

MEETING MINUTES

The City Council/Successor Agency of the City of Firebaugh
Vol. No. 22/10-17

**PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 11 OF EXECUTIVE ORDER N-25-20,
EXECUTED BY THE GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA ON MARCH 12, 2020**

City Council Meeting held via teleconferencing

***Pursuant to Government Code Section 54953 (b) (2), all action taken during this teleconferenced meeting shall be by roll call vote.**

Location of Meeting: Andrew Firebaugh Community Center
1655 13th Street, Firebaugh, CA 93622

Date/Time: October 17, 2022/6:00 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL Mayor Brady Jenkins
Council Member Elsa Lopez
Council Member Freddy Valdez
Mayor Pro Tem Felipe Pérez

ABSENT: Council Member Marcia Sablan

OTHERS: City Attorney James McCann; City Manager Ben Gallegos; Deputy Clerk, Rita Lozano; Finance Director, Pio Martin
Police Chief, Sal Raygoza; Fire Chief, John Borboa; Public Works Director, Michael Molina; City Engineer, Mario
Gouveia; Gouveia Engineering, Rigoberto; Dispatcher, Raquel Tabares; Officer Juan Castillo & family; Officer
Fernando Campa & Family; Linda Espinoza, Abel Serrano; Matt Garcia, Ryan Gonzalez, Silvia Renteria, Chris
Gutierrez, Amanda Fleming, Wanda Breashears, Hector Marin, Terry Campa, Tito Campa, Angel Campa, Steven
Veiga, Manuel Perez, Salvador – Tomasa Navarro, John Navarro, & others.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Council Member Valdez led pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda by Council Member Valdez, second by Council Member Sablan, motion passed by 5-0 vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Silvia Renteria, for closed session, our City Manager is being evaluated for the fifth time already this year, which, I think causes his moral to go down. He's doing a wonderful job, he's very passionate, no one else has cared more about the community. Matt Garcia stated the VFW is still missing 13 chairs, a donation of \$500 was given to purchase chairs, but I understand it went to the General Fund, instead of the VFW, but we already had grant funds to buy chairs, so I would like to know where the funding is. A renter broke a key in the fire alarm pull station, VFW is being asked to pay for the \$621.65 bill to EKC Enterprises for the repair, but the device is part of the building and building is the City's, so the city should have to pay the fees. VFW members believe it was a faulty pull station that was causing the issue. Matt provided a copy of the invoice for review. On June 6, 2022, Council approved reimbursement to the VFW for rental fees of the Fireman's ball but we haven't received it.

PRESENTATION

- Swearing-in of Corporal Campa and Corporal Castillo.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The City Council regular meeting on October 3, 2022.
- WARRANT REGISTER – Period starting September 1 and ending on September 30, 2022.

September 2022	General Warrants	#43288 - #43398	\$ 1,019,678.34
	Payroll Warrants	#71856 - #71874	\$ 147,639.87
	TOTAL		\$ 1,167,318.21

3. **RESOLUTION NO. 22-46 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH AUTHORIZING USE OF EMERGENCY REMOTE TELECONFERENCING PROVISIONS.**

Motion to approve Consent Calendar by Council Member Lopez, second by Council Member Valdez, motion passed by 5-0 vote.

PUBLIC HEARING

None

NEW BUSINESS

4. **THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH TO DISCUSS AND DIRECTION ON HUD TANK.**

City Manager reported the project is estimated at \$8 to \$9 million, \$40 thousand for the previous environmental, transition line is at 30%, but the city will have to front the funds. Water has more available grant funding, city will revise the past submitted application to meet the new requirements and Self-help is offering to assist the city with the project. The city will use about \$90,000 from the water fund, and could possibly get reimbursed, but it's not guaranteed. Fresno County is assisting the city & providing American Rescue Plan Act aka (ARPA) funds and the Water board is providing additional funding for this project. The HUD tank is in bad shape and isn't even safe to put a diver in to look inside.

The consensus of the Council is to proceed with the project, city will front expenses.

5. **THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH TO DISCUSS AND DIRECTION ON ALLEY PAVING AT BEEHIVE.**

Item is tabled to seek additional funding to complete the whole alley.

STAFF REPORTS

- **Public Works Director, Michael Molina** – had a couple of water leaks, working with Mario on future projects, construction to begin in spring when we have better weather, the carnival is next week, so we're working on that.
- **City Manager, Ben Gallegos** – Thanked Michael, he's been short staff and he stepped up to fill-in the vacant positions, he's helped at various positions and locations, projects, and has stayed after hours when needed. The cannabis company from Mendota does community service hours, so the volunteered to clean-up alleys in Firebaugh and picked up bags of trash through out the city, so I want to thank them. Freddy, Pio, and I attended the Cannabis Convention in Sacramento, we got the answers we were looking for, Fresno stated cities shouldn't count on the money from these types of businesses, because there's no guarantee on what the city will actually receive, & the funds are actually much lower than originally anticipated. Mario and I attended a 3 ½ hour webinar seminar, on multi-use projects like our project, it's the type of project they're looking for. Will Marshall was in Kerman attending the same meeting as I, he mentioned grant funding to create jobs, 14,900 per capita, match up to \$300 million industrial site – Toma-Tek can possibly use it. Seeking additional funding, working with businesses that interested in coming to Firebaugh, but property owners are asking for too much to rent or sell. Attending an annual report at Fresno City College on Wednesday, at 6:00 pm. Looking for grants, have seen a lot for the schools, I've been forwarding info to Terry to review. There's a street closure in front of West Hills College for about 2 weeks to let concrete to cure.
- **Police Chief Sal Raygoza** – issue State Foods with food trucks, backing up to unload in front of the store/parking lot, we need to see what we can do to prevent it.
- **City Engineer, Mario Gouveia** – pre-bid, meeting will be held tomorrow for 8th Street & 9th Street.

- **Finance Director, Pio Martin** – Will start the audit, pass, and approved the shut-off resolution , coming up Wednesday we will start the implementing shut-off, we got quit a few people make payment or ask for payment plans, the plans are low about \$50 or \$25, we trying to work with them to make it affordable, especially if they're really struggling. Second notices were sent out, home renters were giving flyer for additional funding to help with their payments. Credit Cards are working well, no additional fees are being charged to them. Payment plans being offered are about a 3-year term or 2 ½ years with no stuff-off as long as the continue to meet the terms of the agreement. Those that get shut-off, a \$50 reconnection fee is charged.
- **City Attorney, James McCann** – nothing to report, please read closed session out loud and allow public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chris Gutierrez, I've worked with Ben, he's a really good, pretty sharp guy. Silvia Renteria, Ben being called for evaluation for at least five times this year, when is it called harassment, please take that under consideration, when you keep calling him for evaluation, who would want to work like that. That brings the moral down and people that won't want to work here. The city has people that have came to work for the city, and don't stay. You currently, have someone who's deducted to the city that grew up here, who's make good changes to the city. Linda Espinoza, want to echo what has been said about Ben, he's brining a lot of things to the city, just look at the projects that are being constructed in town. I would prefer to have a local person in his position and stand behind him. Matt Garcia, U hope that this serves well, but I have a different point of view of Ben, I've worked for him. I served as a marine, under great leadership, with men that have great compacity to lead and Ben lacks that ability. Working under Ben, I can say the moral of the employees is low, I've talked to people that don't want to come in to work, whether they don't want to work or don't want to work for Ben, I don't really know. Ben is a good guy & I don't want him to take is personal, the city council is doing their job, all employees get evaluated & sometimes the evaluations takes a toll on that person getting evaluated and effects their moral, but Ben, your workers' moral is just as important. Wanda Breshears, Ben is a dedicated worker, no one knows what's going on behind the scenes, but he's done a lot of for the city. Amanda Fleming, take in consideration, there's not a better person that's came from that job, the beautification of the Firebaugh hasn't look this good in a while. Mayor Jenkins, I've served for about 12 years, and I've never since public comment allowed before closed session, new learning experience, but to enlighten you, just because he's under evaluation doesn't mean that his being evaluated, their things that can't being discuss or explained to you when his under evaluation.

- ❖ ***Motion to enter closed session at 7:30 pm by Council Member Valdez, Second by Council Member Perez; vote pass by 5-0 vote***

CLOSED SESSION

6. Government Code Section 54957

PUBLIC EMPLOYEE EVALUATION: City Manager.

- ❖ ***Motion to enter open session at 9:08 pm by Council Member Valdez, Second by Council Member Perez; vote pass by 5-0 vote***

ANNOUNCEMENT AFTER CLOSED SESSION

No action taken

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 9:09 pm by Council Member Valdez, second by Council Member Sablan, motion passes by a 4-1 vote. Lopez – No.