

Minutes

City of Soledad Joint
City Council/Successor Agency
Regular Meeting

May 19, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Velazquez called the City Council/Successor Agency Meeting to order at 6:00 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	Alejandro Chavez
Councilmember/Agencymember	Ben Jimenez, Jr.

THE FOLLOWING COUNCILMEMBER WAS ABSENT

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

- None

MEETING RECESS FOR CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Velazquez recessed to closed session at 6:01 p.m.

MEETING RECONVENED FROM CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Velazquez reconvened from closed session at approximately 6:37 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

1. The City Council will recess to closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(a) to confer with its attorney regarding pending litigation which has been initiated formally and to which the City is a party. The title of the litigation is Fernandez, et, al. v. City of Soledad.

2. The City Council will recess to closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2) to confer with its attorney regarding litigation and is hereby of the opinion that a significant exposure to litigation exists.
3. 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 the 1000 Block of Front Street, City of Soledad, APN: 022-001-004. Instructions will include price, terms of payment and other relevant conditions.

CLOSED SESSION REPORTS

1. City Attorney Michael Rodriguez reported with respect to item no. 1, the council conferred with legal counsel. No other reportable action was taken.
2. With respect to item no. 2, the council conferred with legal counsel. No other reportable action was taken.
3. With respect to item no. 3, the council conferred with its real property negotiator and provided direction. No other reportable action was taken.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Tony Virrueta

ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA

- None

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Resident of Soledad, Mr. Tony Virrueta had 3 items:
 - He is a part of S.C.A.R. (South County Animal Rescue). S.C.A.R. is requesting a grant of \$5,000 from the city council. Their total budget for the year is \$85,000. He is also reaching out to all other Cities that utilize S.C.A.R.
 - On Saturday, 05/15 he took part in a clean-up/beautification initiative. He is hoping that more clean-up days can take place in the future.
 - On Memorial Day, 05/31/2021, There will be the annual Memorial Day ceremony. The event will be at the Soledad Cemetery and starts at 10:00 a.m. The guest speaker will be Chief Kenneth Peaches.

CENTENNIAL SPOTLIGHT

- None

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Velazquez had 4 items to report:

1. On 05/19 she attended the South County Mayors meeting with Supervisor Lopez.
2. On 05/15 she participated in a Beautification Initiative. She thanked all volunteers that gave of their time. She also thanked Salinas Valley Solid Waste Recycle, Save the Whales and Maury Treleven.
3. On 05/17 she spoke with the youth that are a part of the Police Explorers program. She thanked Chief Wasson for inviting her.
4. On 05/18 she participated in the Ad-Hoc Recreation Sub-Committee meeting.
5. She has been participating in webinars regarding the American Rescue Plan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

Councilmember Chavez had no items to report.

Councilmember Lara had no items to report.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge had no items to report.

Councilmember Jimenez had 2 items to report:

1. On 05/13 he attended the ACCAPS meeting.
2. On 05/20 he will be attending the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority meeting.

COUNCILMEMBER PRAISES

Councilmember Jimenez had 1 praise:

1. He praised the Measure Y Citizens Oversight Committee for their time and recommendations.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge had no praises at this time.

Councilmember Chavez had no praises at this time.

Councilmember Lara had 1 praise:

1. She praised Hartnell College Board President Erica Padilla-Chavez for giving the council a tour of the new Hartnell College, Soledad Education Center.

Mayor Velazquez had 1 praise:

1. She thanked the Soledad High School NJROTC Cadets and Captain Pete, Chief Peaches and Chief Dunn for their volunteer work in preparation for the Clean-up event.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

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

1. Recreation Manager Rebecca Hall has been interviewing young people for jobs and summer programming.
2. Staff will be moving to the Soledad Visitors Center very soon.
3. He thanked City staff for the tremendous amount of work they have been doing.
4. He thanked the Soledad Police Department for all the hard work they have been putting forth in keeping the community safe.

YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT

Soledad Youth Commissioners Amber Solorio, Ximena Mandujano, Christian Pantoja, Sophia Vargas, Marcela Perez, and Maya Padilla-Chavez presented a verbal update.

Mayor Velazquez thanked the youth council members for their efforts.

Councilmember Chavez thanked the youth council members for taking on the challenges they have accomplished.

PRESENTATIONS

1. A Presentation overview of the 211 United Way Monterey County was given by President CEO, Katy Castagna.
2. A Presentation of Certificates of Recognition for Vaccination Site Volunteers and Partners were presented by Mayor Velazquez.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilmember Jimenez asked that Item C-6 be pulled for further discussion.

Motion: Councilmember Chavez made motion to approve items C-1 through C-5. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried unanimous vote:

Action:

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

Approval of Minutes

C-1. Approval of Minutes

Joint City Council/Successor Agency Regular Meeting Minutes of May 05, 2021.

C-2. Warrants

044055 - 044215

C-3. Review of First Four Months Financial Progress Report.

C-4. Resolution No. 5709, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving an Agreement for Construction Services with VSS International in an Amount Not-to-Exceed \$300,000.00 for the FY 20/21 SB 1 Preventative Maintenance Project and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Said Agreement on Behalf of the City.

C-5. Consideration and Approval by Minute Motion of Fireworks 2021 Sales Permits.

Motion: Councilmember Jimenez made motion to approve item C-6 with the correction that it will not incur any costs or expenses. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried unanimous vote:

Action:

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

C-6. Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding Between the City of Soledad and El Pajaro Community Development Corporation for the Regional Women's Business Center Program.

Councilmember Jimenez would like staff to specify whether the item will or will not incur costs.

City Manager Slama said at this point each party will pay its own costs, bring their own forms and supplies. There is no rent rate, and the terms of the times will be established by staff. This is a part of the city's outreach to promote businesses, micro businesses, and woman entrepreneurs.

Councilmen Chavez said he would like the City to also look into partnering with Mission Services Corporation.

BUSINESS

- B-1. Resolution No. 5710, A Resolution in Support of Publication of Notice of Intent to Apply Restricted Pesticides.

City Manager Slama presented the staff report.

There were 9 public comments received by the Deputy City Clerk via email. The comments were read into the record in Spanish by certified Spanish Interpreter and Translator Yesenia Fernandez, and in English by Deputy City Clerk Darlene Noriega:

1. Soledad Resident Juan Manuel Moran submitted a public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
2. Soledad Resident Audelia Garcia submitted a public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
3. Soledad Resident Liliana Elizabeth Fajardo De La Fuente submitted a public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
4. Soledad Resident Juana Ramos submitted a public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
5. Soledad Resident Rufina Recendez submitted a public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
6. Soledad Resident Rosa Lopez submitted a public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
7. Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indigena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO) Executive Director Sarait Martinez submitted a public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
8. Vice President of the UFW Lauro Barajas submitted a public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
9. Monterey Bay Central Labor Council Executive Director Cesar Lara submitted a public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.

There were 4 public comments received via Zoom participation:

1. Monterey Bay Central Labor Council Veronica Diaz made public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.

2. Soledad Resident Alexis Magdaleno made public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
3. City of Greenfield City Councilmember Yanelly Martinez made public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.
4. Hektor Calderon made public comment in favor of Resolution No. 5710.

Councilmember Chavez feels the Notice of Intent is needed for the Community to better understand the environment in this area. Moving forward makes sense for the City of Soledad.

Councilmember Lara feels that it is the right of people to know this type of information. It is important to be transparent.

Councilmember Jimenez said he agrees with moving forward with Resolution No. 5710. He feels the resolution is appropriate for this area.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge asked Hektor Calderon if the Monterey County pilot program, Farming Safely Near Schools, will be expanded into South County.

Hektor Calderon said that program is only offered in North Monterey County and as of September 2020 according to the Board of Supervisors, the program would not expand into South County because it did not make sense to do that while school was not in session. At the time no one was asking for that program to be expanded but it would be good to have that program implemented now that students are back in school. However, the program is only for school districts which means community members would not find out the information if they are not a part of the school district.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge would like to stay posted about the program expanding to South County. She would like the last "Resolved" section to be changed from "in strong support" to "Encourages the posting". With those changes she would support the adoption of the resolution.

Mayor Velazquez supports any farm worker protections and is in support of addressing issues that farm workers are facing. The City has no oversight over the Ag Commissioner. She wants to support a resolution that has an outcome driven component. She would like amendments and language added to include the items of how the pesticide issues will be addressed. This resolution does not provide strategies to address the pesticide issues. She would like to review the data of outreach data and the data of the pilot program and how can this project be expanded into South County. She would like to look further into how the City can work with the school district in making sure they also have access to the existing notification process. She would also like to learn further about how awareness can be raised so that the community understands how to report existing violations.

Councilmember Chavez would like to move forward with the resolution. He does agree with both Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and Mayor Velazquez. He would also like to look further into the pilot program.

Motion: Councilmember Jimenez made motion to approve Resolution No. 5710 as written. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Chavez and carried the following vote:

Action:

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

B-2. Implementation of a Formal City Paid (Pilot) Internship Program for Summer 2021.

Community Engagement Manager Lynnelle Sanchez presented the staff report and PowerPoint presentation.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Community Engagement Manager Lynnelle Sanchez for the presentation.

Councilmember Chavez liked the idea of the pilot program and liked seeing who the program would partner with.

Councilmember Lara is in favor of the Pilot Internship Program. She feels this type of program is crucial in a community like Soledad.

Councilmember Jimenez is in favor of a program like the Pilot Internship Program and is excited to see the outcome. He hopes to see follow up done.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge is in support of the Pilot Internship Program and is looking forward to seeing this program move forward.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge suggested Item B-3 is discussed before Item B-4.

Mayor Velazquez agreed to move Item B-3 to be discussed before Item B-4.

B-4. Review and Consider Approval of the Measure Y Citizens Oversight Committee's Recommendation to the Council for the Allocation of FY 2021-2022 Measure Y Funds.

City Manager Slama presented the staff report and PowerPoint presentation.

At this time Mayor Velazquez asked if there were any public comments regarding the item.

There were 6 public comments received at this time:

1. Measure Y Oversight Committee Chair Chris Bourke said the Measure Y Oversight Committee gave their recommendations according to what direction and information that was received by the council and staff. He explained, Measure Y was originally set up to save police, fire, and City staff jobs. The recreation part was \$120,000 for the YMCA contract that was coming out of the general fund. There are people who have said that public safety is more than police and fire, and should include health services and social workers, the Measure Y Committee questioned if those things should be paid by the City of Soledad, the Measure Y Committee does not believe they should. Measure Y was set up for specific things; police, fire and to save jobs of City employees.

Councilmember Jimenez thanked Measure Y Chair Chris Bourke and the Measure Y Committee for their recommendations.

2. Resident of Soledad Alexis Magdaleno is not in favor of the Measure Y Committee recommendations.
3. Bernie Gomez is not in favor of the Measure Y Committee recommendations.
4. Resident of Soledad Benny Guijarro is not in favor of the Measure Y Committee recommendations.
5. Resident of Soledad Lupita Arroyo is not in favor of the Measure Y Committee recommendations.
6. Hektor Calderon is not in favor of the Measure Y Committee recommendations.

Councilmember Jimenez thanked the Measure Y Oversight Committee for their recommendations. He would like to move forward with the Victim/Homeless Advocate. He does not want to separate it. He believes this will give the City an opportunity to provide the resource to the community and keep the police notified right away if assistance is needed. He is not in agreement with hiring an Administrative Sergeant. He would like to bring on two officers instead of one sergeant.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge would like to move forward with the Victim/Homeless Advocate. This would be a position that would work closely with law enforcement. The position would be dedicated to Soledad. The position would be on-call. The advocate could handle calls for mental health services. This position would be able to provide assistance and guidance from the beginning of the situation. This is not a sworn position and is not a police officer. She feels hesitant about moving forward with an Administrative Sergeant. She would feel better hiring two police officers.

Councilmember Chavez would like to move forward with the Victim Advocate position in Administration and believes it make the most sense to have the position in the Police Department. He does not want to move forward with hiring an Administrative Sergeant. He asked for clarity regarding what positions are being asked for.

City Manager Slama said the original recommendation of the Committee was one Administrative Sergeant, One Police Officer and one Victim Advocate.

Police Chief Wasson thanked City Manager Slama for bringing clarity regarding statements made that police using all Measure Y funds. The Soledad Police Department is requesting an Administrative Sergeant so that person can take care of all the administrative duties and police sergeants will not have to be pulled off the streets to take care of admin duties. He would like to have a Victim Advocate so the City can have someone dedicated to giving assistance and guidance to victims. The position is not a sworn position. The reason why the advocate would be at the Police Department is because when someone is a victim of a crime, they come to the police department. It makes sense for this position to be at the police department. If the City would rather hire two officers, he would be fine with that. His goal in asking for an Administrative Sergeant is so a sergeant will not need to come off the street to do administrative duties.

Councilmember Lara asked why the City needs an Administrative Sergeant.

Chief Wasson said there are many things an officer can not do on their own because of title.

Deputy Chief Lombardi said an officer cannot do many functions that the County requires. He does appreciate all comments by the public and councilmembers. He does agree that public safety is more than policing. The Soledad Police Department partners with many organizations and agencies throughout Monterey County to be able to provide a huge variety of services to the Community. This year there has only been 14 juvenile arrests and 4 citizen complaints.

Councilmember Lara would like Fire, Administration and Capital reserve fund to remain the same as recommended. She would like to move forward with the Victim/Homeless Advocate. She is not in favor of an Administrative Sergeant or one additional police officer.

Mayor Velazquez asked Councilmember Lara what her suggestions are in place of not moving forward with the Administrative Sergeant and one additional Police Officer.

Councilmember Lara would like to see more services for community engagement, mentorship programs, mental health services, student access to after school services regarding mental health services and stability for youth. She would also like to have more housing, rental assistance, and more police officer engagement services.

Mayor Velazquez said she is not against a victim advocate and knows the community would benefit from it. She is against the hybrid position because a homeless advocate and a Victim Advocate are two different positions. She would like a better understanding of the services that are being offered to Soledad by the County. She would like to take time to gather information about the service providers who are already addressing the mental health needs and victims needs. She does not want to move forward with an Administration Sergeant, she would like to add another police officer.

Councilmember Lara would like to bring all the County's services here to Soledad, in one building. She would like programs that benefit the community.

Motion: Councilmember Jimenez made motion to accept the Measure Y Oversight Committees recommendations with the exceptions of the Administrative Sergeant position, adding in two Police Officer positions and the Victim Advocate. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried unanimous vote:

Action:

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

MEETING RECESSED

Mayor Velazquez recessed the meeting at 10:14 p.m.

MEETING RECONVIEND

Mayor Velazquez reconvened the meeting at 10:22 p.m.

- B-3. A Presentation Regarding Economic Development Initiatives and Front Street Development and Reconsiderations of Resolution No. 5699, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving a Contract for Construction Services with the Ross Recreation Equipment Company in the Amount of \$118,936.00 for the Gazebo Project and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Said Contract on Behalf of the City of Soledad.

This item has been continued to the 06/02/2021 Regular City Council meeting.

- B-5. Resolution No's. 5702, 5703, 5704, 5705, & 5706, Resolutions of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving Preliminary Annual Engineer's Reports and Declaring the City's Intention to Levy and Collect Annual Assessments for Various Districts for Fiscal Year 2021/2022 and Setting a Time and Place for a Public Hearing.
(Continued from 05/05/2021 City Council meeting)

Public Works Director Oscar Antillon presented the staff report.

Councilmember Chavez recused himself from the meeting for Resolutions 5702 and 5703.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge made motion to adopt Resolutions 5702 and 5703. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Lara and carried by the following vote:

Action:

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

Councilmember Chavez returned to the meeting for Resolutions 5704 and 5705

Councilmember Lara recused herself from the meeting for Resolutions 5704 and 5705.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge made motion to adopt Resolutions 5704 and 5705. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Jimenez and carried by the following vote:

Action:

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

Councilmember Lara returned to the meeting for Resolution 5706.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge made motion to adopt Resolution 5706. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Chavez and carried by unanimous vote:

Action:

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

- B-6. Review of City Council Calendar, Agendas and Consideration of an Ad-Hoc Policy Committee.

Mayor Velazquez presented the staff report.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge has volunteered to be on the Ad-Hoc Policy Committee for policy and procedures only. She would like to suggest in addition to the limit of presentations on each agenda, She would also like to put a 3 to 5 minutes time limit on Mayor and Council's comments for presentations. She would also like to move presentations to the end, around 8:00 p.m. to allow council to take care of business items first. Having Business at the end is a disservice to the residents.

Mayor Velazquez clarified the item discussion is:

1. Moving Mayor and Council report's to after Business.
2. Strongly encourage written reports.

3. Limiting presentations to two per meeting
4. Moving non-requested presentations to after Council Business

She also added that everyone has a right to be thorough in a comment and reserves the right to do so.

Councilmember Chavez said he agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge in placing presentations around 8:00 p.m.

Mayor Velazquez made motion to approve the Ad-Hoc Policy Sub-Committee to address only Policies and Procedures. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried by unanimous vote:

Action:

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

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councilmember Jimenez would like a report from the Ad-Hoc Recreation Sub-Committee.

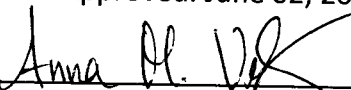
Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge would like a status update of the City Council purchasing new chairs.

Mayor Velazquez would like to discuss AB 1383 and rate increases.


ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Velazquez adjourned the Regular meeting at 10:37 p.m.

Minutes Approved: June 02, 2021



ANNA M. VELAZQUEZ, Mayor/Chair



BRENT SLAMA, City Clerk/Agency

