

**CITY OF SOUTH GATE
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, May 7, 2019

5/7/2019 - Minutes

I. Call To Order/Roll Call

CALL TO ORDER Jorge Morales, Mayor called a Special City Council meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Dave Torres, Field Operations Manager

ROLL CALL Carmen Avalos, City Clerk

II. City Officials

PRESENT Mayor Jorge Morales, Vice Mayor Denise Diaz, Council Member Al Rios; and Council Member Maria Belén Bernal; City Treasurer Gregory Martinez, City Manager Michael Flad,

ABSENT Council Member Maria Davila

LATE City Attorney Raul F. Salinas

III. Meeting Compensation Disclosure

IV. Open Session Agenda

1. FY 2019/20 Municipal Budget

The City Council approved A, B, and C by motion of Council Member Bernal and seconded by Council Member Rios.

a. Received an overview of the FY 2019/20 Municipal Budget from the City Manager and Director of Administrative Services;

b. Heard presentations from the Director of Community Development and the Assistant City Manager/Director of Public Works on their proposed Fiscal Year 2019/20 departmental budgets; and

c. Opened the continued Public Hearing, take public testimony, and continued the Public Hearing to May 14, 2019.

The City Manager gave an overview of tonight's item.

Jackie Acosta, Director of Administrative Services gave a brief report on the General Fund.

Council Member Bernal asked when the last quarterly report was given to City Council from the Administrative Services Department. Ms. Acosta responded that on April 23rd when we did the midyear budget review, we included the quarterly update in that staff report.

Mayor Morales asked if there has been an analysis conducted on CalPers.

Ms. Acosta answered that she has done an analysis of the fund but did not bring that information to today's meeting. The last time it was reviewed our annual PERS costs were projected to increase by about 5 million dollars over the next few years. Ms. Acosta will provide this information at the next meeting.

Joe Perez, Director of Community Development presented the budget for the Community Development Department.

Council Member Bernal asked about the Public Wifi on Tweedy Boulevard and how realistic it would be to add it at South Gate Park.

Mr. Perez said that staff has been out and has looked at other sites to see the technology that is available. Based on what was seen on some of the site visits it looks like it is actually more likely that we will be able to implement something at South Gate Park. Especially because we own the buildings and the infrastructure there. It becomes more challenging when you have to deal with private properties. We are still in the analysis phase of the project and there is still work to be done on this matter.

Council Member Bernal asked what level the interns would come in at.

Mr. Perez explained that the way that the market is currently there are Master level individuals looking for the opportunity to have experience in the Planning field.

Vice Mayor Diaz suggested looking into a higher quality grocery store that provides healthy foods and fresh produce.

Council Member Bernal agreed with Vice Mayor Diaz and said that South Gate residents are forced to shop in other cities to get a healthier selection of foods.

Art Cervantes, Assistant City Manager/Director of Public Works presented the budget for the Public Works Department.

Council Member Bernal asked where the penalties fees are comprised from and what the duties of the Electrical Foreman position are.

Mr. Cervantes stated that these are late fees from the water utility bills. As for the Foreman position Mr. Cervantes explained that many of the divisions work the same way and currently the foreman that oversees electrical also oversees maintenance and graffiti. In the absence of the foreman the superintendent has to step in and oversee the day to day work assignments.

Council Member Bernal asked about the possibility of increasing the budget for tree trimming. Currently the City has a three year cycle and she would like to have an assessment of trees that cannot wait for the three year cycle.

Mr. Cervantes stated that this was considered in the budget three years ago, when the Public Works Department restructured the tree trimming contract. At that time we were looking at trees that were causing liabilities and we invested a lot more money to address that issue. Currently the issues are more nuisance related, therefore, increasing the cycle would not necessarily solve the problems. Some of the tree issues that the residents face are normal growing patterns for a tree.

Council Member Bernal agreed with Mr. Cervantes. However, indicated more concern with the palm trees and inquired about the balance for the account.

Mr. Cervantes responded that the money in the contingency fund is for emergencies but if she would like he could bring an item back to Council in order to change the contract.

Council Member Rios asked if the staffing for the positions is from the General Fund.

Mr. Cervantes explained that for Engineering it is listed under General Fund but is reimbursed through Capital Improvement special funds by 80%. The electrical position is funded through the Street Lighting and Landscape Maintenance District and the Water Account.

Vice Mayor Diaz asked about the deteriorating streets and the status of the mobile app to report service requests.

Mr. Cervantes said that the Public Works Department repairs roadways by using grant funds. Major resurfacing projects will include Imperial Highway, Garfield Avenue and Firestone Boulevard. We are also utilizing SB1 funds to work on residential streets. The residential streets are done by priority through our Pavement Management System. As for the app, the Public Works Department is still running on the old system and are planning to convert to a new one. This project was put on hold as the City is looking into a new website.

Mayor Morales asked if it is possible to do an assessment on customer late fee charges.

Mr. Cervantes responded that there is a bill that is providing guidance to all Cities across the State of California for those issues. We are looking into this now and the new policy, which needs to be in place by February, is going to consider personnel situations. This bill will also cover what we can charge in these particular cases.

Mayor Morales shared that AB1180 regarding water agencies that want to start taking credit card payments. One of the big issues that we had was that there is a 3% fee that we could not charge for and AB1180 allows cities to get into a pilot program to be able to recoup those funds.

Council Member Rios asked for Mr. Cervantes to explain the debt services funds.

Mr. Cervantes said that this fund sets payment for the water bond that the City has.

Mike Flad, City Manager explained that the Water Department has millions of dollars'

worth of capital projects and you cannot pay as you go. What you do is borrow money and then you pay it off as you would do with a mortgage. Council Member Rios asked if the WRD fees are also water fees.

Mr. Cervantes explained that these are fees that we pay the Water Replenishment District (WRD) for the water we extract from the ground water basin.

Mr. Flad stated that each City in our area pays back the WRD due to the pumpers pulling so much water out of the ground that it was pulling salt water underneath Long Beach. Cities were pulling out ocean water which ruins the water table for Cities like Long Beach. The WRD was created to pump water back in to create a barrier that keeps the salt water where the salt water is supposed to be and the drinking water where drinking water is supposed to be. This is a very expensive process to create a water barrier and so each City that pumps has to pay an equivalent amount relative to how much water they pump.

V. Adjournment

Mayor Morales adjourned the meeting at 6:03 p.m. in memory of Hector Brito family member of City Manager Michael Flad, by motion of Council Member Rios and seconded by Council Member Davila.

PASSED and APPROVED this 28th day of May, 2019.

For a signed copy of the minutes for this meeting please contact the City Clerk's Office:
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