

CITY OF HIDDEN HILLS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

City Hall

Monday, February 23, 2009

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Hidden Hills was duly held in the Council Chambers at the City Hall, 6165 Spring Valley Road, Hidden Hills, California 91302 on Monday, February 23, 2009 at the hour of 7:30 p.m. Mayor Steve Freedland called the meeting to order and presided thereover after leading the Council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Council:	Mayor Steve Freedland Council Member Monty E. Fisher Council Member Jim Cohen Council Member Stuart E. Siegel
Staff:	City Attorney Roxanne Diaz City Engineer Dirk Lovett City Manager Cherie L. Paglia
Absent:	Mayor Pro Tem Larry Weber

Upon MOTION of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Fisher and unanimously carried, it was resolved to excuse the absence of Mayor Pro Tem Weber.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon MOTION of Council Member Cohen, seconded by Council Member Fisher and unanimously carried, it was resolved that the agenda for the February 23, 2009 regular meeting be approved as submitted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Freedland made the following announcements:

Weather permitting, the Round Meadow gate will be closed from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday, February 28th (both incoming and outgoing lanes) for restriping.

Daylight saving time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 8th; that Saturday evening, don't forget to turn your clocks ahead one hour; this is also a good time to replace batteries in your smoke detectors.

The Las Virgenes Educational Foundation and Artists for the Arts Foundation are presenting "Benefit for the Arts" this Friday night, February 27th, at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza; proceeds will benefit the LVUSD arts programs; tickets are on sale now at the box office or online; call City Hall for more information.

AUDIENCE

There were no questions or comments at this time.

PRESENTATION

Las Virgenes Municipal Water District Water Supply Update

Mayor Freedland introduced LVMWD Board President Charley Caspary and Jimmy Cho, Director of Resource Conservation and Public Outreach. Mr. Cho read a prepared statement entitled "Las Virgenes Municipal Water District Prepares for Water Shortage" (attached), and then added the following comments:

The situation is very complex; it is not just about snow and rain, but also has to do with endangered species; the rains have helped, but most of the rain ends up in the ocean; it is rare that the Metropolitan Water District receives 100% of the water requested; last year they received 35%, the year before 60%, and this year's projection is only 15%; this is

not a short term issue, but will probably be a change in life; people now pay \$1.50 - \$2.00 for bottled water; for that amount one could purchase 748 gallons of water from the LVMWD; the greatest change that has to happen involves how residents use water for outdoor irrigation.

Mayor Freedland asked how this would work for a typical Hidden Hills resident, as he was concerned that those who have already planted drought resistant landscaping or are otherwise using less water for irrigation, would be penalized if there is a percentage cut across the board.

Mr. Cho responded as follows:

For residential customers, the District will assign a fixed amount of water for a given year, which will be directly related to how much water is given to the LVMWD by the Metropolitan Water District; these allocations are called "budgets"; the District will look at the units used on a parcel for indoor and outdoor usage, and distribute across the year based on plant demand for water; there will be extremes in this community, as budgets are assigned based on parcel size; if a resident exceeds the budget, there will be a surcharge that is tied to what Metropolitan charges LVMWD; there is a strong correlation between parcel size and usage; budgets are an emerging concept used by many other agencies, as they do not penalize those who have conserved the most; there are two other options used by some agencies; some just raise the rates; others just cut across the board based on usage, which does penalize those that have already been cutting back and conserving water.

Both Mayor Freedland and Council Member Siegel asked if the budgets would be based on the square footage of a parcel, wondering if two residents each lived on a one acre parcel, if those budgets would be the same, and if a ¼ acre parcel would have a budget allocation ¼ of the amount. Mr. Cho explained the following:

Residents living on one acre would each initially be given the same allocation; however, there could be appeals based on different matters such as medical needs, livestock, etc.; a parcel ¼ of an acre would not get ¼ of the allocation, as it is not a linear relationship; they have parcels in the District up to 10+ acres, and some less than ¼ acre; they have found that up to ½ acre, there is a strong relationship between the size of a parcel and usage; once you get into the larger parcels, for example a 5 acre parcel, the irrigation density lessens, as the larger parcels are not going to have turf from property line to property line; so they are not going to get an allocation based on straight square footage.

Council Member Siegel then asked Mr. Cho to confirm his understanding of the following: a 5 acre parcel will not have 20x the allocation of a ¼ acre parcel; at some point, a full acre lot

allocation will begin to diminish as the lot gets bigger; that formula will be universal throughout the District, and not different per city; in any case, the rates will go up. Mr. Cho stated the following:

Council Member Siegel's statements are accurate, but in relation to rates, there is a scheduled 5-year rate increase that was previously approved; this is essentially a 3% increase that should come in July, and would have occurred in spite of what else is happening; the rate increase he has been talking about is looking ahead several years; Metropolitan (which is the LVMWD's wholesaler) is talking about a 20% next year, followed by a 30% after that, and it is only going to get worse; in the model that he just shared with the Council, customers using within their budgets will pay per an established rate schedule; for those that go over, there will be a surcharge directly tied to what Metropolitan is charging the LVMWD; how much residents have to cut back will of course vary individually depending on the parcels; as a service territory, they just do not know what Metropolitan is going to say on April 14th; they might say there is a 5% or a 30% shortage; whatever Metropolitan says, the LVMWD will say 5% over that.

The City Manager informed the Council that the District would be scheduling a community meeting in Hidden Hills sometime in the next few months to discuss these issues; they are working with the Community Association to determine a date when the theater would be available.

Mayor Freedland asked what plans the District had for bringing recycled water into the community, as that is something that will be needed in the future, especially with the great percentage of water being used for irrigation. Mr. Cho responded as follows:

The District wants to expand the provision of recycled water, but there are two fundamental issues; one is the supply, which at times in the summer, gets close to running out; the other is the cost of infrastructure, for which they are always looking for grants; many communities are asking for this, but he has no additional details at this time; the Department of Health had a lot of restrictions on the use of recycled water for home use; this is evolving, and there should be a new policy this year, but it is still not as friendly as they would like.

Mayor Freedland wondered if there were any customers in the District using gray water systems for irrigation, and if the City should look at incorporating this into its Building Codes. Mr. Cho was not aware of any. Council Member Fisher stated that there was a lot of water in the

community, as it could often be seen running down the streets. That prompted Council Member Siegel to ask if there was any feasibility in using old wells from the City's own original water system.

LVMWD Board President and Hidden Hills resident Charley Caspary addressed the Council as follows:

Regarding recycled water, in the summer the District has to add potable water to the reclaimed distribution system to meet the demand; the reductions in water use that the Board will consider will also likely apply to recycled water; in the winter, they produce more reclaimed water than is needed; they are again looking at property within the District on which to conceivably build a reclaimed water storage reservoir; this would allow them to store the extra water in the winter and then serve it back during periods of high demand; in regards to supplementing recycled water with ground water, they are already doing that in Westlake Village with water upstream of the lake; but for Hidden Hills, you would have to pump the water over the Calabazas grade to get it to the treatment plant and then back over the grade again to serve the City; as far as possible storage locations, they are looking at particular elevations in relation to the elevation of the treatment plant and the distribution system; the District serves potable water at five different pressure zones to get people at both the tops and bottoms of the hills; for the reclaimed system, they have two pressure gradients; there are not any on this side of the hill; most of the year they do pump sewage from this side of the grade over the hill; they have Southern California Edison out all the time conducting energy audits, and they have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars recently to replace electric motors with more energy efficient motors; using every drop of reclaimed water is very high on his priority list, but it is not something easily accomplished, or done in a short period of time.

PUBLIC SAFETY

A. Los Angeles County Fire Department Report - January

The following report was presented by Community Services Representative Maria Grycan:

During the month of January there were 8 responses, including 3 medical calls, 4 false alarm/good intent calls, and 1 public assist (invalid); it is difficult to accurately report the number of fire hydrants inspected, which shows 69 currently; however, by 2/28/09, they will have finished inspecting all hydrants within their jurisdiction; if there are any problems, the location is turned over to the Water District, which then completes repairs or adjustments; there were 5 Fire Prevention Bureau inspections during the month; CERT training is now being conducted in Hidden Hills on Wednesday evenings; the final drill

will be conducted in Hidden Hills on Saturday, 3/21/09, and will include both the Hidden Hills class and the Agoura Hills class; there are approximately 14-15 currently taking the Hidden Hills class, although not all are Hidden Hills residents.

Mayor Freedland pointed out that there is a strange black box chained to a fire hydrant on Jed Smith with a hose going into the hydrant; after the meeting, he will provide the address so either the Fire Department or Water District can check to see what the device is.

B. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Report - January

Lt. John Benedict provided the following information:

In January, there was 1 residential burglary in the 24900 block of Jim Bridger; a guest house was entered via an unlocked rear door, with furniture, a television, and refrigerator taken; no suspects were seen or heard; there were 2 arrests during the month; one was a warrant; an Arleta resident was arrested for assaulting her boyfriend in the 24700 block of Robert Guy; there were no collisions; 48 citations were issued, including 34 hazardous, 11 non-hazardous, and 3 parking.

C. Consideration of Issuance of Proclamation for Safe Communities Month March 1 – 31, 2009

The following report was provided by Lt. John Benedict:

In 1992 the Sheriff's Department started the Safe Communities Awareness Week, which has now been expanded to a month; it will be celebrated this year during the month of March; it is to promote awareness of public safety issues within communities; the Sheriff's Department would like Hidden Hills to support this program with a proclamation.

Upon MOTION of Council Member Fisher, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried, it was resolved to issue a proclamation declaring March 1 – 31, 2009 as Safe Communities Month in the City of Hidden Hills. Mayor Freedland read the proclamation and then presented it to Lt. Benedict.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. City Council Minutes – February 9, 2009**
- B. Demand List**
- C. Disbursement List – January**
- D. Financial/Treasurer’s Report – January**
- E. Financial Statements Audit – June 30, 2008**

Upon MOTION of Council Member Cohen, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried on roll call vote, it was resolved to approve items A, B, C, D, and E of the consent calendar as submitted.

MATTERS FROM CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Report from 2/17/09 Hidden Hills Community Association Board of Directors Meeting

Community Association Board President and City liaison Ron Wolfe reported that the welcome party would be held on May 30th, with a Caribbean Island casino theme, and that the Equestrian Services Committee is working on a new horse evacuation plan.

MATTERS FROM STAFF

Charles Abbott Monthly Report – January

The report was received and filed.

CLOSED SESSION

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL:

**Potential Initiation of Litigation Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(c):
Number of Potential Cases: 1**

At this time, Assistant City Attorney Steve Orr (by telephone) joined the meeting. Upon MOTION of Council Member Fisher, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn to closed session at 8:03 p.m., at which time the Mayor announced that the Council in closed session would be discussing the item listed above.

Upon MOTION of Council Member Cohen, seconded by Council Member Siegel and unanimously carried, it was resolved to return to open session at 8:26 p.m., at which time the City Attorney announced that the Council in closed session discussed the item listed above, and that no reportable action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, upon MOTION of Council Member Cohen, seconded by Council Member Fisher and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn the regular meeting of February 23, 2009 at 8:27 p.m.

Steve Freedland, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cherie L. Paglia, City Manager/City Clerk