



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Special Meeting held
August 26, 2008

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:03 p.m. by Mayor Croft in the Executive Board Room at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Steve Croft
Vice Mayor Todd Rogers
Council Member Diane DuBois
Council Member Joseph Esquivel
Council Member Larry Van Nostran

REVIEW OF AB32, CALIFORNIA GLOBAL WARMING SOLUTIONS ACT

Lisa Novotny, Deputy City Manager, made a presentation based on the memo in the agenda and stated staff was seeking direction for the level of staff activity pertaining to Assembly Bill 32 and pending Senate Bill 375 which would implement AB32's land use provisions. She reported that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) had been working with stakeholders to develop a Scoping Plan for regulations to achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, but that information regarding the process was not passed on to most cities. She stated that the proposed regulations could have far-reaching implications as the focus appeared to be reducing vehicle miles traveled through land use and density.

Community Development Director Jack Gonsalves reported that SB 375, the land use component, would require regional governmental agencies, such as SCAG (Southern California Association of Governments) to develop regional land use plans. The goal would be to provide more and denser housing closer to job sites and along mass transit outlets, negating the need for a vehicle to commute to work. But this could have serious impacts on housing and land-use elements, such as requiring high-density housing units to be constructed in identified transit hub areas, even though the area was zoned for commercial or industrial uses.

Sonia Southwell, Assistant Director of Community Development, stated that one of the most serious impacts for cities such as Lakewood was that there currently was not a mechanism or formula by which a city could get credit for the steps previously implemented or positive changes already in place. Additionally, developers within transportation corridors could be exempted from CEQA required transportation improvements, leaving cities with needed traffic improvements and no funding to accomplish them.

Public Works Director Lisa Rapp stated that there were industry sector committees developing protocols for the CARB which would require cities to calculate everything and quantify them as good or bad for emission levels, and, at least at this point, were only taking into account future projects, not existing programs. She stated that there were not many city people keyed into the hearing process.

REVIEW OF AB32, CALIFORNIA GLOBAL WARMING SOLUTIONS ACT – Cont.

Responding to questions from Mayor Croft, Ms. Novotny responded by stating that while some of the proposed regulations would need to go back to Sacramento for legislative approval, most would be enforced as regulations by the CARB. She also responded that at this point, there were assurances that costs related to this legislation would be reimbursable by the State.

The Deputy City Manager continued by stating that the opinion of staff was that there was over emphasis on the land use component of this legislation out of proportion to the benefit that would be realized. High density housing without a high-quality transit program would increase rather than decrease vehicle traffic. She stated that cities around or like Lakewood had not been heard by the CARB board and requested the City Council provide direction on whether this developing legislation should merely be monitored, concerns be expressed to legislators or other actions be taken.

City Manager Howard Chambers stated that a time of severe economic challenges like this was a difficult time to address such an issue as this one, with the potential for such sweeping changes to the way local agencies operate. He reported that most city managers seemed unaware of what was happening on this legislation.

Council Member DuBois noted that she was the City's representative on the Gateway Council of Governments (COG) and that several of the other COG members also served on SCAG committees. She stated that while she did not feel Lakewood had the resources to lead a charge on this matter, she would definitely be in favor of contacting our local legislators and expressing the City's concerns.

Mayor Croft stated that while he was in agreement with the overall goals of the legislation, when it came down to laying out future regulations to accomplish those goals, the City needed to have representation. He stated he would favor expressing the City's concerns regarding the shortcomings of the process to date and working through the COG.

Vice Mayor Rogers stated that it would be important for the City to have a role in the development of these regulations and that the CARB should hear that even though they received some input from the League of California Cities, the League did not speak for all cities. He stated that the issues of affordability and achievability needed to be raised, a system for cities to receive credit for goals previously achieved and that he hoped that more cities would be drawn into the discussions.

Mayor Croft noted that it was the consensus of the City Council that staff be directed to send correspondence to the City's local legislators, the Governor, and to the Chair of the Air Resources Board.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Croft adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise R. Hayward, CMC

City Clerk