



**CITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2015**

A regular meeting of the La Quinta City Council was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Mayor Evans.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Franklin, Osborne, Peña, Radi, Mayor Evans

ABSENT: None

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON AGENDA** - None

**CLOSED SESSION**

1. **CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54956.8 FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT AVENIDA MONTEZUMA AND AVENIDA NAVARRO ADJACENT TO THE EAST SIDE OF FRANCIS HACK PARK (APNS: 773-077-015 AND 773-101-013).**

**CITY NEGOTIATOR: FRANK J. SPEVACEK, CITY MANAGER**

**NEGOTIATING PARTY: CITY OF LA QUINTA AND LA QUINTA HOUSING AUTHORITY**

**UNDER NEGOTIATION: PRICE AND TERMS OF PAYMENT**

*COUNCIL RECESSED TO JOINT CLOSED SESSION AT 3:32 P.M.*

*MAYOR EVANS RECONVENED THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING AT 4:03 P.M. WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT. NO ACTIONS WERE TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION THAT REQUIRES REPORTING PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54957.1 (BROWN ACT).*

Mayor Evans led the audience in the pledge of allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON AGENDA**

**PUBLIC SPEAKER:** Allen Worthy, homeless – Mr. Worthy congratulated new Councilmembers, thanked Animal Control Officer Kevin Meredith, and provided information about his claims against the City of Palm Springs Police Department.

**PUBLIC SPEAKER:** Neeta Quinn, La Quinta – Ms. Quinn provided a hand out of her comments regarding sustainable development, which is available in the City Clerk's Office.

## **CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

City Manager Spevacek introduced the new Emergency Operations Center Manager, Tawny Castro, who works for the City by contract with the Riverside County Fire Department.

Mayor Evans introduced the new La Quinta Fire Chief, Alex Gregg, of the Riverside County Fire Department.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRESENTATIONS AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

A presentation by Queen Scheherazade and her court was made on behalf of the upcoming Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. **APPROVE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 16, 2014**
2. **APPROVE DEMAND REGISTERS DATED DECEMBER 9 AND DECEMBER 12, 2014**
3. **DENIAL OF CLAIM FOR DAMAGES FILED BY JONATHAN REISS; DATE OF LOSS – JUNE 17, 2014**
4. **DENIAL OF CLAIM FOR DAMAGES FILED BY RED HAMMAN AND JOYCE LITCH; DATE OF LOSS – SEPTEMBER 8, 2014**
5. **DENIAL OF CLAIM FOR DAMAGES FILED BY MICHAEL AND ROBIN HENDRICKS; DATE OF LOSS SEPTEMBER 8, 2014**
6. *pulled by Councilmember Radi and moved to the Business Session for discussion and separate vote>>>* **APPROVAL OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH MATRIX CONSULTING GROUP FOR A CRIME TREND AND SERVICE STUDY**
7. **ADOPT RESOLUTION TO EXTEND TIME TO COMPLETE OFF-SITE AND ON-SITE IMPROVEMENTS FOR LA QUINTA RETIREMENT COMMUNITY (PARCEL MAP NO. 36405)**
8. **ADOPT RESOLUTION GRANTING APPROVAL OF A FINAL MAP TO SUBDIVIDE A LOT LOCATED WITHIN THE QUARRY DEVELOPMENT (TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP 36602)**
9. **SECOND READING AND ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 523 APPROVING CHANGES TO PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FIELD CROP FARMING AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS IN CERTAIN ZONES**

MOTION – A motion was made and seconded by Councilmembers Osborne/Radi to approve Consent Calendar Item Nos. 1-5 and 7-9 as recommended, with Item Nos. 7 and 8 adopting Resolutions 2015-001 and 2015-002 respectively. Motion passed unanimously.

## **BUSINESS SESSION**

### **1. ADOPT POLICY REGARDING UNSCHEDULED VACANCIES ON CITY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

City Clerk Maysels presented the staff report, which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

MOTION – A motion was made and seconded by Councilmembers Osborne/Franklin to adopt a policy regarding unscheduled vacancies on City boards and commissions whereby one or two alternates to each commission are selected and numbered during the annual appointment process to fill mid-term vacancies as acting commissioners, and to accept applications throughout the year. Motion passed unanimously.

### **2. *Pulled from the Consent Calendar by Councilmember Radi and moved to the Business Session for discussion and separate vote:* APPROVAL OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH MATRIX CONSULTING GROUP FOR A CRIME TREND AND SERVICE STUDY**

Business Analyst Shove presented the staff report, which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Councilmembers discussed including technology in crime deterrence; the frequency of crime trend studies; the need to include firm background information in staff reports; the 2013/14 resident petition regarding police staffing; budgetary reason for the crime trend and service study; efforts to pull successful ideas from other agencies; study start date at the end of January; collaborative effort with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, and; the need to engage the community.

MOTION – A motion was made and seconded by Councilmembers Osborne/Radi to approve a professional services agreement with Matrix Consulting Group for a crime trend and service study. Motion passed unanimously.

## **STUDY SESSION**

### **1. DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT ACTION STRATEGIES FOR THE LA QUINTA VILLAGE**

Community Development Director Johnson presented the staff report, which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Councilmembers discussed the importance of taking advantage of pent-up development interest; the need to shorten the development process to help keep the momentum moving forward; the Planning Commission's involvement in community outreach; the assistance of users such as experienced engineering groups to help guide and simplify the process; focus group questions for residents, business owners and developers; need to seek input from other destinations that have completed similar processes; cost of General Plan update; history of low attendance at community meetings; the need to include the small City lot on the outskirts of the Village known as the "paisley" piece, and; the consensus of Council to have staff move forward immediately.

## **REPORTS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

La Quinta's representative for 2015, Councilmember Osborne reported on her participation in the following organizations meeting:

- IID ENERGY CONSUMERS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

### **1. ALTERNATIVE ENERGY STRATEGY FOR CIVIC CENTER CAMPUS**

City Manager Spevacek presented the staff report on photovoltaic and solar power systems for City Hall, which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Councilmember Osborne noted that as a municipality, the City cannot take advantage of the 30 percent tax credit and suggested that a private entity may be interested in installation and ownership with the City as the lessee.

The consensus of Council was to move forward in pursuing the grant, with an action item on the matter to be brought to Council at the next meeting.

## **MAYOR'S AND COUNCIL MEMBER'S ITEMS**

Councilmember Franklin stated that Tom Flavin, CEO of the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership has retired. She said she hoped that the selection of a new CEO will be more inclusive this time by involving all participating Valley cities.

Mayor Evans commended staff on the Open House held on December 16. She also announced the Council community workshop scheduled for Saturday, January 10, 2015 at the La Quinta Museum from noon to 4:00 p.m. to discuss 2014 accomplishments and set priorities for 2015. Mayor Evans encouraged residents to attend and participate.

Councilmember Osborne noted that the City skate parks are in need of maintenance. He asked staff to explore, with the Community Services Commission, the possibility of charging an entrance fee with the resulting revenue used for maintenance and possibly staffing. Community Services Director Hylton agreed and stated that relocation of the park(s) will also be examined.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- 1. ADOPT RESOLUTIONS TO APPROVE A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND ASSOCIATED MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, A GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AND TENTATIVE TRACT MAP; AND INTRODUCE AN ORDINANCE TO CHANGE THE ZONING DESIGNATION FROM MEDIUM HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL TO LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL TO ALLOW THE DEVELOPMENT OF 82 SINGLE FAMILY HOMES ON 20.8 ACRES OF LAND LOCATED AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF JEFFERSON STREET AND AVENUE 52**

Planning Consultant Nicole Criste presented the staff report, which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Councilmembers discussed other projects for which the City has made setback exceptions; provisions for guest parking; alleys conform to emergency vehicle requirements; the density compared to the neighboring development of *The Citrus Course* and *Mountain View Country Club*; the compactness of the plan, which provides for only five-foot side yard setbacks and ten-foot front and rear yard setbacks; parking options on 36-foot main loop road; the need to include the enhancements requested by the Planning Commission and *The Citrus Course* homeowners' association; size of the community pool; anticipated sale price in the \$600,000 range; buyer profile of families and active adults; difficulties with trash pickup from alley lots, and; no acceleration lane on Avenue 52.

Mayor Evans declared the PUBLIC HEARING OPEN at 5:41 p.m.

**PUBLIC SPEAKER:** On behalf of the developer Beazer Homes, the following representatives explained the project:

- Monica Ultreras, Project Manager, Beazer Homes West Region, Brea, CA
- Vance Graham, AIA, Principal, Bassenian/Lagoni, Newport Beach, CA
- David Neault, Landscape Architect, Neault Associates, Temecula, CA

The representatives explained that ten feet between homes is fairly common for their projects throughout the U.S; as enhancements, they have added features such as wrought iron detailing, shutters, and extended overhangs; the single-story homes are meant to be tucked into mature landscaping, which is expected to be the focal point; the community pool size is 30'x50'; individual homeowners would have space in rear yards for a private spa; a project similar to this is currently under construction in Palm Springs, and; the agreement with *The Citrus Course* for shared use of amenities is near completion.

Community Services Director Johnson said that, to his knowledge, there is no La Quinta single-family-home project that does not have the option for a pool at each home.

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Robert J. Kroll, La Quinta – Mr. Kroll said his home is on the northerly border of this project in *The Citrus Course* and he has very few concerns compared to the previously proposed project. Specifically, he believes two-story homes should not be placed along the boundaries, and the homes need some architectural enhancements which, if accepted, he would support the project. He suggested a correction to the memo handed out to Council, page 2, item 3K – change from “northern” to “northern and western elevations.”

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Jennifer Jenkins, Marketing & Membership Director, *The Citrus Club* – Ms. Jenkins said *The Citrus Club* was very close to finalizing their agreement with Beazer Homes. She described *The Citrus Club*'s successful amenities-sharing relationship with another adjoining development. Regarding the architectural design and price point, Ms. Jenkins said that Beazer Homes was in the same ballpark as the *Signature* project, the *Grove* and *Monterra*. The Citrus Club does not have any concerns about this project.

In response to Councilmember Franklin, Ms. Jenkins said that *The Citrus Club* expects to sell golf memberships to approximately fifty percent of the 82 Beazer homebuyers. Golf memberships are \$30,000 (plus \$1,000 dues) and social memberships are \$5,000. The Beazer Homes project will be advertised as part of *The Citrus Club*.

In response to Councilmember Radi, Ms. Jenkins said that since the economic downturn in 2008, the trend in the market is toward smaller homes. Mr. Radi's question regarding the setbacks in *The Citrus Club* project was addressed by Community Development Director Johnson and Mr. Kroll, who responded that front setbacks are the standard 20 feet and side yard setbacks are between five and ten feet (total between homes 10 to 20 feet).

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Art Lambrose, La Quinta – Mr. Lambrose, a builder of many homes in La Quinta, spoke in support of the project.

In response to Councilmember Franklin, Beazer Homes Project Manager Ultreras said that if the company is not able to make the product line within the tentative map proposal, they do not have a project.

Mayor Evans declared the PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED at 6:23 p.m.

Councilmember Osborne reported the results of his online search of Beazer Homes. He said there was a report from 2005/2006 where the auditor of Beazer Homes was fined \$950,000 for not telling investors that Beazer Homes had issued false financial statements. Mr. Osborne said that another website contained numerous complaints about the poor quality of Beazer Homes' construction throughout the country. He also spoke with some in California who have worked with Beazer Homes and they were happy with the company. Mr. Osborne stated that this raises concern about the price point set for this development.

Councilmember Peña said he is still concerned about the tightness of the homes, and rather than vote no on the project, suggests a continuance to allow the parties to rework the tract map.

Councilmember Radi said that the open questions for him are: Is this the home product the market is supporting, and will the builder be able to execute their vision in this rather cozy atmosphere? He commended Beazer Homes and *The Citrus Club* for working together to improve the project. Mr. Radi likes the single family aspect of project and agreed with Mr. Lambrose that viewing projects on paper sometimes don't do it justice.

Councilmember Osborne said that Beazer Homes has been a good neighbor in working with *The Citrus Course*. He express concern about whether properties with such small setbacks are realistic for families, and although the project fits with *The Citrus Course* next to it, is it the right project to be across from SilverRock, a five-star resort.

Mayor Evans agreed that the collaboration was commendable. She added that although the property has been dormant for a while due to the economy, it does not mean that the first plan presented is the right plan. She is concerned with 10-foot setbacks and would rather see smaller homes on the lots. Mayor Evans said she was not sold on the concept that the landscaping, rather than the homes, would tie the project together. She also said that, like Councilmember Osborne, she is not convinced it's the best project to be across from SilverRock. She supports Councilmember Peña's recommendation to continue this item because there are lots of elements to change and accommodate as the pros don't outweigh the cons at this point.

Community Development Director Johnson asked Councilmembers to provide Beazer Homes with as much specific direction as possible, such as elaborating on the project's compatibility with SilverRock.

Councilmember Osborne said a consistent concern is the reduced setbacks.

Councilmember Franklin said the main challenges for her are the side and front yard setbacks; the marketing to families when there is no play area for children; it is not compatible with SilverRock, and; buyers of \$600,000+ homes will not want to haul their trash three houses down the street. She stated that she loves the home design and landscaping, and appreciates the collaboration with *The Citrus Course*, but asked that the regular 20-foot front and 10-foot side setbacks be used.

**MOTION** – A motion was made and seconded by Councilmembers Peña/Franklin to continue Public Hearing Item No.1 to the regular Council meeting of March 3, 2015. Motion passed unanimously.

*MAYOR EVANS CALLED FOR A FIVE MINUTE BREAK*

*MAYOR EVANS RECONVENED THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING AT 6:45 P.M.  
WITH ALL COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT.*

**2. ADOPT A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE A SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT AND SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR A NEW 6,720 SQUARE-FOOT TIRE RETAIL AND INSTALLATION STORE AND FIND THE PROJECT EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT**

Associate Planner Jay Wu presented the staff report, which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Mayor Evans declared the PUBLIC HEARING OPEN at 6:56 p.m.

PUBLIC SPEAKER: Bedros Darkjian, Darkjian Associates, Pasadena, CA, Applicant – Mr. Darkjian explained the design and flow of the facility and stated that approximately 10 to 15 percent of the tire center business will be minor auto repair such as brakes and shocks, and oil changes will be done upon request, but not advertised. He expects the store to get one to two tire shipments per week. Mr. Darkjian said that American Tire Depots are being located in three Valley cities: Cathedral City, Indio and La Quinta. He stated that the store will never have stacks of tires on display outside the building. He also noted that recycling and disposal accommodations are included as approved by the fire department and state permitting. Mr. Darkjian explained that the design of each store is customized to the city in which it is located.

Mayor Evans declared the PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED at 7:06 p.m.

MOTION - A motion was made and seconded by Councilmembers Franklin/Radi to adopt RESOLUTION 2015-003 entitled:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA QUINTA, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT AND A SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FOR THE AMERICAN TIRE DEPOT PROJECT AND DEEMING THE PROJECT EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT, CASE NUMBERS: SPECIFIC PLAN 1996-027, AMENDMENT 2; SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT 2013-936, APPLICANT: BEDROS DARKJIAN

Motion passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded by Councilmembers Franklin/Osborne to adjourn at 7:08 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

SUSAN MAYSELS, City Clerk  
City of La Quinta, California