

## Minutes

City of Soledad  
Joint City Council/Successor Agency  
Regular Meeting

October 20, 2021

### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Velazquez called the City Council/Successor Agency Meeting to order at 6:01 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	Ben Jimenez, Jr.
Councilmember/Agencymember	Marisela Lara
Councilmember/Agencymember	Alejandro Chavez

### THE FOLLOWING COUNCILMEMBER WAS ABSENT

- None

### PUBLIC COMMENT- CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

City Attorney Mike Rodriquez and City Manager Brent Slama have requested to add an item to the closed session agenda.

Attorney Mike Rodriquez said the issue arose after the agenda was published. There is need to discuss the matter with the council.

Mayor Velazquez entertained a motion to add the third item of:

The City Council will recess to closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9 (D)(1) to confer with its legal counsel – Claim/Complaint of Lugo.

**Motion:** Councilmember Chavez made motion to add item number 3 to the closed session agenda. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried by unanimous vote:

**Action:**

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

There were no public comments at this time.

**MEETING RECESS FOR CLOSED SESSION**

Mayor Velazquez recessed to Closed Session at 6:04 p.m.

**MEETING RECONVENED**

Mayor Velazquez reconvened from Closed Session at approximately 6:45 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION**

1. The City Council will recess to Closed Session to consider personnel matters pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(B)(1) - City Manager Evaluation.
2. The City Council will recess to closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2) to confer with its legal counsel - Significant exposure to litigation.
3. The City Council will recess to closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9 (D)(1) to confer with its legal counsel – Claim/Complaint of Lugo.

**CLOSED SESSION REPORTS**

1. City Attorney Mike Rodriquez reported with respect to item no. 1, the mechanics of the evaluation were discussed, and direction was provided to the City Attorney. No other reportable action taken.
2. With respect to item no. 2, the council met legal counsel regarding an item of litigation. No other reportable action taken.
3. With respect to item no. 3, the council conferred with legal counsel and provided direction. No other reportable action taken.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

1. Ms. Jennifer Gray led the Pledge of Allegiance

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

- None

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments at this time.

## **MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION**

1. A Proclamation of the City Council of the City of Soledad Proclaiming October 2021, National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.
- YWCA of Monterey County, CEO, Christine Duncan thanked the City of Soledad for honoring the victims of domestic violence and proclaiming October 2021, National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. She also introduced Ms. Zamora who works with victims of domestic violence in the City of Soledad. Ms. Zamora also thanked the council for their support and recognition of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.
- Lideres Campesinas Marta Zarrate thanked the council for their support of the victims of domestic violence. She thanked the council for the proclamation of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Lideres Campesinas Marta Zarrate expressed her message in Spanish. Mayor Velazquez translated the message to English.

Mayor Velazquez thanked the representatives from YWCA and Lideres Campesinas and asked that a photo be taken with the groups and the council.

A group photo was taken at this time.

2. A Proclamation of the City Council of the City of Soledad Proclaiming October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, as Hartnell College Higher Learning Awareness Day.
- The second proclamation will be presented by Mayor Velazquez at the Soledad Education Center grand opening celebration on Saturday, October 23, 2021, at 11:00 a.m.

## **YOUTH COUNCIL'S REPORT**

- Soledad Youth Commission members Sophia Vargas and Alan Briseño presented a brief verbal update of October 20, 2021.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

1. Economic Development & Housing Program Coordinator Tencia Vargas introduced business loan recipient Ms. Jennifer Gray.

CDBG Business Loan Recipient and resident of Soledad Jennifer Gray presented a brief verbal update explaining how the CDBG Business Loan helped her new business, Grooms by Jen. She also provided City Manager Brent Slama and City Councilmembers with a keepsake from her new business.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Ms. Gray for her testimony. She is grateful for the CDBG funding to bring support to local businesses.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge also thanked Ms. Gray for her story. She thanked her for helping the residents of Soledad with pet grooming services that they may otherwise, not be able to physically get their pets to a place to provide them the needed care. She thanked Ms. Gray for all that she does in the Community.

Mayor Velazquez also thanked Economic Development & Housing Program Coordinator Tencia Vargas and the Economic Development department for their efforts in assisting Soledad businesses.

Councilmember Chavez also thanked Economic Development & Housing Program Coordinator Tencia Vargas and the Economic Development department for their efforts in helping the growth of the up-and-coming small businesses in the Community.

Councilmember Lara thanked Ms. Gray for providing support for the pets of families in the City of Soledad.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

There were no public comments or questions at this time.

City Manager Slama said there were two modifications made to the minutes of 10/06/2021. The edited minutes were provided on the dais for the council.

**Motion:** Councilmember Jimenez made motion to approve items C-1 through C-4 with the noted modifications. Motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge and carried by unanimous vote:

**Action:**

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

**C-1. Approval of Minutes**

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

**C-2. Warrants**

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**C-3.** Resolution No. 5749, A Resolution of the City council of the City of Soledad Authorizing the City Manager to Execute All Master Agreements, Program Supplemental Agreements, and Related Agreements and Amendments thereto with the State of California, Department of Transportation, for Federal and/or State Funded Projects.

**C-4.** Resolution No. Use of Land Permit for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Front Street Spook Fest. A Collaboration Between Front Street Group, City of Soledad, and the Soledad Police Department.

**BUSINESS**

**B-1.** Review of the Draft Fiscal Year-End Financial Report.

Finance Director Mike Howard presented the staff report.

Councilmember Jimenez thanked Finance Director Mike Howard for the report. He is glad the City is in a good place, and he is happy about how staff budgeted.

Councilmember Chavez thanked Finance Director Mike Howard for the report. He feels it is a good report overall.

Mayor Velazquez asked if the General Plan Update funds will carry over to next year.

Finance Director Mike Howard said the funds from the General Fund Update will carry over.

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson said this week his department will meet with consultants regarding proposed budgets for consultants. Once the budget is at a point of being ready for council consideration, staff will bring the report back to council.

Mayor Velazquez asked about expenses that were approved by the council for the Community Center but didn't happen.

Finance Director Mike Howard said the dividers were approved by the council. The items regarding bleachers and cabinetry will come back to the council this current fiscal year for approval.

City Manager Slama said there are also several things that have been done and will continue to be done under the authority of the City Manager such as replacing the curtain. There are also things that will need to go out for bid so once that is done, these items will come back to the council.

Soledad Resident Alexis Magdeleno Mora gave public comment via Zoom. Mr. Magdeleno Mora said he was confused by the language of the report. He understands there may be extra funding available to the City and he would like to remind the council that there is still a lack of services and resources such as mental health, housing, utility assistance, youth services and service for substance abuse. He would like the funding to be used for those needs of the community.

Benito gave public comment via Zoom. He said he hopes the language of the reports can be written in a way that is more understandable to the residents of the City of Soledad. He would like the surplus finances to be invested in case workers or social workers that can bring support to residents. He would like there to be more community engagements so the community can have a say to where the money can be directed to.

Fernando gave public comment said he said he would like the council to consider the other languages that are spoken in Soledad so that those residents can also be engaged. He would like to see the surplus of funds expanded to parks and recreation, trails for people to walk, and housing.

Mayor Velazquez said the staff is actively working towards addressing many of needs of the Community and thanked everyone for their public comments.

B-2. Resolution No. 5750, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving the Expenditure of \$27,675 to Hartnell College for the Salinas Valley Promise Program.

City Manager Slama presented the staff report. He would also like council to establish a clear process of funding nonprofits.

Mayor Velazquez said she would like to have a discussion regarding establishing a process, criteria and timeline for funding nonprofits that are transparent and equitable. She would also like to discuss how much discretionary funding does the council have.

City Manager Slama said he has seen a mini grants program in past in another city. The mini grants were tied into the budget. There was an application process and could be used for nonprofits that provided services to the City. This may be something the council might be interested in doing.

Councilmember Jimenez said the Hartnell College for the Salinas Valley Promise Program is an excellent program and he supports the council supporting the program. He agrees there should be a clear process so that things can be budgeted accordingly.

Councilmember Chavez agrees that there should be a clear process for funding nonprofits. He feels the grant for the Hartnell College for the Salinas Valley Promise Program is more of a long-term commitment from the City Nonprofits should have to apply every year for grants from the City. The City can look at the Community Foundation process as to their criteria for mini grants. This is an opportunity for the City to bring in social service programs, but those types of programs need grants that would provide support for those services.

Mayor Velazquez would like to move forward with having a future discussion about the grant process.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge agrees with Councilmember Chavez and believes the Hartnell College for the Salinas Valley Promise Program expenditure is a commitment and not a grant. She does believe there should be policies in place regarding grants and mini grants. She would like to see examples from other cities that are similar in size and budgets so that the council can get a better idea of how to move forward. She would like that to be a separate item.

Councilmember Lara agrees that this specific expenditure to the Hartnell College for the Salinas Valley Promise Program should be a commitment from the City. Moving forward she would like to see how many students are receiving the service through the Promise Program. She does not want to see this specific topic again and would like it to become a part of the budget, but she would like to see a report of students served.

City Manager Slama said staff can make this a separate line item in the budget.

Finance Director Mike Howard said these funds were budget in the previous fiscal year. He can approve this expenditure into the previous fiscal year and it will be charged to the previous fiscal year.

Soledad Resident and Hartnell College Student Laura Rivera thanked the council for the commitment they have made to the Hartnell College Salinas Valley Promise Program. She feels the City's commitment has made being a student a good experience because students are not needing to worry about fees and book costs.

Mayor Velazquez clarified what the City is funding. The two years for college tuition is already free as part of the State allocation to community colleges for any student regardless of income. The City of Soledad is providing additional services for the 123 students from Soledad; providing the students with additional counseling support, laptops and other supplies needed for success.

Guadalupe Arroyo gave public comment via Zoom. She is very much in favor of the City of Soledad's financial commitment to the Hartnell College for the Salinas Valley Promise Program as a community member. She believes this program will help students in Soledad to obtain higher education and will also help students because they will not need to travel all the way to Salinas. She is excited about the new facility. She thanked the council for their efforts and is excited for the future.

Soledad Resident Alexis Magdeleno Mora gave public comment via Zoom. He is in favor of the City's support to the Hartnell College for the Salinas Valley Promise Program. He feels this is a good example of public safety and believes it is critical in the shaping for the future of Soledad.

Fernando gave public comment via Zoom. He is in favor of the City supporting the Hartnell College Salinas Valley Promise Program in Soledad. He would like to know if there is a space for social services to come and present workshops. He also asked if there is a cost to use spaces available.

Mayor Velazquez said the Soledad Community Center would be a viable space for those types of workshops to occur. The City is also working towards entering into an MOU with the Soledad Unified School District to be able to utilize those spaces they may have available. The Hartnell Community Education Center also has a community space where those types of workshops can happen. The cost would depend on the type of event. She asked Fernando to leave his contact information so he can be put in touch with the Recreation Program Coordinator.

There were no other public comments at this time.

**Motion:** Councilmember Jimenez made motion to approve Resolution No. 5750. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Chavez and carried by unanimous vote:

**Action:**

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

**B-3. Monterey County Face Covering Ordinance.**

City Attorney Mike Rodriquez presented the staff report.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge would like to make sure staff is continuously refilling the food pantries around town with disposable masks and would like law enforcement to continue to hand the disposable masks out to residents that need them.

City Manager Slama said staff and law enforcement have a supply of disposable masks and have continued to refill the pantries and hand out disposable masks to people when needed.

Mayor Velazquez thanked City Attorney Mike Rodriquez for the presentation. She asked if the moderate transmission rates continue beyond October 29<sup>th</sup> and thirty days after that date, will the ordinance laps and need to go back to the Board of Supervisors again.

Attorney Mike Rodriquez believes Mayor's understanding is correct. If the Board of Supervisors would like to revisit the issue of establishing a mask ordinance, then they would need to adopt an ordinance. He said In Soledad, advising people has worked well and law enforcement has not had to resort to anything further.

**Motion:**

Information was received by council.

No Action taken for this item.

**MAYORS' REPORT**

- On 10/09 she attended the City-wide clean-up event. She gave praise to the Soledad NJROCT and Maury Treleven from Tri-Cities for their efforts.
- On 10/10 she attended a food distribution event in Soledad organized by Celebration Nation Foundation.
- On 10/11 she attended the MST ribbon cutting ceremony in King City.
- On 10/11 she attended the MST Board of Directors meeting.
- On 10/13 she attended the District 3 Mayors County meeting.
- On 10/15 she attended the Rancho San Vicente grand opening to celebrate and honor the work and legacy of Mr. Alfred Diaz-Infante and the 8 housing units and ADU's.
- On 10/15 she attended a food distribution at San Vicente School as part of World Food Day honoring Mr. Alfred Diaz-Infante. She thanked Mr. Anthony Vasquez who is a part of the organization who helped distribute boxes of food.
- On 10/15 she had a discussion with Soledad Medical Clinic RDN Julia Snell regarding a comprehensive food distribution calendar for Soledad.

- On 10/17 she attended the pop-up vaccination clinic in partnership with Monterey County VIDA Program, The Community Foundation, and the McDonalds. The next clinic is scheduled for 11/07.
- On 10/19 she attended a round table discussion with Senator Anna Caballero. She thanked City Manager Slama, Police Chief Wasson, Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson, Economic Development & Housing Program Manager Tencia Vargas, Community Engagement Manager Lynnelle Sanchez, Soledad Unified School District Superintendent Randy Bangs and Soledad Medical Center CEO Ida Lopez Chan.
- Mayor Velazquez welcomed the new Soledad Police Officer Alejandro Castillo.
- Mayor Velazquez announced that she will be having office hours at Soledad City Hall every first and third Wednesday of each month from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

### **COUNCILMEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS**

Councilmember Chavez had 1 item to report:

1. On 10/20 he attended a TAMC Special meeting.

Councilmember Jimenez had 3 items to report:

1. On 10/14 he attended the ACCAPS meeting. There will be an ACCAPS Strategic meeting held in Soledad on 02/10/2022, staff assistance will be needed for 50 to 75 attendees.
2. On 10/20 he toured the Historical Society Museum building.
3. On 10/21 he will be attending a meeting with the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority.

Mayor Velazquez asked staff to arrange a date for the council to take a tour of the Historical Society Building.

### **COUNCILMEMBERS' PRAISES**

Councilmember Jimenez praised the Historical Society for their efforts in preserving the history of the City of Soledad.

Mayor Pro Tem Stobridge also praised the Historical Society for their efforts in preserving the City's history. She also praised the Public Works Department for taking care of the City of Soledad because they do a great job in making the City look fantastic.

Councilmember Lara praised the Front Street Group, The Soledad Police Department, and the Soledad Youth Council. She is excited about the upcoming Spook Fest and is looking forward to the event.

Councilmember Chavez also praised the Front Street Group and the Soledad Youth Council for their efforts in organizing the upcoming Spook Fest. He praised the youth of Soledad for continuing to practice sports through the changes of the season and having less light. He hopes

that Soledad can be a part of giving the kids the tools to be able to move forward. He would like to put lights up at the parks, so parents won't need to pull up their vehicles and use their headlights for lighting the park in order for their children to practice.

Mayor Velazquez praised the City staff for the ongoing outreach to the Community regarding the utility program and for supporting small businesses and Community members. She also thanked the Monterey County VIDA Program for their efforts with the census and Covid-19 testing and vaccination clinics.

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

- City Manager Slama reported the council has his written report.
- He has attended meetings with Community Engagement Manager Lynnelle Sanchez and property owners regarding the Salinas Valley River Trail Program.
- On 10/19 he attended the round table with Senator Anna Caballero.
- The Community and Economic Development Department is applying for an additional million dollars for the next phase of the rental and utility assistance programs.
- On 10/21 he will be attending the MBASIA conference.
- On 11/01 he will be attending Jury Duty.
- On 10/19 there was a news story done regarding the opening of the Soledad movie theater.
- He thanked City staff and gave special thanks to the front counter staff Marisela Moreno and Alma Pelayo for all their efforts in making sure the City-wide Clean-up event was done correctly. He presented a PowerPoint slide show displaying the number of donated and recycled materials, hazardous materials collected, the number of volunteers that participated, and the number of hours of service.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Councilmember Lara had 1 item:

1. She would like an update on the budget allocated for the youth council.

Councilmember Jimenez had 1 item:

1. He would like to have an item on the next agenda regarding consideration of a lease for the Historical Society.


Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge had one item:

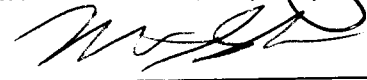
1. She would like an update on the rifle range.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- 8:47 p.m.

Minutes Approved: November 03, 2021

  
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ANNA M. VELAZQUEZ, Mayor/Chair

  
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BRENT SLAMA, City Clerk/Agency Secretary