

MEETING MINUTES

The City Council/Successor Agency of the City of Firebaugh
Vol. No. 25-11-03

Location of Meeting:	Andrew Firebaugh Community Center 1655 13th Street, Firebaugh, CA 93622
Date/Time:	November 3, 2025/5:30 p.m.
CALL TO ORDER	Meeting was called to order by Mayor Valdez at 5:30 p.m.
ROLL CALL	Mayor Freddy Valdez Mayor Pro Temp Silvia Renteria Council Member Brady Jenkins Council Member Felipe Perez Council Member Elsa Lopez
ABSENT	

OTHERS: City Attorney Christina Smith; City Manager, Ben Gallegos; Finance Director, Pio Martin; Interim Police Chief, Magda Martinez; Public Works Director, Micheal Molina; Battalion Chief, Hector Marin; Stephanie Gonzales, John Patlan, Paul Ashcy, Twilia Gonzales & others.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE *Council Member Valdez led the Pledge of Allegiance.*

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda by Council Member Jenkins, seconded by Council Member Perez, motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

PRESENTATION

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Twilia Gonzales stated, "I am a long-time resident of this town, have lived here for over 55 years, and worked here for over 36 years, and raised my family here. The reason why I'm here is because over the past few years, we have noticed and started to see more homelessness, and being a founder of a 501C (Operation Blessed Housing), started back in 2022, as I'm getting ready to retire. I want to focus on where we can build tiny homes to assist some of the homeless people around town, and our mission is to help and provide homes to the elderly, disabled, and people with children, so we're here to ask Firebaugh to be the first city (Pilot Project), where we can start the housing project. Due to the inflation we are seeing, the people that are working are broke because the cost of living has outgrown people's paychecks with the current economy. So, we're asking the city specifically for a grant or seed funding to help launch the pilot and to access the land needed to place the homes. If the city has received any land that may have been donated, we can use where we can put the pilot homes, and local coordination with the city on permits and things like that. The manufacturing company would be handling the permits."

Stephanie Gonzales wanted to thank the council for including the comments in the meeting records. I think it is a very valuable and beneficial piece of information to help convey what's happening within the city and to hopefully get more community members engaged in the actions that are taking place.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Meeting Minutes from October 20, 2025.

Motion to approve the minutes by Council Member Jenkins, seconded by Council Member Perez, the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

PUBLIC HEARING

2. THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING FOR CLOSEOUT OF 22-CDBG-NH-00014 GRANT.

The public hearing opened at 5:38 pm - Comments from Stephanie Gonzales included a question about whether grant expenditures were available for review, and if so, where those records are kept. Regarding the sub-recipient, it is selected through a bid opportunity or partnership development when a grant is proposed. P. Ashby replied that all drawdowns are public records and are available at City Hall for review. The sub-recipient could be directly chosen by the city, since the organization is a non-profit group. The city entered into an agreement with the Salvation Army. The city was asked to apply for the funds on their behalf because only the city can apply for CDBG funding. S. Gonzales asked if the sub-recipient provided any monetary match. P. Ashby answered that the Salvation Army did not provide a monetary match but contributed significantly through staff time. S. Gonzales inquired about the \$160,500—does the city know what percentage was paid to the Salvation Army's admin staff or the city? P. Ashby explained that 7% of the \$160,500 can be used for general administrative costs, and the remaining funds go to the Salvation Army for food purchases, staff time, volunteer mileage, and other expenses. S. Gonzales thanked Ashby for explaining how the partnership is developed and how funds are allocated. Council Member Lopez asked if the city has the opportunity to reapply. Ashby confirmed that the city has re-applied and was successfully awarded the funds and is now waiting for the contract to proceed. The hearing closed at 5:46 pm.

Motion to approve closeout of grant by Council Member Jenkins, seconded by Council Member Perez, the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

3. THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH PUBLIC HEARING PRESENTATION OF STATE CDBG 2025 NOFA GRANT PROGRAM.

P. Ashby provided an update on the CDBG grant and explained that the City is participating as a non-entitlement community, meaning it must compete for funding. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is issued every two years. There has been a change in the selection process from over the counter (1st come, 1st serve) to documents must be ready but will be scored now. Application can't exceed \$3.6 million. Once the project is decided, the council will approve the resolution to be submitted.

The Public hearing opened at 5:53 pm - A member of the public asked if the city is the only one that can apply. Non-profits can't apply directly for the grant, meaning a non-profit would have to be in partnership with the city, and who would be the contact? The mayor replied, "Yes, correct, the city manager." A member of the Public continued, tiny homes were mentioned as a possible project. I can set the business model for the non-profit; everything is dependent on the setup we can get, and I love to talk with the city more about it. Stephanie Gonzales stated, "The city probably has a list of projects or programs that could benefit from these funds and have successfully in the past, but I wonder how the projects are selected," City Manager replied, it's usually based on the need of the community, and the scoring of a project, being a non-entitlement (one of two cities in the county) allows the city to apply for larger amounts of funding and it is more competitive, so it's more risky but has paid off for the city. Gonzales added, so based on what would be the most successful in the rating or scoring process, and the grant application is also available for review? Ashby responded, "The scoring is available on the HCD website, under CDBG." Gonzales stated she is only asking because she is curious about how the community as a whole can decide which are the best projects, since there are many options. City Manager informed her that the city uses the CIP (Capital Improvement Projects), which is part of the application requirement. Gonzales asked outside of this Public Hearing, is there any other way for the community to be part of the discussion or selection process, and in what format? City Manager invited S. Gonzales to visit City Hall for more discussion. – Hearing closed at 6:00 pm.

Informational only.

NEW BUSINESS

4. **THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH CONSIDERS THE REQUEST FROM THE FIREBAUGH FALSON CHEER OF A WAIVER RENTAL FEES FOR COMMUNITY CENTER FOR A BINGO FUNDRAISER ON NOVEMBER 12, 2025.**

Motion to approve waiver of fees by Council Member Jenkins, seconded by Council Member Lopez, the motion passed by a 3-2 vote. Council Members Renteria and Perez – no.

5. **RESOLUTION NO. 25-34 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH OF ACCEPTING THE LOW BID AND AWARDING A CONTRACT TO QUALITY DRILLERS, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$163,200.00 FOR WELL No. 18 TEST WELL PROJECT AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT.**

Motion to approve Resolution No. 25-34 by Council Member Lopez, seconded by Council Member Jenkins, the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

6. **RESOLUTION NO. 25-35 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH APPROVING A CONTRACT WITH PRECISION CIVIL ENGINEERING, TO PROVIDE CONSULTING SERVICES PLANNING SERVICES.**

Motion to approve Resolution No. 25-35 by Council Member Perez, seconded by Council Member Jenkins, the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

7. **THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER AMENDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR THE SELECTION OF THE MAYOR POSITION.**

Motion to explore other options on the process and terms of selecting the Mayor's positions passed by a 3-2 vote. Council Members Renteria and Lopez – request to keep the same procedure in place.

STAFF REPORTS

- **Interim Police Chief Magda Martinez** – Nothing to report.
- **Battalion Chief, Hector Marin** – Busy week with Red Ribbon week, a fire at the middle school in a school locker around 7 or 8 in the morning, and Friday, we held our Trunk-or-Treat, which had a lot of kids.
- **Public Works Director/Fire Chief** – Nothing to report.
- **City Manager, Ben Gallegos** – Nothing to report.
- **Finance Director, Pio Martin** – Nothing to report.
- **City Attorney, Christina Smith** – Nothing to report.
- **Council Member, Lopez** – Nothing to report.
- **Council Member, Perez** – asked for an update on the lights at Clyde Fannon and Sablan. Molina replied that the lights have been ordered, waiting on adapters that have been ordered for the past two weeks.
- **Council Member, Jenkins** – Nothing to report.
- **Council Member, Renteria** – Nothing to report.

- **Council Member Valdez** – amazing work with the red ribbon week guys; the kids really enjoyed it, especially the firefighters putting on their uniforms. They kept talking about it afterwards. It was amazing, so thank you guys for doing that.

COUNCIL MEMBERS AGENDA ITEMS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS ONLY

None

- ❖ *Council Member Jenkins motioned to enter the closed session, which was seconded by Council Member Lopez. Motion passed by a 5-0 vote at 6:42 p.m.*

CLOSED SESSION

8. Government Code Section 54957.6.

CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS: UNREPRESENTED EMPLOYEES

City Negotiator: Ben Gallegos

Employee Organizations: Unrepresented positions.

- ❖ *Council Member Jenkins motioned to enter the open session, which was seconded by Council Member Lopez. Motion passed by a 5-0 vote at 7:18 p.m.*

ANNOUNCEMENT AFTER CLOSED SESSION

No action is to be reported at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

- ❖ *Motion to adjourn at 7:19 pm by Council Member Jenkins, and seconded by Council Member Perez. Motion passed by a 5-0 vote.*