

**MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE
TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER The regular meeting of the Budget Subcommittee of the City of South Gate was called to order by Maria Belen Bernal, Mayor at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL Carmen Avalos, City Clerk

PRESENT Mayor Maria Belen Bernal, Council Member Al Rios, City Treasurer Greg Martinez; City Staff Jackie Acosta, Director of Administrative Services, Kim Sao, Deputy Director of Administrative Services

**1
DEPARTMENT
PRESENTATIONS**

The Budget Subcommittee Members heard department presentation on operations by Community Development and Public Works directors'.

Director Acosta stated the Budget Subcommittee Members wanted more information from the departments about their day to day operations. Last month we heard from the Parks and Police Departments. Today we will hear from Community Development and Public Works Departments.

Joe Perez, Director of Community Development will be introducing the staff members who interact with the public. Director Perez stated that the Community Development Department is funded with a combination of restricted funds (these funds can only be used for specified purposes) and general fund.

Director Perez stated that the department is comprised of Economic Development & Administration, Planning, Building & Safety, Code Enforcement, Housing & Grants and Successor Agency.

Economic Development & Administration supports existing businesses & attracts new ones.

Planning ensures new developments meet General Plan and Zoning Code requirements and supports Planning Commission.

Building & Safety ensures new construction meets safety regulations.

Code Enforcement ensures the City's policies and laws are compliant in a timely fashion.

Housing & Grants administers Section 8 Housing Program & Federal/State grants and supports the Citizen's Advisory Committee.

Mayor Bernal thanked Director Perez for his presentation. She reviewed the LEAP Report. She believes there's a great opportunity to continue working with the Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Bernal asked about the landlords that are absent from our community.

Director Perez stated that our City prosecutor will send a letter to the absent landlords or non-responsive property owner who do not maintain their property.

Council Member Rios thanked Director Perez and his staff for their service to the community. He has noticed the budget decreasing from year to year and wants to know how that is going to impact some of the departments and if the general funds will offset it.

Director Perez stated that in this year's budget there's some areas that have increased and decreased. Some of the savings are in a positive ways. For example we have a new plan checker. The previous plan checker had worked for the City for many years and we felt it was time for an RFP.

Director Perez stated that they will be talking to Council about staffing levels. The goal is to provide a high quality standard of service to the public and yet be sensitive especially in development.

Council Member Rios asked if code enforcement have any discretion to deal with any difficult situations.

Director Perez stated that code enforcement officers respond to complaints or observations.

Mayor Bernal is aware Mr. Betancourt who was the Senior Planner no longer works for the City. She asked who is currently assisting with this process.

Director Perez stated that Jessica is an Assistant Planner and we currently have a temporary person in the senior position.

Council Member Rios stated that the South Gate Leadership class asked him what the City is doing about homeless. He understands this is a difficult issue.

City Treasurer Martinez stated meeting with Bishop Mendez because there is a program in Huntington Park done thru non-profit (church). They bring in showers, someone does haircuts, clothing which is done once a week. We are trying to do this quarterly or once a month.

City Treasurer Martinez is not sure if the City would assist or ask a non-profit church to do it.

Council Member Rios asked if a partnership with PATH ways would help.

City Treasurer Martinez has seen PATH ways help but what is South Gate doing to help. He mentioned that last Wednesday or Thursday nuns were feeding the homeless on Santa Fee and Truba. These nuns were from St. Emydius.

Director Perez stated that any initiative that the city might enter into could cause unintended negative consequences to a neighborhood. He believes the residents need to be informed of all the programs the City has to help the homeless.

Mayor Bernal hears a lot of care and love for others in need. She mentioned Amanda Foundation is a non-profit who provides services. The foundation has a contract with the City of LA. She knows of an organization, Volunteers of America, next to American Legion on California. You might want to speak with them.

Arturo Cervantes, Assistant City Manager/Director of Public Works spoke on the public works projects, covered missions and goals.

Mayor Bernal thanked Assistant City Manager/Director Cervantes for his presentation. She asked about the sidewalk repairs.

Assistant City Manager/Director Cervantes stated that sidewalks move annually. If public works started on the west side of the City and worked clear to the east side and by the time they are done with the entire City, they'll have to go back to the west side and start all over again. They are creating a special task force to focus on sidewalks.

Mayor Bernal asked if the majority of the trees in the community are ficus.

Assistant City Manager/Director Cervantes stated their last inventory had us at about 1,000 ficus trees.

Mayor Bernal asked if he has considered a special tree task force to asses non-traditional and justify going out of the triannual cycle.

Assistant City Manager/Director Cervantes stated that the tree contract is expiring and will provide another opportunity to improve it if the City Council wishes to invest.

Council Member Rios is pro-trees.

Assistant City Manager/Director Cervantes stated that the City has an ordinance. We cannot remove trees unless its dead, diseased, causing damage to the infrastructure and if it looks like it's going to fall or structurally unsafe.

Mayor Bernal inquired about the Water Master Plan.

Assistant City Manager/Director Cervantes stated that the public infrastructure master plans in general accomplish three things. It asses the system, identify deficiencies and make recommendations for improvements.

The Water Master Plan that is being prepared is geared towards identifying how the system is doing now and what is the highest areas of need in terms of infrastructure.

Mayor Bernal asked if we have to report to the public with regards to the water fund monies and operations.

Director Acosta stated that in regards to monies and operations, there are no requirements.

Mayor Bernal thinks it's helpful to inform the public of how things are being spent, why we are choosing or able to do certain projects in one department vs. sidewalks.

Mayor Bernal inquired about any private water wells in the community.

Assistant City Manager/Director Cervantes stated there are private water wells. He can try and put together an inventory.

Council Member Rios inquired about usage and quality of water compared to other in our region.

Assistant City Manager/Director Cervantes stated that the City's water system is second to none.

Assistant City Manager/Director Cervantes introduced the following employees:

Clint Herrera, Assistant City Engineer and has been with the City for four (4) years

Dave Torres, Field Operations Manager has been with the City for thirty (30) years

January Bonilla, Management Assistant has been with the City for twenty-five (25) years

Alma Medina, Management Analyst has been with the City for six months

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DEPARTMENT

PRESENTATIONS CONT'D

Mayor Bernal and Council Member Rios thanked everyone for their hard work and commitment to this community.

2

SALES TAX RECEIPTS

The Budget Subcommittee Members received and filed an accounting of sales tax receipts for the past ten years.

Jackie Acosta, Director of Administrative Services stated this item was from one of the first meetings. A question was asked about how much revenue the City has received in sales tax generated by Measure P that was approved in 2008.

Director Acosta has provided a chart and included the Bradley Burns sales tax.

Mayor Bernal asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak on this item. Seeing no one step forward; Mayor Bernal closed the audience portion.

Mayor Bernal reviewed the ballot question that went before the South Gate voters in 2008. She would like to know if we are in compliance. She also inquired about the Citizens Financial Oversight.

Director Acosta stated we have our annual financial audit and believes the criteria has been met. There was a committee created after the measure was passed and it's unknown why the committee stopped meeting.

City Treasurer Martinez stated \$3.7 million was spent the first year. He asked if the current money is considered surplus money.

Director Acosta stated the money is not being supplanted. She added that without the \$10 million we would not be balancing our budget

Council Member Rios thanked Director Acosta for this information. He is concerned because LAUSD has placed a measure on the ballot for the June election. He was wondering how it's going to impact South Gate residents and businesses.

City Clerk Avalos explained that the measure is a parcel tax and based on the footage of your home or business at sixteen (16) cents for a twelve year period.

Mayor Bernal understands this is an LAUSD issue. She spoke with Mr. Web who used to be the Director of Operations for our local district. Mr. Web informed her that they are strongly reaching out to our community. She believes the residents and businesses see both sides of the story.

2

SALES TAX RECEIPTS

Mayor Bernal is offended by the ballot proposal and asked Director Acosta to have a conference with City Attorney and City Council to understand what exactly we can do as a City to educate and inform our community.

Director Acosta will do research and bring it back at the next meeting.

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MINUTES


The Budget Subcommittee Members unanimously approved the meeting minutes of January 29, 2019 by motion of Council Member Rios and seconded by Mayor Bernal.

ADJOURNMENT


Mayor Bernal unanimously adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m. seconded by Council Member Rios.

PASSED and **APPROVED** this 9th day of July 2020.

ATTEST:



Al Rios, Vice Mayor



Carmen Avalos, City Clerk