; motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Wilson, Franco, Moore, Schuster and Stafford.

**2 PUBLIC COMMENT:** No comments.

**3 CLOSED SESSION:** No business.

**4 SCHEDULED MATTERS:**

**4A Consider Transactional and Use tax Ballot Measure for November 5, 2018 Election** Mr. Newton explained that the City and County worked together to develop a proposed tax measure that was placed on the ballot for the June 5, 2018 election. Passage of the measure would have imposed a tax on sales transactions in the entire County. The ballot measure did not pass, and the opportunity to place a measure on the November ballot was discussed at the July 5, 2018 special meeting. Mr. Newton stated that he attended the Board of Supervisors meeting held on July 10<sup>th</sup> where the topic was discussed and the concerns were similar to those expressed by the City Council, including a general versus special tax, what percentage of a split would be acceptable to the City and County. The direction given was to move forward with the ballot measure for a three-quarters of a cent special tax that would include Sheriff Patrol, City Police and Fire, Sheriff and Police Dispatch and SIFC Fire Fees. The current agreement requires that the City pay half of fire dispatch that is handled by SIFC. The County plans to move forward and include the City, and the simplest action for the City is to accept and support the County Ballot measure. The option is still available for the City to proceed with its own ballot measure, however that will require the declaration of an emergency by unanimous vote.

Ms. Ryan entered the meeting.

Mayor Stafford asked Sheriff Dean Growdon if he had any comments.

**Dean Growdon**, Lassen County Sheriff, discussed the importance of building public support for the measure, keeping the focus small, and the importance of putting forth the effort. Without additional revenue, the Sheriff's department is going to be faced with making some drastic cuts. The County has been utilizing one-time money to fill the gaps and those options are running out.

Mayor pro tem Franco asked if the Board of Supervisors took action by vote.

Mr. Newton responded that direction was given, and it did take a lot of discussion to get there.

Mayor Stafford commented that it was a good thing to have the Measure on the November ballot, as he does not believe that the City can afford to wait two more years to take action.

Mayor pro tem Franco responded that even if it passes, it will take time before the City sees the additional revenue. The problem is much deeper for both the City and the County.

Mayor Stafford agreed, adding that he does not want to be the person who doesn't even try to find solutions before there are cuts made. The June ballot measure was not worded well or marketed properly.

Mayor pro tem Franco asked what steps the City would have to take to ensure that the additional revenue generated by a special tax was accounted for and spent properly.

Mr. Newton replied that the revenue would be distributed by the County, and they would bear the responsibility of ensuring that it was properly expended according to provisions of the measure.

Mayor pro tem Franco stated that the City and County do not have a lot of time to prepare or educate the public regarding the fact that we are in somewhat dire straits if it does not pass. There was not an outpouring of support or interest according to the Advisory measure.

Councilmember Wilson stated that he found the people he spoke with were opposed to the idea of a tax increase and at best, they were on the fence. At this point, he believes that there is no chance of anything being approved in November.

There was a general discussion regarding public support of law enforcement and the consistent feedback received at Council meetings asking for increased law enforcement and public safety spending.

**Harold Kimbriel** commented that the City has to sell the idea of a tax increase, and people will not vote for it if they think that they will be paying for something that they are not getting. The City has to do a better job of showing people what they are getting for their tax dollars, and if people think they are not getting anything, they won't be buying. He spoke in support of the Fire Department and Sheriff's department.

Councilmember Schuster commented that the City needs to focus on the issues that affect people, such as panhandling and cleaning up the streets. The community needs to see a direct benefit and the City can do a better job of making sure the public knows what is being done to address some of those types of problems.

Mr. Newton requested direction from the City Council, with the understanding that they are trying to prevent cuts that would impact the level of services being provided. Expenses are increasing exponentially, and even the passage of a ballot measure will not solve everything.

Mayor pro tem Franco commented that the reality could be that the ballot measure would not pass, and the Council will be faced with some tough decisions that will likely trickle down to public safety. There are a lot of things that the City would like to provide for the department, such as a K-9 program, improved technology, however without money to fund those things just maintaining the department will be difficult. He is open to any suggestion or idea that will support public safety for the community.

There was a general discussion regarding the June ballot measure and advisory measure, and the merits of a special tax versus a general tax. Issues related to maintaining transparency, educating the public, building trust in local government, acting proactively versus reactively, and working together with the County were all discussed.

Mr. Newton requested direction regarding the Council either moving forward with the November Ballot Measure, or proceed with supporting the County in their effort.

Motion by Councilmember Schuster, second by Councilmember Moore, to support the County in a November Ballot Measure and not support an independent measure initiated by the City; motion carried. Ayes: Schuster, Moore, and Stafford. No: Wilson and Franco.

Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

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Kevin Stafford, Mayor

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Gwenna MacDonald, City Clerk

Approved on September 5, 2018