

SUMMARY MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRINIDAD CITY COUNCIL
JUNE 27, 2006

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Lin called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. Present were Councilmembers Marlow, Bowman, Heyenga, and Cuthbertson. No staff were present, but Chief Thraikill joined the meeting at 7:50pm.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Lin led the Pledge.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Cuthbertson suggested that Item #1 (Employee salaries) should be delayed until the Council has had some budget workshops. Lin proposed starting with salary issues to "get the budget started" and wanted to leave it on the agenda so we could at least discuss it.

Motion (Marlow/Heyenga) to approve the agenda as submitted. Passed unanimously.

III. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

Michael Osbaldeston, artist

Mr. Osbaldeston distributed a film of a sculpture proposed for installation in the ocean off Trinidad Beach. He discussed his sculpture and wanted community feedback.

George Bowman (Councilmember)

Bowman shared with the Council an email from Mike Morrow dated June 16 which was sent to only three Councilmembers (Bowman, Cuthbertson, and Heyenga). He asked who got Mr. Morrow to send the email, showed an article from the Eureka Reporter featuring a photo of the Mayor, and criticized news coverage by the press.

Jim Cuthbertson (Councilmember)

- Stated that the new handicapped parking space by the tennis court should have gone to the Council and/or Planning Commission for discussion and approval. Marlow replied that the Planning Commission does not have the expertise for ADA parking spaces and that he had contacted the City Engineer for information.
- Commented that email from Management Plan Team members regarding meetings should be sent to both City representatives, not just the Mayor.
- Said he was also disturbed about Mike Morrow's email and how/why it was sent.

IV. AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Discussion/Decision on salary adjustment for City employees. (Lin)

Mayor Lin introduced the item, explained his rationale for doing employee salaries first in the budget process, and reviewed the employees' salary proposals.

Council clarification:

Marlow and Cuthbertson asked for which years the CPI index was calculated and was it an average for the year? Lin said it was an average for the entire year calculated in May for the previous year.

Bowman asked if we approve the salary proposal tonight, would we know how much the increase would be? Lin said that we know the May, 2006 CPI is 4.1 or 4.2.

Public clarification:

Carol Rowe

- Who researched the data from other cities? Lin said that the City Clerk did.
- What are the specific recommendations? Lin reviewed the employees' options.

Richard Johnson

- Does the proposal include merit reviews? Lin – no
 - Does the City have a merit review process? Lin – yes
 - If the proposal is approved will there be merit reviews? Lin - no.
- Mayor Lin wanted to make a motion but Cuthbertson objected to the "motion first" procedure by referring to sections of the Brown Act and the Municipal Code. After some discussion, a motion was made.

Motion (Lin/Marlow) to adopt option A without the vacation increase provision.

Cuthbertson again raised the issue of meeting procedure, citing Resolution 2002-18. Heyenga suggested we bring issues of parliamentary procedure to the Council as separate agenda items for discussion and decision. Discussion of the motion continued.

Public comments:

Kathy Bhardwaj: Gabe's work with the community is important

Richard Johnson: the vacation proposal is not clear.

Carol Rowe: favored the salary increase

Council comments:

Bowman: In the chart with salaries from other cities, only Blue Lake is anywhere near our size and our salaries compare favorably with Blue Lake's. Our employees also have a good benefit package. He wanted to see the benefits and time off data for the other cities. He suggested we take up salaries during the budget sessions.

Cuthbertson: We need to know how much money is coming in before we consider salaries. The sales tax increase expires in two years.

Heyenga: We need to know that our General Fund reserve is being rebuilt and Water Fund reserve is adequate before we consider salaries. Everyone agrees that our employees work hard and deserve a raise, but we promised the community we would get the city on its "financial feet."

Marlow: We need to rebuild our reserves, but we take in enough money to give a salary increase; favors the increase.

Mayor Lin withdrew his motion. *Motion (Lin/Heyenga) to table the employee salary proposal until we get more information on our financial status and employee benefits in other cities and to bring the issue back for further discussion and action.*

Council discussion of new motion:

Marlow: Suggested increases one year at a time.

Bowman: discussed when the sales tax increase would sunset; favored increases one year at a time.

Public comments on new motion:

Carol Rowe: staff needs to present a well-researched proposal when it comes back.

Richard Johnson: supports merit raise process to reward people for excellent work.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Discussion/Decision regarding additional interpretive signs for Trinidad Head Trail. (Marlow)

Marlow introduced the item explaining that the Bureau of Land Management has budget funds and wants Trinidad to be a "focal point" for interpretive signs. The money is designated for featuring offshore rocks designated as Coastal National Monuments, but the Gateway Committee has moved away from a kiosk and interpretive sign approach so such signs could go on Trinidad Head. The BLM gave the money to the Redwood Coast Action Agency to promote Coastal Monuments and the BLM staff wants Council conceptual approval of the idea before proceeding with designs.

As per Lin's new procedure, Marlow put the following motion on the floor: *(Marlow/Lin) to authorize the Parks Commissioner to bring to the Council suggested interpretive signs for Trinidad Head.*

Council clarification:

Heyenga: Would the signs feature only Coastal Monuments? Marlow - yes. Would the proposal go to the Planning Commission? Marlow - yes.

Lin: does the City apply for the funds? Marlow - no. The BLM would work with RCAA to design several signs and then bring the designs to the City.

Public clarification:

Carol Rowe

- How much money has BLM allocated? Marlow - \$20,000 - \$30,000.

- What is the purpose? Marlow - to promote Coastal National Monuments.
- Are there restrictions on the money's use? Marlow - not sure.

Michael Osbaldeston: Perhaps a statue could be installed with the money.

Richard Johnson: is this a one-time allocation or an annual amount? Marlow - assumes it is in an annual budget and may not be there next year.

Public comments:

Carol Rowe: opposed to new signs on Trinidad Head; wants money used in other ways.

Mike Morgan: wants to see the signs first, and then decide.

Kathy Bhardwaj: wants to see what the BLM proposes.

Cindy Lindgren: adding signs to a walk around the Head is too much; we should not feel compelled to accept money just because the BLM has it.

Council comments:

Bowman: the motion doesn't commit the City to install any signs.

Cuthbertson: some residents don't want anything else put on the Head. Would the BLM be disappointed if they did the work and the Council turned it down? Marlow - that's why the BLM wants concept approval from the Council. Will BLM money cover the cost of the Planning Commission hearing? Marlow - not sure.

Bowman offered an amendment to replace "interpretive signs" in the motion with "interpretive information." Marlow accepted the amendment.

Public comment:

Carol Rowe: liked the money offer but not for interpretive signs.

Kathy Bhardwaj: wants to know what the signs are going to show.

Cindy Lindgren: if we like one or more signs we can install them. If they are successful we can add others. The BLM wants to promote Trinidad as a coastal gateway and rejecting their offer is not a way to treat a partner.

Richard Johnson: noted that there are BLM signs at Camel Rock and Luffenholtz Beaches which can be used as examples of BLM signs.

Council comments:

Marlow: would like more direction from the BLM.

Heyenga: likes the interpretive sign idea but not the amendment.

Cuthbertson: feels that the majority of the Council and audience want to see what the BLM will propose.

Bowman withdrew his amendment.

*Vote on the original motion: **Passed unanimously.***

V. COUNCIL REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - none

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, Mayor Lin adjourned the meeting at 9:20pm/

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Dean Heyenga
Councilmember
06/30/06

Chi-Wei Lin
Mayor