

# PIEDMONT CITY COUNCIL

## Regular Meeting Minutes for Monday, July 7, 2008

A Regular Session of the Piedmont City Council was held July 7, 2008, 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 July 3, 2008.

**CALL TO ORDER** Following a 6:00 p.m. interview session with candidates applying for appointment to the Environmental Task Force, Mayor Friedman called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL** Present: Mayor Abe Friedman, Vice Mayor Dean Barbieri and Councilmembers John Chiang, Margaret Fujioka and Garrett Keating

Staff: City Administrator Geoff Grote, City Attorney George Peyton, Fire Chief John Speakman, Police Chief Lisa Ravazza, Finance Director Mark Bichsel, Public Works Director Larry Rosenberg, Recreation Director Mark Delventhal, City Clerk Ann Swift, City Planner Kate Black, Assistant Planner Kevin Jackson, Public Works Superintendent Dave Frankel and Recording Secretary Chris Harbert

**APPOINTMENT** **Resolution 64-08**  
RESOLVED, that the City Council appoints Susan Ode as the “member at large” on the Environmental Task Force.  
Moved by Fujioka, Seconded by Chiang  
Ayes: Friedman, Barbieri, Chiang, Fujioka, Keating  
Noes: None  
Absent: None

**CONSENT CALENDAR** The following items were considered under one vote by the Council:

**Minutes** Approves as submitted Council meeting minutes of June 16, 2008

**Agreement** Approves an agreement with Benson Lee Consulting in an amount not to exceed \$23,500 for CEQA studies of the Coaches Playfield Synthetic Turf and Field Lighting Project

**Resolution** Approves a resolution changing the official map number for the 415 Pacific subdivision from 7777 to 8622 and changing all references to the map to the new number

**Resolution 65-08**  
RESOLVED, that the City Council adopts the consent calendar as noted.  
Moved by Barbieri, Seconded by Chiang  
Ayes: Friedman, Barbieri, Chiang, Fujioka, Keating  
Noes: None  
Absent: None  
(0045; 1010)

**PUBLIC FORUM** There were no speakers for the public forum.

**REGULAR CALENDAR** The Council considered the following items of regular business:

**EBMUD  
Presentation**

East Bay Municipal Utilities District Board Member Katy Foulkes reported on actions being taken by EBMUD in response to the current drought conditions. She stated that as a result of two years of drought, EBMUD is imposing mandatory water rationing on customers. Water consumption reductions are being required for industry, commercial businesses, municipalities and individual homeowners, noting in particular that homeowners are being requested to reduce water consumption by 19% based upon a three-year average of past water usage. She explained that EBMUD is offering various water saving devices to customers at no charge as well as rebates for the purchase of low-flow toilets and front-load washers and encouraged residents to contact EBMUD for tips on how to reduce water usage. The Council requested staff to contact EBMUD to arrange for water saving devices to be available at City Hall for residents as well as include a link on the City's website to EBMUD so residents can easily obtain more information on the new restrictions.

**Public testimony** was received from:

George Childs expressed concern that a 19% reduction in water usage for homeowners was too drastic and criticized EBMUD for misleading the public earlier in the year regarding water supplies. He also noted concern as to accuracy of EBMUD's calculations regarding past water usage and whether new "drought related" cost increases to consumers will be rolled back when the current drought period ends.

**Traffic Signal**

The Public Works Director recommended that the contract for the installation of a new traffic signal at the intersection of Grand/Rose/Arroyo Avenues be awarded to W. Bradley Electric in the amount of \$199,800. He reviewed the history of this traffic signal project, beginning in 2001 when Beach School parents requested that a traffic signal be installed at the intersection for pedestrian safety reasons. In March and April of 2006 Council approved use of grant funding for this project and authorized staff to proceed with project specification and bidding. Grant funding for this installation has been received from the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency and the City of Oakland approved the project last month (a portion of the signal is in Oakland).

**Public testimony** was received from:

William Schnitzer stated that several surrounding residents have serious concerns regarding the proposed installation related to illumination impacts and potential traffic congestion. He noted that these concerns have been relayed to the Public Works Department and he requested that efforts be taken to: (1) minimize illumination impacts on surrounding properties by shielding the light displays and directing them away from homes as well as deferring the installation of a "flashing" alert sign advising drivers that a signal light is ahead until it is determined after installation that such a sign is actually needed; and (2) timing the signal light cycles so as to minimize traffic back-ups.

George Childs voiced support for the project.

Lisa Tuck also strongly supported traffic light installation to protect school kids crossing the street, noting that she was hit by a car at this intersection 10 years ago.

William Ruth voiced concern that once the traffic light is installed, many drivers may opt to travel down Ronada Avenue to avoid the light. He requested that “no left turns” signs be installed to discourage drivers from using Ronada as a short-cut.

In response to Council questioning, the Public Works Director assured the Council that once the light is installed (early October) staff will monitor traffic flow as well as assess signal impacts and adjust the timing, illumination, light direction, traffic signage etc. as necessary to address these impacts. However, he emphasized the importance of providing the “flashing” driver alert sign to enhance pedestrian safety given that the signal light is located around a curve. He stated that this driver alert sign will be installed so as to flash only when activated by pedestrians/cars crossing the intersection and the flashing illumination can be adjusted to minimize light impacts on surrounding homes.

**Resolution 66-08**

RESOLVED, that the City Council awards a contract in the amount of \$199,800 to W. Bradley Electric, Inc., for the construction of the Grand/Rose/Arroyo Avenues traffic signal installation, with said contract to include the installation of a flashing warning light sign alerting drivers to the upcoming signal.

Moved by Chiang, Seconded by Barbieri

Ayes: Friedman, Barbieri, Chiang, Fujioka, Keating

Noes: None

Absent: None

(1060)

**Ordinance**

Per Council direction of May 19, the Assistant Planner recommended first reading approval of a proposed “Green Building Ordinance” for City owned or operated facilities. He reviewed the major provisions of the proposed ordinance, noting in particular that the regulations will not apply to privately owned or school buildings and are in accordance with a model ordinance prepared by Alameda County StopWaste. Org.

**Public testimony** was received from:

Meri Soll, StopWaste.Org. Program Manager for Green Building, stated that every city in Alameda County has adopted a “green building ordinance” based upon the County’s model.

The Council supported the proposed ordinance, requesting the following amendments:

- Section 17.11.10(b)(iv) – In developing project specifications for use in building “Traditional Public Works Projects,” the Public Works Department shall consider including in those specifications green building and environmentally sound practices whenever practicable.

- *Section 17.11.10(a)(xiii)* – “Traditional Public Works Project” means heavy construction projects, including but not limited to, pump stations, flood control . . .”

The Council acknowledged the upcoming formation of a City Environmental Task Force and the desirability of having this task force review the issues involved in the ordinance. However, the Council also acknowledged the potential for the City to lose grant funding if a “green building ordinance” is not in effect. Therefore, the Council agreed to adopt the ordinance now, with the understanding that the Environmental Task Force would be requested to review said ordinance and submit any proposed recommendations/revisions to the Council following its review.

Ms. Soll stated that the suggested Council revisions to the proposed ordinance appear to be acceptable and consistent with the intent of StopWaste.Org.’s “model ordinance.”

**Resolution 67-08**

RESOLVED, that the City Council approves, as amended herein, the first reading of Ordinance 680 N.S. adding Section 17.11.10 to the City Code regarding green building regulations for City facilities.

Moved by Chiang, Seconded by Fujioka

Ayes: Friedman, Barbieri, Chiang, Fujioka, Keating

Noes: None

Absent: None

(0705)

**Agreement**

The Finance Director recommended Council approval of a 3-year Memorandum of Understanding for the positions of Dispatcher and Animal Control Officer for the time period January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2010. The proposed MOU grants salary increases of 12% in 2008 and 6.5% in 2009 and 2010 for dispatchers and 4% increases in each of the three years to Animal Control officers as well as provides cost sharing for medical insurance premiums. The Mayor noted that based upon salary comparison data and City experience, the City’s past pay scale for dispatches was significantly lower (18.29%) than comparable cities making recruiting and retaining skilled dispatchers a serious/recurring problem.

**Public testimony** was received from:

George Childs suggested that the proposed salary increases for the dispatchers be spread out over a longer length of time in recognition of declining City revenue.

**Resolution 68-08**

RESOLVED, that the City Council approves a three-year Memorandum of Understanding with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 1021 (General Unit) for the positions of Dispatcher and Animal Control Officer for the time period January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2010.

Moved by Chiang, Seconded by Barbieri

Ayes: Friedman, Barbieri, Chiang, Fujioka, Keating

Noes: None

Absent: None

(0045/X0910)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

July 4<sup>th</sup> – The Mayor congratulated July 4<sup>th</sup> Chair Carla Betts and her organizing committee for once again producing an outstanding community celebration of July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Harvest Festival – The Mayor announced that this year's *Harvest Festival* will be held Sunday, September 21 and he encouraged residents to participate in the Festival's cooking and produce growing contests.

Garbage Collection – The Vice Mayor reminded residents that under the City's new garbage/green waste/recycling contract with Richmond Sanitary Company, additional green waste and recycling containers can be requested at no charge. Councilmember Fujioka also encouraged residents to request their gardeners to dispose of green waste in the resident's green waste containers rather than haul the waste off-site so that the City can receive credit for landfill diversion. She noted that such a request would probably also save homeowners' money.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mayor Friedman adjourned the Council at 9:15 p.m. to Closed Session for the purposes of discussing employee contract negotiations with the Piedmont Police Officers Association and International Association of Firefighters as well as potential litigation matters held pursuant to Government Code Sections 54957.6 and 54956.9(b)(1).