

MEETING MINUTES

The City Council/Successor Agency of the City of Firebaugh
Vol. No. 19/03-04

Location of Meeting: Andrew Firebaugh Community Center
1655 13th Street, Firebaugh, CA 93622
Date/Time: March 4, 2019/6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER Meeting called to order by Mayor Sablan at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL PRESENT: Mayor Marcia Sablan
Mayor Pro Tem Elsa Lopez
Council Member Freddy Valdez
Council Member Brady Jenkins
Council Member Felipe Perez

ABSENT:

OTHERS: City Attorney J. Sanchez; City Manager/Acting Public Works Director, Ben Gallegos; Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano; Finance Director, Pio Martin; Police Chief, Sal Raygoza; Fire Chief, John Borboa, City Engineer Mario Gouveia, Consultants Albert Peche & Clayton Tuckfield, & others.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Council Member Jenkins led pledge of Allegiance.

Motion to approve agenda by Council Member Jenkins, second by Council Member Perez; motion pass by unanimous 5-0 vote.

PRESENTATION Swear-in of Officer Rodolfo Tabares & Dispatcher Jeanette Marquez.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The City Council Special Meeting on February 19, 2019.**

Motion to accept minutes by Council Member Lopez, second by Council Member Perez; motion pass by unanimous 5-0 vote.

PUBLIC HEARING

2. **RESOLUTION NO. 19-13 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH ESTABLISHING RATE INCREASES FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICES.**

Financial Advisor Albert Peche & Consultant Clayton Tuckfield provided a brief presentation of the rate study.

City Attorney Sanchez stated, "The adoption of water and wastewater rate increases are exempt from CEQA under Public Resources Code section 21080(b)(8) and CEQA Guidelines section 15273(a) because the increases reflect rates to provide for the maintenance of operational expenses, capital and reserves to ensure continued operation of the system."

Public Hearing Opened at 6:27 pm – Mr. John Seasholtz of Red Rooster stated his in opposition against any rate increase because of the negative impact it could have on his business. Representatives from Toma-Tek also stated their opposition against any rate increase because of the impact to their business & the economy, so they are looking into alternate sources for utilities as well as other areas to save money. Both companies expressed they employee may local residents and they may have to reduce their employee staff, which will effect Firebaugh's economy because most of their employees are local residents. Abel Serrano, eastside acres residents, stated a board meeting was held regarding

*the sewer rate increase. Most residents that live on the Madera County felt they were not properly informed and stated concern that any sewer rate increase to them will fund improvements to their services. They would like to make sure that their service is maintained & upgrades are being made to the system that provides them their service. City Manager Gallegos replied to Mr. Serrano & public, that the Lift Station which serves the residents of Madera County was rebuilt in 2010, at an estimated cost of \$500,000. The system also notifies the city about any problems it may come across & is monitored every day. Allen Narbaitz, eastside acres resident, asked who monitors for any leakage of the sewer lines that run underground, the proposed rate is so high at \$49.00 or more a month? Mr. Randy Key of Red Rooster, added he manages the purchase orders and handles so many orders for part purchases, the company employees over 300 people, an increase in rates will cause other businesses to raise their rates to cover cost. Mr. Bob Sharp inquired about commercial rates, which haven't been discussed. Lydia spoke on behalf of her father, owners of apartments on "N" St, she stated she opposes the rate increases, because it cause rent to be increase and effect the economy of Firebaugh. Representatives of Toma-Tek asked if the rate study shows consumption of all rate descriptions to determine usages. Mr. Tuckfield informed the public that is a part of the rate study, as well as the consumption of the past 5 years, which determine the proposed rates. Mr. Tuckfield didn't have the information with him at the meeting but it could be provided. Mr. Javier Flores stated he understands what the businesses concerns are, rate increases do affect them & other businesses, including his employer because I work locally, but the cost of living is always increasing. Mr. Flores added, he has considered moving but Firebaugh is a good community to raise kids and yes, it is difficult with the costs of living always going up. – **Public Hearing Closed at 7:08 pm.***

Council Member Valdez stated we have been active in upgrading the system & asked staff if there has ever been a time when we couldn't maintain the system or services? City Manager Gallegos replied, "No, a few years back the City had a few sink holes and that caused sewer lines to collapse, but the City was able to repair because of funding in the city's reserves. It takes 7,400 gals per minute is required for the Fire Department to be able to put out or fight fires like the one at Rebecchi's Dept. Store." Council Member Jenkins, asked if the City could wait for the new houses to be built to help offset cost without rate increase. Manager replied, if the City waits, we will be behind the problem, because the city will have more expenses to treat more water and sewer for additional services/usages. Council Member Sablan asked Attorney, "What if the City doesn't comply with the Prop 218 process?" City Attorney, strongly recommends the City abides with the law or the City could face a potential law suit.

Motion to approve Res. No. 19-13 by Council Member Lopez, second by Council Member Perez; motion pass by 4-1 vote. Jenkins – no.

STAFF REPORTS

- ***Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano*** – 700 Form Reminder, received notice not all members have completed forms, do so before you are fined. Joint Meeting with the School Board is at 6:00 pm on March 11, 2019, Community Center, please email me any last minute agenda items to be added.
- ***City Attorney James Sanchez*** – Hemp is now an Agriculture Product/Commodity.
- ***City Manager Ben Gallegos*** – Working with Mario on a sidewalk repair, will attend ICSC Conference in Monterey, Thursday through Friday.
- ***Council Member Valdez*** – Attended a Parks & Rec Meeting on Friday, very helpful. Sitting as a Council Member is difficult when making tuff decisions but Council is trying to make the quality of service as we make the best decisions.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLOSED SESSION ITEM ONLY

CLOSED SESSION

ANNOUNCEMENT

ADJOURNMENT

Motion adjourn by Council Member Valdez, second by Council Member Perez; motion pass by unanimous 5-0 vote at 7:24 p.m.