



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Special Meeting held
June 26, 2001

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:01 p.m. by Mayor Wagner in the Executive Board Room at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Robert Wagner
Vice Mayor Larry Van Nostran
Council Member Joseph Esquivel
Council Member Wayne Piercy
Council Member Todd Rogers

SCHOOL DISTRICT FORMATION COMMITTEE

UPDATES FROM MEETINGS, REVIEW OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND DIRECTION, AND REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ALTERNATIVES

Mayor Wagner reported that the Committee had previously directed that meetings be set up with the districts before a decision was made on the direction of the Committee. He stated that there had been problems with the type of forum for the meetings and problems with scheduling. He noted that there had been one preliminary meeting at which the district expressed reluctance to meet with the whole Council, feeling that little could be accomplished with so many people involved. He suggested a sub-committee be formed to meet with the district representatives.

Responding to a question from Vice Mayor Van Nostran, City Manager Howard Chambers stated that none of the districts were interested in meeting with the Committee of the Whole, but would sit down and talk with a smaller group.

Council Member Piercy suggested a dinner meeting in a relaxed setting where all parties could discuss general concerns and build bridges for improved communications.

Mayor Wagner reaffirmed that the districts did not want so many people involved and that people would be able to speak more freely in a smaller group.

Vice Mayor Van Nostran stated he would support forming a sub-committee made up of Mayor Wagner and Council Member Rogers if there were assurances that the sub-committee would report back after meetings with the districts.

Council Member Piercy stated he concurred with the Vice Mayor, including the condition that regular reports be made to the Committee of the Whole.

Council Member Rogers stated that it would likely be easier to build good relationships with a sub-committee since the districts seemed to be uncomfortable meeting with the entire Council. He noted that any actual action would require a vote of the whole committee.

SCHOOL DISTRICT FORMATION COMMITTEE - Continued

Council Member Esquivel stated that he would also be in favor of a sub-committee under those conditions.

City Attorney John S. Todd advised that since the Committee of the Whole fell under the provisions of the Brown Act, a sub-committee would also have to comply with those requirements. He noted that since flexibility had been a problem and the requirement for posting a meeting agenda 72-hours prior to each meeting made scheduling meetings with the districts much more difficult, it would be more effective to dissolve the Committee of the Whole and just form a new ad hoc committee.

COUNCIL MEMBER ESQUIVEL MOVED AND VICE MAYOR VAN NOSTRAN SECONDED TO DISBAND THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AND FORM A NEW AD HOC COMMITTEE COMPRISED OF MAYOR WAGNER AND COUNCIL MEMBER ROGERS.

UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Esquivel, Piercy, Van Nostran, Rogers and Wagner

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

REVIEW OF THE RESIDENTIAL SOLID WASTE PROGRAM

Finance Director Larry Schroeder reported that although the Lakewood Municipal Code provided the Finance Director with the authority to adjust refuse rates annually based upon the Consumer Price Index, staff was seeking direction from the City Council on proposed refuse rate increases. He reported that the City had received rebates from the Southeast Resource Recovery Facility (SERRF) for ash credit, some portion of which could be used to offset the increased cost of refuse collection.

Responding to a question from Mayor Wagner, Mr. Schroeder stated that an increase was necessary due to inflation clauses in the City's contracts with B Z Disposal Service, CR&R and SERRF. He reported that a table had been prepared showing how much the rate increase would be offset depending upon the amount of rebate funds used.

The Director of Public Works, Lisa Rapp, stated that the City had received some rebate funds from SERRF since FY 96-97 and that they had been held pending the imposition by the State's Integrated Waste Management Board (IWMB) of additional program requirements to meet diversion limits. She noted that since some Lakewood refuse was being diverted to CR&R, the materials recovery facility, the City would be receiving less ash rebate from SERRF in the future, but also saving on the tipping fees charged by SERRF.

Mayor Wagner stated that the City Council might want to reconsider the municipal code provisions authorizing the automatic rate increases.

The City Attorney advised that such a change could be subject to the provisions of Proposition 218.

REVIEW OF THE RESIDENTIAL SOLID WASTE PROGRAM - Continued

Mayor Wagner noted that up to this point, the rebate had been set aside in anticipation of further sanctions by the SWMB, such as mandated curbside recycling, or if legal action against the SWMB were warranted.

Vice Mayor Van Nostran stated that he felt rates should not be raised any more than absolutely necessary since so many people were already struggling with increases in their electric and gas bills.

Mr. Schroeder reported that if subsidized at the highest level presented, the fund should last over ten years, provided the SERRF ash credit continued at current levels.

VICE MAYOR VAN NOSTRAN MOVED AND MAYOR WAGNER SECONDED TO USE \$175,835 IN REBATE FUNDS TO OFFSET AN INCREASE TO RESIDENTIAL REFUSE COLLECTION RATES.

Council Member Piercy stated that as a member of the Solid Waste Management Committee, a great deal of time had been spent studying this issue and that he had serious reservations about expending the rebate funds which could be needed for future projects required under AB 939. He reminded the Council that the rebate funds received from SERRF each year were not a guaranteed thing.

Council Member Esquivel advised that the Solid Waste Management Committee recommendation was for the 9.82 percent increase. He noted that even with such an increase, Lakewood rates would still be lower than more than half of the surrounding cities.

Mayor Wagner stated that a \$175,835 offset could be used for at least one or two years without any substantial impact to the ash rebate fund.

Vice Mayor Van Nostran stated that at the rate the fund was growing, it would be hard to justify withholding relief to people on fixed incomes.

Council Member Rogers agreed that many people were under pressure from rising utility bills and that it was very important to stabilize the rates and ease the pain whenever possible. He stated that recognizing that the State requirements could be changed at any time, it would be wise to take a measured approach and that should the rebates in future be substantially reduced or stopped, the City Council should revisit this issue.

Responding to a question from the City Attorney, Mr. Schroeder stated that any rate increase would become effective on July 1st.

UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Van Nostran, Rogers and Wagner

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Esquivel and Piercy

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Wagner adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise R. Hayward, CMC

City Clerk