

**MEETING MINUTES**

**The City Council/Redevelopment Agency of the City of Firebaugh  
Vol. No. 07/03-19**

**Location of Meeting:** Andrew Firebaugh Community Center  
1655 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Firebaugh, CA 93622

**Date/Time:** March 19, 2007 @ 7:30 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER** Meeting called to order by Mayor Craig Knight at 7:31pm

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Craig Knight  
Mayor Pro Tem Javier Marquez  
Council Member Chris J. DeFrancesco  
Council Member Clyde Fannon

**ABSENT:** Council Member Marcia Sablan

**OTHERS:** City Clerk, Priscilla Meza; City Treasurer, Alice Castaneda; City Manager, Jose Antonio Ramirez; City Attorney, Dave Bacigalupi; City Engineer, Fred Rabe; City Finance Director, Jose Garay; Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano; Interim Public Works Director, Ben Gallegos; Fire Chief/Code Enforcement Officer John Borboa; Jim Lowe, Rigoberto Peraza, Ryan Hansen, Don Esola, David Flores, Sergio Carrera, John Santoyo

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Chris J. DeFrancesco

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

UPDATE ON WATER TREATMENT PLANTS NO. 1 & 2

City Manager Ramirez introduced Jim Pritchard (Provost & Pritchard Consulting Engineers) to provide a brief update on the improvements to Water Treatment Plants No. 1 & 2.

Mr. Pritchard reported that improvements to Plant No. 1 is scheduled to begin in September 2007 (post TomaTek season). Mr. Pritchard discussed the goals driving the improvement project; they are as follows: (1) Changes in water regulations leading to changes in the chemical system eliminating levels of arsenic; (2) increasing pumping capacity; (3) repairing seismic damage to storage tanks bringing them up to standards, and (4) replacing roof structures of storage tanks.

City Manager Ramirez pointed out that the above-mentioned improvements are not primarily focused on improving the taste of the water; however, the city can look at future improvements to include this goal.

Mr. Pritchard explained that carbonation filtration is expensive and problematic. As per Mr. Pritchard carbonation filtration removes chlorine from the water and chlorine is needed to reduce and/or eliminate arsenic levels within the water. Mr. Pritchard further explained that city operators are currently flushing lines to reduce carbonation levels leading to better-tasting water.

Responding to Mayor Pro Tem Marquez request, Mr. Pritchard explained that the tanks will be 3/8 to 7/16 thick in diameter and that the tank’s thickness gets thinner towards to top. This is the same size on the city’s current tanks. Mr. Pritchard also explained that the new tanks should last approximately 40 years and that the paint on the tanks about 25 years. Lastly, Mr. Pritchard reported that installation of protection devices will alert city operators of possible corrosion.

**INTRODUCTION**

**1. INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEE**

City Manager Ramirez introduced and welcomed Alma Chambers as the city’s new Account Tech. II.

**PRESENTATION**

**2. THE CARMEN MEZA CENTER/MYSTRENGTH CAMPAIGN**

Ms. Valerie Gonzales, Director of Rural Services, provided a brief presentation of services offered through The Carmen Meza Center and introduced the MyStrength Campaign.

**3. DOWNTOWN CIVIC PROPOSAL**

Mr. Jaime Gonzalez and Justo Padron, Bastian Partners LLC, provided a power point presentation regarding their proposed “*Downtown Civic Proposal*”. The proposed site is between P and O Streets/11<sup>th</sup> and 12 Streets. The proposed project would include over 12,000 square feet of available commercial space. In addition, the project includes office space and housing units. Mr. Gonzalez explained that Bastian Partners LLC is willing to invest approximately \$3.5 million and would need about \$1.8 - \$2 million from the city. Mr. Gonzalez stated that the overall cost of the proposed project is about \$8 - \$10 million. Bastian Partners LLC plans on applying for tax credits to assist with the overall costs. City Manager Ramirez expressed concern with the requested amount of the city’s contribution for the proposed project. Council members echoed the concern; however, expressed interest in hearing a revised proposal reflecting a significant decrease in the city’s contribution for the proposed project. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Padron agreed to consider the council’s remarks.

**CORRESPONDANCE**

None

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

- 4. **APPROVAL OF MINTUES – The Special City Council meeting on February 28, 2007 and the Regular City Council meeting on March 5, 2007.**
- 5. **PROCLAMATION BY MAYOR CRAIG KNIGHT – THE WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD.**

Motion to approve the Consent Calendar, including items 4 and 5, with item 6 pulled by Council Member Fannon, second by Council Member DeFrancesco. Motion passed with Mayor Pro Tem Marquez abstaining from item 4.

- 6. **USE OF CITY FACILITY (MALDONADO PARK) REQUESTED BY FIREAUGH LIONS CLUB.**

Council Member Fannon requested item 6 be pulled from the agenda. Council Member Fannon requested council to consider either charging fees for use of city facilities or to waive them altogether. City Manager Ramirez explained that current protocol mandates he bring any requests for a fee waiver before council. City Manager Ramirez also offered to bring before council a chart of fees for council to review and to take action. Mr. Jim Lowe, 1980 River Lane, stated that the city created a list of community-based organizations eligible for fee waivers; City Manager Ramirez explained that the list was abolished when council decided to reinstate fees for use of city facilities.

Motion to approve Consent Calendar item 6 by Council Member Fannon, second by Council Member DeFrancesco, Motion carried.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

None

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

- 7. **RESOLUTION NO. 07-10 – A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH ESTABLISHING A POLICY TO WAIVE AIRPORT FEES FOR USE OF AIRPORT FACILITIES BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.**

Mayor Pro Tem requested clarification on Resolution No. 07-10. City Manager Ramirez explained that item was brought back before council as per council’s request. City Manager Ramirez explained that currently, the Mosquito Abatement Board is the only governmental agency using airport facilities. Others are required to pay fees including \$50/per month *tie-down* fees; \$100/per month for hanger lease fees, and/or \$10/per runway use/per plane fees. City Manager Ramirez also reported that the city is pro-actively billing those using airport facilities.

Motion to approve and adopt Resolution No. 07-10 by Council Member Fannon, second by Council Member DeFrancesco, motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

**8. RESOLUTION NO. 07-11 – A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH APPROVING MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS PLAN FOR TRACT 5529 FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF FLOOD WALL AND LEVEES.**

City Manager Ramirez requested council to table Resolution No. 07-11 until the next regular scheduled city council meeting. City Manager Ramirez discussed the need to ensure the costs associated with the Maintenance and Operations Plan is accurate based on the actual need for overall maintenance. City staff is waiting for additional information in order to incorporate a Consumer Price Index to avoid falling short of actual amount needed to maintain overall plan, including the city’s lighting and landscape maintenance. City Engineer Rabe discussed the difficulties in predicting actual amounts without knowing the costs for levee maintenance.

Sergio Carrera (Central Valley Engineers) provided a brief overview of the designs, as per FEMA Standards, used in the flood wall and levee. Mr. Carrera explained that the levee was over designed per FEMA Standards and incorporates the use of clay materials. A seepage analysis was also conducted with water at the highest level (Flood Plain Elevation of 186 feet). The masonry flood wall includes a “key-way” and incorporates clay, lime and bentonite materials.

**9. RESOLUTION NO 07-12 – A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH APPROVING THE CONDITIONAL LETTER OF MAP REVISION (CLOMR) ISSUED BY THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) ON FEBRUARY 20, 2007, AND FURTHER APPROVING A REVISION TO THE FEDERAL FLOOD MAP FOR THE AREA ENCOMPASSED BY TRACT 5529, K. HOVNANIAN HOMES.**

City Manager Ramirez explained that Resolution No. 07-12 would revise the Federal Flood Map, taking into consideration that building the Flood Wall above FEMA standards would change classification of Tract 5529. FEMA will not change the Federal Flood Map unless council requests revision. Mayor Knight expressed concern with issues of seepage; Mr. Carrera explained that a seepage analysis was conducted along the Flood Wall, which led to the recommendation to use bentonite materials prohibiting water penetration.

Mr. Jim Lowe, 1980 River Lane, expressed concern with how levee would affect subdivision at Lake Jo Allen and River Lane residents. City Manager Ramirez explained worst case scenario for the city of Firebaugh which would include, over a long period of time, for water to collect at 44,000 to 45,000cfs in Friant Dam’s channel capacity to reach the city of Firebaugh. This worst case scenario is not common; however, if it were to occur, water would only reach the city of Firebaugh at shallow levels.

Motion to approve and adopt Resolution No. 07-12, by Mayor Pro Tem Marquez, and second by Council Member DeFrancesco. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

**10. TRACT NO. 5529 MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONN PLAN FOR THE MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION FOR THE FLOOD PROTECTION LEVEE AND WALL.**

City Manager Ramirez requested council to table Tract No. 5529 Maintenance and Operation Plan for the Flood Protection Levee and Wall until the next regularly scheduled city council meeting.

**11. ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER POSITION**

City Manager Ramirez described the need for an Assistant City Manager to assist with current and upcoming city projects and the day-to-day operations, such as Human Resource issues. The personnel costs associated with the proposed position (\$55,000 - \$60,000) are feasible due to personnel changes with city staff and funding of upcoming projects. Council Member Fannon expressed the importance of including background checks with all city personnel. Deputy City Clerk Lozano informed council of Police Chief Lopez requests for city personnel to undergo a background check. Mayor Knight requested clarification of the proposed position’s job responsibilities and duties. City Manager Ramirez provided a brief overview of the proposed position’s job description (*included in council member’s meeting packet*).

Council Member Fannon requested item to be tabled to the next meeting and for City Manager Ramirez to include a description of the proposed position’s personnel costs covered by source of funds in the agenda packet. Council Member Fannon also requested a temporary contract be included when hiring the proposed position. Mayor Pro Tem also requested item to be tabled to the next meeting. Mayor Knight instructed staff to present item incorporating council’s requests at the next meeting. Mr. David Flores, 37647 W Behymer, encouraged council members to consider the “bigger picture” and to avoid any disruption in the city’s daily operations. Mr. Flores stated that the proposed position would increase the city’s efficiency and allow City Manager Ramirez to pursue other grant opportunities that would benefit the city of Firebaugh.

**PENDING ITEMS**

- 12. Emergency Disasters Plan – a draft of the plan is currently being circulated for review and comment.
- 13. Second Unit Ordinance – a public hearing is scheduled for April 2, 2007.
- 14. Cost Analysis for Flood Damage and Clean Up
- 15. Medical Retirement Benefits/Audit Report
- 16. Update Firework Ordinance – Fire Chief Borboa is currently working on it.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**

None

**STAFF REPORTS**

- Interim Public Works Director, Ben Gallegos – improvements to the baseball diamond are being made; public works department is working on removing tree stumps; continue to making improvements at airport.

- Fire Chief/Code Enforcement Officer, John Borboa – attended regional meeting in Modesto and looking into incorporating ideas for the city of Firebaugh.
- City Engineer, Fred Rabe – addressed issues with contractors working on road work on P Street; PG &E meters were installed at city wells.
- Police Chief, Elsa Lopez – not present.
- Community Service Coordinator, Phyllis Baltierra – not present.
- Finance Director, Jose Garay – meeting with USDA to discuss loan application process regarding Water and Wastewater improvement plans.
- City Treasurer, Alice Castaneda – nothing to report.
- City Clerk, Priscilla Meza – nothing to report.
- Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano – reminded council and city staff to submit completed 700 Forms by March 23, 2007. Failure to submit completed forms may result in fines.
- City Manager, Jose Antonio Ramirez
  - Fresno’s Mayor, Alan Autry, sent fax to city staff requesting council to approve resolution against the recent immigration raids in the city of Mendota. Staff didn’t receive fax in time to put on tonight’s agenda. Mayor Knight requested staff provide council members with a copy of Mayor Autry’s fax and to bring before council at the next city council meeting. Council Member Fannon expressed concern with moving forward on resolution fearing it would affect federal funding awarded to the city of Firebaugh. City Attorney Bacigalupi advised council could request staff to contact local legislators and express concern.
  - City staff is researching additional information to incorporate a Consumer Price Index to ensure all costs associated with the lighting and landscaping maintenance plan is captured.
  - Zito Family is interested in selling what was known as the “Sears Building”.
  - Greenlining Institute will soon conduct a survey to look at health factors (i.e. nutritional needs) as part of their Housing Development.
  - The Department of Water Resources conducted an assessment on the levee; the report is expected soon.
  - The Mosquito Abatement Board sent letter to city staff announcing April 23-29, 2007 as the West Nile Virus Awareness Week.
  - Announced that Walgreens is currently looking at the city of Mendota to build a store.

## COUNCIL ITEMS

Mayor Knight expressed concern with recent incident involving youth gang activity in the city of Dos Palos. The incident involved over 40 juveniles. Dos Palos City Council and city officials are scheduled to address and discuss the incident at their upcoming city council meeting. Mayor Knight announced he will be attending their next city council meeting.

**CLOSED SESSION**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn meeting by Mayor Pro Tem, meeting adjourned at 9:37pm by consensus vote.

***SUBMITTED BY:***

***APPROVED BY:***

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***City Clerk, Priscilla Meza***

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***Mayor, Craig Knight***