

**Minutes**

City of Soledad Joint  
City Council/Successor Agency  
Regular Meeting

**February 17, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Velazquez called the City Council/Successor Agency Meeting to order at 6:03 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
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 6:06 p.m.

**MEETING RECONVENED**

Mayor Velazquez reconvened from Closed Session at approximately 6:31 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION NO. 1**

1. The City Council will recess to Closed Session to consider personnel matters pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(B)(1)-City Attorney Evaluation
2. 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.

### **CLOSED SESSION REPORTS**

1. With respect to item no. 1, there was a discussion regarding the process for the City Attorney Evaluation and direction was provided. This item will appear again on the agenda of 03/03/2021. No other reportable action taken.
2. With respect to item no. 2, the council met with its real property negotiator and provided direction. No other reportable action taken.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was led by Mrs. Doris Galardi

### **ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- None

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

### **CENTENNIAL SPOTLIGHT**

Longtime resident of the City of Soledad Mrs. Pea Catalina Romeli Franscioni and her family were present. Mr. Wayne Galardi gave a brief presentation and shared the history of their Family in Soledad.

Mayor Velazquez and the Councilmembers thanked Mrs. Franscioni and her family for sharing the history of their family in Soledad.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Velazquez had 7 items to report.

1. On 02/05 she met with CRLA and councilmembers from the City of Seaside and Salinas and the Monterey County Renters United regarding a "Know your Rights" virtual Town Hall that will be in Spanish.
2. On 02/08 she attended a meeting with City Manager Slama, Chief of Police Damon Wasson, Warden Matt Atchley and Warden Craig Koenig to discuss Covid-19 cases and affordable housing.
3. On 02/09 she attended a meeting with City Manager Slama and a representative from the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership to discuss Teacher & Employee Housing.
4. On 02/10 she met with Supervisor Lopez and the South County Mayors to discussed Covid-19 vaccines and the State Rental Assistance program.
5. On 02/10 she met with Landwatch Executive Director Michael DeLapa to discuss housing needs in Soledad.
6. On 02/12 she Met with Sustainability Manager of County of Monterey Ashley Paulsworth, and Mayor Allison Kerr of Del Rey Oaks, to discuss the County's Regional Action Plan to discuss how the City of Soledad can partner in developing a multijurisdictional climate action plan.
7. On 02/16 she attended the LAFCO orientation with Executive Officer Kate McKenna, as she is now an alternate on the LAFCO Board.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge had 5 items to report:

1. On 02/05 she met with Dave Mora in preparation for the goal setting session of 02/20/2021
2. On 02/10 she participated in the AMBAG meeting.
3. On 02/15 she met with Mayor Velazquez.
4. On 02/17 she participated in the gun range sub-committee meeting.
5. South County Animal Rescue is having a low-cost vaccination and microchip clinic on 02/20 in Greenfield starting at 9:00 a.m.

Councilmember Jimenez had 1 item to report:

1. On 02/17 he participated in the gun range sub-committee.

Councilmember Chavez had 2 items to report:

1. On 02/11 he met with Dave Mora in preparation for the goal setting session.
2. On 02/16 he attended an AMBAG meeting.

### **COUNCILMEMBER PRAISES**

Councilmember Jimenez gave praise to the City staff and City Manager Slama for the City being awarded a Community Development Block Grant of \$500,000.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge praised the City staff for always going above and beyond and for the work they have been doing on the social media platforms. She also praised the Salvation Army Mobile Ministries for their efforts in dropping off food boxes every Tuesday and Wednesday on people's doorsteps in Soledad.

Mayor Velazquez gave praise to the SPCA for doing a pet food drive.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge said that the SPCA also had a pet food drive in January. She also wanted to remind the community that South County Animal Rescue has four food pantries in South County for pets in need.

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

City Manager Slama presented his written report and verbally highlighted 4 items:

1. There have been further meetings with Spectrum regarding internet for all. Information has also been received from CHISPA regarding a pilot project for apartment complexes in Soledad.
2. A meeting took place with the Soledad Unified School District regarding Measure N and there is now a joint meeting scheduled for 03/30/2021.
3. \$500,000 in business assistance money was granted to the City of Soledad, specific to job creation and growth.
4. There will be a City Council goal setting session on 02/20/2021 at the Soledad Community Center.

City Manager Slama asked City Attorney Mike Rodriguez to give a brief update regarding the homes in Rancho San Vicente.

City Attorney Mike Rodriguez said the Redevelopment Successor Agency entered into an agreement with CHISPA because the City/Agency agreed to reduce the resale deed restriction term for those homes, from 45 years to 20 years. Administrative duties associated with the resale restriction agreements and promissory notes were also transferred to CHISPA. The Agency did all of this because it lacked sufficient

staff to handle the issues associated with changing the terms, recording the amendments, and sending notice to the residents that they had been relieved of any obligations pursuant to the promissory notes. The problem that has occurred is CHISPA cannot carry out the duties that are set forth in the agreement, primarily because the City/Agency cannot find the original promissory notes. CHISPA has been advised by their contacts that the amendment cannot be processed. The City will need to take back the promissory notes and take back responsibility of processing the amendments to the resale restriction agreement. This would require the City to amend the agreement that was entered into with CHISPA in handling the issue. If the promissory notes are taken back by the Agency and the Agency also takes responsibility for the recordation and preparation of the amendments to the resale restriction agreement, there is not much left for CHISPA to do. The idea was that during the interim period between the time that all the actions were done and recorded, the resale restriction would expire, which for most of the homes will be in the year 2024, if anyone wanted to sell their house and needed assistance in understanding what the resale restriction compelled them to do, then CHISPA would help with guiding them through that process. It is doubtful there will be a number of those homeowners selling their homes in the next three years. This scenario brings the City/Agency to the question of should the City/Agency amend the agreement with CHISPA or terminate the agreement with CHISPA. It is also unclear if there will be costs involved if the Agency takes on the responsibility of recording the amendment to the resale restriction agreement. There is an exception of recording costs for some public entities for some specific reasons, reasons which he is unsure of at this time. The primary beneficiaries of this action would be the homeowners and not the Redevelopment Agency or Successor Agency. The original position of the former City Manager Adela Gonzalez is that the City/Agency should bear no responsibility for the cost because the City is already gifting the homeowners 25 years off the release of the resale restriction so the homeowners should pick up the cost of the recordation. The cost of the recordation of the amendment is unknown at this point. Also, if the City/Agency takes back the responsibility for the handling of the amendments to the resale restriction agreement, as well as the subsequent duties in a couple of years, will the City have the staff to carry out the action necessary. The original project had 82 homes and 10 to 15 have been lost to foreclosure.

Mayor Velazquez asked City Attorney Rodriguez what would be the next steps that should be done to keep this item moving forward.

City Attorney Rodriguez said the City needs to make sure that it has the staff to move this forward. The City needs to find out the cost for the recordation and what staff will be assigned to handle this. The City may still need assistance from CHISPA to communicate with the property owners. There is a simple form that was created for the amendment, the blanks would need to be filled in. There will be a status update on this item in the 03/17/2021 City Council meeting.

There were no questions or comments from the public at this time.

### **YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT**

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

### **PRESENTATIONS**

1. Soledad Police Chief Wasson presented an overview regarding the nationwide Fentanyl epidemic.

Chief Wasson will be emailing updated information to the council regarding his presentation.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Chief Wasson for presenting the information. She would like to look further into preventative strategy for epidemic in the City. She would like to work with the County to get resources available to target the individuals that are being most affected.

Chief Wasson said he has reached out to the County, and other allied law enforcement agencies such as Monterey County Health Department, Monterey County Behavioral Health Department, The hospitals, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the FBI. He acknowledges that the City needs assistance because the issues are larger than just the drug, there are many issues that come along with that.

Councilmember Jimenez would like to see more education for kids and parents. He hopes to bring more support and resources to the City.

Mayor Velazquez would like to put together a sub-committee to bring necessary partners in that can bring forth a strategic effort in reaching the community.

Chief Wasson said Sun Street Centers will be doing further trainings with the officers and he will reach out to see if they will also do community education.

Councilmember Jimenez would also like to invite the faith-based groups and the Soledad Unified School District.

Councilmember Chavez asked if there is a possibility of taking some preventive efforts that other cities are doing. He would like these efforts to be geared to elementary school aged kids through high school student. He suggested looking at efforts that Santa Cruz County has used.

Soledad resident Alexis Magdaleno said he agrees with Mayor Velazquez in the point that the City should take a public health approach to this problem. He hopes there will be social workers and a crisis response team involved. He would like the people of the City to have the tools and resources needed to take care of themselves.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Councilmember Chavez asked to pull item C-5 for further discussion.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge would like to ask a question regarding item No. C-3. Both Mayor Velazquez and Councilmember Jimenez would also like to have further discussion of item C-3.

**Motion:** Councilmember Jimenez made motion to approve items C-1, C-2, C-4, C-6, C-7, and C-8. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried by the following vote:

**Action:**

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

#### **C-1. Approval of Minutes**

Joint City Council/Successor Agency Regular Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2021.

C-2. **Warrants**

043207 - 043339

- C-4. Resolution No. 5682, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Establishing a Sidewalk Repair/Replacement Cost Share Program.

Ordinance No. 736, Introduction and First Reading by Title Only of an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Soledad Adding New Chapter 12.02-Maintenence and Repair of Sidewalks to Title 12-Street, Sidewalks and Public Places of the Soledad Municipal Code.

- C-6. Resolution No. 5684, A resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving an Agreement for Professional Services with Michael Baker International in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$27,620 to Prepare a Hydraulic Analysis for the Miramonte (Former Mirvale III) Project and Approving an Agreement for Services with Schaaf & Wheeler in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$46,860 for the Miramonte Project Storm Drain Impact Study.

- C-7. Resolution No. 5685, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad to Consider and Adopt a Resolution Ratifying A "Proclamation of Existence of Local Emergency" Due to the Atmospheric River System Storm Damage.

- C-8. Resolution No. 5686, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving Consulting Services Agreement Task Order 110/Agreement Amendment No. 4 in the Amount of \$171,170.00 for Construction Management and Inspection Services with Harris & Associates for the Miravale II Parcel D Development and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Said Task Oder/Amendment on Behalf of the City of Soledad.

- C-3. Resolution No. 5681, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Establishing the Job Classification of a Police Cadet -Trainee, Adopting a Job Description, Approving the Classification of a Temporary – Short Term Position and Establishing a New Salary.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge asked that any future items like this item not be placed on the Consent Calendar because items like this one are worthy of further discussion. She also asked Chief Wasson if the Police Cadet -Trainee would be paying for their own post certified police academy.

Chief Wasson said the Police Cadet -Trainee would not be paying for the police academy. This Police Cadet -Trainee position would be part of successor training and would transition between a school cadet, an explorer position, a volunteer position, a reserve position and then a full-time position for the City of Soledad. This position would be for an individual who is seen to be a good candidate for a police officer for the City but does not have the finances to pay for the academy themselves. The City can help them get through the academy, help them through training and they would be able to do the field training here in Soledad and by the time it is time to hire them, the City would know exactly who they are hiring. The Department is looking for someone who will be staying in Soledad and dedicated to the City.

Mayor Pro Tem would like to know further information about what the commitment of the person would be.

Chief Wasson said no one can be made to sign a contract stating they will stay with the department or pay back money that was given for training if they decide to leave.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge asked if the City would be paying the academy in full or would the person pay, and the City would reimburse the person in increments through time.

Chief Wasson said the City would pay the police academy.

Councilmember Jimenez would like to know if the cadet position would go beyond the three to six months.

Chief Wasson said this position is for someone who is between the reserve, explorer, and fulltime Police Officer position. This is a way to sponsor them through the academy and once they have graduated, they will need to go through the hiring process. The hiring process usually takes up to six months, but when working with the individual through this program, most of the process will have already been done. This approach will save time in the hiring process.

Councilmember Jimenez said he also believes this will help with recruitment and will encourage someone to be a representative of the community.

Mayor Velazquez knows the council had previously approved incentives and retention tools for staffing which included longevity pay and an extra step increase. If the approved tools are not working, then the council and staff should discuss other efforts and tools that other cities have used and have proved to be successful. She would like to know if Chief Wasson already has someone in mind for this position. She would like to know if there will be more than one trainee at a time. She would also like to know why there is an option for nine months because the academy is only six months. She would like to know what the real total cost would be for the program. She also wants to know if this is an urgent matter that needs to be done now, or can this item be brought back later.

Chief Wasson said because the cost is so low, the money can come out of the training budget. The waiting time would be a less which outweighs the cost of the program. There is no additional or hidden cost. He would like to have the position approved now so that the position will be in place before he needs the position. If he waits to get this position approved, then when he needs it, it will not be there. This position will not cost the City any extra cost.

Soledad resident Alexis Magdaleno is not in favor of Resolution No. 5681 because he does not believe the City has enough resources to retain officers. He would like to the City to invest in alternatives to policing.

Finance Director Mike Howard said the price of a full-time officer is about \$90,000. Half of that cost is \$45,000, which is 6 months of time for the trainee. The cost of the trainee, if the trainee were not a current employee, would be roughly \$31,000. The savings to the City for the six-month period would save about \$13,500. If the candidate is an existing employee, the savings would be greater because that person is already budgeted in the system.

Councilmember Jimenez thinks this will be a good tool of investment into the community.

**Motion:** Councilmember Jimenez made motion to approve items C-3. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried by the following vote:

**Action:**

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

C-5. Resolution No. 5683, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Authorizing the City Manager to Sign a Letter of Intent to Enter an Agreement With the Soledad-Mission Recreation District to Collaborate on Recreational Services to the Community and Create an Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee.

Councilmember Chavez would like clarity in the recommendation of creating an Ad-Hoc sub-committee and signing a letter of intend to enter into an agreement with the Soledad-Mission Recreation District.

Councilmember Jimenez said he is not comfortable with moving forward with a letter of Intent at this time. He is ok with creating an Ad-Hoc sub-committee.

City Manager Slama said the goal is to show interest in working with the Soledad-Mission Recreation District on a project. Another goal is to create a sub-committee to make sure the City moves forward. The purpose of the item is to let the Recreation District know that the City wants to have more formal talks. Timing is important and the City needs to create their own recreation department and that will not be easy and needs to be addressed quickly.

Mayor Velazquez would like to move forward with the Ad-Hoc sub-Committee to set up a foundation. She recommends herself and Councilmember Chavez be on the sub-Committee and she recommends the alternate member be Councilmember Jimenez.

Councilmember Jimenez does not see the urgency in this item. He does not want to take on more than the City can afford to do. He would like to approach this item cautiously.

Councilmember Chavez would like to move this project along with caution. He would also like to accept the recommendation of Mayor Velazquez to be on the sub-Committee.

Mayor Velazquez would like to move forward with the Ad-Hoc sub-committee, but not sign the letter of intent.

City Attorney Rodriquez said the resolution does not need to be adopted.

**Motion:**

Information was received by council.

No Action taken for this item.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

- None

**BUSINESS**

B-1. A Presentation by Buxton Company Senior Vice President Lisa Hill Regarding Economic Development Tools for the City of Soledad.

City Manager Slama presented the staff report and introduced Buxton Company Senior Vice President Lisa Hill.

Councilmember Chavez thanked Ms. Hill for the provided information. He would like to have retailers interested in coming to Soledad and feels the information presented will be beneficial to the City. He would like to move forward with the item.

Mayor Velazquez said having this type of data is important to have and believes this will be good to move forward with in the next budget cycle.

Councilmember Jimenez said the information will be helpful for incoming retailers and will work well with other strategies the City is developing.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge said she is in favor of moving forward with the item moving forward in the next budget cycle. The data is helpful and will also help the community to see more clearly of how retailers can come to Soledad.

**Motion:**

Information was received by council.

Direction given

No Action taken for this item.

B-2. Professional Support RFQ Engineering Services Presentation.

Public Works Director Oscar Antillon presented the staff report and presentation.

Councilmember Jimenez would like to know if the work could be done in-house if the City had the engineers or would the City still have to hire outside support.

Public Works Director Antillon said if the City had Engineers in-house, most work could be taken care of. There are still outside engineering services for specialty jobs that would still be needed. There is a huge benefit to having engineers in-house because that person would know what is going on from day to day. Right now, the City relies on contracts from outside engineering resources.

Mayor Velazquez would like to see a five-to-ten-year plan so the council can gauge the needs. She would like to see an analysis to see what positions are needed for the next five to ten years. She would like to see a copy of the RFQ language and the existing professional services agreement.

**Motion:**

Information was received by council.

Direction given

No Action taken for this item.

B-3. Resolution No. 5687, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an Option and Land Lease Agreement Between the City of Soledad and GTE Mobilnet of California Limited Partnership, DBA Verizon Wireless for Approximately 625 Square Feet of Space in Blas Santana Park for the Construction and Operation of a Telecommunications Antenna and Related Equipment.

City Manager Slama presented the staff report.

City Attorney Mike Rodriquez explained the item further.

Councilmember Jimenez asked if a survey was done with the neighbors.

City Manager Slama said that the neighborhood has not been surveyed because the plans have not been submitted. Once plans are submitted the item will go before the Planning Commission and continue to move forward.

Mayor Velazquez asked where a similar project in Soledad is.

City Manager Slama said a similar project in Soledad is in Vosti Park.

Mayor Velazquez asked how the City handle concerns of radio frequency, radiation, and magnetic fields. How would the public be able to voice their concerns.

City Manager Slama said the towers are regulated by the FCC and are equipped to handle those types of concerns. The City does not have anyone on staff that can handle those concerns. The City has never received any past complaints about other tower projects in the past.

Mayor Velazquez would like to see a copy of the final agreement in red-line version.

Attorney Mike Rodriquez said the text to the actual agreement will not have changes. There will be modifications to the plans. The changes will be provided to the council.

Councilmember Chavez is glad that the City is finally moving forward with the project. This will be helpful to teams that hold practice in the park.

**Motion:** Councilmember Chavez made motion to approve items B-3. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried by the following vote:

**Action:**

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

B-4. Mayor and City Council Members' Appointments to the Measure "Y" Citizens Oversight Committee and the Measure "S" Citizens Oversight Committee.

City Manager Brent Slama presented the staff report.

Mayor Velazquez recommends that the City does further outreach to get more applications submitted. She would also like to have the councilmembers do outreach in the community.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge would like to extend the date extended to 03/05/2021 and have the item be brought back to the council on the 03/17/2021 agenda. She would also like to see sponsored post done on the social media platforms. She would like the community policing person to hand out flyers to Soledad residents and local business owners to bring awareness while he is doing community outreach.

Councilmember Chavez agrees with extending the date so that more applications can be received.

Councilmember Jimenez asked that each councilmember reach out to five people each so that more applications can be received. He also asked if the terms can be staggered.

**Motion:**

Information was received by council.

Direction given

No Action taken for this item.

B-5. Review and Provide Direction on Draft Dog Breeding Ordinance.

Attorney Mike Rodriguez presented the staff report.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge for bringing this issue to the attention of the council.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge asked if the ordinance language could also say "Upon proof of spay or neuter within 30 days, fines would be waived." She also said that if the individual shows the SnipBus with a proof of citations then SnipBus would spay or neuter the animal at no cost and the animal at the front of the line for services. She is not sure of that information also needs to be referenced in the ordinance as well. On page 8, item 2, she would like the age to be changed from four months to two months. She thanked the council for allowing this item to move forward. She feels proud that the City of Soledad will be the first City in South County to bring a new ordinance like this. When Measure S does meet, she would like that committee to look at how they can help enforce the ordinance with the funds that will be set aside for animal welfare services.

**Motion:**

Information was received by council.

Direction given

No Action taken for this item.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

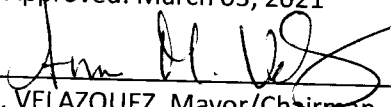
Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge had 1 item:

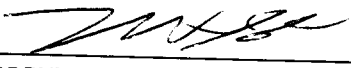
1. She would like staff to ask the Food Bank of Monterey County if they would consider changing their day of distribution here in Soledad or adding a make-up day when there is a holiday that falls on a Monday.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Velazquez adjourned the Regular meeting at 9:57 p.m.

Minutes Approved: March 03, 2021

  
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ANNA M. VELAZQUEZ, Mayor/Chairman

  
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BRENT SLAMA, City Clerk/Agency Secretary