

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**  
**The City Council/Successor Agency of the City of Firebaugh**  
**Vol. No. 23/11-20**

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**Location of Meeting:** Andrew Firebaugh Community Center  
1655 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Firebaugh, CA 93622

**Date/Time:** November 20, 2023/5:30 p.m.

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

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

***ABSENT:***

***OTHERS:*** City Attorney Christina Di Filippo; City Manager, Ben Gallegos, Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano; Public Works Director, Michael Molina; Finance Director, Pio Martin; Police Chief, Sal Raygoza; Battalion Chief, Hector Marin; Gouveia Engineering, Mario Gouveia School Board Members, Abel Serrano, Fernando Campa, Deanne Crockett, Maria Ramirez, Eliseo Gamino, Roy Mendiola & others.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** *Council Member Valdez led pledge of Allegiance.*

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Flores stated he's tired of this garbage, he paid \$17,000 of city fees regarding his property and now he's getting sued by the City of Firebaugh, we need to change people around here, that don't take advantage of the poor people.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**a. West Hills College Update**

Dean of Firebaugh District Bethany Matos provide an update, 93% of the students that attend the district applied for FAFSA admission and 87% received FAFSA, about 30 students have signed up for the JR. Falcon Program, and will receive a CPR certification, over 150 attended the Dia De Los Muertos. CALSOAP had about 400 Students visit the center, spoke with over 240 students through the outreach at the high school, dual enrollment is up 15% this fall, Measure K will fund a solar project. The college is rebranding with Lemoore, Coalinga, and Firebaugh so the colleges will distinguish the differences between the campuses and have different logos. Firebaugh is a center of Coaling WHC, not a college, yet, like Lemoore.

**b. City of Firebaugh Update**

A new McDonalds is opening, working with other businesses that are interested in, but can't provide the names. The Housing Authority is rebuilding the apartments, so there looking at 64 units, the Habitat for Humanity is building 17 homes, with a possibility of additional 10 more if funding is received, funding of \$200,000 to repair street crossing on Clyde Fannon and various other locations. City was awarded 6 million to repair the wastewater project, but it is a \$16 million project so we're waiting for additional funding, Dunkle Park is getting a remold, with new playground equipment, improvements to the basketball court and hoping to do additional repairs. Maldonado Park has been a very busy park, it's way overused, so we need to figure out how or when to close it to do some repairs. Caltrans will be working on the Highway Beautification; they are aware of the potholes. Police Chief Raygoza reported the following: Received complaints regarding 13<sup>th</sup> St and P St and crosswalks, over 500 cars use 13<sup>th</sup> street, it has recently dropped but it's heavily used. The department has used drone visibility. It can be dangerous when people pass on 7<sup>th</sup> street because they're running late, so an officer will be placed there to patrol. The department will relocate to the new police station on December 1st. Residents have been notified of the relocation, so everyone is aware. project was delayed due to transferring

the AT&T, comcast and PG&E wiring. Domestic Violence went up a few months ago but is going back down. I'd like to report that our community is still the safest. DUI incidents are increasing.

**c. Firebaugh PD Update**

**i SRO Mid-Year Report**

Introduced School Resource Officer Andrew Lopez, funded by the School District, BSCC Officer Rodolfo Tabares, officer for 7 years, grant to expire 5/30/2024, 7 grant is 50/50 assigned by the School, BSCC Officer Kevin Gillum, grant funded by the state, expires 5/31/2028, 50/50 assignment between the school and city. Officer work investigations, provide CPR training to students and worked with MAGIC, in the past three months, they've attended the school 173 times, completed 11 investigations, recovered guns, weapons, and drugs through their investigations. They've assisted with student harassment matters, attended football games and school presentations. Council Member Valdez recognized Officer Gillium for his work in connecting with students, one of the connections with a troubled student when he was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, he is currently in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and you can see the improvement he's made. Officer Lopez supported and made a change in a student when they were hungry and provided aid. Officer Tabares assisted a female a student that was interested in joining the cadet program but felt she didn't have a chance because she was female. Officer Tabares assured her and made her feel comfortable to fulfill her interest. Council Member Jenkins inquired about an SRO having a K9. Police Chief and School Board Member Serrano were in support of the idea.

**d. District Update**

**i Bailey TK Facility Update**

Contractor Bush representative attended the meeting, if anyone has questions on their project, on constructing 14 units at Biley, it the highest attendance for summer school. The project is estimated to take more than a year to complete. The Football project has been delayed to future notice, the track and field project are on hold, last year the soccer tennis team was disrupted, and they had to go practice at another school after that team was done practicing. It was late and inconvenient to travel to Madera and back, it wasn't fair to them but the end the season with the Championship Title.

**ii Bailey Parking Lot**

The school would like to start a conversation about having the city pave the dirt area at the Dunkle Park, Parking has been an issue at Bailey, and it would help with drop off students, its city property, so we ask the city to consider it. The street becomes so narrow, the school has approached CCID about property along the canal to build additional parking, so the school may need assistance from the city to resolve the issue.

**iii High School Parking lot Project by highway 33**

The football parking lot has been an issue, many cars park along the street and there's been one incident of a child being hit because it is hard to see when cars park on both sides of the curb along that street.

**iv Potential Housing Options**

Glad to hear about the additional housing but need housing that it's for low income for teachers to living the community.

**v American Heart Association**

**vi Future Joint Meeting Proposed Dates:**

- i.) February 15, 2024**
- ii.) April 18, 2024**
- iii.) August 29, 2024**

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** Add K-9 discussion and Green Space to the next agenda Feb. 15, 2024.

**BOARD MEMBERS & COUNCIL MEMBERS COMMENTS**

*Motion to approve a recess of 5 minutes at 7:32 p.m. by Council Member Renteria, second Council Member Valdez; motion passed by 5-0 vote.*

*Motion to approve a return and enter City Business at 7:42 p.m. by Council Member Valdez, second Council Member Jenkins; motion passed by 5-0 vote.*

## CITY BUSINESS

### CONSENT CALENDAR

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The City Council regular meeting on November 6, 2023.**

*Motion to accept consent calendar by Council Member Valdez, second Council Member Jenkins; motion passed by 5-0 vote.*

### PUBLIC HEARING

2. **THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARING FOR CLOSEOUT OF 20-CDBG-CV2-3-00231 GRANT.**

*Public Hearing Open at 7:43 p.m. – No comment given – Close Hearing at 7:44 p.m.*

*Motion to approve grant closeout by Council Member Lopez, second Council Member Renteria; motion passed by 5-0 vote.*

3. **ORDINANCE NO. 23-02 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH AMENDING SECTION 4-2.6.1 OF THE FIREBAUGH MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO ITINERANT BUSINESSES – **TABLED TO DECEMBER 18, 2023.****

### NEW BUSINESS

4. **RESOLUTION NO. 23-48 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH ACCEPTING COMPLETION OF THE NEW POLICE STATION IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, AUTHORIZING THE CITY CLERK TO RECORD A NOTICE OF COMPLETION WITH FRESNO COUNTY, AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO MAKE FINAL PAYMENT OF RETENTION MONIES TO ARDENT GENREAL, INC.**

Recommendation is to accept the project as is, if there's any other issues it may be fixed under the one-year warranty, which starts 30 days after the Notice of Completion is recorded. The only outstanding item, the contractor will be replacing all of the awnings.

*Motion to approve Res. No. 23-48 by Council Member Lopez, second Council Member Jenkins; motion passed by 5-0 vote.*

### STAFF REPORTS

- **Police Chief Sal Raygoza** – the department has been very busy, so will provide my staff report at the next meeting.
- **Battalion Chief, Hector Marin** – it's been a slow month on calls, which is good. Attended training a couple of weeks ago at the North Central Fire district, it's the first time got to attend to witness the explore program, with the high school ROP class. I was approached with something similar from one the teachers at our high school. I told him it's not something I'm looking at but would like in the future. This past week we held family Thanksgiving with the Fire Department, had some games, it was fun.
- **Public Works Director, Michael Molina** – we survived the 1<sup>st</sup> storm, the department went around to clean all the DI's and clean of the leaves in the gutters, and we're getting ready for the Christmas Parade. Started to put up the main streetlights decorations and we'll finish up in the next few days.
- **City Engineer, Mario Gouveia** – nothing to report.
- **Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano** – nothing to report.

- **Finance Director, Pio Martin** – reminder we'll be implementing late fees next month, on our water bills, letters were mailed out last month to inform residents, the 2<sup>nd</sup> notices will go out this month.
- **City Attorney, Christina Di Filippo** – nothing to report.
- **City Manager, Ben Gallegos** – attended a flood meeting with a lot of cities that had the same issue as us, very interesting and educational how other cities handled the matter. We were very fortunate to have our elected officials, that were willing to help us more than other communities with their elected officials. We all shared what we went through and discussed how we can help each other, they liked how we were very prepared with the study that was done and asked us how we did that. Wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.
- **Council Member Lopez** – just wanted to re-emphasize, that we don't thank our employees as often as we should, the employees, the staff or your dedication and the work that you put into the community and providing the services you do.
- **Council Member Renteria** – Thank you, staff, and Hector, including the volunteers for attending the Halloween event at the school, I wasn't here last week so I couldn't talk on the. Also, if the volunteers can attend the Jr. High School, with a candy program give away. Battalion Chief Marin advised the department wasn't invited to the event. We will try and get you invited; it was a great opportunity to meet the people. Thank you to everybody for all of your work, and just know, sometimes we don't say it as much as we should, but especially with the holidays, we need to thank our staff, because some of them are going and doing above and beyond things when they should be home with their families. The other thing is, I know Councilmember Jenkins has brought it up before and there's been talk about it, but haven't seen it on the agenda, I just wanted to see if we can talk about Mr. Marin's PayScale. In the past, we said we were going to bring it back, and we never discussed it, so I was just wondering what happened with that. Is there a thought about bringing it back to us, or was it just negotiated on your own? City Attorney De Filippo stated, "I recalled we approved the pay scale, and that the negotiation was going to be on an actual number." City Manager Gallegos added, "But if I'm not mistaken, that is personnel, not a council" City Attorney replied, "Correct".
- **Council Member, Jenkins** – that we still asked you to bring it back and put it on the agenda for discussion.
- **Council Member Valdez** – like my colleagues stated, tis is the only time we should be thankful for the benefits we all enjoy as community members, thank you for your dedication, we see a lot of it, and we're blessed to have it. Hector, I fully support you with our ROP class. Moving forward, I think that's the direction we have to pursue and hopefully, follow with the Police Department. Again, what's better to teach the courses to our cadets than the people dealing with that, as you find your position, I fully encourage you to really think about that. It would be a great asset to the school district and to the community.
- **Council Member Perez** – Can you enlighten us about Mr. Flores's comments. City Manager Gallegos informed Mr. Flores is not being sued, unpaid fines were placed on property tax rolls for collection, which was approved by City Council. The fines are over \$100,000, due to all the code violations at his property, he did pay \$17,000 for a site plan review to planning, and the violations haven't been corrected, it's been an issue for several years. Council Member Valdez added, several residents were offered and opportunity to work with the City Manager to address the violations and negotiate fees and fines, I believe most of the residents resolved the problems and received a reduction on what they owned. He had several opportunities to work with the city and council, fines and deadlines were extended several times to work with him, but he chose not to. Thank everyone for what you are doing. It's nice to see the kids are getting everything, since 5 to 6 years old. I know all the officers are doing a great job, everywhere I see them, they greet me and say hi, they're very friendly, thank you so much.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

## CLOSED SESSION

## ANNOUNCEMENT AFTER CLOSED SESSION

## ADJOURNMENT

- ❖ ***Motion to adjourn at 8:01 pm by Council Member Jenkins, second by Council Member Lopez, motion passes by a 5-0 vote.***