

**Minutes**

City of Soledad Joint  
City Council/Successor Agency  
Regular Meeting

**February 03, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Velazquez called the City Council/Successor Agency Meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The Following Councilmembers/Agencymembers were present when the meeting was called to order:

Mayor/Chair	Anna M. Velazquez
Mayor Pro Tem/Vice Chair	Carla Strobridge
Councilmember/Agencymember	Marisela Lara (Arrived at 6:05 p.m.)
Councilmember/Agencymember	Ben Jimenez, Jr.
Councilmember/Agencymember	Alejandro Chavez

**THE FOLLOWING COUNCILMEMBER WAS ABSENT**

- None

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS**

- None

**MEETING RECESS FOR CLOSED SESSION**

Mayor Velazquez recessed to Closed Session at 6:05 p.m.

**MEETING RECONVENED**

Mayor Velazquez reconvened from Closed Session at approximately 6:42 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION NO. 1**

1. The City Council will recess to closed session pursuant to Government Code 54956.8 to give instructions to the City's real property negotiator (City Manager) concerning sale/exchange/lease of property located at 31500 San Vicente Road, City of Soledad, APN: 257-081-022. Instructions will include price, terms of payment and other relevant conditions.
2. The City Council will recess to closed session to confer with its attorney regarding litigation pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2)- significant exposure to litigation.

**CLOSED SESSION REPORTS**

1. With respect to item no. 1, the council conferred with its property negotiator and provided direction. No other reportable action taken.
2. With respect to item no. 2, the council conferred with legal counsel and the City Manager. No other reportable action was taken.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was led by Councilmember Ben Jimenez, Jr.

**ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- None

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

City of Soledad resident Mr. Diego Tinajero asked if there have been any updates in the matter of Promissory Notes regarding the homes in Rancho San Vicente.

- Mayor Velazquez replied to Mr. Tinajero and said City Manager Slama will look into the matter and give him an update.

Field Representative for Senator Anna Caballero, Ms. Marissa Hernandez introduced herself. She represents the City of Soledad and other South County cities and can assist residents with bringing resolution to issues of contacting EDD or any other State agencies.

**CENTENNIAL SPOTLIGHT**

Mr. Graig Stephens gave a brief presentation of historical information about the Soberanes family and Munras Family, who first moved the City forward into becoming the City of Soledad.

**MAYOR/COUNCIL RESOLUTION**

Resolution No. 5680, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Landmark Education and Civil Rights Case of Diana v. California State Board of Education that Ended the Use of Discriminatory IQ Tests in California Public Schools.

Councilmember Lara shared a brief history of her life experience relating to Resolution No. 5680 and presented the resolution in detail.

Mr. Hector De La Rosa Jr. spoke on behalf of his late father, Mr. Hector De La Rosa Sr., who had a major role with the civil rights case of Diana v. California State Board of Education and thanked the City of Soledad for the recognition of his father and the Diana case.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Mr. Hector De La Rosa Jr., and his family for sharing in the council meeting.

California Rural Legal Assistance of San Francisco Administrative Office Executive Director Mr. Jose Padilla explained in further detail how CRLA and the families of the City of Soledad were able to move the Civil Rights Case of Diana v. California State Board of Education forward which ended the Use of Discriminatory IQ Tests in California Public Schools. He thanked the families of the City of Soledad for taking a stand for their children and their rights.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Mr. Jose Padilla and CRLA for speaking up for social injustice and thanked him for all that is currently being done for farmworkers.

**Motion:** Councilmember Jimenez made motion to approve Resolution No. 5680. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Chavez and carried by unanimous vote:

**Action:**

Ayes: Jimenez, Chavez, Lara, Strobridge, and Velazquez  
Noes: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: None

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge thanked Mr. Hector De La Rosa Jr., and his family for joining the meeting and sharing the memory of Mr. Hector De La Rosa Sr.

Councilmember Chavez thanked Mr. Hector De La Rosa Jr. and his family for joining the meeting and sharing the memory of Mr. Hector De La Rosa Sr. He also thanked Councilmember Lara for sharing.

Councilmember Jimenez thanked the De La Rosa family for joining the meeting.

Mayor Velazquez thanked the De La Rosa family for being a part of the meeting.

## **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Velazquez had 8 items to report.

1. She announced the former Community and Economic Development Director Mr. Brent Slama is now the City Manager of the City of Soledad. She congratulated City Manager Slama in his new position.
2. On 02/03 she attended a meeting with Supervisor Lopez and the South County Mayors.
3. On 01/28 she met with City Manager Slama, I.T. Director Steven Andranigian, and Spectrum to discuss the internet for all initiative.
4. On 01/28 she participated in a virtual townhall with Economic Development & Housing Program Coordinator Tencia Vargas and El Pajaro Community Development Corporation regarding the round two of the small business Covid-19 relief funds.
5. On 01/26 she participated in a Joint Meeting between the Soledad-Mission Recreation District and the Soledad City Council.
6. On 01/26 she met with City Manager Slama, Economic Development & Housing Program Coordinator Tencia Vargas and the Soledad Chamber of Commerce President Andria Brinson.
7. On 01/08 she participated in the Covid-19 regional call.
8. She also announced that the Tennant Protection Act, AB 3088, has been extended to June 2021. She also invited the public and the council to participate in a town hall regarding tenant protection under that legislation.

## **COUNCILMEMBER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS**

Councilmember Jimenez had 6 items to report:

1. On 01/21 he participated in the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority meeting.
2. On 01/22 he participated in the range subcommittee meeting
3. On 01/25 he went on a range site visit.
4. On 01/26 he participated in the Joint Meeting of the Soledad City Council and the Soledad Mission Recreation District.
5. On 02/01 he met with Mr. Dave Mora regarding goal setting for the City.
6. On 02/02 he participated in the range subcommittee meeting.

Councilmember Chavez had 3 items to report:

1. On 01/27 he participated in TAMC meeting.
2. On 02/01 he participated in the TAMC Rail Policy Committee.
3. On 01/26 he participated in a Joint Meeting between the Soledad-Mission Recreation District and the Soledad City Council.

## **COUNCILMEMBER PRAISES**

Councilmember Chavez thanked the Public Works Department for the work they did during the storm. He also thanked the Police Department for handling the issues of drugs and arrest in the community.

Mayor Velazquez added that the City will be able to submit for F.E.M.A. reimbursement for the expenses related to the damage of the storm.

Councilmember Jimenez gave praise to Councilmember Lara for sharing her personal experience.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge also thanked the Public Works Department for their prompt response to the storm. She also thanked the residents for their patience during the storm while the public works crews were out in the streets day and night working. She also thanked Councilmember Lara for sharing her personal experience.

Mayor Velazquez thanked the Public Works Department for making sure the streets were safe for travel during and after the storm. She also thanked the I.T. Director Steven Andranigian for moving the City forward in current information technology.

Councilmember Lara thanked the Public Works Department for their hard work during the storm. She also thanked the Police Department for doing a great job in keeping the public informed. She thanked Supervisor Chris Lopez and Supervisor Luis Alejo for encouraging her to move forward with sharing her personal experience regarding Resolution No. 5680.

### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

City Manager Slama presented his written report and verbally highlighted 6 items:

1. He thanked the Mayor and Council for welcoming him in his new position as City Manager of the City of Soledad.
2. He introduced four new employees that have joined the City of Soledad team.
  - Officer Brian Solis
  - Code Enforcement Officer Gretta Steinbruner
  - Public Works Executive Assistant Veronica Gonzalez
  - Economic Development/Housing Program Administrative Secretary Ariana Mora
3. The County has a resolution regarding vaccine distribution that will be moving forward.
4. An email has been sent to the city council regarding video messages that will need to be created.
5. There will be a meeting between County staff and the Soledad Public Works Department regarding the flooding of San Vicente.
6. The City is still accepting applications for the Measure Y and Measure S committees.

### **YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT**

Soledad Youth Commissioners Marcela Perez and Amber Solorio gave a brief verbal update and presented a written report.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

- None

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Councilmember Jimenez asked that Item C-5 be pulled for further discussion.

Item C-5 was pulled for further discussion and approved with the other consent items.

**Motion:** Councilmember Chavez made motion to approve items C-1 through C-6. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried by the following vote:

**Action:**

Ayes: Chavez, Strobridge, Lara, Jimenez, and Velazquez  
Noes: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: None

**C-1. Approval of Minutes**

Joint City Council/Successor Agency Regular Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2021.

**C-2. Warrants**

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C-3. Resolution No. 5677, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving Application(s) for Per-Capita Grant Funds.

C-4. Resolution No. 5678, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Temporarily reducing Garage Sales Permit Fees.

C-5. Accept Status Report on City of Soledad Business Microloan Program and Status of CDBG Grant Application.

Councilmember Jimenez requested that Item C-5 be pulled for further discussion. He would like an overview of the program and the number of community recipients that took advantage of the grant. He would also like to know what future monies might become available for small businesses in Soledad.

Economic Development & Housing Program Coordinator Tencia Vargas said that three businesses were assisted in the round one application process.

Councilmember Jimenez asked Ms. Vargas to please go over the CDBG grant micro loan program. He seen there are 13 that have received the loan in the community; he asked if he was correct in reading that there is potentially \$380,000 that could also be available for the City of Soledad.

Economic Development & Housing Program Coordinator Tencia Vargas confirmed that information to be true and added that the City's consultant Angel Johnstone will be moving forward with applying for the grants.

Soledad Chamber of Commerce President Andria Brinson thanked City Manager Slama, Mayor Velazquez, and Economic Development & Housing Program Coordinator Tencia Vargas for meeting with her. She is happy to be working with Ms. Vargas in efforts to assist local businesses.

C-6. City of Soledad Monthly Department Activity Reports.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

- None

### **BUSINESS**

B-1. Review of Mid-Year Financial Report and Consideration of Mid-Year Budget Adjustments.

Finance Director Mike Howard presented the staff report.

Mayor Velazquez thanked the Finance Director Mike Howard for the thorough report. She is happy that the City received money through the C.A.R.E.S. Act and the sales tax. She would like to suggest a future budget consideration of a Downtown Façade program; starting with a budget of \$50,000 per budget year and at the end of a three-year cycle there will be enough to assist in the look of downtown.

**Motion:** Councilmember Chavez made motion to approve the Review of the Mid-Year Financial Report and Consideration of Mid-Year Budget Adjustments. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried by unanimous vote:

#### **Action:**

Ayes: Chavez, Strobridge, Jimenez, Lara, and Velazquez  
Noes: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: None

B-2. Review of CalFire Operations and Future 5 Year Plan.

CalFire Chief Nunez presented the staff report and PowerPoint presentation.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge asked if the Smeal fire engine will need to be retired in 2028.

Chief Nunez said the Smeal will not be retired in 2028 but it will go to the second line of engines; the City has two engines. There is a one front line engine and one back up engine. This way the City is never without an engine. There has been a time that the City was able to rent the engine back to CalFire for use of other assignments. In 2027-2028 that engine will become a reserve engine and the City will look into purchasing a new front-line engine.

Mayor Pro Tem asked Chief Nunez if the 2017 Smeal engine was purchased with a FEMA grant.

Chief Nunez confirmed the engine was purchased with a FEMA grant.

Councilmember Jimenez asked if the budget for CalFire is 1,275,000.

Finance Director Mike Howard said CalFire is budgeted in two locations; under fire department and a part of it is in Measure Y. The combination of both is just under \$1,300,000.

Councilmember Jimenez asked Chief Nunez if the increase and decrease in amounts listed for the five-year plan is a result of the cost sharing.

Chief Nunez confirmed the amount does go up considerably and is a direct result of the cost sharing. In year four and five the amount goes up because of extra staffing and paramedics on the engine.

Councilmember Jimenez would like to see a cost analysis of the current services the City is receiving and what would it cost the City to carry services.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge asked where the Cypress Fire District is located.

Chief Nunez said the Cypress Fire Protection is located on Rio Road, between Carmel and Monterey County.

Chief Nunez said the cost sharing agreements are with the Aromas Tri-County Fire District and the South Monterey County Fire Protection District. The districts of Cypress, Carmel Highlands, and the Pebble Beach District all in one district in Battalion II.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge asked if the City currently enough firefighters on duty to legally and safely enter a building to fight a fire.

Chief Nunez said as of now there are not enough firefighters for the "two-in/two out" rule. The City currently only has two people on an engine. If there were a fire, an engine would come from the City of Gonzales, the City of Greenfield, or from the prison. If there was a rescue needed, that would change the dynamic and the rescue would happen.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge asked if there will be enough firefighter in year five of the cost sharing program for the two-in/two-out rule.

Chief Nunez confirmed that in year five, there will be enough firefighters. There will be 3 assigned to the engine and an additional Battalion Chief on duty.

Mayor Velazquez asked for clarification regarding the cost sharing agreement that the City has; the agreement is not with Carmel, Cypress or Pebble Beach but is with Aromas Tri-County and with South County Fire Protection.

Chief Nunez confirmed the information is correct. The City of Soledad is not in a cost sharing agreement with Carmel, Cypress or Pebble Beach. He used those city's cost sharing agreement as an example of how the Cost sharing works for the other districts.

Mayor Velazquez agrees with Councilmember Jimenez and would also like a cost analysis done for the City of Soledad. She would like to know what it would cost to have one more ambulance dedicated to the City. She also knows the fire department facility needs to be expanded and renovated. She would like to start looking at what potential funding resources are available to start renovation on the facility.

**Motion:**

Information was received by council.

Direction given

No Action taken for this item.

**B-3. Discuss and Provide Direction on a Proposed Sidewalk Repair/Replacement Cost Share Program and Sidewalk Repair and Maintenance Ordinance.**

Public Works Director Oscar Antillon thanked Councilmember Lara for sharing her experience reading Resolution No. 5680. He also acknowledged Mr. Miguel Cardona who has been nominated by President Joe Biden to serve as United States Secretary of Education. He thanked Mr. Jose Padilla for his work on the Civil Rights Case of Diana v. California State Board of Education.

Public Works Director Antillon thanked Mr. Chris Braga and his crew who helped in the cleaning of storm damage on San Vicente.

Public Works Director Antillon presented the staff report.

Councilmember Chavez asked what is the process in a case of the trees that are placed on the sidewalk by the City or the original developer; how is that situation handled in the plan that has been presented today.

Public Works Director Antillon said from the research done on this, in California, the owner is responsible for those problems, even if the tree is considered a City tree. Having trees in the City benefits the City and the residents in the community.

Councilmember Jimenez said he would like to move forward with the 50/50 plan until the money available is exhausted.

Mayor Velazquez agrees that the cost sharing program is a great idea. Many residents believe that if someone gets hurt due to a sidewalk, the City is liable. She hopes that as the City moves forward with plans and developments, the City pays attention to what trees are being planted and where they are being planted because the City is going through the permitting process with the developers. She asked if the \$40,000 set aside in Measure X funds is enough for sidewalk repairs.

Public Works Director Antillon said he does think the \$40,000 will be enough for the most egregious sidewalk issues.

Councilmember Chavez asked how the process will work for property owners needing to choose a contractor; will the City choose or will there be a list of contractors for the property owner to choose from.

Public Works Director Antillon said he believes the best option would be to provide a list of contractors that are approved by the City.

Councilmember Lara asked what the process will be if the homeowner does not have the money to do the repair. Also, how will sidewalks that need repairs will be identified; would the City identify the sidewalk or would a resident identify the sidewalk.

Public Works Director Antillon said the priority would be to make the sidewalk safe and give the resident payment options if they cannot afford to pay for the repairs done, similar to how the City handles utilities. He believes most sidewalk repairs needed will be identified by residents.

Mayor Velazquez said pointed out that there is language regarding repairs in the code already. The code says a sidewalk will be repaired within 30 days and the residents will be given notice, and if the resident does not pay there will be a lien put on the property. She would like language to be added that states if the property owner does not have the means to pay for the repairs within the 30 days there will be a payment option put in place.

Public Works Director Antillon agreed and said the language will be added.

Mayor Velazquez asked for the list of contractors that are approved by the City to be added to the ordinance as well.

Public Works Director Antillon said the list will be added.

Mayor Velazquez would like to see a past survey that was done regarding priority areas identified.

Public Works Director Antillon said the City does have a survey identifying the priority areas. He will send council the list of high priority areas.

City Attorney Rodriquez clarified that there are two different ways this can be approached; either a "first come first serve" basis and the other is "area of need". He asked council to clarify their preference. He said it sounds like council's preference is for monies to be expended for the sidewalks where there is the greatest need for repair rather than on first come first serve.

Mayor Velazquez said that is correct.

City Attorney Rodriquez said that if a request is received and it does not meet the highest need of priority, the request can be put on a waiting list. He would also like to make sure everyone understands that notwithstanding the property owner's responsibility to repair the adjacent sidewalk, a property owner does not bear the full responsibility for injury that occurs on the sidewalk because of a defect. There is language that will be put into the ordinance that says the property owner is responsible for repairs, but that does not mean 100% responsibility. The City does not have immunity from being brought into a lawsuit if someone has a trip and fall.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge asked if the first-come first-serve waiting list can have different levels to it.

City Attorney Rodriquez said there will be a prioritizing of the need.

Mayor Velazquez asked if this is inclusive, not just for sidewalks damaged by trees.

City Attorney Rodriquez said that is correct.

**Motion:**

Information was received by council.

Direction given

No Action taken for this item.

- B-4. Resolution No. 5679, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Issuing a request for Proposal for the Centennial General Plan and Establishing an Ad-Hoc General Plan Advisory Committee and Defining the Scope of the Committee Responsibilities.

City Manager Brent Slama presented the staff report.

Mayor Velazquez said she would like to know if the public participation can be weighted more in the language of the proposal because public participation and feedback is priority. Regarding the Ad-Hoc general plan advisory committee, she would like representatives of local housing organizations to lend their expertise in terms of choosing a firm. Regarding the land use and housing, she would like to make sure there is an analysis included of the City's climate action plan. She wants to make sure the best practices of the City's climate action are included in the general plan. Regarding the Health and Wellness component, she would like to look further into

the access to healthy affordable food, sustainable practices, and affordable and quality healthcare.

City Manager Slama said that he will add the language needed. He leaves it to the council to add the needed committed people to the committee. There will be many proposals that are received, and the council will be able to look at those proposals and move forward with whom they choose.

Mayor Velazquez would like to make sure the firm that is selected has the availability to conduct meetings that will be in Spanish or have translation available, and all notices posted should also be posted in Spanish.

City Manager Slama said he will be sure to confirm that information.

**Motion:** Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge made motion to approve Resolution No. 5679. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Jimenez and carried by the following vote:

**Action:**

Ayes: Strobridge, Jimenez, Lara, Chavez, and Velazquez  
Noes: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: None

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge had 1 item:

1. She would like an update on the K-9 unit.

Councilmember Chavez had 1 item:

1. He would like to look further into helping the City's small business owners of how they can be classified as essential workers so they can stay open.

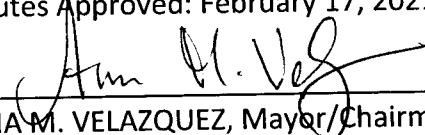
Mayor Velazquez had 1 item:

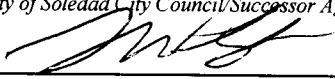
1. She would like a presentation done by the Hartnell college regarding a status update on the Soledad Education Center.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Velazquez adjourned the Regular meeting at 9:44 p.m.

Minutes Approved: February 17, 2021

  
ANNA M. VELAZQUEZ, Mayor/Chairman



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BRENT SLAMA, City Clerk/Agency Secretary

