

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LA PALMA CITY COUNCIL

June 15, 2016

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Goedhart called the Special Meeting of the La Palma City Council to order at 6:32 p.m. in the Council Chambers of La Palma City Hall, 7822 Walker Street, La Palma, California, with Council Member Shanahan being absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Pro Tem Steggell

MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Mayor Goedhart requested a moment of silence in memory of the tragic events in Orland over the past few days, including the victims of the Orlando massacre act of terrorism, the tragic shooting of Christina Grimmie, and in memory of 2-year old Lane Graves, who was attacked by an alligator at an Orlando resort.

ROLL CALL: Council Members

Council Members present: Mayor Goedhart, Council Member Hwangbo, Council Member Kim, and Mayor Pro Tem Steggell

Council Members absent: Council Member Shanahan

City Officials present: Laurie Murray, City Manager
Michelle Molko, Assistant City Attorney
Michael Belknap, Community Services Director
Michael McCrary, Interim Police Chief
Sea Shelton, Administrative Services Director
Kimberly Kenney, Deputy City Clerk

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No members of the Public wished to speak.

REGULAR ITEMS

1. Public Engagement Survey Results

City Manager Murray introduced Dr. Timothy McLarney Ph.D, President of TrueNorth Research, who gave the presentation.

Council Member Shanahan joined the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Discussion ensued regarding the 289 participants, whether that was the total number approached or the total completed surveys; whether they were phone call or online participants; and the amount of people that had to be surveyed in order to reach a total of 289 participants.

Dr. McLarney responded that the 289 quoted were all participants; that most participants were telephone survey respondents; that his firm was contracted to complete 250 and they exceeded their goal; that the participants were structured to achieve a true reflection of the demographics of La Palma; that roughly, the completion rate is a 20-to-1 ratio; that the voter file is not always accurate or updated, but that the company utilizes other resources as well; and that his company is careful on how the survey is worded to ensure impartial, true reflection and responses.

Dr. McLarney continued with his presentation.

Discussion ensued regarding the wording of and manner in which the survey questions were asked and how to determine whether respondents understand what was asked.

Dr. McLarney responded that the questions were read to respondents three times over the length of the survey to ensure the respondent's comprehension of the question; the questions get read back to the responders; that his firm has used this methodology for conducting three hundred revenue measure surveys tested before and found this process is the best; and that this methodology has been proven and works.

Dr. McLarney continued with his presentation.

Council Comments and Questions:

Discussion ensued regarding support for the presentation; that the telephone survey length was approximately 15-17 minutes; that online surveys are quicker because the respondent does not have to wait for someone to read the questions to them; that participants were asked about a "sales tax" and that was the only finance mechanism asked to respondents; that the survey did not have a mechanism to capture general comments about other revenue options; that age profiles of the participants will be forwarded onto the City Council and are a true reflection of the voter base of the City; that how the questions were worded will be forwarded onto the City Council; that it is important to know where the voters are today and where they will be at the end of an election cycle; that TrueNorth tests

both sides so there is a realistic assessment of the voters outcome; and that studies have shown there is no consistent pattern to asking a negative or positive question first because the answer is the same.

Public Input:

Keith Nelson, a La Palma resident, asked for clarification on a number of items related to the survey, including the number of survey attempts; the source for telephone number listings; what percent of respondents spoke Korean as their first language; whether respondents were homeowners; clarification on the detail of the 'Critical Statements' made in the survey; whether specific questions regarding the City's unfunded liability or pension costs were asked; and the total number of questions that were asked in this survey.

Dr. McLarney responded that the telephone numbers are in clusters; each cluster is grouped into a certain demographic and the surveyor may easily get to the bottom of the list in a particular cluster; that the amount of respondents called is a very large number; that about 85% of surveys were conducted in English and about 15% were in Korean; that the voter file does not detail whether a registered voter is a homeowner; that TrueNorth tries to simulate arguments to get a true answers on any revenue measure question; that negative questions regarding pensions were asked, but not specific to the unfunded liabilities; and that there were a total of 12 questions for this survey.

Mr. Nelson asked if he could get a copy of the questions that were asked in this survey; and inquired about the cost and expenses for this survey as of today.

Assistant City Attorney Molko responded that the City is finalizing documents with the Consultant and the questions will be made available to the public after that.

City Manager Murray answered that the cost for the survey was \$24,800; \$5000 a month for the consultant; that the City is in the process of doing mailers and does not have those numbers yet. Assistant City Attorney Molko concurred the amounts stated by the City Manager, and noted that there is a copy of the contract with the Lew Edwards Group that has details of the cost for these services.

Mr. Nelson asked for other source materials that show the detailed results.

Dr. McLaren responded that the summary has already been produced as part of this staff report, the Powerpoint has just been presented, and his company is still working on the results which will be made available when completed.

Council Member Shanahan asked if any one present received a survey phone call and one audience member raised their hand.

Steve Cocca, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council in opposition to a sales tax.

John Alvis, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council by noting that he did take the survey, which was lengthy; that surrounding cities already have a higher sales tax than La Palma and residents do their shopping in those cities; and that the surveyors tested your answers to see if your opinion had changed.

Ismile Noorbaksh, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council in opposition to a general sales tax measure; but in support of a special tax measure.

George Mast, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding his concern that the City is experiencing a reduction in Utility User Tax revenues because of residential installation of solar panels; and support for the City to recover the lost UUT revenue.

Willie Ortega, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council in support of a measure and in appreciation of the City Council and Staff.

Mayor Goedhart closed the meeting by announcing that this meeting was the beginning of the discussion process; that at the next City Council meeting there will be a discussion of what could happen if we don't look at a possible revenue measures; that the upcoming July 5 City Council meeting will be a critical decision-making meeting; that the survey gives us an idea of what the public is feeling about their community; and that the purpose of this is that the City Council wants public feedback so the City can make a decision on its future.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Goedhart adjourned the Special Meeting of the City Council at 7:32 p.m.

Gerard Goedhart
Mayor

Attest:

Kimberly Kenney
Deputy City Clerk