

PIEDMONT CITY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting Minutes for Monday, October 1, 2007

A Regular Session of the Piedmont City Council was held October 1, 2007, in the City Hall Council Chambers at 120 Vista Avenue. In accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2(a) the agenda for this meeting was posted for public inspection on September 27, 2007.

CALL TO ORDER

Following a 7:00 p.m. Closed Session regarding potential litigation held pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.8, Mayor McEnroe called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Nancy McEnroe and Councilmembers Dean Barbieri, John Chiang and Garrett Keating

Absent: Vice Mayor Abe Friedman

Staff: City Administrator Geoff Grote, City Attorney George Peyton, Finance Director Mark Bichsel, Recreation Director Mark Delventhal, City Clerk Ann Swift and Recording Secretary Chris Harbert

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following item was considered under one vote by the Council:

Minutes

Approves as submitted Council meeting minutes of September 17, 2007

Resolution 75-07

RESOLVED, that the City Council approves the consent calendar as noted.

Moved by Barbieri, Seconded by Chiang

Ayes: McEnroe, Barbieri, Chiang, Keating

Noes: None

Absent: Friedman

PUBLIC FORUM

George Childs complimented the Piedmont School District and Fire and Police Departments for sponsoring and/or participating in the *Every 15 Minutes* program addressing the issue of teenage drinking and driving on October 1. He felt that the program provided a tremendous service to Piedmont High School students.

REGULAR CALENDAR

The Council considered the following items of regular business:

Public Hearing: Coaches Playfield Lighting Study

Per Council discussion of April 16, 2007, the Recreation Director recommended approval of an agreement with SFE Landscape Architects and Mr. Phil Singer for the preparation of a lighting study for Coaches Playfield. He stated that based upon consultations with lighting experts and cost estimates, the installation of temporary lighting at the field to assess potential impacts is not practical – temporary lighting would not accurately depict the field lighting which would be achieved by a specifically designed plan for Coaches Playfield and would probably exceed \$100,000 in cost. Therefore, the Director recommended a lighting study which would develop a basic

lighting plan and include photometric photos so that the visual impacts of the light poles and light spread could be easily determined. The cost of this proposed study is \$27,800. He submitted sample photometric photos prepared for the Albany Unified School District in connection with its consideration of new lighting at Cougar Field. As an alternative, a lighting study without photometric photos would cost \$14,900. It is estimated that the proposed study would take approximately 60 days. The Director noted the extensive public notification of tonight's public hearing on this issue mailed to the surrounding neighborhoods and community sports groups.

Mr. Phil Singer of SFE Landscape Architects responded to Council questions concerning the benefits of the photometric element of the lighting study, noting that such photos would be extremely helpful in assisting neighbors and the Council in evaluating the potential visual impacts of a lighted Coaches Playfield as well as provide additional information required for the CEQA/EIR analysis associated with any field lighting proposal.

Public testimony was received from:

Murray Davis and Paul Adams (Piedmont Baseball Foundation Board Members), Erik Housh (Piedmont/NOLL/SOLL Little League Board Member), Scott Cauchois (Piedmont Soccer Club Board Member) and Bob Lally (Skyline Lacrosse) all urged the Council to authorize the lighting study, stressing the critical need in Piedmont to increase the amount of field playing time available to local sports groups given the upcoming loss of field access to other non-Piedmont fields and the growing demand and popularity of a wide variety of field sports in Piedmont. They felt that adding lighting to existing fields is the least expensive way of increasing field availability/access and they were convinced that new technologies in sports lighting can mitigate any potential adverse impacts on surrounding residential properties. They agreed that a lighting study should be conducted to accurately assess potential impacts rather than just dismiss the possibility of field lighting based upon long-standing fears that such lighting would adversely impact adjacent neighborhoods.

William Blackwell acknowledged the need for increased field time for local sport groups and personally supported the installation of field lighting at Coaches. However, he stressed that at the time of field development, the City promised the surrounding neighborhoods that lighting would not be added to the field. He urged the Council not to renege on this promise and pursue field lighting at Coaches without the neighborhoods' support. He agreed that a study would be worthwhile if it can demonstrate to the neighborhoods that field lights will not be detrimental to the enjoyment and value of their properties.

The Council supported the Recreation Director's recommendation that a lighting study, including photometric photos, be conducted so that a realistic evaluation of field lighting impacts can be made. The Director assured the Council that the study consultants would be requested not to underestimate the potential impacts of field lighting so that an accurate representation and simulation of the lights will be developed.

Resolution 76-07

RESOLVED, that the City Council approves an agreement in the amount of \$27,800 with SFE Landscape Architects and Mr. Phil Singer for the preparation of a lighting study (Option 1) for Coaches Playfield. Moved by Barbieri, Seconded by Chiang

Ayes: McEnroe, Barbieri, Chiang, Keating

Noes: None

Absent: Friedman
(0745)

**Municipal Services
Tax Committee
Report**

Municipal Services Tax Committee Chairperson Martha Jones and Committee Member Cynthia Kroll narrated a power-point presentation summarizing the Committee's findings and recommendations, including an in-depth fiscal analysis of the City's parcel tax revenue needs. Copies of the Committee's written report are available at City Hall and on the City's website. It was also noted that the Committee is considering holding a Saturday workshop on October 13 for public review and comment on its report.

Public testimony was received from:

George Childs thanked the Committee for its outstanding effort and very valuable work product. He urged the Council to use restraint in assessing any new taxes on Piedmont residents. He also noted his concurrence with the Committee's recommendations regarding the City's business tax, parcel tax renewal, continuing with sewer system rehabilitation and expanding the membership and timeline for the next Municipal Services Tax Committee. However, he strongly opposed the Committee's recommendation that a ballot measure be submitted to the electorate for removing the reserve percentage cap from the City Charter.

A lengthy question and answer period followed the Committee's presentation, which included among other issues, the Committee's recommendations as well as timelines for preparing ballot measures for either the March, June or November 2008 elections. The Council thanked the Committee for its efforts. It directed staff to prepare for Council consideration at the October 15 meeting, proposed draft ordinances/ballot measures for renewing the City's parcel tax and removing the reserve percentage cap from the City Charter in accordance with the Committee's recommendations.

City Website

The City Clerk described the new updates made to the City's website and her intention to "go live" with the new site tomorrow. She stated that website design was based upon her own research as well as comments and suggestions received from residents. She noted her intention to report back to the Council in January regarding the success and feedback received on the new design as well as any additional changes that may be made in the interim.

Municipal Election

The City Clerk requested Council authorization to prepare a charter amendment ballot measure for the March 2008 Municipal Election changing the City's regular municipal election date from the "first Tuesday after the first Monday of March" to the "second Tuesday in November" in even-numbered years. She explained that in 2000, 2002 and 2004 the City's March municipal election date coincided with the

state's primary election as a means of lowering election costs for the City. However, in 2006 the state changed its primary election date to June and the City was forced to hold a more expensive "stand alone" election in March. Now, the legislature has again changed its primary election date for 2008 to February and it is likely that further date changes could occur in the future. As a means of avoiding "stand alone" election dates in the future, the City Clerk recommended that the City change its municipal election date to either the statewide election dates of the second Tuesday in June or the second Tuesday in November in even numbered years. Council consensus supported changing the City's municipal election date to the second Tuesday in November.

**Civic Center
Master Plan**

The City Administrator requested Council input as to whether a proposed Civic Center Master Plan community workshop meeting should be scheduled for Wednesday, October 17 in light of the fact that the Municipal Services Tax Review Committee intends to hold a public workshop meeting on its report on Saturday, October 13. The Council agreed that both meetings should proceed as scheduled, suggesting that the public notification of both meetings be combined as a cost-saving measure. The Council requested that the Municipal Services Tax Review Committee workshop be held in the Council Chambers so that this meeting can be filmed and broadcast by KCOM. The Council further agreed that the Civic Center Master Plan workshop be held at the Community Hall.

Council Reports

Harvest Festival – The Council complimented the organizers of the City's annual *Harvest Festival* for once again putting on a thoroughly enjoyable community event yesterday.

Camp Augusta – Councilmember Keating reported that the September 29 *Gold Rush* fundraiser for Camp Augusta was a great success.

Oakland Avenue Bridge Lighting – The Mayor thanked the Centennial Committee for sponsoring the September 23 *Bridge Lighting* ceremony.

Future Agenda Items

Community Pool – The Mayor noted her intention to submit for Council consideration at the October 15 meeting a proposed non-binding ballot measure for the March 2008 election intended to gauge resident support for a City operated community pool.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leadership Seminar – the Mayor announced that Alameda County is holding a 5-session *Leadership Academy* for Alameda County residents interested in learning about county government and developing leadership/communication skills. Informational flyers and application forms for this free seminar are available at City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor McEnroe adjourned the meeting at 10:55 p.m.