

**MEETING MINUTES**

**The City Council/Redevelopment Agency of the City of Firebaugh  
Vol. No. 08/03-24**

**Location of Meeting:** Andrew Firebaugh Community Center  
1655 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Firebaugh, CA 93622  
**Date/Time:** March 24, 2008 @ 7:30 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER** Meeting called to order by Mayor Craig Knight at 7:32 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Craig Knight  
Council Member Chris J. DeFrancesco  
Council Member Marcia Sablan

**ABSENT:** Mayor Pro Tem Javier Marquez  
Council Member Clyde Fannon

**OTHERS:** City Attorney, Dale Bacigalupi; City Manager, Jose Antonio Ramirez; Assistant City Manager, Laura Rios; City Finance Director, Jose Garay; City Treasure, Alice Castaneda; City Clerk, Priscilla Meza; Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano; Public Works Director, Ben Gallegos; Fire Chief/Code Enforcement Officer, John Borboa; Community Service Coordinator, Phyllis Baltierra; John Baltierra; Dr. Oscar Sablan; Dr. Marcel Hetu; Craig Scharton.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Sablan

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Representative from the Central Valley Business Incubator, Mr. Craig Scharton provided a brief overview of its mission and resources available to local businesses and potential business owners. Resources include educational workshops and networking opportunities to successfully launch effective and sound businesses. Mr. Scharton encouraged council and community members to consider becoming active members of the Central Valley Business Incubator. Mr. Scharton highlighted the reported successes made by the City of Clovis as a result of their membership and support of the program.

**INTRODUCTION**

None

**PRESENTATION**

None

**CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

- 1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The City Council meeting on March 3, 2008.**
- 2. **WARRANT REGISTER – Period starting on February 1, 2008 and ending on February 29, 2008.**

February 2008	General Warrants	#19437 - #19602	\$ 1,436,533.89
	Payroll Warrants	#54948 - #55079	<u>\$ (Included in Total)</u>
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 1,436,533.89</b>

*Motion to approve Minutes and Warrant Register made by Council Member Sablan, seconded by Council Member DeFrancesco; motion passed by consensus vote.*

**PUBLIC HEARING**

- 3. **PUBLIC HEARING – TO APPLY FOR A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) IN THE AMOUNT OF UP TO \$1,200,000 FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF STREET LIGHT POLES AND FIXTURES ALONG DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR.**

City Manager Ramirez explained that grant would address street lighting and overhead wiring issues. Mr. Ramirez stated that staff met with PG & E to clarify if street lighting on Highway 33 was owned by PG & E. As a result, determination was made that said street lighting did in fact belong to PG & E and was declared the fiscal responsibility of PG & E. Staff is also following up with other potentially-owned PG & E street lights.

Mr. Ramirez also proposed to use the bond proceeds from 2006 to meet the grant’s \$30,000 match.

Mayor Knight opened hearing for public comments. Mayor Knight also voiced a community member’s concern regarding the decision to focus on street lighting issues rather than the poor condition(s) of city roads. Mr. Ramirez explained that the city has and will continue to receive funding to address the poor street conditions, including over \$400,000 in road work and about \$50,000 in street sidewalk improvements. Mr. Ramirez suggested designating funds for sidewalk improvements/repairs to bring sidewalks/gutters at Maldonado Park up to code.

Council Member DeFrancesco questioned if grant proposal requires applicant to state how funds will be used. City Manager Ramirez explained that city is required to explain how funds would be used if granted. Mr. Ramirez also informed council that application process is extremely competitive; however, believed city’s proposal is a strong/powerful one.

Mayor Knight questioned if “lighted” stop signs could be included in proposal’s plan to administer funds, if awarded. City Manager stated that it would depend on related costs.

Council Member Sablan requested clarification on the difference of benefits from remaining independently eligible to apply for state CDBG funds versus participating in the county’s CDBG funded program. City Manager Ramirez explained that since council agreed to act independently from the county, staff has been successful in obtaining a significant increase of CDBG funding. Mr. Ramirez advised council to remain independent from the county when applying for CDBG funds.

Mayor Knight closed public hearing.

*Motion to approve RDA Resolution No. 08-01 made by Council Member Sablan, seconded by Council Member DeFrancesco; motion passed by unanimous roll-call vote.*

**4. PUBLIC HEARING – TO REVIEW THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT’S FINAL FINANCIAL AND ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT FOR THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH AND AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.**

City Manager Ramirez explained that this report is part of the Weed & Seed grant, which includes the provision of Safe Havens and a Public Safety Needs Assessment. Mayor Knight requested a review of how the monies were spent and opened hearing for public comments.

Council Member Sablan requested a copy of the final report. City Manager Ramirez stated that the report will soon be available to staff and suggested public hearing remain open pending receipt of final report; council agreed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**5. REQUEST FOR USE OF FACILITIES: A.F. COMMUNITY CENTER AND WAIVER OF FEES FOR ST. JOSEPH’S ANNUAL FISH FRY DINNER/DANCE, APRIL 11, 2008.**

John Baltierra, 1456 “Q” St., questioned need for council to address such request based on past council decision to process applications at staff level. Mayor Knight explained that non-profit organizations have the right to present request for fee waivers before council. Mr. Baltierra also expressed concern with the absence of the petitioning organization. Mr. Baltierra stated that applicants should attend council meeting when request is presented to council.

Council Member Sablan requested provision of use of facility fees when addressing such requests in the future. Mr. Baltierra suggested staff post use of facility rates within council chambers.

*Motion to approve use of facility and waiver of fees made by Council Member Sablan, seconded by Council Member DeFrancesco; motion passed by consensus vote.*

**6. REQUEST FOR USE OF FACILITIES: DUNKLE PARK AND WAIVER OF FEES FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR, APRIL 16, 2008.**

Council Member Sablan questioned why request is presented before council. City Manager Ramirez agreed by stating that use of the park is on a “first come, first serve” basis. Council Member Sablan also questioned request for waiver of fees if they do not apply. City Manager again agreed.

Council Member Sablan questioned if staff would block off requested area. Council Member DeFrancesco questioned if applicant listed a designated area.

Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano, stated that according to municipal code, staff and council must be informed of any “special event”. City Attorney confirmed provision of such notification in city’s municipal code and agreed to follow up with City Manager to provide additional information to council. Council Member Sablan mentioned that a list of “special events” is listed within the said municipal code and that staff should have a different form indicating “special event. City Manager Ramirez stated that staff will use same “Use of Facility” form with a different title reflecting “Facilities Use Form” requests/notifications.

Mayor Knight called for vote.

*Motion to approve use of facility request made by Council Member DeFrancesco, seconded by Council Member Sablan; motion passed by consensus vote.*

**7. FRESNO COUNTY'S URBAN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM FOR PROGRAMS YEARS 2009-10, 2010-11, AND 2011-12.**

City Manager Ramirez stated that grant calls for "minute order" reflecting council's decision regarding the city's participation in the county's CDBG program. Mayor Knight called for vote.

Council Member Sablan questioned if consultants expect any changes with the availability of CDBG funding. As per City Manager Ramirez, increased funding for "planning" efforts are expected.

*Motion to remain independent from the county's CDBG program made by Council Member Sablan, seconded by Council Member DeFrancesco; motion approved by consensus vote.*

**PENDING ITEMS**

**8. Emergency Disaster Plan – A Draft Plan is currently being circulated for review and comment.**

Item tabled in lieu for Police Chief's absence.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**

None

**STAFF REPORTS**

- **Community Service Director, Phyllis Baltierra** – stated that provision of free income tax services continues to be available at the Senior Center every Thursday. Senior Center staff has been very busy.
- **Police Chief, Elsa Lopez** – absent.
- **Public Works Director, Ben Gallegos** – reported that Valle De Paz residential area is 100% water metered. Staff is focusing efforts to Munich/Zozaya and Vasquez/Landucci residential area.
- **Fire Chief/Code Enforcement Officer, John Borboa** – nothing to report.
- **Finance Director, Jose Garay** – nothing to report
- **City Treasurer, Alice Casteneda** – nothing to report.
- **City Clerk, Priscilla Meza** – nothing to report
- **Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano** – nothing to report.
- **Assistant City Manager, Laura Rios** – nothing to report
- **City Manager, Jose Antonio Ramirez** –
  - Informed council of Self-Help Housing program to address water efficacy issues, including the installation of water meters and toilet retro-fits. As per City Manager, qualifying households are eligible to receive a rebate after toilet installation and approved inspection.
  - Staff continues to collaborate with county officials regarding the "post closure land use" of about 30 acres.
  - Staff received letter from Chevron notifying city of potential hazards if building above historic pipe line that runs through the city of Firebaugh.

- o Converse Consultants approached staff to resubmit proposal to obtain EPA funding to address underground gas tanks, blighted areas and debris removal. City Manager Ramirez stated that estimated consultant fees are approximately \$16,000; however, Mr. Ramirez will follow up with Converse Consultants regarding said costs and provide council with additional information.
- o Announced meeting hosted by the Commission of Local Governments on improving San Joaquin Valley communities. Meeting is scheduled for April 23, 2008 from 6-9 p.m. at the Fresno Downtown Club.
- o Reported on the successful California Emerging Technologies Fund Grant proposal allowing staff to obtain free computers and computer hardware. Grant also provides city with teleconferencing capabilities.
- o Announced that the One Economy Corporation (funded via 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Grant funds) wants to partner with city to make programs available at no cost to the city.

**COUNCIL ITEMS**

➤ **Council Member Sablan -**

- o Requested staff to provide update regarding Firebaugh Disposal Service at next council meeting.

**CLOSED SESSION**

**9. Pending Litigation Government Code Section 54956.9**

*City of Firebaugh v. Giersch & Associates, Inc., et al.  
Fresno County Superior Court Case No. 07 CE CG 02610 MWS*

**10. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATIONS – Pursuant to Government Code Section #54957.6**

City Designated Representative – City Manager Jose Antonio Ramirez

Employee Organization – Public Works Miscellaneous Employees

**11. CONFERENCE WITH CITY COUNCIL RE: REAL PROPERTY – APN# 008-074-3 – Pursuant to Government Code Section # 54956.8.**

Closed session is authorized by government code section 54956.8 to confer with and grant authority to its realty property negotiators regarding APN# 008-074-3 0.13 acres.

*Motion to adjourn into closed session made by Council Member Sablan, seconded by Council Member DeFrancesco; motion carried by consensus vote at 8:50pm.*

**ANNOUNCEMENT AFTER CLOSED SESSION**

No action taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion to adjourn made by Council Member Sablan, seconded by Mayor Knight. Meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m.*

*Minutes submitted by:  
Priscilla Meza, City Clerk*