

Minutes

City of Soledad
Joint City Council/Successor Agency/Housing Authority/Successor Housing Agency
Regular Meeting

November 17, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Velazquez called the Joint City Council/Successor Agency/Housing Authority/Successor Housing Agency/Regular 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 (Arrived at 6:04 p.m.)
Councilmember/Agencymember	Alejandro Chavez

THE FOLLOWING COUNCILMEMBER WAS ABSENT

- None

PUBLIC COMMENT- CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

There were no public comments on closed session items.

MEETING RECESS FOR CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Velazquez recessed to closed session at 6:03 p.m.

MEETING RECONVENED FROM CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Velazquez reconvened from closed session at 6:39 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 to meet with its designated representative, Brent Slama, regarding labor relations matters pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6- The employee/organization is- Unrepresented employee(s).

CLOSED SESSION REPORTS

1. City Attorney Mike Rodriguez reported with respect to item no. 1, The council discussed and provided direction on the process for the evaluation. The City Attorney was given direction and will respond accordingly. No other reportable action taken.
2. City Attorney Mike Rodriguez reported with respect to item no. 2; The council provided direction to its labor relation negotiator, City Manager Slama. No other reportable action taken.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Alan Briseño led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA

City Manager Slama requested the following modifications to the Agenda:

- Item B-6 to be removed from the agenda.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge made motion to approve the requested modification of removing item no. B-6. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Jimenez and carried by unanimous vote:

Action:

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Claudia, resident of Soledad, lives on Entrada Drive. She has three concerns: (1) She is very concerned with the speeding happening on her street. She would like to know the process of what she can do to have the City place a speedbump to help calm the speeding taking place and she would also like to know if a police officer can patrol and enforce the speed limit because there are many students, including smaller children, that cross that street and streets in the area. (2) She is concerned about a neighbor located at 73 Entrada. The neighbor is converting his garage into a studio. There are many vehicles and trailers on the lawn and around the area that are not registered, there is trash in the yard, and there are 17 people living in the home, which already seems it would be a health code violation. She would like direction of what she can do to help alleviate the problems. She would like to know a time frame of when the area can expect changes or updates. (3) She would also like the red sidewalk next to the fire hydrant repainted.
 - Mayor Velazquez agrees the area is very busy. Deputy Chief Lombardi will have officers and code enforcement in the area on 11/18. She will refer to the City Manager to look further into traffic calming measures in the area.
 - City Manager Slama asked the resident to please leave her contact information with the City Clerk, so the item can be followed up on.
 - Councilmember Chavez also asked staff to check if the home mentioned is on the ADU list of approved homes.
2. Carmelo Cruz, Resident of Soledad, Entrada Drive. He would like further safety measures taken in the area because there are many children and families that walk in the area.
3. Jose Calderon, Resident of Soledad, Entrada Drive. He would like to see officers visit the area because of the speeding cars. He is considering moving out of the City due to the speeding cars. There seems to be no enforcement. He would also like to know further information regarding people being approved to build ADU's. He is questioning why the homeowners can get permits in order for people to renovate their homes and allow even more people.
 - Mayor Velazquez said the issue will be investigated further.
 - Councilmember Chavez acknowledged there is a problem with the speeding and traffic in Soledad and these things are being looked into in order to address the speeding problems.

Mayor Velazquez took a moment of silence to extend condolences and prayers to the family of Guadalupe Garcia who lost his life on 11/16/2021.

She thanked Chief Damon Wasson for his act of bravery in stopping the criminal and ending what could have resulted in more tragic casualties of innocent bystanders. She also thanked the Soledad police officers, Greenfield police officers, Monterey County Sherriff Office, California Highway Patrol and CalFire for responding as part of the multi-jurisdictional effort that is in place.

She hopes for a speedy recovery to all officers involved. She thanked them for protecting the Community and residents. What the officers did went above and beyond their duties.

YOUTH COUNCIL'S REPORT

Soledad Youth Commission members Sophia Vargas and Alan Briseño presented a brief verbal update along with their written report of November 17, 2021.

COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS

1. Astoria Logistics Group, LLC. will give a brief presentation regarding the rifle, pistol and shotgun range located at 31500 San Vicente Road, City of Soledad.

Astoria Logistics Group, LLC was not present in the meeting.

Mayor Velazquez asked staff to place the presentation on the agenda of 12/15/2021. She would like to have the project timeline in advance of the meeting.

Councilmember Jimenez would also like the group to be present in the meeting.

2. Recreation Supervisor Jessica Potts will give an update regarding upcoming Soledad Community Center Winter Programming. She will also introduce City of Soledad Community Center Recreation Coordinators Michael Perez and Priscilia Rodriguez.

Recreation Supervisor Jessica Potts introduced City of Soledad Community Center Recreation Coordinators Priscilia Rodriguez and Michael Perez. City of Soledad Community Center Recreation Coordinators presented sections of a PowerPoint presentation.

Councilmember Chavez asked if there is a way to work through the Soledad Unified School District to get messages out to all students regarding getting involved in sports being offered by the Soledad Community Center. He would also like to see the number of sign-ups go up.

Recreation Supervisor Jessica Potts said she is in contact with the Soledad Unified School District and the information is now being included in the messages going out to students. The information is also on social media.

Councilmember Jimenez said he knows people are hesitant to come to the Community Center because of Covid, but he has been to the Community Center, and it is very clean, and staff are happy to assist people.

Mayor Velazquez asked why people pay for a membership and also have to pay additional costs to be apart of programs.

Recreation Supervisor Jessica Potts said the cost of membership focuses on the fitness. There is an extra cost for other programs because there is a cost to bring in additional programs.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Recreation Supervisor Jessica Potts and Community Center Recreation Coordinators Priscilia Rodriguez and Michael Perez.

CONSENT CALENDAR

There were no public comments.

Motion: Councilmember Jimenez made motion to approve items C-1 through C-6. 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 November 03, 2021.

C-2. Warrants

046091 - 046267

C-3. City of Soledad Monthly Department Activity Reports.

C-4. Resolution No. SHA-2021-01, a Resolution of the Successor Housing Agency for the Soledad Redevelopment Agency Approving A Subordination Agreement with JP Morgan Chase Bank Concerning the Market Street Townhome Project.

C-5. Temporary Use of Land Permit for the Soledad-Mission Chamber of Commerce Annual Christmas Parade and Festivities.

C-6. Resolution No. 5754, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Standard Non-Exclusive Consulting Service Agreement with Harris & Associates for Engineering Work on the Liberty Court Subdivision Project.

BUSINESS

B-1. Consideration of Community Center Event Sponsorship Policies.

City Manager Slama presented the staff report.

Mayor Velazquez would like to know what eligibility criteria is being used in other Cities.

City Manager Slama said other cities have numerous facilities that are privately run and have different rates and schedules for all the different needs and events. The part of the list provided that might be more of interest to the City of Soledad, is looking at the non-City sponsored list. This list shows events that were not sponsored by the City but did get the building free of charge for their event. The events are not specific to the City's mission but are organizations in the Community that do provide services to the people of the Community.

Recreation Supervisor Jessica Potts said any event that has below 250 participants cost \$1,080 and a non-profit would get a 10% discount. An event that has above 250 participants cost \$1,500 for the event.

Councilmember Chavez agrees with City Manager Slama. There are grey areas of events raising money, but that money is used for scholarships. The Chamber of Commerce used to honor members from the school board, community members and the business community. This is a bigger discussion because there are many grey areas.

Councilmember Lara had an idea of a three-tier policy:

1. If the event is sponsored by the City, then it should be free since it would be free to the public.
2. If the event is being put on by a non-profit, free, and benefitting community members then that type of event should be charged one specific fee.
3. Any private event should be charged a specific fee.

Mayor Velazquez said some of that idea is already in the Master Fee schedule. The research for the criteria is needed. She wants the criteria to be fair across the board.

Councilmember Jimenez feels the 10% discount might be a substantial amount for a non-profit that is not making any money from the event. In future discussion of the fees, hopefully council can agree on a further reduction of 50% for non-profits, however they must meet certain criteria. The City sponsored events should meet all the criteria and private events should be charged the normal rate. He believes the criteria should be tailored to the City of Soledad's needs.

Mayor Velazquez said there is some language already included, but it does need to be broken down even more.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge said she hopes the council remembers this is about the Soledad Community Center and City-sponsored events should be about the community. The Football and Cheer banquet, and the Soledad Little League sign-ups should be City-sponsored because these are things for the youth of Soledad. The religious events should not be City-sponsored.

Mayor Velazquez asked that staff bring this item back for a later discussion.

Mayor Velazquez asked if there were any public comments.

Resident of Soledad Ivan Ibarra Mora said the school district does not charge a non-profit agency for the use of facilities but does ask the non-profit to cover the custodial and staff costs needed for the event.

Resident of Soledad Rebecca Hall said there should be partnership and engagements with other organizations to collaboratively do events, like the SoCo Social which does currently take place at the Community Center. The Lion's Club would be a good partnership; there could be a Thanksgiving meal and arts and crafts with the kids and families, so it would not just be a group coming into the Community Center but would be a Community event.

There were other public comments.

Motion:

Information was received by council.

The council provided direction.

No Action taken for this item.

- B-2. Ordinance No. 740, An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Soledad Adding Chapter 5.55- Tobacco Licensing to Title 5- Business Taxes, Licenses, and Regulations of the Soledad Municipal Code.

City Attorney Mike Rodriquez presented the staff report.

Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado was present in the meeting via Zoom available to answer any questions.

Mayor Velazquez asked if there were any public comments.

Mayor Velazquez said there was one written public comment received via email by both Mayor Pro Tem Carla Strobridge and Mayor Velazquez from Mr. Dale Hillard, Resident of City of Salinas. Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge read the written comment into the minutes:
Dear Mayor Pro Tempore Carla Strobridge, It takes a village to raise a child. The City of Soledad is that village. With the adoption of Soledad's Tobacco Retail License Ordinance, it will be easier to raise that child in Soledad. This ordinance isn't about preventing adults from using tobacco products, but it does help prevent our youth from purchasing addictive tobacco products. Thank you again for considering taking this important step to protect the youth of the city of Soledad.

Soledad Youth Commission member Sophia Vargas asked if there would be any educational awareness that would be included with the ordinance. Would there be any education orientation required by the vendor selling the tobacco.

Mayor Velazquez asked Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado what the awareness component is prior to the licensing. Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado said the awareness component is done prior to the licensing to be able to sell tobacco products. There is an introductory letter explaining things, which is first approved by City staff. There is a "frequently asked questions" documents that is always being updated. The County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention can also do a press release for the City of Soledad.

City Attorney Mike Rodriquez asked if information regarding the regulatory licensing is also available on the County's website.

Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado said it is available on the website under Chapter 7.80. The County Health Department also has a webpage with every city listed who has adopted the tobacco retail licensing, the adopted ordinances are there, the frequently asked questions document is there, the application is there and contact information is also listed.

Soledad Youth Commission member Alan Briseño said he hopes to have more emphasis made on the flavored puff bars. It is obvious this is targeting youth, but he believes the target is kids as young as 6th graders. For example: High school students don't really like or want candy and most of the flavors are candy or very sweet flavored, but kids do love sweets and candy, and this is what makes him feel like younger children are being targeted.

Mayor Velazquez agrees that it is targeted towards younger children. She asked Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado how more awareness and education can be done for the families in the Community.

Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado said the webpage has information regarding the flavors. He would like help from the Soledad Youth Council, Gonzales Youth Council and STEP (Safe Teen Empowerment Project) in getting the message spread. Together they can come up with comprehensive information on flavored tobacco products. He also clarified that the tobacco retail licensing does not ban flavored tobacco products, but the issue may be looked at in January.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado for clarifying the fact that the tobacco retail licensing does not ban flavored tobacco products. She believes working with the youth council will help in developing an outreach strategy.

There were other public comments.

Councilmember Chavez asked if there was any type of educational component the school district does. He suggested maybe the City, County and school district can work together in educating students and families.

Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado said he will be in contact with the Tobacco Use Prevention Educator at the Soledad Unified School District in order to get the message out to the schools.

City Attorney Mike Rodriguez asked Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado if the County ordinance covers the flavored electronic tobacco products.

Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado said the ordinance does cover electronic smoking devices like Juul and puff bars but is silent regarding flavors. The only flavored cigarette allowed to be sold is menthol. Soledad can do what the City of Pacific Grove did and add a section banning flavored tobacco products.

City Attorney Mike Rodriguez asked if the section is added, will the County enforce the ordinance as written with the addition of the section banning flavored tobacco products.

Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado said he is confident that once the ordinance is passed, there will be a memorandum of agreement, and there will be a provision added regarding what the County will be doing.

Mayor Velazquez agrees those provisions should be added because that is currently an issue. She asked that a correction be made regarding the age of 27 being changed to the age of 21. She also asked Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado to clarify who would be doing the appeal procedure if needed.

Monterey County Health Department Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator Gonzalo Coronado said that would be the County's responsibility.

Mayor Velazquez made a motion to continue this item to the Regular meeting of 12/15/2021 with the additional provision of banning flavored tobacco products.

Motion: Councilmember Chavez made a motion to continue this item to the Regular meeting of 12/15/2021 with the additional provision of banning flavored tobacco products. Motion was seconded by Mayor Velazquez and carried by unanimous vote:

Action:

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

B-3. Discussion of Hotel Incentive Programs.

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson presented the staff report.

Councilmember Jimenez asked Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson if he has had the experience of hotels responding to the hotel incentive program.

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson said the City of Hollister was able to bring two hotels as an outcome of their hotels incentive program. The hotel incentive program is successful in the City of Hollister.

Councilmember Chavez said the current TOT program in Soledad does not bring in a big amount of funds and is a voluntary program, he asked if in his previous position, did this help with the transparency of being able to see how much TOT was actually coming in.

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson said it did help. Because hotels want to get back what they are taking in, so they must be honest.

City Manager Slama said the City of Soledad generates \$200,000 a year from TOT. The goal in expanding economic development is for staff to be more aggressive in terms of what is needed in the Community. Getting another hotel in the City that has a standard that would be required to be apart of this program, is something that has been looked into.

Mayor Velazquez asked if the Hollister program is the baseline that Soledad should be looking towards. She also seen that Hollister hotels are at the three-diamond level and asked if there were any four or five diamond hotels added through the program.

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson said the intent of the Hollister council was to have a program with specific requirements for the staff and the applicant to follow. They did not want the process to become too cumbersome. Three-diamond hotels are what Hollister has, which includes a Holiday Inn Express and a Marriot.

Mayor Velazquez said she would like to keep some of the language in terms of the workforce and the livable wage criteria. She asked if there prospects of "opportunity zones".

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson said the threshold of opportunity zones is \$37, 252, the residents in Soledad are above the threshold.

Mayor Velazquez asked if there were any public comments.

There were no public comments.

B-4. Consideration of the Submittal of a Letter in Opposition to the Division of the Salinas Valley in Redistricting.

City Manager Slama presented the staff report. There were requested revisions of the letter by both Mayor Velazquez and Councilmember Chavez.

Councilmember Chavez read his requested revisions for the letter of which he sites section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

Mayor Velazquez also read her requested revisions for the letter.

Councilmember Jimenez asked that next time, all councilmembers receive requested changes ahead of time so that all councilmembers can have the opportunity to request changes.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge made a motion to approve the submittal of the Letter in Opposition with the requested revisions, to the Division of the Salinas Valley in Redistricting. Motion was seconded by Mayor Velazquez and carried by unanimous vote:

Action:

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

B-5. Council Committees List.

City Manager Slama presented the staff report.

Councilmember Chavez would like the Parks and Recreation Committee to continue. The Measure "S" is an oversight committee for financial purposes, but the purpose shouldn't be just to look at recreation. The recreation committee should be looking at recreation regularly and making certain there are connections with programs that are not apart of the City and making sure they are working together.

Mayor Velazquez would like to look at these committees and the roles again in January. The Liaison appointments should also be filled. There should be more conversation about how to move forward with appointing people.

City Manager Slama said at this time there needs to be action taken to ratify the changes already made to the AMBAG committee.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge made a motion to ratify the changes. Motion was seconded by Mayor Velazquez and carried by unanimous vote:

Action:

Ayes: Strobridge, Velazquez, Chavez, Jimenez, and Lara

Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

Councilmember Lara left the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

Councilmember Lara returned to the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

MAYORS' REPORT

Mayor Velazquez had 12 items to report:

1. On 11/05 she attended the County Mayors Association meeting.
2. On 11/07 she attended the Covid-19 pop-up clinic in Soledad.
3. On 11/09 she attended the SoCo Social at the Soledad Community Center.
4. On 11/09 she met with Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments Executive Director of Administration, Finance and Planning Maura Twomey.
5. On 11/10 she attended the South Monterey County Job Fair at the Soledad Community Center. She also thanked Community Engagement Manager Lynnelle Sanchez and the City staff for their efforts.
6. On 11/10 she attended the LAFCO Board meeting.
7. On 11/11 she attended the Veterans Day Appreciation Breakfast and the Veterans Day Parade in Salinas. She thanked all the sponsors involved, Starbucks, Soledad Auto Sales, Soledad Lions Club and Soledad High School.
8. On 11/14 she attended a food distribution event with Celebration Nation.
9. On 11/15 she attended the MST Board meeting.
10. On 11/16 she listened to the Monterey County Supervisors meeting.
11. On 11/17 she attended a meeting with Dole and the Green Leaf Estates.
12. She announced that there will be a meeting on 11/18 regarding redistricting.

COUNCILMEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

Councilmember Jimenez had 1 item to report:

1. On 11/18 he will be attended the SVSWA meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge had 4 items to report:

1. On 11/10 S.N.I.P. Bus was in Soledad
2. On 11/11 she volunteered at the Veterans Day Parade.
3. On 11/18 she will be attending the Monterey County Animal Control Advisory Board meeting.
4. She announced there will be a low-cost vaccination clinic for pets in Gonzales

Councilmember Chavez had 2 items to report:

1. On 11/17 he attended a special TAMC Board meeting.
2. On 11/09 he attended a meeting with the Joint City/Soledad-Mission District Ad-Hoc Sub Committee meeting. The next meeting is scheduled in January.

COUNCILMEMBERS' PRAISES

Councilmember Jimenez praised the Soledad Police Department and Police Chief Damon Wasson for their quick action. He also praised and thanked all the agencies involved.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge praised all the law enforcement involved. She thanked Chief Wasson for his heroic action. Her thoughts go out to the family who's loved one was lost.

Mayor Velazquez also praised and thanked all the law enforcement involved. She thanked them all for their quick action. She also praised the Soledad Centennial Gala Committee for all the work they have been doing to make the Gala a success.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- City Manager Slama said he is thankful for Police Chief Wasson. The Chief and police department acted with tremendous class and bravery and did what needed to be done. He is grateful for the Soledad Police Department. He also thanked the fellow agencies that work together daily to keep the Communities safe.
- There are many events coming up in Soledad as the City heads into the holiday season. Including the Gala and the Soledad staff holiday celebration.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councilmember Jimenez had 1 item:

1. He would like to know if staff can put together an event calendar for council, so they don't miss events.

Councilmember Chavez had 1 item:

1. He would like to have a study session regarding traffic calming measures.

Councilmember Lara had 1 item:

1. She would like to see have a report on what was done with the youth council budget.

Mayor Pro Tem Strobridge had 2 items:

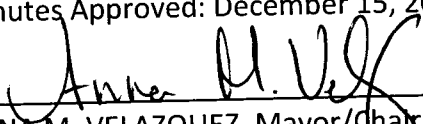
1. She is looking forward to having the shooting range item on the next agenda.
2. She would like to have special recognition given to the Soledad Police Department and Chief Wasson.

City Manager Slama reminded everyone there is no meeting the first Wednesday of December. The next meeting is scheduled for 12/15/2021.

ADJOURNMENT

- 8:48 p.m.

Minutes Approved: December 15, 2021



ANNA M. VELAZQUEZ, Mayor/Chair



BRENT SLAMA, City Clerk/Agency Secretary