



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Regular Meeting held
September 24, 2019

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 7:42 p.m. by Mayor Rogers in the Council Chambers at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

INVOCATION was offered by Pastor Tim Buzbee, Life Center Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Boy Scout Troop 140 and Cub Scout Pack 247

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Todd Rogers
Vice Mayor Jeff Wood
Council Member Steve Croft
Council Member Diane DuBois
Council Member Ron Piazza

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Mayor Rogers announced that the meeting would be adjourned in memory of Bill Phillips, who recently retired as a Park Maintenance Worker and had worked for the City for thirty years; and in memory of Lakewood resident and longtime LYS coach, Bobby Carstens.

Mayor Rogers also announced the upcoming 38th annual Fall Craft Festival to be held at Weingart Senior Center on Saturday, September 28th, providing residents an opportunity to purchase a variety of handmade items at reasonable prices and get a jump on holiday shopping.

ROUTINE ITEMS:

Mayor Rogers announced that Routine Item 11 would be considered separately.

VICE MAYOR WOOD MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER PIAZZA SECONDED TO APPROVE ROUTINE ITEMS 1 THROUGH 10.

RI-1 Approval of Minutes of the Meetings held July 23, and August 27, 2019

RI-2 Approval of Personnel Transactions

RI-3 Approval of Registers of Demands

RI-4 Approval of Report of Investment Transactions - August 2019

ROUTINE ITEMS: - Continued

RI-5 RESOLUTION NO. 2019-44; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR APPROVING APPLICATION(S) FOR PER CAPITA GRANT FUNDS

RI-6 Approval of Amendment to Agreement with ABCUSD for the STAR Deputy Program

RI-7 RESOLUTION NO. 2019-45; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD ESTABLISHING A "SCHOOL BUS ONLY, MONDAY TO FRIDAY, 7:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M." ZONE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF 207TH STREET WITHIN THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-46; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD RESCINDING A RESOLUTION PROHIBITING THE PARKING OR STANDING OF VEHICLES ON NORWALK BOULEVARD WITHIN THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD

RI-8 RESOLUTION NO. 2019-47; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD ESTABLISHING PAYING AND REPORTING THE VALUE OF EMPLOYER PAID MEMBER CONTRIBUTION FOR CITY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

RI-9 RESOLUTION NO. 2019-48; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD APPROVING THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD AND THE LAKEWOOD CITY EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION AND ESTABLISHING EMPLOYEE BENEFITS, DEFINING THE CONDITIONS AND HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT AND ADOPTING A CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLAN FOR CITY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

RI-10 RESOLUTION NO. 2019-49; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD REPEALING RESOLUTION NO. 2019-38 PERTAINING TO HOURLY-RATED PART-TIME EMPLOYEES AND ENACTING A PERSONNEL RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE COMPENSATION, RULES AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO HOURLY-RATED PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Croft, DuBois, Wood, Piazza and Rogers

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

ROUTINE ITEMS: - Continued

RI-11 Approval of Eleventh Amendment to the City of Lakewood Recreation Lease for the Lakewood Equestrian Center

Thaddeus McCormack, City Manager, provided a brief summary of the proposed extension to the Lakewood Equestrian Center (“Equestrian Center”) with Sandie Mercer Ranch, Inc. He stated that the item was a follow-up to a previous study session discussion regarding a proposed ten-year agreement with a new concessionaire. He reported that in the days leading up to the meeting, renovation costs that the City would have to bear to prepare the site for the new concessionaire had increased significantly to approximately \$500,000, which did not include the City’s portion of the \$1.5 million in needed improvements; therefore, the agreement did not move forward. He further explained that instead the City Council directed staff to craft a new agreement for the property that would allow the Equestrian Center to continue to operate, while being more fiscally responsible for the City. He added that due to the short time frame when the existing operator’s agreement would end and the legitimate concerns of the boarders at the Equestrian Center, efforts to bring forth a new arrangement proved fruitless and consequently, discussions with the existing operator ensued to extend oversight of the Equestrian Center for a period of time that would allow the City to explore options to develop a long-term plan for the continued use of the Equestrian Center in its entirety and would be financially viable for its operator, users and taxpayers. He concluded by stating that staff recommended that the City Council approve the amendment to the City of Lakewood’s recreation lease with Sandie Mercer Ranch, Inc. and authorize the Mayor and the City Clerk to execute the amendment to the City of Lakewood Recreation Lease for the Lakewood Equestrian Center, subject to approval of the City Attorney.

Mayor Rogers reiterated the statement that efforts were being made to find a way to continue operating the Equestrian Center and to make needed improvements in a manner that was fair and reasonable were being undertaken. He identified some of the needed repairs and upgrades, which included new barns and riding arena. He detailed the request for proposals process and discussed the structural deficit that the City faced. He explained that due to the severity of the financial situation, maintenance at various parks and City facilities were being deferred and spending commitments had to be carefully considered. The Mayor stated that some of the options being considered included housing, a retail center, and a recreational vehicle storage facility. He expressed disappointment that some of the proposed ideas had been misconstrued as the City’s intent to close down the Equestrian Center and convert the entire property into an RV storage park, which was not true. He emphasized that the City Council’s main priority and preference was to pursue plans that allowed the Equestrian Center to continue to operate on the entire site. He asserted that with the long-time operator, Sandie Mercer Ranch, being willing to continue operating for at least another year, it would provide ample opportunity to determine a long-term solution. Mayor Rogers added that only eight of the ninety-five horses boarded at the Equestrian Center were owned by Lakewood residents and that there was space for approximately twice that capacity. He expressed hope for an increase to the number of horses boarded there and to attract more Lakewood residents to bring the horses they owned to their hometown stables.

ROUTINE ITEMS: - Continued

Sonya Jahn, Lakewood, expressed disappointment at the unsuccessful agreement with the proposed operator. She stated her support for continued operations at the Equestrian Center and thanked its supporters' and their efforts to revitalize the facility with various improvement projects. She extended an invitation to the Barn Beautification Day to be held on October 13th.

Nancy and Douglas Alchorn, Long Beach; Mandi McGinnis, Lakewood; Ron Broder, Los Alamitos; Jody Radtke, Lakewood; Ruby Cure, Lakewood; and Evan Morissette, Lakewood; addressed the City Council in support of maintaining the operations at the Lakewood Equestrian Center, noting the recreational and therapeutic benefits of the facility and its services to the community.

Alan Gafford, Lakewood, suggested sources of funding and revenues, such as an increase to the sales tax.

Responding to comments from Marianne Tauson, La Mirada, who cited budget figures from a media article and inquired about the lack of funding for the facilities at Equestrian Center, Mr. McCormack noted that over the last three years, \$172,000 in improvements to the site had been made.

In response to Mayor Rogers' inquiry, Mr. McCormack stated that over the next year, limited improvements would be made during the interim period as a longer term plan was being developed, including removing some of the hay barn to be replaced with a new structure, trimming and removing trees, removing tack sheds and managing the rodent and other wildlife infestation

Council Member Croft indicated that the Equestrian Center had been a jewel and a benefit for the community; however, as noted by the Mayor, times were different and the City faced resource shortfalls. He expressed support for the lease extension and expressed hope for a viable program. He added that with assessments having been recently conducted on capital projects, it was determined that most of the parks and buildings in the City required maintenance.

Council Member DuBois commented that as a longtime rider, she understood the emotional connection to horses. She stated that staff had worked diligently to keep the Equestrian Center going and wanted to ensure the efficiency and affordability of maintaining the property.

Vice Mayor Wood expressed appreciation for staff and the Mayor's outlining of the history and the financial background with regards to the Lakewood Equestrian Center and stated the expectation that the lease extension would allow a comprehensive exploration of options and to utilize the facility for the benefit of all residents, including the taxpayers.

ROUTINE ITEMS: - Continued

Council Member Piazza concurred with his colleagues' comments and noted the importance of allowing time to determine achieving a win-win situation for the Equestrian Center to reach its highest potential as a world-class facility. He stated he was encouraged by the enthusiasm of the facility's supporters.

Mayor Rogers stated that the Equestrian Center had deep roots in the City and added that the City Council had not been interested in dispensing with it. He provided perspective by explaining that \$1 million would be equivalent to putting a deputy sheriff on the street 24-hours a day, seven days a week, and noted the importance of providing public safety. He noted that in the past year, the Park Development Committee, comprised of Council Member DuBois and Vice Mayor Wood, had considered options and attended tours of not just the Lakewood Equestrian Center but of other centers as well, in order to make a recommendation to the City Council. He explained that unbeknownst to the Committee, staff and the City Council, in the span of eleven days, the costs would skyrocket due to unforeseen circumstances; therefore, instead of approving the proposed agreement or of giving staff direction to raze the property to put another facility in its place, he appointed Council Member Croft and Council Member Piazza to serve as Ad Hoc Committee members to find a way to maintain the Equestrian Center for its current use, although not in its current state. He further reported that the entire City Council had not been interested in considering alternative uses and wanted to save the Equestrian Center. He reiterated that the City Council's responsibility was to Lakewood residents and that tough decisions had to be made to maintain balanced budgets.

COUNCIL MEMBER CROFT MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER PIAZZA SECONDED TO APPROVE ROUTINE ITEM 11. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Croft, DuBois, Wood, Piazza and Rogers

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

1.1 • ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING RULES FOR SIDEWALK VENDING

Mr. Skolnik, City Attorney's Office, advised that the proposed ordinance had been introduced at the previous City Council meeting, however, based on Council Members' requests and suggestions, some modifications had been made. He stated it was staff's recommendation that the City Council conduct a public hearing and introduce Ordinance No. 2019-3, as amended.

Vice Mayor Wood extended thanks to Paolo Beltran, Assistant to the City Manager, for incorporating into the ordinance the various suggestions made at the last meeting and for addressing their concerns.

Mayor Rogers opened the public hearing at 8:39 p.m. and called for anyone in the audience wishing to address the City Council on this matter. There was no response.

1.1 • ORDINANCE - RULES FOR SIDEWALK VENDING - Continued

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-3; AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD ESTABLISHING RULES FOR SIDEWALK VENDING PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 51036, ET SEQ. was read by title by the City Clerk.

VICE MAYOR WOOD MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER PIAZZA SECONDED TO WAIVE FURTHER READING AND INTRODUCE ORDINANCE NO. 2019-3. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Croft, DuBois, Wood, Piazza and Rogers

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Rogers adjourned the meeting at 8:40 p.m. to Tuesday, October 8, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. in the Executive Board Room. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Bill Phillips and Bobby Carstens.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Mayberry, CMC
City Clerk