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MINUTES OF THE ALBANY CITY COUNCIL
IN SPECIAL SESSION, 1000 SAN PABLO AVENUE
MONDAY, JANUARY 31, 2005

7:30 p.m.

Mayor Good who led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag called the special meeting of the Albany City Council to order on the above date.

ROLL CALL

Present: Council Members Javandel, Lieber, Maris, Okawachi & Mayor Good
Absent: None

STAFF PRESENT

Beth Pollard, City Administrator; Jacqueline Bucholz, City Clerk; Judy Lieberman, Assistant City Administrator; Charles Adams, Finance Director; Ann Chaney, Community Development Director; Rich Cunningham, Public Works Manager; Melinda Chinn, Recreation & Community Services Director; Kim Denton, City Treasurer; Marc McGinn, Fire Chief; Greg Bone, Police Chief; Aaron Walker, Personnel Manager; Dustyn Wiggins, Fire Captain; Sergeant Bettencourt, Police Department.

1. NEW BUSINESS

1-1. City Council Goal Setting.

The City Administrator reported that periodically, the City Council reviews issues and trends in the City and establishes goals and objectives for a certain period of time. In June 2001, the Council adopted the following three-year goals: Attract and retain professional staff; broaden and enhance revenues; improve infrastructure and facilities; improve customer service.

With the conclusion of the three-year goal period, the election of two new Council Members, and the completion of the 2003-04 work plan, the Council now has the opportunity to start new goals and objectives for the City.

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The City Administrator stated that staff has prepared a "State of the City" report, which divides City trends and issues into four categories: Services, Land Use, Resources, Infrastructure, Facilities and Environment.

The City Administrator noted that among the various trends and issues presented in the "State of the City" report, the following, in her opinion, are the top ten most significant trends and issues that will require additional information, policy direction, and/or resources from the City in the next two years: 1) The future development and/or use of the Golden Gate Fields property. 2) The redevelopment of UC Village. 3) Recruiting and retaining well-qualified employees, notably police officers. 4) Keeping pace with demands and desires for parks, sports fields, recreation, open space services, facilities and maintenance. 5) The expanding use of the Internet and e-mail. 6) The future of mixed-use development on San Pablo Avenue. 7) Additional retail development in the City's redevelopment district on Eastshore Highway and Cleveland Avenue. 8) Retaining and enhancing "downtown" Albany on Solano Avenue. 9) Rising employee pension and health care costs. 10) Identifying and implementing funding sources for unfounded maintenance services, parks and recreation facilities, storm drain improvements, pavement improvements and sewer repair and replacement.

The City Administrator recommended that the Council provide staff with direction on priorities for goals it wishes to accomplish in the next two years. Staff will return with an implementation plan that considers existing time commitments and available resources. If there are insufficient resources to accomplish the desired goals, Council will have the option of revising the goals, revising the current work program and projects, or identifying and obtaining additional resources.

Mayor Good indicated that each Section will be taken individually and each Council Member will give their priorities for that area.

Services: Improve the e-mail system to notify residents of upcoming meetings, maybe implement a database. Video taping of Council meetings, multi media update. Maintenance plan and schedule for parks and other landscaping areas in the City. Moving forward on the retrofitting of the Police, Fire & City Hall. Updated equipment in the Fire Department. More enforcement of traffic laws. Look for grants for the unfunded maintenance needs. Address social justice issues, such as woman's right to choose. Distribution of Measure R money for the JPA ball fields at Gilman Street. Moving forward with the Pierce Street Park, also having a park on the western side of Albany. Additional recreation opportunities for teens including a place for them to meet. Office space for Council, look for a building to purchase and move City Hall. Teen social issues. Support for mental health services, including supporting the Berkeley/Albany Mental Health Board. Follow through with affordable housing, as stated in the Zoning Ordinance. Develop an Internship Program for students at MacGregor and Albany High School.

Land Use: Golden Gate Fields – need to have a clear base map, aerial photograph that shows property lines. Put this information on the web page. If Magna submits plans for development they should pay for this information. Move forward on the Bay Trail, clarify the easement, install toilets and running drinking water. Inclusionary incentives for affordable housing. Green building codes. UC Village mixed use – concentrate on

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traffic issues and the impact on City services. Green buildings – establish an Ordinance and use the City of Dublin as an example. No hotels or convention centers at Golden Gate Fields and the City should not assist Magna in planning for development (the type of development the City does not want). Small development at Golden Gate Fields is necessary so that it generates revenue to the City. Look towards the Eastshore Highway & Cleveland area for development and potential revenue to the City. Combination of development and revenue for the City and as much open space, as possible. Need to strategize in case the Track does leave the property – put this item on a future agenda for brainstorming. Acquisition of Pierce Street Park and acquire any land that becomes available. Cerrito Creek easement – look at ways of developing a bike path on the easement. Getting rid of garbage cans in the street. Support green business. Concentrate on the redevelopment area at Cleveland and the Eastshore Highway. Establish what the City wants on San Pablo Avenue and follow through on the San Pablo Avenue Beautification Plan. Consider making it difficult for expansion of single-family homes. Establish incentives for using solar power – maybe have an exception of height limits if solar panels are used. Continue to have a vision for the Gill Tract that includes keeping the agricultural farm. Disagreed with use of land for the agricultural farm. Reconfiguration of Marin Avenue. High priority for the El Cerrito Plaza issues, such as parking and traffic. Develop an incentive program for Unreinforced Masonry Buildings.

Resources: Continue to keep requesting money from the University of California, Berkeley to reimburse City for police and fire expenses. High priority for reinvestment area. Agenda a strategy session on a future agenda for Golden Gate Fields issues. Look at adjusting the Master Fee Schedule for 70% recovery costs. Need to adapt working conditions or compensation to compete with other cities in attracting employees. Need to attract police officers. Look at PERS premiums and health care costs. Diversity of employees. Continue development on San Pablo Avenue, especially the following areas: Good Year, the Albany Bowl and Town Centre. Develop strategy for building a parking area behind the Albany Theatre. Have staff come up with a plan for unfunded needs, especially in recreation and maintenance. Asked for projection on funding that is expected from the State. Develop partnership with non-profit groups. Review and restructure the Lighting & Landscaping Districts. Increasing revenues for impact fees.

Infrastructure, Facilities & Environment: Acquisition of Memorial Building. Pedestrian/Bicycle and Motorist safety. Explore alternative plans to purchase building for City Hall, specifically administration – then expand the Police Department and have the administrative area for City Council offices. Commitment for safety improvements to City Buildings – retrofitting. Dedicate funds for maintenance and repair or replacement of City Buildings. Additional restroom facilities in City parks and keep the playgrounds open longer. Continue to go ahead with storm drains and sewer projects. Improve the entrance to Albany at the Buchanan I-80 freeway area. San Pablo Avenue streetscape – including signage at both ends and consistency in signage. Look at the signs in the San Pablo Vision Plan. Improving pedestrian traffic at the Target area and sidewalks around the USDA building. Ocean View and Memorial Park improve the revenue source for street paving. Support an Arts Festival and encourage volunteer participation. Promote

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fitness in the City. Have staff report on the condition of the Veterans Memorial Building, not just earthquake safety, but mold problems, etc.

Mayor Good opened up the discussion to the public and asked if anyone would like to comment.

The following people spoke: Ms. Mara Duncan & Ms. Kim Linden and a summary of their suggestions is as follows: To keep as much open space as possible and to hold onto the shoreline. Participation of youth at Civic meetings and events. The City to support the Gill Tract. Stressed the importance of balancing revenue with quality of life issues.

Council Member Maris stated that the City does encourage youth participation and noted that there are members on various advisory boards and committees from the High School.

Council Member Maris stated that looking at the list of priorities appears to be a wish list and would recommend that the Council select their top 10 priorities. The City Administrator responded that staff would come back to Council with a process for them to follow.

Council Member Maris suggested that the priorities be evaluated on cost basis, feasibility and impact to the community.

Council Member Maris reported on a Congestion Management Authority meeting he attended noting that the Authority has come up with a different distribution of funds and would keep the Council advised. Council Member Maris noted that the Congestion Management Authority is taking away money from bicycles and redirecting to street repaving.

Council Member Okawachi reported on her meeting at the Waste Management Authority and stated that the discussion was on green buildings and it was noted that the first grant the Authority gave for green buildings was to Albany for their Teen Center. Council Member Okawachi noted that staff is working with the Authority for possible grants for the remodeling of the Civic Buildings.

2. ADJOURNMENT

9:05 p.m. – There being no further business before the City Council it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Minutes submitted by Jacqueline L. Bucholz, CMC, City Clerk.

ROBERT GOOD
MAYOR

ATTEST:

JACQUELINE L. BUCHOLZ, CMC
CITY CLERK

