



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
CITY COUNCIL – SPECIAL MEETING**

MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022 AT 7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER:

The Special Open Session Meeting of the South Pasadena City Council was called to order by Mayor Cacciotti on Wednesday, February 23, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. The City Council Chamber are located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, California.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Mayor Michael Cacciotti
Mayor Pro Tem Jon Primuth
Councilmember Jack Donovan
Councilmember Diana Mahmud
Councilmember Evelyn G. Zneimer

ABSENT

None

Christina Muñoz, Deputy City Clerk, announced a quorum.

CITY Arminé Chaparyan, City Manager; Andrew Jared, City Attorney; Christina
STAFF Muñoz, Deputy City Clerk were present at Roll Call. Other staff members
PRESENT: presented reports or responded to questions as indicated in the minutes.

CLOSED SESSION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Closed Session Announcements

A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL: REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATIONS

(Government Code Section 54956.8)

Property Address: 815 Mission Street, South Pasadena (portion thereof)

APN: 5315-020-900

Agency Negotiator: Arminé Chaparyan, City Manager

Under Negotiations: Price and Terms

City Attorney Jared reported this item was not heard; the item will be heard after the conclusion of open session; and, report will be given at the March 2, 2022 City Council Meeting.

B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL: REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATIONS

(Government Code Section 54956.8)

Property Address: 1505-1507 El Centro Street

Agency Negotiator: Arminé Chaparyan, City Manager

Negotiating Party: Stephen Godwin and Sally Smythe

Under Negotiations: Price Terms

City Attorney Jared reported that Council met in Closed Session to receive a briefing on the item. He noted direction was provided to the City Attorney’s Office but no action was taken in closed session.

C. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL: POTENTIAL LITIGATION

(Government Code sec. 54956.9(d)(2))

Number of Cases: One

City Attorney Jared reported this item was not heard; the item will be heard after the conclusion of open session; and, report will be given at the March 2, 2022 City Council Meeting.

D. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL: EXISTING LITIGATION

(Government Code sec. 54956.9(d)(1))

- 1. Maria Marroquin de Navarro, et al. V. City of South Pasadena, et al. (LASC Case No. 20STCV07509)

City Attorney Jared reported that Council met in Closed Session to receive a briefing on the item. He noted direction was provided to the City Attorney’s Office but no action was taken in closed session.

The City Council recessed closed session at 6:00 p.m.

ACTION/DISCUSSION

1. COMMISSION ANALYSIS STUDY SESSION

Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Council:

- 1. Consolidate the Public Works and the Mobility and Transportation Infrastructure Commissions to a seven-member Mobility, Transportation and Infrastructure Commission;
- 2. Dissolve the Animal Commission;
- 3. Dissolve the Youth Commission;
- 4. Consolidate the Animal, Youth, Senior Citizen and Park and Recreation

- Commission scopes of work to create a seven-member Community Services Commission, and reserve at least one seat each for members of youth and senior citizen populations;
5. Create an annual Animal Events Steering Committee within the Community Services Commission to focus on “Doggy Days” and “Be Kind to Animals Day” and other programming;
 6. Absorb the Public Art Commission into the existing Planning Commission;
 7. Dissolve the Finance Ad Hoc Committee; and
 8. Dissolve the Economic Development Ad Hoc Committee.

COUNCIL ACTION AND MOTION

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian and Management Analyst Jerejian made a presentation and provided an overview of the item. They discussed the Commission impacts to staff and the need for more training and processes.

Councilmember Mahmud inquired about the timing of staff’s recommendation.

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian noted that this discussion is just a starting point and staff plans to bring a timeline to a later meeting based upon the direction from the City Council.

Councilmember Mahmud stated that it would be prudent for the City Council to provide direction to staff sooner rather than later due to the timing of appointments to the Commissions.

Mayor Pro Tem Primuth asked if staff has looked at ways for staff to service the existing commissions efficiently.

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian noted that research into this item has revealed the need for additional training and processes that need to be put in place following the meeting.

City Manager Chaparyan stated the goal is also to align Commission Workplans with the Capital Improvement Plan and the Strategic Plan.

Mayor Pro Tem Primuth asked if the current Commission structure creates staff burnout. Deputy City Manager Megerdichian referenced the recent public works assessment did reveal the significant workload that staff undertakes to service the three commissions under that department.

City Manager Chaparyan noted the term the consultant used was that staff is constantly in a fire drill.

Mayor Pro Tem Primuth discussed staff to commission ratios compares to other agencies.

Councilmember Mahmud referenced the powerpoint slide regarding feedback from staff liaisons to Commissions and the number of hours liaisons are spending on Commission work.

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian noted the City Council could look at the frequency of meetings to create less burden on staff.

Mayor Cacciotti asked for staff to commission ratios from bigger agencies such as the City of Santa Clarita.

City Manager Chaparyan noted a bigger agency like the City of Santa Clarita has triple the amount of staff as compared to South Pasadena.

Councilmember Mahmud inquired about Brown Act compliance in relation to Commission meetings.

City Attorney Jared provided an overview of the Brown Act and noted Commissions are subject to compliance with the Brown Act.

Mayor Cacciotti opened the public comment period.

Phung Huynh disagreed with the recommendation for the Planning Commission to absorb the Public Art Commission.

Kim Hughes stated that Commissioners have extensive historical knowledge of the City and suggested looking into ways to make Commissions more efficient.

Yvonne LaRose questioned whether the Commission survey should have been out longer to get more responses; discussed staff to commission ratios from other agencies; expressed concern with the number of staff hours committed to Commissions.

Linda Krausen expressed her opposition to the recommendation to dissolve the Animal Commission.

Deputy City Clerk Muñoz noted the following written public comments were received:

The following individuals expressed their written opposition to the recommendation to dissolve the Animal Commission:

Erin Fleming
Tracy Reiman
Betty Emirhanian
Ed Simpson

Joanne Nuckols expressed concern with the recommended actions and suggested the City Council not rush into making final decisions.

Phung Huynh expressed her opposition with the recommendation for the Planning Commission to absorb the Public Art Commission.

With no other requests to speak, the public comment period was closed.

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian provided background on the number of community input opportunities on this item and how the survey was implemented.

Councilmember Mahmud asked if the contract with the Pasadena Humane Society provide for presentations on living with wildlife.

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian answered affirmatively.

Councilmember Mahmud inquired regarding forming a less formal Senior Advisory Committee in place of the Senior Commission and asked if the Committee would be subject to the Brown Act.

City Attorney Jared noted if the City Council provides direction to form the Committee from the City Council, it would be a Brown Act body. He noted that groups that form together on their own are not subject to the Brown Act.

Community Services Director Pautsch stated that staff can explore the idea of an advisory committee.

Councilmember Zneimer inquired about a potential commission for diversity, equity, inclusion, homelessness, and mental health.

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian noted that staff is still researching that potential commission.

Councilmember Donovan asked why staff is recommending consolidating the Public Works Commission since its only been in existence for twelve years.

Public Works Gerber stated he wasn't here when the Commission was formed but provided potential reasons as to why it was split up into its own Commission.

Councilmember Mahmud discussed the recent difficulty for the recruitment of Youth Commissioners and asked if staff is reaching out to the school district for volunteers.

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian answered affirmatively. She noted the reduction in the school district's requirements for volunteers' service hours.

Councilmember Mahmud asked if the Planning Commission Chair has been consulted about potentially absorbing the duties of the Public Arts Commission.

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian and Community Development Director Frausto-Lupo noted that the Planning Commission Chair has not been consulted; stated that the Planning Commission could potentially have a heavy workload in the foreseeable future; suggested that the Design Review Board could potentially absorb the Public Arts Commission as well.

Councilmember Mahmud inquired if existing commissions would be subject to new term limits if they are appointed to a commission that absorbed another commission.

Deputy City Manager Megerdichian provided an overview of the potential Community Services Commission and noted that it would be a seven-member board that would include one youth, one animal member, and one senior member.

City Attorney Jared stated that the City Council may waive the term limit rule for existing Commissioners if a new Commission is created from consolidation.

Councilmember Mahmud inquired regarding the feasibility of the Public Works Commission to be formed with the Mobility, Infrastructure & Transportation Commission while not creating longer meeting times.

Councilmembers discussed the possibility of consolidating the Public Works and Mobility and Transportation Infrastructure Commissions; potentially limiting the number of hours a Commission meeting can last; staff conducting additional research and looking for efficiencies.

Public Works Director Gerber noted that the work could be consolidated and staff would look for ways to create an efficient process to absorb the two Commissions.

Councilmember Donovan expressed concern with dissolving the Animal Commission and suggested limiting their meetings to twice per year.

Councilmember Mahmud respectfully disagreed with Councilmember Donovan and stated that while the Commission has historically provided value to the City regarding animal policy, their scope of work can be consolidated with another Commission.

Mayor Cacciotti asked how often the Animal Commission currently meets.

City Attorney Jared noted that they currently meet six times per year.

Councilmember Zneimer reiterated Councilmember Mahmud's thoughts.

Councilmembers discussed the possibility of creating an Animal Committee or Advisory Body that isn't subject to the Brown Act.

Councilmember Donovan expressed concern with consolidating the Parks & Recreation Commission with other Commissions; noted that they have a heavy workload.

Councilmembers had a discussion regarding the new seven-member commission and how many individuals should represent parks & recreation, animal, senior, and youth.

Councilmember Zneimer expressed support for staff recommendation for consolidating the Parks & Recreation Commission with other Commissions; noted that their workload is primarily performed by City staff.

Mayor Pro Tem Primuth stated a Sub-Committee consisting of three members of the seven-member commission could focus on parks & recreation issues.

Mayor Pro Tem Primuth noted that the animal representative on the new commission should have a background in promoting or volunteering in animal related causes.

Mayor Cacciotti suggested excluding the Animal Commission consolidation and creating a Youth Committee under the new seven-member Commission.

Councilmember Mahmud noted that dissolving the Senior Commission isn't explicitly called out in the recommendation but it's implied in recommendation #4.

Councilmember Mahmud suggested reaching out to individuals who want to keep the Animal Commission and receive suggestions on how to move forward with a Steering Committee.

Councilmember Donovan supported the idea for consolidating the Design Review Board and the Public Arts Commission.

Councilmembers and staff discussed the length of Design Review Board meetings and whether they could absorb the Public Arts Commission.

Councilmember Mahmud asked for more information on recent Public Art Commission and whether number of meetings are required to conduct their business.

Mayor Pro Tem Primuth supported the idea of having the Public Arts Commission only meet on an as-needed basis.

Mayor Cacciotti supported the idea of capping the number of Public Arts Commission meetings at six per year.

Councilmembers discussed the idea of dissolving the Finance Ad-Hoc Committee and supported the idea to dissolve the Committee after the submission of their final report.

Councilmembers supported the idea of dissolving the Economic Development Ad-Hoc Committee.

The City Council provided the following direction:

1. Regarding recommendation #1, the City Council requested further

recommendations from staff regarding greater efficiencies and aligning Commission objectives with the City's Strategic Plan.

2. Regarding recommendations #2 through 5, the City Council supported staff's recommendations to consolidate into a "Community Services Commission"; solicit opinions from individuals who supported the Animal Commission to get their ideas on an Animal Events Steering Committee.
3. Regarding recommendation #6, the City Council provided direction to maintain the Public Arts Commission with a maximum number of six meetings per year.
4. Regarding recommendation #7, the City Council provided direction to dissolve the Finance Ad-Hoc Committee after the completion of their final meeting.
5. Regarding recommendation #8, the City Council provided direction to dissolve the Economic Development Ad-Hoc Committee.


Mayor Cacciotti adjourned the open session meeting at 8:46 PM.

The City Council reconvened back into closed session to discuss closed session item numbers A and C.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further matters, Mayor Cacciotti adjourned the meeting of the City Council at 10:10 p.m., to the next Regular City Council meeting scheduled on Wednesday, March 2, 2022.

Respectfully submitted:



Christina Muñoz
Deputy City Clerk

APPROVED:



MICHAEL CACCIOTTI
MAYOR

ATTEST:



Christina Muñoz
Deputy City Clerk

Approved at City Council Meeting: 07/20/2022.