



City of Commerce

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 13, 2024 - 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 Argumedo called meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilmember Rebollo arrived at 5:08 p.m.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

There were no individuals wishing to address the City Council on any item on Closed Session agenda.

RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION

City Council/Successor Agency recessed to Closed Session at 5:07 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.
2. Pursuant to Government Code §54956.8, the City Council will confer with its real property negotiator, Vilko Domic, with respect to real estate negotiations with:
 - A. Wash-Tel Commerce, LLC concerning proposed price and other terms relating thereto, comprised of 6329 and 6355 Washington Boulevard, Commerce, California, commonly referred to as the Stahl Trust property.
 - B. Craig Realty Corporation concerning proposed price and other terms relating thereto, comprised of the former Commerce Community Development Commission-owned real property located along the Telegraph Road Corridor, south of Gaspar Avenue and north of

the Commerce Casino [Tubeway Avenue], formerly known as 5809, 5819, 5823, 2901/2903, 5933, 5901, 5959, 6000, 6003 and 6233 Telegraph Road and 2240 Gaspar Avenue; 2311, 2322 and 2366 Travers Avenue, Commerce, California.

3. Pursuant to Government Code §54957.6 the City Council will confer with its labor negotiator, Vilko Domic, with respect to labor negotiations pertaining to compensation and benefits for the unrepresented full-time executive management employees.

Employee Title: Director of Human Resources, Director of Transportation, Director of Parks & Recreation, Director of Public Works, Director of Administrative Services and City Clerk, Director of Library Services, Director of Economic Development and Planning, Director of Finance and City Treasurer, Deputy Director of Public Works Operations, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

City Council/Successor Agency reconvened to Open Session at 6:02 p.m.

ORAL CLOSED SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

City Attorney Tapia reported on Closed Session items:

Item #1 -was not discussed.

Items #2 and #3- staff provided a presentation, the City Council provided direction and no reported action was taken on these items.

6:00 P.M. - CITY COUNCIL MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Argumedo called regular meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Director of Human Resources Pappo led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INVOCATION

Vice Mayor Altamirano offered the invocation.

APPEARANCES AND PRESENTATIONS

1. Certificate of Recognition - Bell Gardens High School Football Team

The Councilmembers and the Mayor extended congratulations to the Bell Gardens Football team for their achievements and recent success. They also commended the coaches for their outstanding work.

Mayor and Councilmember Rebollo discussed the ongoing fundraising efforts for the team and emphasized that those interested in contributing or utilizing GoFundMe could reach out to any of the coaches or find relevant information on social media.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jasmine Gonzalez and Honey Bizarro asked for interpretation being provided at the Council meetings.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilmember Garcia asked to pull item #6 from the Consent Calendar for discussion.

Agenda Item #6 - Councilmember Garcia requested an overview of the services covered by the proposed contract. Public Safety Manager Epson explained that the Probation Officer would dedicate 20 hours a week to the Commerce area, collaborating closely with deputies and offering resources. Mr. Rojas and Ms. Dolores White from the Probation Department clarified that the officer would assist law enforcement, act as a liaison between Commerce, the Sheriff's department, and the community and providing resources.

Following discussion, Councilmember Rebollo moved and Councilmember Garcia seconded the motion to adopt a Resolution approving an Agreement with the County of Los Angeles Probation Department. This agreement aims to provide a Prevention and Intervention Program for the remainder of the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The motion passed with the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Garcia, Lainez, Rebollo, and Mayor Argumedo (4)

Absent: Vice Mayor Altamirano (1)

Councilmmeber Lainez moved, seconded by Councilmember Rebollo, to approve the Consent Calendar minus item #6. The motion was carried by

the following vote:

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

2. Approval of Warrant Register Nos. 12A, 12B, and 12C
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Approval of 2024 Civic Organizations
5. Weed Abatement - Declaring that Weeds, Brush, Rubbish are a Public Nuisance
6. Agreement with County of Los Angeles Probation Department for Fiscal Year 2023-2024
7. Appointing Authorized Agents for the Fiscal Year 2023 Emergency Operations Center Grant Program through Cal OES
8. Lake Arrowhead Camp Commerce Replacement of Damaged Retaining Wall Project Acceptance
9. Clean California Local Grant Program Agreement for Garfield Avenue Median Beautification and Citywide Cleanup Project

SCHEDULED MATTERS

10. Presentation/update from the Sheriff's Department Regarding Public Safety in the City of Commerce

Captain Brendon Dean and Captain Chris Kusayanagi presented the year-end statistical comparison between 2023 and 2022. Captain Dean highlighted that the areas most affected by crime were Citadel and the Commerce Shopping Center. While burglaries and thefts increased slightly in these locations, other types of crime saw a reduction.

Deputies made a total of 723 arrests, with emergency response times at 5.3 minutes, priority response times at 8.4 minutes, and routine call response times at 53 minutes. These figures, when compared to surrounding areas, showed a slight improvement. Notably, efforts were underway to combat organized retail theft, with Deputy Perez making commendable progress in recovering stolen property. The installation of license plate reader cameras was emphasized as a significant tool

in crime prevention.

Addressing traffic concerns, it was mentioned that a recent fatal crash had occurred.

Initiatives such as Neighborhood Watch and Coffee with the Cop events were deemed highly productive.

Mayor Argumedo expressed gratitude for the comprehensive report and recommended collaborative efforts with Citadel and the Shopping Center to reduce crime in those specific areas. Captain Kusayanagi provided an update on the installation of license plate reader cameras, acknowledging a learning curve but emphasizing their potential to aid in various crime prevention efforts.

In response to Councilmember Lainez's query about the timeline for measurable results, Captain Kusayanagi assured that improvements would be evident every month once the learning curve was overcome, and cameras were strategically placed. Captain Dean added that increased patrol measures, particularly in school areas, were implemented in response to a surge in homicides in surrounding areas. The Captains committed to providing regular status updates and returning with more information.

11. Concept Plan for the Bristow Park Improvements Project

Acting Public Works Director Nila provided a brief overview, followed by a presentation from Architect John Cataldo. Councilmember Rebollo expressed a concern for preserving the soccer field green area and sought clarification on whether the proposed water features would be a splash park or just fountains. Mr. Cataldo explained that the presentation was conceptual and open to recommendations, adding that the Parks and Recreation Director Alaniz had plans for another splash park in the area. Councilmember Rebollo suggested more trees for the project.

The discussion took place about murals, with Mr. Cataldo mentioning an increase in the meeting room's square footage.

Councilmember Garcia inquired about the atrium, specifically mentioning an outdoor area with offices on the side. Mr. Cataldo clarified that the outdoor atrium space could serve multiple purposes, including meetings, art installations, and study areas. Responding to Garcia's suggestion, Mr. Cataldo mentioned that additional green space and walkways had been incorporated on the backside.

Councilmember Lainez inquired about the construction timeline and whether public outreach would be part of the design phase. Mr. Cataldo indicated a two-year timeline for construction, noting that additional elements like art and sculptures could extend it. He assured that public outreach would be integral to the design phase.

Regarding Councilmember Lainez's request to upgrade benches and dugouts, Acting Director Nila mentioned that Pathway to Hope would cover those expenses. The estimated building cost for Bristow Park library was around ten million dollars.

The Mayor recommended strategic lighting, especially in the atrium area, to facilitate various events. Additionally, the Mayor suggested installing heating for cold weather to enhance the space's utilization.

Vice Mayor Altamirano moved, seconded by Councilmember Garcia, to receive and file a presentation on the proposed Concept Plan for the Bristow Park Improvements Project by John G. Cataldo, Inc. the City's project consultant and to adopt a Resolution approving the proposed Concept Plan, an appropriation of \$300,000 from Measure AA for design services and release of a Request for Proposals for design services.

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

PUBLIC HEARING

12. Adopt Resolution Making Certain Findings and Approving an Energy Services Contract With Alliance Building Solutions

Scott Mainzen, the Vice President and General Manager of Syserco Energy Solutions Inc., reported that the City Council has received a recommendation for an Installation Agreement with Alliance Inc in November. He mentioned that the City Council instructed the staff to investigate the interest rates and revisit this matter. Mr. Mainzen explained that the new document presented in the meeting excludes the Rosewood park element. His proposal to the City Council provides more energy conservation solutions at a cost that is two million dollars lower.

Brad Chapman, the President of Alliance Building Solutions Inc., emphasized that he collaborated closely with the staff and submitted a strong proposal. Mayor Argumedo closed the public hearing.

Acting City Manager Domic gave an overview of the staff report, suggesting the removal of the aquatics center from the project as it will be funded by the Capital Improvement Project. Regarding financing, staff secured a 4.75% interest rate and achieved additional savings due to changes in the scope of services. The approval of the installation agreement is based on design and construction energy improvements recommended in a certified audit conducted in 2023.

Councilmember Lainez acknowledged positive aspects of the project but expressed concern about the city realizing savings only in year 20. Councilmember Lainez suggested prioritizing Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and incorporating renewable energy components into future projects, considering the uncertainty of building operations and rapidly evolving technology.

Vice Mayor Altamirano pointed out that HVAC units would require replacement in 20 years, and some units were overpriced. Vice Mayor Altamirano requested staff to solicit bids for the project and explore cost-saving measures. He expressed uncertainty about certain buildings as well.

Acting City Manager Domic indicated a willingness to bring the project back after the bidding process is complete. Further discussions ensued regarding M2 and M3 applications and tax write-offs.

Councilmember Rebollo expressed support for the project due to its low tax rate, potential savings, and the use of union labor.

Councilmember Rebollo moved, seconded by Mayor Argumedo, to approve a proposed energy services contract with Alliance Building Solutions, Inc and adopt a Resolution making the required findings under Section 4217.10 and approving an Installation Agreement with ABS in the amount of \$9,059,952 for the installation of certain energy conservation facilities, and authorizing the Interim City Manager to execute the Installation Agreement subject to non-monetary revisions approved by the City Manager and City Attorney, and conditioned upon and City Council's future consideration and approval of a final lease purchase agreement or financing contract in the manner specified by Section 4217.10 to finance the project. The motion was carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 2 - Mayor Argumedo, and Councilmember Rebollo

Nays: 3 - Mayor Pro Tem Altamirano, Councilmember Garcia, and Councilmember Lainez

13. Allocation for the 50th Year of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds for Fiscal Year 2024/2025

Senior Management Analyst Esparza provided an overview of the staff report. Mayor Argumedo opened Public Hearing. There were no individual wishing to address the City Council on this item. Mayor Argumedo closed public hearing.

Councilmember Lainez moved, seconded by Councilmember Rebollo, to adopt a Resolution authorizing the allocation for the 50th year of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for Fiscal Year 2024/2025. The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

CITY COUNCIL/SUCCESSOR AGENCY REPORTS

Councilmember Garcia shared her involvement in the homeless count, commending the Public Safety Division staff and CSO Meda for their commendable work. Councilmember Garcia inquired about the possibility of utilizing CDBG funds or look into similar program to assist senior homeowners with ramp repairs.

Councilmember Rebollo reported that she attended ICA conference, highlighting discussions on emergency communications. She asked to look into bringin back the Public Information Officer position and extended condolences to Estella Lukuen, Joanna Flores's mother. Councilmember Rebollo concluded with warm wishes for a Happy Valentine's Day.

Councilmember Lainez reported his participation in the Southeast Water Coalition board and Greater LA Vector Control District meetings. Councilmember Lainez stated that the Media Specialist position was approved during the budget and urged staff to move forward with implementing the civic app. Councilmember Lainez also conveyed condolences to the Flores and Williams families.

Vice Mayor expressed condolences for Willie Williams, emphasizing his significant impact. He reiterated congratulations to Chris Griego and the Bell Garden Football team for their historic victory. Vice Mayor Altamirano reported that he attended the ICA conference, participating in a disaster preparedness session focusing on communication during emergencies.

Mayor Altamirano extended Valentine's Day wishes to everyone, emphasizing a

sense of community and care.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m. in memory of Estella Lukuen and Willie Williams.