

MEETING MINUTES

The City Council/Successor Agency of the City of Firebaugh
Vol. No. 25-12-01

Location of Meeting:	Andrew Firebaugh Community Center 1655 13 th Street, Firebaugh, CA 93622
Date/Time:	December 1, 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 Nick Matoian; City Manager, Ben Gallegos; Finance Director, Pio Martin; Interim Police Chief, Magda Martinez; Public Works Director, Micheal Molina; Battalion Chief, Hector Marin; City Engineer, Noe Martinez; Stephanie Gonzales, Steve Gonzales, John Patlan, Veronica Navarro, Janet Yergat, Claudia Gutierrez, Raquel Tabares, Hortencia Mock Priscilla Mesa, & others.

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda with an amendment to agenda item #2, changing first reading to second reading by Council Member Jenkins, seconded by Council Member Perez, motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

PRESENTATION

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Stephanie Gonzales suggested adding more context to agenda items to help residents provide more informed public comments. She noted that because public comment occurs before the Council's discussion, residents often lack clarity about key issues or questions the Council will be considering. She proposed that the Council provide a brief outline or summary of main points or discussion questions for each agenda item in advance, so the public can better understand the topics and offer more meaningful input. Gonzalez acknowledged the longstanding rationale for taking public comment first—ensuring neutrality and uninfluenced input—but encouraged the council to consider an alternative structure that offers residents a clearer context while preserving the integrity of the process.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Meeting Minutes from November 17, 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. ORDINANCE NO. 25-03 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 2-3.7 OF THE FIREBAUGH MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING APPOINTMENT OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE-SECOND READING.

The public hearing opened at 5:38 pm – No public comment given - The hearing closed at 5:39 pm.

Motion to approve Ord. No. 25-03 by Council Member Jenkins, seconded by Council Member Perez, the motion passed by a 4-1 vote. Lopez – No.

3. **RESOLUTION NO. 25-36 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH ESTABLISHING A POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR THE SELECTION OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE BY CITY COUNCIL.**

Motion to approve Res. No. 25-36 by Council Member Jenkins, seconded by Council Member Perez, the motion passed by a 4-1 vote. Lopez – No.

NEW BUSINESS

4. **RESOLUTION NO. 25-40 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH ACCEPTING A CORRECTION GRANT DEED FOR STREET RIGHT OF WAYS, A CORRECTION GRANT OF EASEMENT FOR PUBLIC UTILITY EASEMENTS, AND A CORRECTION GRANT OF EASEMENT FOR PEDESTRIAN EASEMENTS DEDICATED BY THE FRESNO HOUSING AUTHORITY AND THE FIREBAUGH LA JOYA COMMONS, LP, FOR APN 007-140-20ST, APN 007-140-21ST, AND APN 007-140-22S (FORMERLY 007-140-04ST AND 007-140-07ST) AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CERTIFICATE OF ACCEPTANCE FOR THE RECORDING OF SAID DOCUMENTS.**

Motion to approve Resolution No. 25-40 by Council Member Lopez, seconded by Council Member Perez, the motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

5. **THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 25-04 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FIREBAUGH, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 16.5 OF THE FIREBAUGH MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING PUBLIC NUISANCE ABATEMENT.**

Consensus of the City Council to direct the City Manager to begin advertisement for first reading and approval of Ord. No. 25-04.

STAFF REPORTS

- **Interim Police Chief Magda Martinez** – Nothing to report.
- **Battalion Chief, Hector Marin** – Nothing to report.
- **Public Works Director/Fire Chief Michael Molina** – Staff reported that the restroom at Maldonado Park will be closed after 3:00 p.m. due to ongoing vandalism, unless a solution can be identified to prevent further damage. Staff also noted that the street sweeper is out of service again. Options such as renting equipment or contracting the work have been explored; however, contractor services are estimated to be between \$10,000 and \$12,000. A request for a quote has been submitted to Mid-Valley, but no response has been received to date.
- **City Manager, Ben Gallegos** – Nothing to report.
- **City Engineer, Noe Martinez** - Nothing to report.
- **Deputy City Clerk, Rita Lozano** – Nothing to report.
- **Finance Director, Pio Martin** – Nothing to report.
- **City Attorney, Nick Matoian** – Nothing to report.
- **Council Member, Lopez** – Nothing to report.
- **Council Member, Perez** – Some lights have been fixed, but there are still a few that need to be repaired on Clyde Fannon.
- **Council Member, Jenkins** – Nothing to report.

- **Council Member, Renteria** – Requested updates on the Starbucks project, Fire Department Tax, sidewalks in the Del Rio area, Employee’s Training report, and Mid-Year review. City Manager responded that the city has provided all the possible assistance available, but it’s a legal issue between PG&E, Starbucks, and Family Dollar. Staff have started working with the consultant on the parcel tax for the Fire Department. The sidewalks were put on the City’s CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) as a project to be funded with CMAQ allocated funds. Staff were directed to report all employees’ training in their staff reports. The Finance Director stated the Mid-Year budget review will be presented in January of 2026.
- **Council Member Valdez** - At the last Council meeting, there was a presentation regarding the dog shelter project. I’d like to know where we were at with the project, where we should be, and where we fell short at the next council meeting. I also request that the Council provide clear direction to the City Manager to reach out to the donor to establish or re-establish a working relationship. I would like this item to be placed on the next agenda: an update on the project’s current status, including the complete progress and the remaining steps. Additionally, I request that the Council consider providing consensus direction for the City Manager to move forward with the portion of the project that has already been funded. It is important that we demonstrate our commitment to this project; by doing so, we will be in a stronger position to re-engage the donor in hopes that he may reconsider his contribution toward the building structure.

COUNCIL MEMBERS AGENDA ITEMS

- Mayor Valdez asked for the Animal Shelter to be on the next agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS ONLY

Ms. Janet Yergat addressed the Council and stated that she has been working on the animal shelter project for more than two years. She reported that she had secured contact with a prospective donor for a new animal shelter structure and believed the donor was eager to contribute to the City. She expressed concern regarding the difficulty in moving forward with the completion of donations and stated that the City should not decline financial assistance, particularly given the budget constraints common in small municipalities.

Ms. Yergat further stated that volunteers were lost through this process because they felt disrespected and unappreciated. She noted that there were extended periods without communication—sometimes lasting days or weeks—which had delayed progress. She referenced the duties of the City Manager and asserted that, in her view, those responsibilities had not been adequately fulfilled by Mr. Gallegos. She concluded by stating that, as representatives of the community, the Council should not issue a positive evaluation.

Motion to enter closed session at 6:06 pm by Council Member Jenkins and seconded by Council Member Perez. Motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

CLOSED SESSION

6. Government Code Section 54957

PUBLIC EMPLOYEE EVALUATION: City Manager.

Motion to enter open session at 7:16 pm by Council Member Jenkins and seconded by Council Member Perez. Motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

ANNOUNCEMENT AFTER CLOSED SESSION

Nothing to report

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 7:17 pm by Council Member Renteria, and seconded by Council Member Perez. Motion passed by a 5-0 vote.