

CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

June 8, 2015

A. CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Session of the City Council of the City of Merced, California, was held on Monday, June 8, 2015. Mayor THURSTON called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Mayor Stanley Thurston, Mayor Pro Tempore Josh Pedrozo, Council Members Michael Belluomini, Kevin Blake, Tony Dossetti, Noah Lor, Mike Murphy

All Council Members were present, with the exception of Council Member LOR.

C. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

1. Purpose of Session

City Manager John BRAMBLE reported that the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) numbers that have been collected from the operator of each hotel needed to be amended, resulting in an additional one-time source of revenue.

City Manager BRAMBLE reviewed his recommendations for additions to the budget.

City Manager BRAMBLE announced that he had submitted his letter of retirement effective December 5, 2015.

Council Member MURPHY suggested having a strategic policy discussion on building the reserve fund.

2. Responses to City Council Requests

City Manager BRAMBLE reviewed possible budget items identified by Council. City Council Members asked questions related to costs of items possibly included in the budget.

Mayor Pro-Tempore PEDROZO added that Council should also have a strategic discussion on the Measure “C” fund.

Mayor Pro-Tempore PEDROZO asked about the amount delegated for Fire brown-outs, and the cost of having a full staff. City Manager BRAMBLE responded that the Budget included two new positions and money for overtime.

City Manager BRAMBLE reviewed a handout of historical projected and actual General Fund balances.

City Manager BRAMBLE explained that within the Measure “C” fund budget there are currently 22.99 police officers, 13.8 fire officers, \$374,689 to be transferred to the Streets Department, \$300,000 for capital projects, and \$30,000 for predictive police software and camera system. That leaves a \$1.1 million fund balance, which is within the two month reserve requirement set by the Government Finance Officers Association.

Mayor THURSTON asked the annual revenue for Measure “C”. City Manager BRAMBLE responded that this year it was \$6.2 million.

Council Member DOSSETTI emphasized that the Measure “C” fund needs to be built up as much as possible in anticipation of the 2026 sunset on the tax.

Vehicle Fleet fund balance will end at \$12,492,626, which comes out of the refuse rates. Mayor THURSTON asked about police and fire vehicles. City Manager BRAMBLE responded that those vehicles come out of the General fund.

City Manager BRAMBLE reported that the Feasibility Study for re-using waste treatment water for parks and medians would cost around \$175,000 of water enterprise funds. Council Member BELLUOMINI expressed his concern about the cost and logistics of implementation. Council Member MURPHY added that the Council should still look into a recharge basin with Merced Irrigation District.

Merced Firefighter Chad ENGLERT - asked for clarification on what is being done to end the brownouts. City Manager BRAMBLE responded that the money appropriated in the Budget will cover the

cost of overtime, it would only be a matter if personnel is available to take on those extra shifts.

Chief Shawn HENRY confirmed that with the two additional positions and money allocated for overtime, it will help alleviate the problem, but brownouts will still happen. A squad vehicle that can be staffed by only two firefighters will be used to respond to medical calls.

City Manager BRAMBLE reviewed the cost of items to potentially be added to the budget.

Mayor THURSTON asked about options for lighting downtown. City Manager BRAMBLE responded that canopy lights may be an option. Mayor Pro-Tempore PEDROZO asked if the Main Street Association were willing to put in money towards lighting. Council Member MURPHY expressed his support for this item.

Council Member BELLUOMINI requested a scope of work for the Wastewater Feasibility Study. City Manager BRAMBLE responded that there is not sufficient time to request a scope of work before the budget needs to be voted on.

3. Outside Agency Requests for Funding

Kelly TURNER and Rochelle ABRIL, Merced - responded to questions related to the McNamara funding request.

Donna HALL, Merced – spoke in favor of funding for McNamara Park programming.

Kevin HAMMOND, Merced – answered questions related to the Art Hop funding request.

City Council Members asked questions related to allocations for staff time from the Downtown Fund. Director of Economic Development Frank QUINTERO responded.

Council asked questions relating to a new Recreation & Parks coordinator position. City Manager BRAMBLE responded.

D. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Isai PALMA, Merced – spoke about a survey by the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG).

Aldo LOPEZ, Communities for a New California – spoke in favor of designating additional funds for the Youth Council.

Marilyn MOCHEL, Merced – spoke in favor of community partnerships to provide more youth programs.

E. COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. Council Direction for Budget Hearing

On a motion by Mayor Pro-Tempore PEDROZO, seconded by Council Member BLAKE, and with all in favor, the Council voted to add the City Manager's recommendations to the Fiscal Year 2015-16 budget errata. Council Member LOR was absent.

Council Member BELLUOMINI made a motion, seconded by Mayor THURSTON, to appropriate \$15,280 to McNamara Center Funding. The motion failed with Mayor Pro-Tempore PEDROZO, Council Member DOSSETTI and Council Member BLAKE voting no. Council Member LOR was absent.

Council Member MURPHY made a motion, seconded by Mayor THURSTON, and with all in favor, to appropriate \$10,800 to Art Hop in the Fiscal Year 2015-16 budget errata. Council Member LOR was absent.

On a motion by Mayor Pro-Tempore PEDROZO, seconded by Council Member MURPHY, and with all in favor, the Council voted to add the \$175,000 for a consultant Feasibility Study in the Fiscal Year 2015-16 budget errata. Council Member LOR was absent.

On a motion by Council Member MURPHY, seconded by Council Member BLAKE, and with all in favor, the Council voted to add downtown lighting in the Fiscal Year 2015-16 budget errata. Council Member LOR was absent.

City Engineer Ken ELWIN made a brief presentation on the R Street Project. City Council Members asked questions. Mr. ELWIN responded to the

questions.

F. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Council Member MURPHY, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore PEDROZO, and with all in favor, the Council voted to adjourn to Monday June 15, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. Council Member LOR was absent.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.