



Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Winters City Council Held via Teleconference
(Zoom) on February 16, 2021

Mayor Cowan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Council Members Harold Anderson, Jesse Loren, Pierre Neu, Mayor Pro Tem Bill Biasi, Mayor Wade Cowan

Absent: None

Staff: City Manager Kathleen Tropa, Director of Financial Management Shelly Gunby, City Clerk Ashley Bussart

Councilmember Neu led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda:

City Manager Tropa had no changes to the agenda. Motion by Council Member Neu, second by Council Member Loren to approve the agenda. Motion carried with the following roll call vote:

AYES: Council Members Anderson, Loren, Neu, Mayor Pro Tem Biasi, Mayor Cowan

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS:

Verbal updates were provided by Council Members.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Eleanor MacMakin, a resident, has been trying to decide where to settle after the fires last year. She is in escrow for the purchase of 100 Wolfskill Street where she plans to build a small house. She wants to initiate a written article that outlines the terms of the storm drain maintenance and liability. The city repaired the storm drain a few years ago and she would like to know what the responsibility will be with the City being the easement holder.

CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular February 2, 2021 Council Meeting

City Manager Trepá provided an overview of the consent calendar items. Motion by Council Member Biasi, second by Council member Loren to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried with the following roll call vote:

AYES: Council Members Anderson, Loren, Neu, Mayor Pro Tem Biasi, Mayor Cowan

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

PRESENTATIONS:

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)

Mayor Cowan and Mayor Pro Tem Biasi both commented that changes need to be made to ensure that we stop spending our reserves.

Councilmember Loren asked if we have completely rebounded from the recession. Shelly answered that we are headed in the right direction. Councilmember followed up asking about structural deficit. Shelly replied that yes, there is a structural deficit.

Councilmember Loren thanked Shelly for all her hard work and recognized the budget awards Shelly has helped the City get over the years.

Jennifer R, a resident, asked about Covid relief packages and reimbursements to local government. Mayor Cowan replied that we can hope. Pro Tem Biasi asked if it will take us until 2025 to recover as was predicted. Shelly confirmed it would be 4-5 years.

2. City of Winters Treasurer Report for December 2020

Taylor, Winters Express, asked the time frame that people were staying in the hotel to generate revenue. Shelly responded that TOT was collected for September-December.

3. Unfunded Employee Benefit Liabilities

Mayor Pro Tem Biasi asked if there has been any discussion of CalPERS returning to their previous discount rate. Shelly has not seen anything recently.

4. Consider Providing Direction to Staff Regarding the Development of Cannabis Regulations

City Manager Trepá presented the staff report. The Mayor called for public comment. City Clerk, Ashley Bussart, read a summary of all emails provided by the public before the meeting. There were 11 emails with 10 in support of developing cannabis regulations and 1 that opposed it. A summary of those comments are attached to the minutes.

Rob Reed, owner of F Street Dispensary in Davis, thanked Council for taking up this topic. His brother Mike, a Winters resident and himself helped commission the move to approve cannabis in the City of Davis. He is extending the information to the City of Winters as well as offering a tour.

Taylor, Winters Express, would like the City to thoroughly investigate bringing cannabis to Winters. He believes it will help boost local revenue for the City.

Nara Dahlback, Lake County, works in the cannabis industry doing compliance and information tracking. She thinks there are many opportunities for Winters to bring in an appropriate business that would work with the community.

Albert, a resident is in support of exploring the industry, particularly retail, testing and development. He believes it will be economically beneficial.

Chris Turkovich, business owner, believes there are benefits but also details that need to be worked out. He supports looking into cannabis operations to see if there is a fit in the City.

Councilmember Loren believes that cannabis could possibly be an economic multiplier and would also help with jobs for the community.

Chief Miller does not oppose the exploration of the industry but would like to be very involved in the process.

Jeff Buchman works in the cannabis packaging industry and has seen vital revenue earned personally from the industry.

Councilmember Neu would like the community to talk about it amongst themselves to form their own opinion; he personally supports exploration of potential regulations.

Councilmember Biasi had questions about the impacts of policing the cannabis industry in Winters. He believes that it will impact the Police Department due to

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cash sales being a large part of the business. He is also concerned that cannabis remains a Schedule 1 drug federally and is illegal. He does understand that it could be a potential source of revenue, but it is not guaranteed. He is concerned about spending the City's reserves on a consultant for cannabis business regulations that may or may not work out. He believes there are taxing and land use issues that need to be explored. He would like a community survey done to gather input from a broader range of our citizens.

Councilmember Anderson commented on the concerns voiced in 2017 about the potent smell of growing the plants and doesn't want that inflicted on anyone.

Mayor Cowan thinks that there is a lot to consider and think about. Doing the research would be a good idea and he especially wants the opinion of the community. He personally doesn't feel it's necessary but also understands that others have a difference of opinion. He wouldn't have a problem with a business in town.

City Manager, Kathleen Trepa, will put together more information and the Council would like the City to put a survey together for community input and also put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) to see what the financial impact of getting started would be.

CITY MANAGER REPORT:

City Manager Trepa had no update

INFORMATION ONLY:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

8:49 PM

Wade Cowan, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Ashley Bussart, City Clerk