



City of Commerce

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 24, 2026 - 5:00 PM

**CONCURRENT JOINT MEETINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
COMMERCE, JOINT POWERS FINANCING AUTHORITY AND THE GOVERNING BODY
OF THE SUCCESSOR AGENCY TO THE COMMERCE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION**

5:00 P.M. - CLOSED SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lainez called the Closed Session meeting to order at 5:13 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Mayor Lainez
Mayor Pro Tem Garcia
Councilmember Altamirano
Councilmember Argumedo
Councilmember Rebollo

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

There were not individuals wishing to address the City Council on any Closed Session items.

RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION

The members of the City Council and Successor Agency recessed to Closed Session at 5:14 p.m.

1. Conference with Legal Counsel Pursuant to Government Code Sections 54956.9(d)(2) & (e)(2) - Regarding Anticipated/Potential Litigation - One (1) Matter.

This Item was not discussed.

2. Pursuant to Government Code §54956.8, the City Council will confer with its real property negotiator, Ernie Hernandez, with respect to real estate negotiations regarding 6300 Telegraph Road, Commerce, CA 90040 (APN: 6336-008-033)

This Item was not discussed.

3. Pursuant to Government Code §54956.8, the City Council will confer with its real property negotiator, Ernie Hernandez, with respect to real estate negotiations regarding 6364 Zindell Avenue, Commerce, CA (APN: 6357-015-900 and 6357-019-304).
4. Pursuant to Government Code §54956.8, the City Council will confer with its real property negotiator, Ernie Hernandez, with respect to real estate negotiations regarding 421 S. Milpas St., Santa Barbara, CA 93103 (APN: 017-313-612)

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

The members of the City Council and Successor Agency reconvened to open session at 6:10 p.m.

ORAL CLOSED SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

City Attorney Tapia reported on Closed Session stating that with the entire Council present.

Item No. 3, staff provided a presentation, the Council gave direction, and no final reportable action was taken.

Item No. 4, staff provided a presentation, the Council gave direction, and no final reportable action was taken.

Item Nos. 1 and 2 were not discussed.

6:00 P.M. - CITY COUNCIL MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lainez called the regular City Council meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Mayor Lainez
Mayor Pro Tem Garcia
Councilmember Altamirano
Councilmember Argumedo
Councilmember Rebollo

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Director of Library Services Bautista led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INVOCATION

Council Member Argumedo offered the invocation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gloria Nezahualcoyotl, stated she was following up on concerns that were raised at the Public Safety Commissioners meeting. She stated that the Bell Gardens Police Department had conducted three Neighborhood Watch meetings in the past eight months, which had limited City of Commerce presence. The community was unclear on the City's role and follow up at these meetings. She further inquired if the City was going to purchase of a hotel in Santa Barbara.

Ruben Castaneda reported ongoing criminal activity in the Rosewood neighborhood, including drug use and repeated harassment of his parents. He raised concerns regarding individuals associated with a residence on Senta Street; incidents involved trespassing and police response. He further expressed dissatisfaction with enforcement outcomes as the offenders only received a trespass warning. He reported vehicle thefts and recurring mail theft in the area, he noted the incident on February 4, 2026. He also stated concerns about overall public safety conditions in Rosewood. He asked whether the City was considering reducing patrol services due to projected casino revenue impacts.

9. Declaration of Fiscal Emergency; Calling a Special Municipal Election; Consolidation with Los Angeles County; Introduction of an Ordinance Increasing the Existing Transactions and Use (Sales) Tax by ¼-Cent, for a Total of a One-Cent Transactions and Use (Sales) Tax

Item No. 9 was taken out of order and discussed before the Consent Calendar.

City Manager Hernandez provided a summary of this item.

Council Member Altamirano stated that he understood what this item would accomplish.

Mayor Lainez stated that the State Attorney General has implemented regulations that restrict lawful long standing gaming operations throughout the State that will impact our City. The truth of the matter is he circumvented the will of the people and has made a unilateral decision. Commerce has a wealth of services that we provide our youth and seniors. It is our responsibility to maintain these services. This is a critical measure and important for our City.

Council Member Rebollo urged everyone to take notice of what was happening here and who were the people that were hurting our City such as the Attorney General. There is an election scheduled for June, pay attention to who you vote for statewide. Follow the paper trails to understand why they do what they do.

Council Member Argumedo moved, seconded by Mayor Lainez to:

- 1. Adopt Resolution No. 26-11 declaring a Fiscal Emergency pursuant to Article XIII C, Section 2(b) of the California Constitution;**
- 2. Adopt Resolution No. 26-12 calling and giving notice of a Special Municipal Election to be consolidated with the June 2, 2026 Statewide Primary Election conducted by the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk for the purpose of submitting to the voters a proposed ¼-cent (0.25%) Transactions and Use (Sales) Tax measure; and**
- 3. Introduced for first reading Ordinance No. 831 amending Commerce Municipal Code Chapter 3.09 to increase the existing ¾ cent Transactions and Use (Sales) Tax by ¼-cent, for a total of a one cent (1%) Transactions and Use (Sales) Tax subject to majority voter approval.**

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 5 - Mayor Lainez, Mayor Pro Tem Garcia, Councilmember Altamirano, Councilmember Argumedo, and Councilmember Rebollo

CONSENT CALENDAR

Council Member Altamirano moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Garcia to approve Item Nos. 1-5. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 4 - Mayor Lainez, Mayor Pro Tem Garcia, Councilmember Altamirano, and Councilmember Argumedo

Absent: 1 - Councilmember Rebollo

1. Approval of Warrant Register Nos. 12A, 12B, and 12C

Action Taken: Approved the bills and claims set forth in Warrant Registers No. 12A dated February 24, 2026, 12B for the period of February 2, 2026 through February 9, 2026, and 12C for the period of February 11, 2026 through February 18, 2026.

2. Approval of Minutes

Action Taken: Approved the minutes of the Regular City Council meeting of Tuesday, February 10, 2026, held at 5:00 p.m.

3. Amendment No. 8 to Interstate-5 Consortium Cities Joint Powers Authority Agreement

Action Taken: Approved Amendment No. 8 to the I-5 Consortium Cities Joint Powers Authority Agreement, extending the term to November 1, 2030.

4. Award of Construction Contract to Interior Demolition, Inc for Demolition of City Buildings at 5819 Telegraph Rd & 2366 Travers Ave

Action Taken:

- 1. Awarded a construction contract to Interior Demolition, Inc. as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, for the Demolition of City Buildings at 5819 Telegraph Rd & 2366 Travers Ave in the amount of \$259,812.40 for the total base bid.**
- 2. Authorized the Mayor to execute the contract with Interior Demolition Inc., in a form approved by City Attorney.**
- 3. Authorized up to 15% (\$38,972) of the total contract in contingencies for f unforeseen conditions.**
- 4. Authorized up to 12% (\$35,854) of the total construction contract and contingencies for Environmental Material Testing, Construction Management, and Inspection Services.**
- 5. Allocated \$334,638.40 from Project Management Funds to cover the total cost of the project.**

5. Quarterly Investment Report - Quarter Ending December 31, 2025

Action Taken: Received and filed the Quarterly Investment Report for the quarter ending December 31, 2025.

SCHEDULED MATTERS**Presentation/Update from Sheriff's Department of Public Safety in the City of Commerce**

Sergeant Cortez provided the crime statistics update for the date of January 2026.

Council Member Argumedo thanked Sergeant Cortez for his report. He was glad that the crime rate had come down in Commerce but it was a trend nationwide. As stated by Mr. Castaneda tonight, he confirmed that there were still issues that need to be resolved at Rosewood and other areas in the City (Veterans Park). The lower statistics were great but the community was not feeling safe. Therefore, he would like to have a plan in place to address all these issues.

Council Member Altamirano requested clarification for when a night crime had been committed and a camera catches the vehicle and the license plate what was the procedure once it had been provided to the sheriffs?

Sergeant Cortez provided the steps that are followed once the Sheriff received this information.

Mayor Pro Tem Garcia asked if the Sheriff was still providing homeless shelter services. She also asked if there was an increase or decrease in homelessness calls.

Sergeant Cortez stated that there were still organizations providing these services. The calls for homelessness were not documented unless there was a crime committed.

Mayor Lainez stated he was glad the Sergeant was going to speak with Mr. Castaneda and help him resolve his issue. Appreciated his statistics but people especially in the area where Mr. Castaneda and I live were not feeling safe.

6. Funding Allocation for the Mural Lighting Installation at the Mixmaster Underpass and City Hall Parking Lot Project

Director of Public Works Abbas provided the presentation for this item.

Council Member Argumedo stated that he was surprised with the cost.

Council Member Altamirano requested clarification on the funding source for this item and what was the majority of the cost.

Director Abbas stated that the majority of the cost was in providing the power to the poles and the CC TV installation. The funding source was the Arts in Public Places account.

Council Member Altamirano was concerned that this item would deplete half of the funds in the Arts in Public Places account.

Mayor Lainez stated that he had not seen the design for the amount of \$400,000. The Council should see the design and requested to continue this item.

Council Member Altamirano would like to see creative solutions that are cost effective.

Item was continued to the March 10, 2026 meeting.

8. FY 2025-26 Mid-Year Budget Report

Item No. 8 was taken out of order and discussed before Item No. 7.

Director of Finance Castellon provided a summary of the presentation for this item.

Mayor Lainez asked how much staff is projecting the City's sales tax will be by the end of this fiscal year and what level of revenue was anticipated through the end of November.

Director Castellon responded that the City originally estimated sales tax revenues of approximately \$28.8 million for the fiscal year. Based on sales tax data received from CDTFA through November 2025, the current year-end projection is approximately \$26.8 million. Staff had anticipated receiving approximately 42 percent of annual sales tax revenue by the end of November; however, actual receipts through that period were below that level. Director Castellon noted that additional data, including December receipts, will continue to inform the year-end projection.

Council Member Argumedo moved, seconded by Council Member Altamirano to receive and file the FY 2025-26 Mid-Year Budget Report. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 4 - Mayor Lainez, Mayor Pro Tem Garcia, Councilmember Altamirano, and Councilmember Argumedo

Absent: 1 - Councilmember Rebollo

7. FY 2026-28 Budget Calendar

Director of Finance Castellon provided a summary of the presentation for this item.

The City Council received and filed the FY 2026-28 Budget Calendar, establishing the timeline for budget preparation, public engagement, and formal adoption proceedings.

PUBLIC HEARING**10. Confirmation of 2026 Weed Abatement Charges**

Interim City Clerk Jacquez-Nares provided a brief summary on this item.

Mayor Lainez opened the public hearing at 7:31 p.m.

There being no public comments, Mayor Lainez closed the public hearing at 7:31 p.m.

Council Member Argumedo moved, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Garcia to:

- 1. Conduct a Public Hearing to consider a Hearing of Protests where any and all property owners having any objections to the proposed removal of weeds, brush, rubbish, dry grass, stubble, refuse, or other flammable material, may appear before the City Council and show cause why said weeds, brush, rubbish, dry grass, stubble, refuse, or other flammable material should not be removed in accordance with this resolution, and said objections will then and there be heard and given due consideration; and**
- 2. Confirm the 2026 Weed Abatement Charges as recommended by the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commission.**

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 4 - Mayor Lainez, Mayor Pro Tem Garcia, Councilmember Altamirano, and Councilmember Argumedo

Absent: 1 - Councilmember Rebollo

CITY COUNCIL/SUCCESSOR AGENCY REPORTS

Council Member Altamirano affirmed the resident's concerns regarding increased criminal activity in the Rosewood area. He reported that two license plates connected to separate crimes were captured and provided to the Sheriff's Department and requested a status update to ensure appropriate follow-up action is being taken. He also shared a positive visit to the Senior Center, expressed his admiration for the quality of artwork produced by the seniors. He requested that a future agenda item include a proposed budget to establish an art gallery festival at the Senior Center to showcase the seniors' professional-level artwork and recognized staff member Calixto for his outstanding work with the program participants.

Council Member Argumedo reported on his advocacy trip to Sacramento alongside representatives from Bell and Hawaiian Gardens. During the visit, approximately nine meetings were scheduled with Senators and Assembly Members to discuss actions taken by the Attorney General. He attended seven of those meetings, noting that most were positive and supportive, with legislators agreeing to sign letters of support. He emphasized the importance of building and maintaining strong legislative relationships. Additionally, he addressed community concerns related to homelessness and crime, including issues raised during the Community Services Commission meeting. He noted an increase in homeless individuals along Atlantic and Washington and stated he regularly forwards photographs and information to the City Manager to facilitate assistance efforts. He reiterated the importance of addressing ongoing public safety and homelessness concerns and reminded the public that the Attorney General was up for reelection this year.

Mayor Pro Tem Garcia thanked Council Member Argumedo for his advocacy efforts in Sacramento. She congratulated the City's varsity girls' water polo team on winning the CIF title, highlighting the participation of Commerce residents and expressing pride in the team's accomplishment. She also raised concerns regarding the HIP exercise class at Bandini Park, specifically related to air quality issues caused by freeway exhaust and nearby railroad dust. To prioritize residents' health, she requested that the City Manager provide logistical information on relocating the class to an alternative site. Additionally, she expressed appreciation to her colleagues for supporting the Mobile Veterans Memorial Wall. A Memorial Day event to be scheduled in May, she requested a comprehensive promotional plan, including social media outreach, flyers, posters at community centers, and cross-promotion through departmental newsletters.

Mayor Lainez thanked Council Member Argumedo for his Sacramento advocacy efforts. He expressed enthusiasm about the upcoming Veterans Memorial Wall event and shared that he had been in contact with the Disabled American Veterans organization, which would be attending a convention that same weekend. He intended to invite them to visit the City and attend the event. He congratulated the Schurr High School girls' varsity water polo team on winning the CIF Southern Section Division 4 championship and indicated that the City plans to formally recognize the team at an appropriate time following their regional competition schedule. He also congratulated the Unplugged program on its ten-year anniversary and recognized the recent production of Grease. He thanked the cast, crew, performing arts staff, Teen Center Supervisor, and supporting staff for their efforts in making the production successful. Mayor Lainez wished his son Roman a happy 14th birthday.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the City Council, Mayor Lainez adjourned the meeting at 7:47 p.m.