

**CONCURRENT REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE
SONOMA CITY COUNCIL
&
SONOMA CITY COUNCIL AS THE SUCCESSOR AGENCY TO THE
DISSOLVED SONOMA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

*Community Meeting Room, 177 First Street West
Sonoma CA 95476*



**Wednesday September 4, 2013
6:00 p.m.

MINUTES**

City Council
Ken Brown, Mayor
Tom Rouse, Mayor Pro Tem
Steve Barbose
David Cook
Laurie Gallian

OPENING

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Darryl Ponicsan and his Granddaughter Rosie led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Mayor Brown and Councilmembers Barbose, Gallian, Cook and Rouse
ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Giovanatto, City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager Johann, City Attorney Walter, and Planning Director Goodison.

1. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC - None

2. COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Item 2A: Councilmembers' Comments and Announcements

Clm. Cook requested Council support to direct staff to look into acquiring State-owned property located east of General Vallejo's home.

Clm. Gallian reported the Wine Country Weekend was a huge success.

Mayor Brown dedicated the meeting in the memory of Louis Ramponi who served on the City Council from 1992 to 2000 and served as Mayor in 1996.

3. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS INCLUDING ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM SUCCESSOR AGENCY STAFF

City Manager Giovanatto reported the following: The Long Range Property Management Plan would be reviewed by the Successor Agency at the next Council meeting and then by the Oversight Board before being sent to the State Department of Finance by October 1. The CFAC was seeking nominations for Treasure Artist of the Year. There were several vacancies on City commissions. Sonoma Valley Oaks affordable project funded by redevelopment funds would have its grand opening September 25.

4. PRESENTATIONS

Item 4A: Presentation of Annual Report of the Sonoma Tourism Improvement District (TID)

Bill Blum, General Manager of MacArthur Place and TID Secretary, reported that since their 2012 inception the TID had entered into a contract with the Sonoma Valley Visitor Bureau for development and implementation of a comprehensive plan to market Sonoma as an overnight destination with the goal of increasing occupancy and rooms revenue. He said they anticipate the 2% assessment on all overnight stays would generate approximately \$450,000 per year to be used for the marketing program, to support visitor center services when redevelopment funds dry up, and for the promotion of events such as the Film Festival, Farmers Market, and Vintage Festival. Blum reported that Transient Occupancy Tax was up 11% over the previous year and was at an all-time high for the City.

Item 4A: Annual Report of the Sonoma Tourism Improvement District (TID)

Wendy Peterson, Executive Director of the Sonoma Valley Visitor Bureau, described the various methods of marketing and promotional materials that had been developed and had garnered over 90 million impressions between November and April.

Clm. Rouse expressed interest in seeing the billboard campaign expanded and creation of a method to inform local non-profit organizations of the possibility of obtaining grant funds from the TID. He stated it had been a good first year for the TID and he was happy with the results. Clm. Gallian stated she would like to see the TID obtain feedback from the various hotels regarding the marketing program.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR/AGENDA ORDER – CITY COUNCIL

Item 5A: Waive further reading and Authorize Introduction and/or Adoption of Ordinances by Title Only.

Item 5B: Approval of the Minutes of the August 12 and August 19, 2013 Meetings.

Item 5C: Approval and ratification of the appointment of Harry Blum to the Community Services and Environment Commission for a two-year term.

Item 5D: Request for Proposals (RFP) for the preparation of updates to the Housing and Circulation Elements of the General Plan. Council authorized circulation of the RFP.

The public comment period was opened and closed with none received. It was moved by Clm. Gallian, seconded by Clm. Rouse, to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR/AGENDA ORDER – CITY COUNCIL AS SUCCESSOR AGENCY

Item 6A: Approval of the portions of the Minutes of the August 12 and August 19, 2013 City Council / Successor Agency Meetings pertaining to the Successor Agency.

The public comment period was opened and closed with none received. It was moved by Clm. Rouse, seconded by Clm. Gallian, to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

Item 7A: Review and Consideration of a Refuse Rate Adjustment with City Franchisee Sonoma Garbage Company, Inc. to be effective on October 1, 2013.

City Manager Giovanatto reported that Sonoma Garbage Company, Inc. (SCG) submitted a proposed rate increase for the 2013-14 fiscal year based on the calculation of the Refuse Rate Index [RRI]. She stated that one additional category had been added to address future options for local businesses to use two yard refuse compactors in response to requests by local businesses. The proposed rate adjustment for residential, commercial and debris boxes with an effective date of October 1, 2013 was 2.38% [RRI + tipping fee adjustment].

Giovanatto added that as a result of SCG temporarily disposing waste in Napa County in 2012, they generated funds for use in replacing aging equipment thereby mitigating the cost of future rate increases to customers.

The public hearing was opened and closed with no comments received. It was moved by Clm. Barbose, seconded by Clm. Gallian, to adopt the resolution entitled A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Sonoma Approving Refuse Rate Adjustments. The motion carried unanimously. Councilmembers praised the service provided by Sonoma Garbage and stated how lucky the City was to have a local business providing the service.

8. REGULAR CALENDAR – CITY COUNCIL

Item 8A: Discussion, Consideration and Possible Adoption of a Resolution in Support of Sonoma Developmental Center, requested by Mayor Brown.

City Manager Giovanatto reported the Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) faced an uncertain future. In June, the State Health and Human Services Agency formed a “Task Force on the Future of the Developmental Centers”. The Task Force was charged with developing a Master Plan to be completed by November 2013 that addressed, among other things a timeline for future closure. She also reported that First District Supervisor Gorin established the Sonoma Developmental Center Coalition, which includes representatives from various County Departments and Agencies as well as representatives of the Parent Hospital Association (PHA). As a result of receiving requests from several members of the community, Mayor Brown placed this item on the agenda to request Council support of adoption of a resolution in support of SDC.

Mayor Brown invited comments from the public. Gina Cuclis expressed support for adoption of the resolution and reported that she had organized a rally in support of SDC for Saturday September 14 on the Plaza.

The following persons spoke in support of keeping SDC open and supported Council’s adoption of the resolution: Kathleen Miller, President of Family and Friends of SDC, Jack Wagner, Sharon Church, Beth Hadley, Richard Dale of Sonoma Ecology Center, and Bob Edwards.

It was moved by Clm. Gallian, seconded by Clm. Barbose, to adopt the resolution entitled A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Sonoma In Support of Sonoma Developmental Center. The motion carried unanimously.

Item 8B: Discussion, consideration and possible action on the question of whether to revisit the regulation of leaf-blowers, including consideration of a ban on gas-powered leaf blowers.

Planning Director Goodison reported the City’s current regulations on the use and noise levels associated with leaf-blowers were adopted in 2011. Recently, there have been several presentations to the City Council, including a petition requesting that the regulations be revisited, with the specific suggestion that gas-powered leaf-blowers be banned. Goodison added that Councilmembers Barbose and Cook requested that this question be placed on an agenda to determine whether there is majority interest in amending the current regulations.

Mayor Brown invited comments from the public. Charlene Hunter suggested that a vacuum would be better than a leaf blower. Phoenix _____ stated she was a former landscaper but had never used leaf blowers. She said they were ear splitting and lung clogging. Taska Lensky stated she had many trees and clearing the leaves was important to her. She questioned would it would cost her to have the leaves raked. Marianne Hammons did not like leaf blowers because of the noise and the dust. Cecilia Ponicsan stated leaf blowers were bad for plants and top soil and blew particulates into the air. She mentioned that one out of five children in Sonoma County suffered from asthma. Lawrence Ayers complained of the noise from leaf blowers and stated he had to plan his day around the leaf blowing activity around his home. Regina Baker complained that the existing time restrictions favored businesses over residents. Darryl Ponicsan stated that after hammering the Council on this issue for over eight months, he was happy to see them address it. Laurie McGovern pointed out that the air-borne particulate included fecal matter, pesticide spores and mold. Gavin McGovern stated leaf blowers were a nuisance and were an archaic tool. Bob Edwards favored a total ban stating that residents should not have to sacrifice their health in favor of landscapers. Karin Barto supported a total ban but would settle for a ban of gas-powered blowers. Connie Rhodes, a landscape designer, pointed out that leaves on the ground were beautiful and homeowners needed to change their mindset. Kat Swift, Lisa Summers, Ed Curry, Mark Genoski, Gayleen Brown, and Lawrence Brooks also spoke in support of a ban on leaf blowers.

Lynn Clary stated that the Council had passed an ordinance making it illegal to blow debris into streets or other people’s yards; however, it was still not on the books. Bill Botief disagreed with most of the complaints about leaf blowers and stated that people were entitled to do what they want. He suggested that enforcement of the existing ordinance was all that was needed.

Clm. Rouse stated he was not a proponent of bans and that he despised leaf blowers and suffered from allergies. He stated that many times, it was a vocal minority coming forward on an issue and he would be more comfortable if the matter was placed before all the voters of Sonoma to decide.

Item 8B: Leaf Blowers

Clm. Barbose stated that it was time to ban gas powered. Halfway measures did not work and the Police Department had more important things to do than respond to leaf blower complaints. He stated he would like the ordinance to include a transition period and that he saw no reason to refer the matter to a commission because it was a policy decision for the Council to make. Clm. Cook and Mayor Brown agreed.

Clm. Gallian stated she would support the ban on gas powered leaf blowers but wanted to see the use banned during the times schoolchildren were walking to and from school.

It was moved by Clm. Barbose, seconded by Clm. Gallian, to direct staff to prepare and bring back an ordinance banning gas powered leaf blowers with a three month transition period and to provide Council with options regarding further regulation of the hours of use. The motion carried four to one, Clm. Rouse dissented.

RECESS: The meeting recessed from 8:10 to 8:20 p.m.

Item 8C: Discussion of 2013-14 City Council GOALS “Report Card”.

City Manager Giovanatto reported that the March 25, 2013 Council goal-setting session resulted in the adoption of six goals for 2013-2014. The goals were used as guiding principles for Department Managers in preparing the City Budget and were used by all staff as a road map of priorities for this fiscal year. She stated that Council goals were not simply words on paper, but in staff's view were words to do business by. To that end, staff prepared a “Report Card” to provide Council and the public written validation that the direction provided by Council was being implemented. The Report Card demonstrated that the City remained focused on accomplishing the goals set forth by the City Council. The six goals included thirty-seven individual action items which define its purpose. Giovanatto described the action items and reported that four had been completed, twenty-one were in process and twelve had not yet been started.

The public comment period was opened and closed with none received.

Clm. Barbose stated that the report card was great and provided a good road map. Clm. Gallian stated that the report card provided great transparency to the public. Councilmembers Rouse and Cook and Mayor Brown all complimented City Manager Giovanatto and her management team for a job well done.

Item 8D: Discussion, consideration and possible action relating to the Alcalde Selection Policy.

Mayor Brown noted that none of the former Alcades were present to discuss this matter and he suggested that it be carried over to another meeting. All agreed to continue the matter to the September 16 meeting.

8. REGULAR CALENDAR – CITY COUNCIL, Continued

Item 8E: Consideration and Possible Action to Appoint an Alternate Representative to the Sonoma Clean Power Agency [SCPA] Board.

Clm. Gallian stated that her husband's employment P.G.&E. created a conflict of interest for her and she would have to recuse from this matter. At 8:35 p.m., Clm. Gallian stepped down from the dais and was excused from the meeting.

The public comment period was opened and closed with none received. The Council, with Gallian absent, reached unanimous consensus to appoint Clm. Cook as the Alternate representative.

9. REGULAR CALENDAR – CITY COUNCIL AS THE SUCCESSOR AGENCY

10. COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS AND FINAL REMARKS

Item 10A: Reports Regarding Committee Activities.

Clm. Rouse reported on the Economic Development Steering Committee meeting.

Clm. Barbose reported on the Waste Management and Cittaslow meetings.

Clm. Cook reported on the Legislative Committee and Library Advisory Committee meetings.

Mayor Brown reported on the Economic Development Steering Committee and SVCAC meetings.

Item 10B: Final Councilmembers' Remarks.

Mayor Brown stated he would like the Clerk to use the timer to remind presenters when their ten minutes were up.

11. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC - None

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m. in memory of Louis Ramponi.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly and regularly adopted at a regular meeting of the Sonoma City Council on the 16th day of September 2013.

Gay Johann, MMC
City Clerk/Assistant to the City Manager