

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE LA PALMA CITY COUNCIL

May 17, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Steggell called the Special Meeting of the La Palma City Council to order at 5:35 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

CS-1. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS

Pursuant to Government Code section 54957.6.

Agency Designated Representatives: Conal McNamara, City Manager
Ryan Hallett Hinton, Administrative
Services Director

Employee Organizations: La Palma General Employees
Association
La Palma Police Association
La Palma Professional Employees
Association

Unrepresented Employees: Executive Management

CS-2. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION:

(Paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9)

County of Santa Barbara Case No.: 20CV02026 (City of Arcadia et al. v.
Southern California Edison Co.)

CS-3. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO
GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54956.8

Property: 5062 La Palma Avenue, La Palma, California

APN: 262-081-04

Agency negotiator: Conal McNamara, City Manager
Ajit Thind, City Attorney

Negotiating parties: David Andaya

Under negotiations: Price and terms of payment

CS-4. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54956.8

Property: Approximately a 900 square feet portion of 8441 Moody Street, La Palma, California, 90623

Agency negotiator: Conal McNamara, City Manager
Ajit Thind, City Attorney

Negotiating parties: Smartlink on behalf of AT & T

Under negotiations: Price and/or terms for a Lease Agreement

CS-5. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION
Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9: One potential case. A copy of the letter is available by clicking [here](#).

Mayor Steggell recessed to Closed Session at 5:37 p.m.

Mayor Steggell adjourned the Closed Session at 6:22 p.m.

OPEN SESSION:

Mayor Steggell reconvened in Open Session at 6:30 p.m and asked for a report from Closed Session.

City Attorney Thind responded that there were no reportable actions out of Closed Session.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Steggell

ROLL CALL: Council and Commission Members

Council members present: Mayor Pro Tem Baker, Council Member Goodman, Council Member Patel, Mayor Steggell, and Council Member Waldman

Councilmembers absent: None

City Official present: Conal McNamara, City Manager
Ajit Thind, City Attorney
Terry Kim, Police Chief
Joe Cisneros, Assistant to the City Manager
Ryan Hallett-Hinton, Administrative Services Director
Scott Hutter, Planning Manager
Kimberly Kenney, City Clerk

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No members of the public wished to speak.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Reauthorize Purchase of Replacement Public Works Vehicle

Reauthorize the purchase of one 2023 Freightliner/West-Mark Dust Control Tank Truck for \$142,941.00 plus sales tax.

Council Member Patel made a motion to approve Consent Calendar Item 1.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Waldman and carried on the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Pro Tem Baker, Council Member Goodman, Council Member Patel, Mayor Steggell, and Council Member Waldman

NOES: None

PUBLIC HEARING:

2. Second Public Hearing to Receive Input from the Community Regarding the Creation of a City Council District-Based Electoral System Pursuant to Elections Code Section 10010

- a) Mayor Steggell opened the Public Hearing at 6:32 p.m.
- b) City Manager McNamara introduced the Item and NDC President, Dr. Justin Levitt, gave the Staff Report and Presentation.

City Attorney Thind gave the Staff Report on Term Limits.

- c) Council Comments and Questions:

Discussion ensued regarding whether the California Voters Right Act (CVRA) allows for a block with the rest of the City being “at Large”; that Palm Desert has been the only city where this applies, but one district is majority Latino with the other districts being at-large; that Palm Desert's demographics is the only city where this situation worked; that City Attorney Thind noted this was a unique situation where the block of Latinos was very concentrated in Palm Desert's one geographical area and is why their outcome was different and does not apply to La Palma; and that the only area that is 75-100% Latino concentration is up in Centerpointe, but there is only 5 people in that area and is not a true representation.

- d) Public Input:

Sharon Gutjahr, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding her confusion with these maps; that there is no way to divide up La Palma equally; that we have a diverse community; what the actual number of voters are in La Palma; whether this is a State law; and the historic difficulty in garnering interest from the public to run in the local election as it is.

- e) Mayor Steggell closed the Public Hearing at 6:54 p.m.

- f) Consider whether to:

- 1) Authorize the Mayor to Sign the 90-day Extension Agreement;
- 2) Adopt the Proposed Meeting Schedule;
- 3) Adopt a by-district election system of:
 - a. Five (5) districts election system with a rotating mayor.
 - b. Four (4) district election system with an at-large mayor.
- 4) Continue incumbent term limits.

Council Member Patel noted that this is a difficult process, a State Law, and that the City Council is going to come up with the best possible solution to resolve it; that the alternative to not addressing this, is high litigation costs; that this will help the City come up with a fair method while already being a diverse community, and will allow the City to address the concerns from the law firm.

Council Member Waldman added that there is no entity that has won their lawsuit; however, there are cities that have had to pay for litigation costs against this; and that fighting this appears to result in inevitable loss.

Discussion ensued regarding the need to get City Council direction on all items listed on item F; that this meeting constitutes the second Public Hearing; that the consultant will begin to prepare the mapping tools and get the public engaged in order to submit maps to the City Council; that three more public hearings need to be scheduled, but with the 90-day extension being approved, whether the City Council wants to extend out the calendar to allow for more community input.

Council Member Patel announced his support to move out the schedule allowing the City Council more time to conduct community engagement; and that he'd like to see a community engagement event on the schedule.

Mayor Steggell asked for clarification as to whether staff needs the City Council to take a formal vote on the matters needing addressed.

City Manager McNamara responded that Staff needs general direction on these matters either by vote or general consensus; and City Attorney Thind added that the only formal vote needs to be taken on authorizing the Mayor to execute the extension agreement.

Council Member Goodman supports signing the 90-day extension; support for revising the schedule based on the extension; that we need as much public engagement as possible to garner input within the new schedule; support for four districts with an at-large mayor; and support to keep current term limits.

Council Member Waldman supports signing the 90-day extension; support for revising the schedule based on the extension; support for more public engagement during that extension; and support for four districts with an at-large mayor.

Council Member Patel supports signing the 90-day extension; support for revising the schedule based on the extension; support for including a public engagement component like mailers, a forum, or town hall meeting into the schedule; support for five districts as the equitable format as he sees no benefit to an at-large mayor, since four other council members won't have the ability to become mayor and could serve as a deterrent; and support to wait to see how the 2024 Election works out before making a decision on term limits.

Mayor Pro Tem Baker supports signing the 90-day extension; support for revising the schedule based on the extension; support for five districts; and support to keep current term limits.

Mayor Steggell supports signing the 90-day extension; support for revising the schedule based on the extension; support for having five districts; and support to keep current term limits.

City Manager McNamara reported that by consensus, the City Council has agreed to sign the 90-day extension agreement; that the City Council has agreed to move the schedule out based on the extension and plans to send out a revised schedule as a result; that Staff will start to plan a Community Workshop on June 21; that the majority of the City Council have decided to move to five districts; and that there will be no direction given in regards to term limits for the November 2022 ballot.

City Attorney Thind asked for a formal motion and vote to Authorize the Mayor to sign the 90-day Extension Agreement.

Council Member Patel made a motion to approve and authorize the Mayor to Sign the 90-day Extension Agreement.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Waldman and carried on the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Pro Tem Baker, Council Member Goodman,
Council Member Patel, Mayor Steggell, and Council
Member Waldman

NOES: None

REGULAR ITEMS

None Scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Steggell adjourned the Special Meeting of the City Council at 7:09 p.m.

Michele Steggell
Mayor

Attest:

Kimberly Kenney, CMC
City Clerk