



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Adjourned Regular Meeting held
June 24, 2008

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:30 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

PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF FY 2008-09 OPERATING BUDGET RADAR SPEED SIGNS

City Manager Howard Chambers stated that as a result of the City Council's first review of the proposed budget, seven items had been identified for more extensive review.

Public Works Director Lisa Rapp made a brief presentation based on the material contained in the agenda, stating that the City Council had authorized the purchase of radar speed signs in December of 2007. She advised that data collected since the installation of the signs in March of 2008, indicated a 2-3 mile per hour reduction in speed on streets where the sign were located. It was the recommendation of staff that the City Council allocate \$65,000 for the purchase of four additional stationary radar speed signs and one trailer-mounted sign.

Responding to a question from Council Member Van Nostran, Ms. Rapp stated that all of the signs currently in place were equipped with the strobe flash.

Vice Mayor Rogers inquired about the significance of the speed reduction experienced. Ms. Rapp responded by stating that the 2-3 mph reduction was generally the experience of traffic safety professionals. She noted that although the reduction in speed might not appear to be very significant, it was a strong indicator that the signs were catching the attention of the drivers, thus increasing their awareness of their speed and surroundings.

In response to questions from Mayor Croft and Council Member Van Nostran, Ms. Rapp stated that the delivery time for the additional units would be approximately six to eight weeks and each unit required about four hours for installation.

Council Member Van Nostran asked about the use of Sheriff's decoy cars as a traffic calming measure. Assistant City Manager Sandi Ruyle responded by stating there were two decoy cars that could be deployed each day, using labor provided by the Volunteers on Patrol.

VICE MAYOR ROGERS MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER ESQUIVEL SECONDED TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE ADDITIONAL SPEED RADAR DISPLAYS.

RADAR SPEED SIGNS - Continued

UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Esquivel, DuBois, Rogers, Van Nostran and Croft

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

Mayor Croft stated that consideration should be given to using one of the new units to monitor traffic counts on Lakewood Drive to determine if the elimination of left turns from Carson Street had been effective in reducing traffic through the residential area.

TREE PLANTING STATUS

The Director of Public Works stated that although more than 3,000 trees had been planted over the past four years, including those in medians, parks and along major streets, there were still locations that did not have a street tree. She further stated that there was a natural turnover in the tree inventory attributable to tree removals for damage, disease or decline due to age. It was the recommendation of staff that the City Council increase the budget allocation for tree planting to \$100,000 for fiscal year 2008-09.

In response to a question from Mayor Croft, Ms. Rapp stated that in addition to locations where a tree was removed, there were locations where a re-planted tree did not survive.

Council Member Van Nostran inquired if the tree inventory system was able to track data regarding the age of the City's trees. Ms. Rapp stated that there were still some very old trees in the City and that the system tracked their condition, which was re-assessed at each trim.

Vice Mayor Rogers, noting that the resident requests for re-plants had been reduced to 70 in the last fiscal year, commended staff for an outstanding program.

MAYOR CROFT MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER DUBOIS SECONDED TO APPROVE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Esquivel, DuBois, Rogers, Van Nostran and Croft

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

HARDSCAPE REPAIR

The Director of Public Works stated that staff had been able to take the projected numbers for square feet of sidewalk and curb/gutter repairs included in the first budget documents and replace them with actual quantities for FY 2007-08 and had also included work done as part of a street project. She also referenced a map showing the sites in need of hardscape work today as compared with a map from 1999 noting just how much improvement citywide had been accomplished through the hardscape repair program. It was the recommendation of staff that the City Council find the previously recommended budget allocation adequate for this function and to suggest a mid-year review.

HARDSCAPE REPAIR - Continued

Responding to a question from Vice Mayor Rogers, Ms. Rapp stated that there were currently about fifty locations on the isolated repair list, prioritized by level of damage.

TRAFFIC SIGNAL REQUESTS

The Public Works Director stated that staff was working with Willdan Engineers on a Traffic Signal Master Plan which was nearing completion and would be presented to the City Council in the early fall. She noted that preliminary results from the Plan had been used to prepare an application for Federal funding, which had been awarded to Lakewood in the amount of \$479,080, which would be available after the first of the year.

Council Member Van Nostran asked whether the study had addressed mid-block crosswalks. Ms. Rapp responded by stating that while the Master Plan had dealt only with intersections, a quote for such a study could be requested from Willdan, as well as possible funding sources for that type of work. She also noted that there was a new warning light system specifically designed for pedestrian crossings that she would be providing information on to the City Council.

Mayor Croft requested that the additional locations be added to the study so that recommendations for those locations could be considered sooner.

The Assistant City Manager advised that it would be more effective to conduct the study on pedestrian crossings during the school year when heavier usage occurred.

Mayor Croft also requested that the study include an analysis of traffic control on Candlewood Street and Lakewood Boulevard relating to access for Fire Station 45.

ANIMAL CONTROL STATUS

The Director of Public Works advised the City Council that the current contract with the Southeast Area Animal Control Authority (SEAACA) would be ending in June of 2009, at which time a close look at revenues generated, license fees and the cost of services would be conducted. It was the recommendation of staff that this issue return for City Council consideration in early 2009.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEES FOR IMMOBILIZED OR IMPOUNDED VEHICLES

Administrative Services Director Diane Perkin advised that the administrative fee charged for the release of immobilized or impounded vehicles, which was set in 1993 at \$65, no longer covered the actual cost for Parking Control staff and/or Sheriff staff to accomplish a vehicle tow. She reported that fees for this service in surrounding cities were more than double that rate.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEES FOR IMMOBILIZED OR IMPOUNDED VEHICLES – Cont.
Council Member Van Nostran stated that it was important to keep such fees current with actual costs and that keeping in the moderate range of local cities, suggested a rate of \$130.

City Attorney Steve Skolnik advised that staff could place this item, in resolution form, on a future agenda for City Council approval.

MAYOR CROFT DIRECTED STAFF TO PREPARE A RESOLUTION FOR CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION WHICH WOULD ESTABLISH AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE FOR RELEASE OF IMMOBILIZED OR IMPOUNDED VEHICLE AT \$130. THERE BEING NO OBJECTION, IT WAS SO ORDERED.

NON-RESIDENT FEES FOR LAKEWOOD YOUTH SPORTS

Recreation and Community Services Director Lisa Litzinger reported that staff had researched and conducted a survey regarding fees charged to non-resident participants in area youth sports programs. Of the twenty cities surveyed, sixteen had youth sports programs and only one offered free programs like Lakewood Youth Sports. She stated that the current ratio for LYS was 56 percent Lakewood residents and 44 percent non-residents. It was anticipated that while charging a non-resident fee for participation would generate revenue to support the programs, participation would likely be reduced, resulting in fewer teams per park location.

Mayor Croft inquired if there was a danger of not being able to field enough teams. Ms. Litzinger responded by stating that there currently were enough teams at each park, but that if registration were reduced, some parks might need to be combined in order to have a play schedule.

Council Member Van Nostran asked if it was believed that the high number of non-residents was keeping the Lakewood residents away. Ms. Litzinger stated that while staff did not believe that to be the case, the actual cause was unknown. She noted that most of the non-resident participants came from Long Beach and Bellflower, with Palms Park having the highest number of resident participants.

Council Member DuBois inquired if it was usual for a coach to sign up a whole team. Ms. Litzinger responded by stating that a coach could only be assured of having his or her own child on the team, that the placement system was conducted by a random assignment.

Mayor Croft stated that a survey was needed to determine the cause of the dropping registration numbers.

The City Manager suggested a focused survey that would target LYS participants or potential participants, rather than a community survey.

NON-RESIDENT FEES FOR LAKEWOOD YOUTH SPORTS - Continued

Vice Mayor Rogers observed that according to the table provided showing annual registration totals, the resident rate was dropping quicker than the non-resident. He noted that currently, there were already non-resident fees in place for other recreation activities, like recreation classes, swim lessons and facility rentals. He stated that while he did not want to push any children out of the program, it was not right to have Lakewood residents continuing to subsidize those from other cities. He concluded by stating that while he would not advocate charging a fee to Lakewood residents, the time had come to seriously look at non-resident fees.

Council Member DuBois supported the proposal to conduct a focus group to uncover the reason for reduced participation by residents.

In response to a question from Mayor Croft, Ms. Litzinger stated that since LYS registration began each year in May and was good for an entire year's worth of sports, staff would recommend that any change to the program not be put into effect until the beginning of the next program year.

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The City Manager confirmed for Mayor Croft that the budget allocation changes would be incorporated into the final budget documents in accordance with the City Council's direction, and that when directed actions were completed, the other items discussed would be placed on an agenda for further Council consideration

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Croft adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise R. Hayward, CMC
City Clerk