

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

### **8-1. Appropriation of Funds for Support of Albany Chamber of Commerce**

(File #130-30)

The Assistant City Administrator reported that in Fiscal Year 2006/07 the City of Albany provided \$21,000 in financial support for the Albany Chamber of Commerce and they have requested the same funding for Fiscal Year 2007/08.

In addition to the funding allocated for general support, the City has also allocated \$5,000 from the Landscape & Lighting Assessment District 1988-1 as “startup” funding for a program to install decorative banners on San Pablo Avenue. This allocation was to be used as a reimbursement for hardware to install the banners; however, since the program did not get underway in FY 2006/07 the funds were never spent and are still in the Landscape & Lighting Assessment District budget.

The Assistant City Administrator noted that staff prepared a survey of surrounding cities to ascertain the type of support that is provided to local Chambers of Commerce. It appears that cities in this area often do provide some type of support, although it is usually tied to a specific service or event.

Dana Milner, outgoing Chamber President and Todd Abbott, incoming Chamber President both spoke to the Council. It was noted that the majority of funding goes to rent and clerical support and stated that the office is only open for 4 hours per day. It was also stated that the funds requested would put the Chamber on track for self-sufficiency within 3 years. The Chamber would be holding more events and a lot more publicity and would look at other ways to obtain funding.

Council Member Okawachi stated that she would like to see the Chamber open more hours.

Council Member Wile stated that she has noticed the low turnout at the Chamber mixers.

Council Member Atkinson noted that the City is going to be hiring an Economic Development person and hopefully they would be able to help the Chamber.

The following people spoke: Elisabeth Bell, Albany resident; Brian Parker, Albany resident; Francesco Papalia, Albany resident; Ray Anderson, Albany resident. Maureen Crowley, Albany resident; Nan Wishner, Albany resident.

A summary of the comments is as follows: Spoke about the increase in rent and salary for clerical support. Opposed to staff’s recommendation noting the Chamber receives more than any other group and stated that many members left the Chamber during the Caruso era. Commended Dana Milner for spearheading the renovation of the Chamber offices. Supported the Chamber’s request noting it has done a lot of improvements over the past months. Support the Chamber and small businesses and suggested the City find space in the renovated Civic Center for the Chamber to use as their office. Would like to know why members are leaving the Chamber.

Council Member Wile applauded the incoming President for the new direction that he is going to take the Chamber but believes the City should not be supporting the Chamber with the amount of funds being requested. Council Member Wile suggested the

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City offer \$1,000 per month for 6 months to get the Chamber back on its feet and does not support staff’s recommendation.

Council Member Okawachi disagreed with Council Member Wile stating that the Chamber needs time to get back on their feet. The Chamber is a very important entity in the community and it needs to get more members and suggested the Chamber come back with a plan for the next 6 months.

Council Member Atkinson stated it is important to support the Chamber of Commerce but do not believe it fair it takes the bulk of the money and would not support the full \$21,000, as requested.

Council Member Javandel stated that he understands that the Solano Avenue Association is going to ask for a bigger amount of money than what they have requested in the past. Council Member Javandel indicated that he would support the funding requested if the Chamber comes back in 6 months to show what they are going to do.

Council Member Atkinson stated the Chamber must provide specific goals.

Mayor Lieber stated that he has always had difficulty with the City funding the Chamber and believe that self-sufficiency is paramount. Mayor Lieber commented that the City and the Chamber should work together on specific projects.

**MOTION:**

Moved by Council Member Okawachi, seconded by Council Member Javandel to approve staff's recommendation: 1) Pursuant to Council past practice and appropriation in the existing 2006/08 budget for community promotions, allocate \$10,500 to the Albany Chamber of Commerce for the first six months of fiscal year 2007/08. 2) Schedule a six-month City Council review of the Chamber budget, expenditures and activities to review allocation of up to \$10,500 for the third and fourth quarter payments to the Chamber. 3) Renew the allocation of \$5,000 as a reimbursement for hardware to support a San Pablo Avenue Banner Program.

AYES: Council Members Javandel & Okawachi

NOES: Council Members Atkinson, Wile & Mayor Lieber ABSENT: None

Motion Failed.

Council Member Atkinson stated that she would support the appropriation of \$14,000 for the Chamber of Commerce and Council Member Okawachi asked for a compromise of \$16,000.

**MOTION:**

Moved by Council Member Atkinson, seconded by Council Member Javandel to allocate \$16,000 and the Chamber does not have to come back to Council in six months and the banner project to go through the Arts Committee before it comes back to Council.

AYES: Council Members Atkinson, Javandel, Okawachi & Mayor Lieber

NOES: Council Member Wile ABSENT: None

Motion carried and so ordered.

## **City Council Minutes July 2, 2007**

### **8. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **8-1. Solano Avenue Association**

a. Solano Stroll – staff recommendation: 1) Direct staff to issue a no fee encroachment permit to the Solano Avenue Association for the 2007 Stroll event, scheduled for Sunday, September 9, 2007. 2) Contribute \$5,000 to the Solano Avenue Association to assist in putting on the 2007 Solano Stroll. 3) Waive fees for on-site paramedics to be on-site from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

b. Appropriation of funds for support of Solano Avenue Association – staff recommendation: Allocate \$6,000 to the Solano Avenue Association for general support of their activities in Albany for Fiscal Year 2007-08.

The Community Development Director noted that the Stroll organizers in the past prohibited vendors from selling alcoholic beverages. As part of this encroachment permit, the Albany Police Department would like to reinforce this policy by requesting that signs be posted reminding people that the Stroll is non-alcoholic event.

The Solano Avenue Association is also requesting a \$5,000 contribution and waiver of paramedic fees during the event. Both these requests have been granted in the past by the City Council and the cost for paramedic service from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. is approximately \$880.

Mayor Lieber asked the cost to the City for waiving fees and the response is as follows: \$6,600 overtime; \$800 paramedic; \$9,000 maintenance crew, which includes labor and supplies. It was noted that Waste Management donates the clean up service.

Council Member Okawachi asked how much money Berkeley donates to the Stroll and was told \$30,000 in kind services and \$6,000-\$10,000 cash investment. It was noted that the Solano Avenue Association would be going before the Berkeley Council on July 3, 2007.

Mr. Robert Cheasty, Solano Avenue Stroll Association, commended everyone who participated on the Clean & Green Task Force and noted that the Stroll is focusing on green. Mr. Cheasty outlined the events being sponsored by the Solano Avenue Association and the