

Minutes

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

February 02, 2022

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	Marisela Lara
Councilmember/Agencymember	Ben Jimenez, Jr.
Councilmember/Agencymember	Carla Strobridge (Arrived at 6:06 p.m.)
Councilmember/Agencymember	Alejandro Chavez

THE FOLLOWING COUNCILMEMBER WAS ABSENT

- None

PUBLIC COMMENT- CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

Soledad Resident Rigoberto Bravo gave public comment regarding closed session item no. 3. Mr. Bravo made his comment in Spanish. Mayor Velazquez translated the comment to English.

Mr. Bravo said he is unsatisfied with the destruction of his home. He feels it was not appropriate.

There were no other public comments.

MEETING RECESS FOR CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Velazquez recessed to closed session at 6:05 p.m.

MEETING RECONVENED FROM CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Velazquez reconvened from closed session at 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- Lugo Claims
2. 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.
3. 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: Claim of Bravo

CLOSED SESSION REPORTS

1. City Attorney Mike Rodriguez reported with respect to item no. 1; the council conferred with legal counsel and provided direction. No other reportable action was taken.
2. City Attorney Mike Rodriguez reported with respect to item no. 2; the council conferred with legal counsel and provided direction. No other reportable action was taken.
3. City Attorney Mike Rodriguez reported with respect to item no. 3; the council unanimously denied the claim and provided legal council with direction. No other reportable action was taken.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1. Soledad High School NJROTC led the Presentation of Colors
2. Chief Ronald Dunn led the Pledge of Allegiance

ADDITIONS/MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA

- None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident of Soledad Tony Virrueta has 2 public comments.

1. Mr. Virrueta said understands the Banner Program is being sponsored by people who paid through the Centennial Gala packages, and he wants to make sure the banners purchased will be used for people who have made achievements in the City. He does feel the Veterans banners are very important but is in support of other types of achievement banners as long as they are for the right reasons.
2. He would like to know what the City's plans are for events in 2022; has the City made plans for Easter, Memorial day, 4th of July and other holidays. He would like to be a part of the planning for future events in the City.

Resident of Soledad Joel Ramirez, who is also a Coach in the Soledad Little League had one public comment.

1. He would like the City to consider waiving the fees for the permit process for usage of the parks. The little league group has put a lot of work into the actual field including their own volunteered time, money, and resources. In 2021 the Soledad Little League was one of the only youth programs that put a little league season together. They have not raised their registration fees because many families are facing very hard times. The League is hoping to get the fees waived and revisit the item again next year.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Coach Ramirez for his comments. She would like the City to work with the Soledad Little League in the process to waive the fees.

Soledad Resident and Acting Soledad Little League President Enrique Luis Tavares had one public comment.

1. He is requesting the City waive permit fees for usage of the park for the Soledad Little League. The Soledad Little League has written a letter that includes costs of services of maintenance and volunteers. The letter will be forwarded to the council.

Mayor Velazquez thanked Mr. Tavares for his comments. She said there was a public meeting regarding fees that would be implemented. She is looking forward to reading the letter from the Soledad Little League. She supports the Soledad Little League and hopes the City can help with the fee waiver and the process.

City Manager Slama said the city council agenda of 02/16/2022 will include the item of the Community Center Fees. Parks will be included in that discussion.

Councilmember Chavez said he agrees that it is appropriate to also remember that this organization has redone the field twice since 2011. The first time, the entire process was paid for and redone by volunteers. The second time the park was redone in partnership with the City.

Councilmember Strobridge thanked the coaches for their public comments, and she also asked what the fees are for players.

Coach Joel Ramirez said the cost for T-Ball and Farm level is \$65, minors and majors level is \$120, and 13- and 14-year-old cost \$140.

Councilmember Strobridge said she would like to sponsor one child from each group. She also asked Chief Wasson if the police department life scanning machine is working, and if so, can the City provide the life-scanning at no cost.

Chief Wasson said the machine is working. The police department only charges the fee of what the State of California and the FBI charges the police department. The fee varies with what service is needed; \$35 is the lowest of the fees. Cost can go up to \$200.

Coach Joel Ramirez said the cost they pay for a volunteer to be life scanned is \$85. He said it is very hard for the league to ask someone to volunteer and then charge that person \$85, so the little league tries to incur the fee when possible.

Mayor Velazquez would like for the Soledad Little League to list all the costs related to item so the item can be brought back for full discussion on 02/16/2022.

Soledad Resident Alexis Magdeleno had one public comment. He feels upset and ashamed of the council for supporting and passing the resolution in opposition of Senate Bill 262.

Mayor Anna Velazquez said before finalizing the letter regarding the opposition of SB 262, the City was going to gather more information regarding Monterey Council and local information.

Soledad Resident Desiree Rosas had one public comment. Ms. Rosas said she is not in favor of the council approving the resolution opposing Senate Bill 262.

There were no other public comments.

YOUTH COUNCIL'S REPORT

Soledad Youth Commission members Sophia Vargas and Alan Briseño presented a brief verbal update.

There were no public comments.

COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS

- None

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Velazquez asked to have further discussion regarding items C-5, and C-6.

City Manager Slama asked to pull Warrant number 046800 from item C-2 for future consideration.

Motion: Councilmember Strobridge made motion to approve items C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-7, and C-8 and pull warrant #046800 from C-2 for future consideration. Motion was seconded by Mayor Velazquez and carried by unanimous vote:

Action:

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

C-1. a. Joint City Council/Successor Agency Regular Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2022.

C-2. **Warrants**

046774 - 046946

C-3. Resolution No. 5773, A Joint Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad/City Council as Board to the Successor Agency to the Soledad Redevelopment Agency/Soledad Housing Authority Executive Board Approving Amendment No. 1 to the Employment Agreement for the City Manager/Successor Agency Director/Housing Authority Director Services with Brent Slama.

C-4. Resolution No. 5774, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving Amendment No. 2 of the Summary of Job Classifications and Salary Schedule for Fiscal Year 2021/22.

C-7. Resolution No. 5777, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Authorizing the Continued Use of Remote Teleconferenced Meetings of the City Council Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361.

C-8. City of Soledad Monthly Department Activity Reports.

Motion: Councilmember Jimenez made motion to approve Resolution No. 5775. Motion was seconded by Mayor Velazquez and carried by unanimous vote:

Action:

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

C-5. Resolution No. 5775, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving the Request for Use of the Community Center for their Mobile Spay & Neuter Clinic on February 12, 2022, and Waiver of Fees for their event.

Mayor Velazquez asked if the services listed in item C-5 are the same as the services the City is already having provided by the SNIP Bus.

City Manager Slama said this service is a part of the SPCA doing outreach in South County.

Councilmember Strobridge said the SPCA has never offered services in South County and are feeling pressured to do so. This will be the first time the SPCA comes to Soledad. They have conducted services in the City of Gonzales and Greenfield. This will be in addition to SNIP Bus. The SPCA is just getting started with this program and does not have the same type of mobile equipment as SNIP Bus. The SPCA will need a room for recovery that offers a warm space. This clinic will be for both domestic and feral animals. This service is long overdue considering how much the City pays to the SPCA for services. There is language mentioned in the contract with the SPCA regarding providing low-cost options to the residents of the communities they are contracted, so this should be a part of the City's contract with the SPCA. SNIP Bus is offered in Soledad up to twice a month and all their appointments are already filled, so there is a need for more services.

Mayor Velazquez would like to receive a report from the SPCA regarding what the outcome is for that day of service.

Councilmember Strobridge said the SPCA service is charging \$25.00 which is a reasonable fee for the residents of the City.

Mayor Velazquez asked what the fee is for the SNIP Bus.

Councilmember Strobridge said the SNIP Bus also charges \$25.00 and that is because the City is helping in providing the clinic. In other cities, the SNIP Bus charges \$100.00 To \$150.00 if the local government is not assisting. Most SNIP Bus fees that residents must pay, are paid by the South County Animal Rescue who has a grant to assist Soledad Residents.

Motion: Mayor Velazquez made motion to approve Resolution No. 5776. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Strobridge and carried by unanimous vote:

Action:

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

- C-6. Resolution No. 5776, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Soledad Approving the County of Monterey's Request for Use of the Community Center for their 4th Annual Youth Violence Prevention Conference on April 1, 2022 and Authorizing Sponsorship of the event.

Mayor Velazquez is excited to have the City of Soledad host the County of Monterey's 4th Annual Youth Violence Prevention Conference at the Soledad Community Center on April 1, 2022. She hopes the County of Monterey will include the Soledad Youth Council to be a part of the planning process for the event. She also thanked Rosemary Soto for being instrumental in creating a larger footprint in South County.

City Manager Slama said this is an event the City is looking forward to sponsoring.

BUSINESS

- B-1. Discussion of the City of Soledad Centennial General Plan Proposed from the EMC Planning Group Inc.

City Manager Slama said this item is one of the City's goals that council has established. Today will be to discuss the financial reality of the goal, specifically compared to the General Plan.

Senior Principal of EMC Planning Group Michael Groves was present in meeting via Zoom

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson gave an overview and PowerPoint of the presentation.

Councilmember Chavez asked what the cost was of past General Plans, compared to now. The latest document seems very costly and high.

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson said the plan for the City of Salinas, with the primary focus only on economic development, costed approximately \$1,000,000. Another proposal received by Soledad was approximately \$950,000, however, the proposal did not include extra focused elements, like economic development, which the proposal from EMC does include. The City of Hollister selected PlaceWorks to do their General Plan which costed \$1,400,000 in addition to other amendments they made, which totaled about \$1,600,000. City Manager Slama said back in 2005, costs were about \$400,000. At that time, Soledad used a smaller firm with a single consultant. There are now things that need to be included that cannot be done in house, such as the environmental documents. The State has added required elements such as environmental justice, climate change and other things that weren't there in 2005. There are limitations in terms of the budget, and the council needs to look at what the priority of the City is. The costs are not going to get cheaper if the council waits to move forward.

Councilmember Jimenez did not realize this process would be so expensive. He is glad there may be some money that can be used to off-set and reduce the cost. He hopes staff will continue to look for alternative funding sources to off-set even more.

Senior Principal of EMC Planning Group Michael Groves said EMC has assisted the planning departments throughout Monterey County for the last 44 years. EMC has a culture of teamwork, and are very flexible about costs. Decisions to cut things from the scope will be up to the council, but the council must be clear on what is being cut. There are many regulations that have occurred the last 10 years in the State of California that have put a burden on cities. The Housing Element updates, and RINA numbers are the latest. EMC did the Economic Development document for the City of Salinas with policy direction from the City Council that included implementation steps which also integrated into the budget cycle. Everything is tied to the Capital Improvement Plan and the budget.

Councilmember Strobridge thanked Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson for looking for cost saving factors which included the Community Engagement piece being done by staff, but she is not sure if staff has the capacity to do the piece listed, since the City is short a Community Engagement staff member.

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson said a lot of hours were trimmed from the public engagement consultant for the General Plan. The consultant is still available to help but staff will take the bulk of the public engagement. Blue Zone will mesh into the plan and help when needed.

City Manager Slama said staff can talk with locals, identify stakeholders, and key people, and do much of the needed groundwork. The council's focus should be determining whether the City wants to invest more money into the General Plan project. The council also needs to decide if it is a matter of finding grants or, spreading the costs out over a couple years or, looking for more ways to involve staff. Staff needs a better idea of how committed council is to this major goal because the costs are significant and twice what was budgeted.

Councilmember Strobridge said there are \$435,000 Measure Y funds allocated for this. There is also Measure Y funds allocated for law enforcement positions that the City is still actively trying to fill, can those funds also be utilized to offset the difference.

Finance Director Mike Howard said there are salary savings that are being worked through right now for the mid-year review. In addition, there are additional funds in the general reserve that can be used. If the council would like to move forward with the proposal as it is, all funds do not need to be allocated in this fiscal year. This is a multi-year plan and can be spread out into multiple fiscal years.

Mayor Velazquez said she understood from previous discussion about this, by providing the Measure Y funds, there would potentially be cost savings and with the funding received the council would be able to back-fill that. It now sounds like that will not be able to happen.

Financial Director Mike Howard said it already happened. Measure Y did contribute \$750,000. Once LEAP and REAP grants were received, the Measure Y was backfilled by \$350,000 and that is why now the Measure Y contribution is only \$435,000.

Senior Principal of EMC Planning Group Michael Groves said everything could be spread out over three years. EMC can go back and rewrite the plan into segments. There is a platform that will be purchased by the City called "Bang The Table". This platform will be used for community outreach, and long after the general plan is done, the City will still be able to utilize the platform. The council should be looking at community boundaries, land use boundaries, urban service areas, LAFCO, and the housing element. The outreach program consists of a team that conduct outreach in both English and Spanish. All documents and flyers will also be done in both English and Spanish as well.

Mayor Velazquez said there is already a lot of climate action data that has been done and asked if the existing data can be used so work is not being duplicated.

Senior Principal of EMC Planning Group Michael Groves said if the scope is broken down into three tears, scope 1 will be the time when information that is already available, will be discovered. Studies that are already done will save a lot of time and money.

Mayor Velazquez would like to know what the contributing factors to the increases are.

Senior Principal of EMC Planning Group Michael Groves said the costs contributing to the increase are public outreach, climate action, healthy communities, and the housing element. There are multiple requirements that did not exist before. The Economic Development element is not easy to put together.

Mayor Velazquez asked in terms of the \$842,000 difference, where will additional funds come from and what would be impacted.

City Manager Slama said the additional costs would be split over multiple fiscal years and would need to be incorporated into future budgets. The money could also come from reserves and

grants. Another option is to continue to look into areas that may already have duplication of efforts.

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson said the City should continue to keep an eye out for more grants.

Mayor Velazquez asked if the LEAP and REAP grants are one-time grants or should those grants be applied for every year.

Community and Economic Development Director Bryan Swanson said those are one-time grants.

Councilmember Chavez asked if the City could implement an internship program that would bring further assistance with engagement. He also agrees that splitting the costs between the next three fiscal years is a smart decision.

Mayor Velazquez asked if there is need for all the different sub-contractors being used. She asked if that position can be reviewed again to see what is necessary.

Senior Principal of EMC Planning Group Michael Groves said that will be reviewed.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Velazquez would like to recommend the consolidation of options 2 and 3.

Councilmember Strobridge supports the recommendation of Mayor Velazquez.

Councilmember Jimenez agreed with Mayor Velazquez and hopes to move forward with splitting the costs over the next three fiscal years.

Motion:

Information was received by council.

No Action taken for this item.

MAYORS' REPORTS

Mayor Velazquez had 13 items to report:

1. On 01/20 she met with Carman Herrera from El Pajaro CDC.
2. On 01/21 she attended the 3CE Board meeting.
3. On 01/22 and 01/21 she participated in the 2022 new Mayor and City Council Academy.
4. On 01/21 she participated in the Cal Cities Latino Caucus New Member Training.
5. On 01/24 she attended the Mayors and City Manager virtual meeting.
6. On 01/24 She attended a public hearing with LAFCO.
7. On 01/27 She participated in the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau.
8. On 01/27 She participated in the Cal Cities Latino Caucus virtual meet and greet.
9. On 01/27 and 01/28 she participated in the 2022 new Mayor and City Council Academy.

10. On 01/28 She participated in the Homeless Point in Time Count for Soledad. She thanked Officer Celaya and Officer Escarsega who were also there and provided the team with two bags filled with coats and blankets.
11. On 02/01 she met with United Way Monterey County CEO Katy Castagna.
12. On 02/01 she met with City Manager Slama, SUSD Superintendent Bangs and School Board President Galvan to review the agenda item for the upcoming Joint meeting.
13. On 02/02 She met with Supervisor Lopez and the South County Mayors.

COUNCILMEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

Councilmember Chavez had 1 item to report:

1. On 01/26 he participated in the TAMC meeting.

Councilmember Jimenez had 3 items to report:

1. On 01/20 He participated in the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority meeting.
2. On 02/10 He will be participating in the ACCAPS meeting.
3. On 02/24 he will be participating the SVSWA strategic retreat.

Councilmember Strobridge had 3 items to report:

1. She reported that she received the Covid-19 booster shot and she encourages everyone to do the same.
2. The Monterey County Animal Control Advisory Board was rescheduled to 02/17.
3. She spoke with Supervisor Lopez regarding a public comment made at the last Monterey County Board of Supervisors meeting. The conversation will be addressed with the individual directly.

Mayor Pro Tem Lara had no meetings to report.

COUNCILMEMBERS' PRAISES

Councilmember Jimenez praised all the volunteers, parents, and participants in the Soledad Little League. He also praised the Police Department and outside agencies for responding quickly to a shooting in Soledad.

Councilmember Chavez praised all the volunteers and the City employees who are keeping the City facilities and parks clean.

Councilmember Strobridge praised the members of the Community who were brave enough to step up and identify the shooters from the latest shooting that happened here in Soledad. She also thanked the Soledad Police Department and the surrounding law enforcement teams for responding to emergencies. She encouraged community members to report information anonymously if needed.

Mayor Velazquez praised Natasha McCann from Girl Scout Troop 35331. Natasha McCann wrote a letter asking for arrangements to be made so the girl scouts could plant flowers. Mayor Velazquez said she will make sure to make this happen. She thanked Girl Scout Natasha McCann.

Councilmember Lara praised all Community members for continuing to be nice and respectful in keeping distance and continuing to wear masks.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Slama reported the following items:

1. He reported the City had their pre-bid conference on 02/02.
2. He is attending the League of California Cities City Manager's Conference.

There were no public comments.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councilmember Strobridge had 2 items:

1. She emailed the City Manager and Chief Wasson regarding a program that King City launched regarding the City reimbursing resident \$200 if they installed their home security system.
 - City Manager Slama said he has already contacted their Finance Director and will have more information soon.

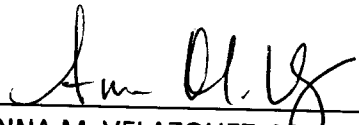
Mayor Velazquez had 6 items:

1. She would like a presentation from Consultant Angel Johnstone regarding the CDBG Business grants.
2. The City was applying for a grant as part of the small water systems through the State, she wants to know if the grant was received.
 - City Manager Slama said the grant was received. The staff are currently going through the process of making the changes to the accounts because the grant is only for the water portion of the accounts. Once changes are made there is a payment plan for the rest of the balance that must be approved by the person receiving the funds. As a condition of receiving the funds they must agree to stay current on the plan, or they will be subject to turn off.
3. She would also like to know if the City submitted for the Cal Trans Clean California Grant.
4. She would like to know if the City issued any comments regarding the FEMA Flood Maps and would also like to know if the City posted the draft maps online for public review.
5. She would like to bring back the conversation regarding the Historical Society lease agreement.

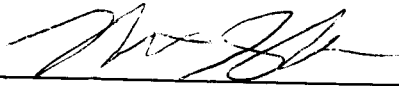
ADJOURNMENT

- 8:36 p.m.

Minutes Approved: February 16, 2022



ANNA M. VELAZQUEZ, Mayor/Chair



BRENT SLAMA, City Clerk/Agency Secretary

