

MINUTES

City of Lakewood
Measure L Citizens Oversight Committee
Mae Boyar Park Activity Room – 6701 Del Amo Blvd., Lakewood, CA
September 21, 2022
6:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bradlee Crihfield at 6:08 p.m. in the Activity Room at the Mae Boyar Park, 6701 Del Amo Boulevard, Lakewood, California.

PRESENT: Bradlee Crihfield, Chair, Greater Lakewood Chamber of Commerce
Crystal Jones-Duncan, Vice Chair, City Council Appointee, Seniors
Cassandra Chase, Chair, City Council Audit Committee
Todd Rogers, Member, City Council Audit Committee
Rose Nelson, Lakewood Women’s Club
Ahmed Rafi, City Council Appointee, Neighborhood Watch
Jeannie Clark, City Council Appointee, At-Large
Valerie Youell, City Council Appointee, Youth
Ron Piazza, City Council Appointee, Business Community

ALSO PRESENT: Paolo Beltran, Deputy City Manager
Jose Gomez, Director of Finance and Administrative Services
Kelli Pickler, Deputy Director of Public Works
Sam Chambers, Asst. Project Manager, Public Works
Barbara Di Iorio, Executive Secretary

I. Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2022 Meeting

A motion to approve was made by Member Piazza, seconded by Member Rogers, and carried without objection (with Member Rogers abstaining), to approve the March 16, 2022 minutes of the Measure L Citizens Oversight Committee.

II. Welcome and Introductions of New Committee Members

New committee members were welcomed and self-introductions were made by all. The three newly appointed committee members (Nelson, Rafi and Youell) expressed their appreciation for being given the opportunity to serve on the committee. Members Chase and Rogers thanked all committee members for their commitment.

III. Overview of Committee’s Mission, City’s Fiscal Structure & Revenue Sources and Trends

Deputy City Manager Beltran provided background on the Committee’s mission, supported with a slide presentation. He reported that for several years prior to Measure L being passed, the city’s expenditures were growing faster than revenues, citing three reasons: loss of local control of the city’s funding; flattening of revenues; and the rising cost of doing business. Mr. Beltran described the city’s challenge of preserving the “Lakewood Way” while being fiscally responsible (which has traditionally been to live within its means), and addressing a critical need to maintain our existing aging infrastructure that was literally falling apart. Measure L was placed on the ballot for Lakewood residents and passed with 64% of the vote to approve a ¾ cent sales tax increase. The Measure L Citizens Oversight Committee was formed to provide additional transparency through oversight of Measure L by reviewing revenues and expenditures generated by the measure.

Director Gomez provided a report supported with slides that briefly reviewed how local governments work, and explained where property and sales tax dollars go, as well as how much the city receives in state general revenues. Additionally, he explained how discretionary revenues and spending are distributed in a typical California full service city.

IV. Overview of FY 22-24 Budget

Director Gomez provided an overview of the 2022-2024 budget and provided comparison with information from prior budget years. Supported with a slide presentation, Director Gomez explained the financial outlook of General Fund Revenues, Measure L Sales Tax Revenue, as well as departmental expenditures. In summary, Director Gomez stated that the city is well-positioned financially to maintain programs and services, and to set aside funds for needed infrastructure improvements, noting that budget surpluses are anticipated and are part of the long-term stabilization strategy.

V. Status of Capital Improvement Projects funded by Measure L

Mr. Beltran introduced Public Works Department staff Kelli Tunnicliff and Sam Chambers. Member Croft explained that long-time Public Works Direct Lisa Rapp is retiring, and he welcomed Ms. Tunnicliff as the Deputy Director of Public Works.

Ms. Tunnicliff displayed slides that showed the 5 Year Measure L Funding Program, and projects in their various stages. The 5 Year Funding Program slide showed how much money is remaining each year after appropriations are made to planned projects. It was clarified for Chairperson Crihfield that \$3M of Measure L funds is allocated for Capital Improvement Projects. Member Croft explained that the city needs to build up some reserve to be able to afford entire projects and for true cost of projects and unforeseen needs.

Projects currently under construction were reviewed. These include the replacement of restroom roof structures and new picnic shelters at Rynerson Park, and improvements to ADA parking, picnic shelters and the tot lot playground at San Martin Park. Member Croft noted that the picnic shelters at Rynerson Park were in such poor condition, that they had to be demolished until now. Mr. Beltran stated that a Measure L banner has been posted at San Martin Park to let residents know that the improvements have been made possible, due to Measure L.

Projects under study or design were explained. The City Hall Public Works and Community Development departments counter replacement and shared space renovation is in the design stage and will make the area ADA compliant. Also under study is the replacement of the construction trailer behind City Hall with a new modular building, including restrooms, that will house some Public Works and Community Development staff – Measure L and ARPA funds will be used for this project. Electrical, roofing and HVAC improvements at various parks and city buildings are being studied. And the possibility of generator replacements at The Centre and City Hall using ARPA funds is also being studied.

Weingart Senior Center improvements and renovation of the Palms Park Community Center are also projects in the planning stage. The current estimated budget for improvements to the Weingart Senior Center is \$2.2 million and include a new HVAC system, flooring throughout the facility, additional hearing loops in the multi-use, assembly and card rooms, as well as various ADA improvements. The city has \$1.3 million from Measure L funds for this project and have requested \$2 million in appropriations from elected officials, who can “earmark” funds for projects in their district. The city must wait to hear if funds get appropriated to Lakewood.

Renovation of the Palms Park Community Center estimated at \$5 million, and complete demolition and rebuilding of the facility is estimated at \$8 million. City staff recommends proceeding with renovation of the facility given the fact that \$3 million in Measure L funds are secured, as well as an additional \$2 million that has been appropriated from State Assembly Member Anthony Rendon. Potential scope of work for the renovation project include a new HVAC system, electrical infrastructure improvements, various ADA improvements, new flooring throughout the facility, roof replacement, mitigation of bee infestation, and replacement of various other damaged or antiquated components of the building.

In response to committee members' questions, it was explained that input from the public was solicited approximately four years ago with regard to services and uses that are desired at the facility. Residents will be surveyed again and community involvement will be requested at certain stages of the planning process, both in person and via the new FlashVote survey system.

To let residents know how Measure L has been helping the city, a Measure L Report Card will be sent to all residents.

VI. Public Comment

There were no members of the public present to comment.

VII. Committee Member Comments

Vice Chairperson Jones-Duncan commended staff on a job well done. Member Croft referred to the spreadsheet provided by staff listing all of the projects planned. He noted that although we are posting signs for the public to see when projects get underway, the enhancements made that can not be seen will be noticed and appreciated by facility patrons upon completion.

VIII. Adjournment

Chairperson Crihfield adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Di Iorio
Executive Secretary