

MINUTES
LAWNDALE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
February 3, 2025

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Pullen-Miles called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, 14717 Burin Avenue, Lawndale, California.

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Robert Pullen-Miles, Mayor Pro Tem Kearney, Councilmember Bernadette Suarez, Councilmember Frank M. Talavera, Councilmember Sirley Cuevas

Other Participants: City Manager Sean M. Moore, City Attorney Gregory M. Murphy, City Clerk Erica Harbison, Assistant City Clerk Yvette Palomo, Deputy City Manager/Director of Human Resources Raylette Felton, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Captain Nicole Palomino, Los Angeles County Fire Department Acting Assistant Chief Brian Kane, Municipal Services Director Michael Reyes, Finance Director Hrant Manuelian, Community Services Director Jason Minter, Public Works Director Lucho Rodriguez, Community Development Director Peter Kann

B. CEREMONIALS (Flag Salute and Inspiration)

Councilmember Cuevas led the flag salute. Pastor Matthew Harbison of Lawndale Wesleyan Church provided the inspiration.

C. PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

1. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Update

Captain Palomino summarized the recent law enforcement activities.

2. Los Angeles County Fire Department Update

Acting Fire Assistant Chief Brian Kane summarized the recent fire department activities.

D. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS - ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (Public Comments)

Michelle Pino, Library Manager, announced the library's upcoming events.

Dulce Stein, ESMoA Staff, announced the museum's upcoming events.

Chelsea Schreiber, Resident, commented on the high percentage of student absenteeism due to Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) patrols, asked if the City can publish information on the matter and commented about the toxicity of soil and soil testing at the Metro Right-of-Way (ROW).

E. COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

Councilmember Talavera thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting, asked if the library's events are posted on their website, thanked ESMoA for the information and requested information be provided to residents about ICE patrols.

City Manager Moore responded that he would follow up with the request to provide information to residents about ICE patrols.

Councilmember Suarez requested that the Procedural Guidelines for the Conduct of City Council Meetings be made available on the City website.

Councilmember Cuevas asked if information can be provided about soil testing on the ROW.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting.

Mayor Pullen-Miles commented on soil testing of the ROW, ICE patrols affecting student attendance and requested information about ICE patrols be posted on the City's website.

City Manager Moore responded that staff will follow up on soil testing of the ROW.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Suarez to approve the consent calendar. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1 with Councilmember Cuevas abstaining.

3. Motion to read by title only and waive further reading of all ordinances listed on the Agenda

— Recommendation: that the City Council read by title only and waive further reading of all ordinances listed on the agenda.

4. Accounts Payable Register

— Recommendation: that City Council adopts Resolution No. CC-2502-007 authorizing the payment of certain claims and demands in the amount of \$901,800.42.

5. Minutes of the Lawndale City Council Regular Meeting - January 21, 2025

— Recommendation: that the City Council approve the minutes.

G. PUBLIC HEARING

6. Introduction of Ordinance No. 1208-25 to Amend Title 17 of the Lawndale Municipal Code to Update the City's Accessory Dwelling Unit Regulations In Compliance with State Laws

— Recommendation: that the City Council 1.) Conduct a public hearing; 2.) Determine that the Ordinance No. 1208-25 is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines; and 3.) Introduce for first reading by title only Ordinance No. 1208-25, an Ordinance amending the Lawndale Municipal Code regarding Accessory Dwelling Units to reflect recent changes in state law, and waive further reading.

Community Development Director Kann presented the staff report.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened the public hearing at 7:01 p.m.

There was no one wishing to speak.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed the public hearing at 7:01 p.m.

City Attorney Murphy read the ordinance by title only.

A motion was made by Councilmember Cuevas and seconded by Councilmember Talavera determining that the Ordinance No. 1208-25 is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines and introduced for first reading by title only Ordinance No. 1208-25, an Ordinance amending the Lawndale Municipal Code regarding Accessory Dwelling Units to reflect recent changes in state law, and waive further reading. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

H. ADMINISTRATION

7. Approval of the Youth Development Center and Skatepark Conceptual Design

— Recommendation: that the City Council review and approve the proposed Conceptual Design for the Youth Development Center and Skatepark (Attachment C) and affirm the Categorical Exemptions and

Categorical Exclusion.

Community Services Director Minter thanked the previous Community Services Director for his work on the project, and stakeholders for their input on the project design.

Kyle Ing, BOA Architecture Project Designer and Manager, presented the staff report.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney asked if the glass is going to be non-graffiti, is a café being built, and commented on the type of lettering on the side of the building.

Kyle Ing responded that there are non-graffiti designs that can be introduced, the café is a social gathering space, not an actual Café, and building signage will be clear.

Community Services Director Minter commented that an area where students can eat after school snacks was requested by the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC).

Councilmember Suarez asked where records are going to be stored, is there sufficient space for file storage and for the public to access services.

Community Services Director Minter responded that there is storage designated for the Municipal Services Department.

Municipal Services Director Reyes responded that there is sufficient space planned for their needs and for public to access services.

In response to Mayor Pullen-Miles' and Mayor Pro Tem Kearney's questions, Community Director Minter stated that the skate park is for all ages and access will not be regulated.

In response to Councilmember Talavera's questions, Community Services Director Minter stated that the Community Services Department will oversee the YDC, activities will be programmed at the park, signage will be posted announcing events, amenities will cater to skaters of all levels, park hours will be from dusk to dawn, there will not be lighting at the park, three separate community meetings were held for community input, an electronic survey was sent to schools for students to provide input, and that a separate budget discussion needs to take place to discuss the future cost of regular maintenance repairs and staffing. Community Services Director Minter responded that classes are planned to be offered in different areas of the YDC, and that there is the potential to rent space to the community; however, the priority is to provide teen resources.

BOA Staff commented that the needs of the community were taken into consideration when designing the skate park.

Councilmember Suarez asked if the library garden will be kept, and offered to provide crafts classes to youth.

Community Services Director Minter responded that the library garden will not be kept.

Mayor Pullen-Miles commented that the YDC is being created for the youth to be productive and have conferences and training.

In response to Councilmember Suarez's questions, City Manager Moore responded that staff will look into fundraisers, including participation by the Parks, Recreation, and Social Services Commission.

A motion was made by Councilmember Cuevas and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kearney to approve the proposed Conceptual Design for the Youth Development Center and Skatepark (Attachment C) and affirm the Categorical Exemptions and Categorical Exclusion. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

8. Emergency Alert Registration Process

— Recommendation: that City Council receive and file this report.

Municipal Services Director Reyes presented the staff report.

Municipal Services Director Reyes introduced the new Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Dr. Yoon Ah Shin.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney encouraged everyone to register to receive emergency alerts.

In response to Councilmember Cuevas's and Mayor Pullen-Miles's questions, Municipal Services Director Reyes stated that over 100 residents have registered, messages sent out are limited to emergency alerts and the system is being advertised via social media, the website and at Neighborhood Watch meetings.

In response to Mayor Pullen-Miles's question, Dr. Shin stated that she requested the local school district to post the flyers at school sites.

By consensus, the City Council received and filed this report.

9. Solar LED Blinking Stop Signs

— Recommendation: that the City Council review the information contained in this report, discuss, and provide direction to staff for future implementation of these devices.

Public Works Director Rodriguez presented the staff report.

Councilmember Talavera asked if there is any supporting data that blinking stop signs change traffic driving habits, if the cost of the batteries has been considered, and if the funds allocated toward this project are restricted.

Public Works Director Rodriguez responded that there is no data supporting that stop signs change traffic driving habits and explained that blinking stop signs are to support hard to see stop signs.

Finance Director Manuelian and City Manager Moore explained that funds have not been allocated to this project and the budget will need to be reviewed to allocate funding if the project is approved.

Public Works Director Rodriguez commented that this agenda item was presented for informational purposes.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney commented on the 444 stop signs that are currently being replaced, vehicles failing to stop at stop signs, graffiti on new stop signs and requested additional information on blinking stop signs.

In response to Councilmember Suarez's questions, Public Works Director Rodriguez stated that 444 old, faded stop signs are being replaced, and lights on the stop signs attract drivers' attention during low visibility.

Mayor Pullen-Miles commented that the reflective tape on stop signs make signs more visible and requested information on installing reflective tape on the stop signs.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened public comments.

Matthew Harbison, Pastor, commented in favor of reflective tape on stop signs.

Andrew Blackney, Resident, commented in opposition to blinking stop signs and in favor of installing reflective tape on stop signs.

Patrick Fallon, Resident, suggested applying for private, state grant funding or partnerships with companies that gather data.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed public comments.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers and staff about purchasing reflective tape for staff to install on stop signs to evaluate the effectiveness and determine which stop signs to install the reflective tape on.

By consensus, the City Council requested that staff install reflective tape and reflective plates on stop sign posts at in school zones and bring this item back at a future meeting.

10. Regional Early Action Plan 2 Grant - Program Objectives Discussion

— Recommendation: that the City Council 1.) Discuss the REAP 2.0 Grant Program; 2.) Direct staff to communicate to the Executive Director of the South Bay Cities Council of Governments that the City at this time is not interested in participating in the REAP 2.0 Grant Program; or 3.) Direct staff to communicate to the Executive Director of the South Bay Cities Council of Governments that the City is interested in participating in the REAP 2.0 Grant Program; or 4.) Provide further direction to staff.

Community Development Director Kann presented the staff report.

Councilmember Suarez provided history on the item as it relates to the South Bay Council of Governments (SBCCOG).

Councilmember Talavera suggested that the item be brought back with an accurate description of the program, and commented that he opposes high density housing.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Talavera directing staff to communicate to the Executive Director of the South Bay Cities Council of Governments that the City at this time is not interested in participating in the REAP 2.0 Grant Program. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

11. Approve the Disposal of Two Vehicles, One Air Compressor, and One Traffic Message Board

— -Recommendation: that the City Council approve the sale of two vehicles, one air compressor, and one traffic message board through the City's standard public auction process facilitated by Ken Porter Auctions in Carson, California.

Public Works Director Rodriguez presented the staff report.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Cuevas to approve the sale of two vehicles, one air compressor, and one traffic message board through the City's standard public auction process facilitated by Ken Porter Auctions in Carson, California. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

12. Discussion of the Existing Software Used by City Departments

— Recommendation: that the City Council provide City Staff with direction.

Community Development Director Kann presented the staff report.

City Manager Moore provided the history of the item and stated that further discussion was requested by the City Council.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers and City Manager Moore about the City's current software services received, termination clauses of current service agreements, and cost-effective firm options.

Councilmember Talavera asked for clarification on the staff recommendation and asked Municipal Services Director Reyes if he supports keeping Citizenserve.

Municipal Services Director Reyes responded that Citizenserve does not meet all the Municipal Services Department needs.

Councilmember Suarez asked if there are only two companies that provide this service and would like the system to be user friendly.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers and Community Development Director Kann about the types of different systems and capabilities, specialized software, compatibility of software between departments, and current services received.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened public comments.

There was no one wishing to speak.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed public comments.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers regarding the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP), creation of a subcommittee to review the resident facing portion of responses to the RFP and creating a survey for affected department staff to provide input.

In response to Mayor Pullen-Miles's question, City Attorney Murphy stated that creating a subcommittee to review the resident facing portion of responses to the RFP is appropriate.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Kearney's and Mayor Pullen-Miles's questions, City Manager Moore stated that staff will provide information on the expiration date of current agreements and their termination clauses.

By Consensus, the City Council directed staff to prepare an RFP for software programs, established a Software Technology Citywide Ad Hoc Subcommittee and appointed Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and Councilmember Suarez to serve on the subcommittee.

13. Consideration of Professional Legislative Lobbyist Services RFP

— Recommendation: that City Council: 1) review the Request for Proposals (RFP) received from the responding firms and provide further direction to staff to proceed with a selection process for lobbying services, which may include establishing a selection committee; or 2) provide other direction to staff as appropriate.

Deputy City Manager/Human Resources Director Felton presented the staff report.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney commented that a lobbyist can help procure funding for City projects.

In response to Councilmember Talavera's question, Deputy City Manager/Human Resources Director Felton responded that a lobbyist was requested to advocate at the federal level for potential grant opportunities.

Councilmember Cuevas asked if the contract will have a term limit, could the contract be terminated sooner, would the lobbyist be able to locate the funding needed for the YDC, who will oversee the position, and can candidates be interviewed.

Deputy City Manager/Human Resources Director Felton responded that the City Manager's Department would oversee the position, a plan for staffing the position and determining its goals would need to be developed; and City Councilmembers would be able to interview candidates.

City Attorney Murphy commented that the interview of the candidates can be done during a special meeting of the City Council.

In response to Councilmember Suarez's question, City Manager Moore provided the history of the City receiving an informational proposal from a firm.

Councilmember Suarez suggested submitting an RFP identifying the areas of focus, hiring on a retainer basis, and establishing a service timeframe.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers, City Manager Moore and City Attorney Murphy regarding hiring on a retainer basis, establishing a timeframe, identifying areas of focus, and reviewing candidates' lobbying history and asking firms that responded to the RFP to provide additional proposals.

By consensus, the City Council directed staff to request additional information from the four (4) responsive firms to include the cost to lobby for funding to close the funding gap for the Youth Development Center project; the timeframe to secure funding for the YDC project; and schedule interviews with the firms at a future City Council meeting.

14. Purchasing Policy Reorganization and Amendment to Authorize City Manager Purchases in Specified Situations

- Recommendation: that the City Council review the proposed changes and adopt Resolution No. CC-2409-095 making the changes to the purchasing policy.

City Attorney Murphy presented the staff report.

Discussion ensued among the City Councilmembers and City Attorney Murphy regarding emergency circumstances, purchasing policies of other cities, threshold purchase amounts, and recent emergency purchases.

City Manager Moore commented that the current threshold limits are sufficient.

Councilmember Suarez proposed that City Manager Moore, in conjunction with the Mayor, receive the authority to make purchases.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Cuevas to adopt Resolution No. CC-2409-095 with the following amendment to the purchasing policy: In case of emergency, the City Manager (with the concurrence of the Mayor, or if the Mayor is unavailable then with the concurrence of another Council Member), may dispense with bidding and procure goods or services necessary to alleviate the emergency situation. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

15. Approval of Senior Citizen Advisory Committee Resolution

- Recommendation: that the City Council approve Resolution No. CC 2502-008 modifying Council Policy 94-09 by reducing the number of appointed positions from twelve (12) to seven (7) for the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee.

Community Services Director Minter presented the staff report.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney suggested reducing the number of positions appointed to five.

Councilmember Cuevas asked if the item can be brought back if the number of appointed positions needed to be reduced.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Cuevas to approve Resolution No. CC 2502-008 modifying Council Policy 94-09 by reducing the number of appointed positions from twelve (12) to seven (7) for the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

I. CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Moore commented that he was invited to a management meeting by a consulting firm regarding Metro, will be attending the League of California Cities City Managers Conference and thanked the City Councilmembers for making the YDC skate park all ages.

J. ITEMS FROM CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

16. Consideration of Compensation Increase for City Clerk

— Recommendation: that the City Council 1) review and discuss this report regarding the City Clerk compensation; and 2) discuss and provide direction to staff regarding the total monthly compensation amount to be added to the draft ordinance amending Chapter 2.16 of the Lawndale Municipal Code regarding compensation for the City Clerk; or 3) provide other direction to the City Manager and staff.

Deputy City Manager/ Human Resources Director Felton presented the staff report.

Councilmember Suarez asked if health benefits costs were taken into consideration.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney provided history on the item and commented in support of increasing the City Clerk's compensation by \$350.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers regarding the compensation increase for the City Clerk.

Councilmember Suarez commented that she will be voting against a compensation increase because the position is ceremonial.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened public comments.

Joshua Gorman, Resident, commented on rising living costs, stated that the last wage raise for the City Clerk position was 16 years ago, and commented in support of the City Clerk receiving a compensation increase.

Chelsea Schreiber, Resident, commented in support of the City Clerk receiving a compensation increase.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed public comments.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Talavera to add the total monthly compensation amount of \$700 be added to the draft ordinance amending Chapter 2.16 of the Lawndale Municipal Code regarding compensation for the City Clerk. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1, with Councilmember Suarez voting no.

17. Code Enforcement Process

— Recommendation: that City Council receive and file this staff report.

Municipal Services Director Reyes presented the staff report.

Councilmember Suarez asked if there is a code enforcement manual.

Municipal Services Director Reyes responded that there is no code enforcement manual, training is provided to staff on the processes and staff are certified by the California Governing Board on code enforcement regulations.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers and staff about internal written policies, staff procedures to be made public, and how complaints are addressed.

In response to Councilmember Suarez's questions, Municipal Services Director Reyes responded that there are multiple ways staff investigates complaints, such as reviewing City records about the property, visual inspection from the sidewalk, talking with tenants, improvements announced on home selling websites,

open houses, and when the property owner denies access to code enforcement staff to inspect the property, an inspection warrant can be obtained with sufficient evidence to request it.

Discussion ensued among Councilmembers and Municipal Services Director Reyes regarding types of complaints received, violation notices issued, timeframe of enforcement follow-up, extensions provided due to extenuating circumstances, conditionally approved plans for open cases, how complaints are handled when there is evidence that the homeowner is following up on violation notices and the process of administrative hearings.

Councilmember Suarez requested the process be outlined and a workshop be held to address the effectiveness of the process.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened public comments.

Randall Abram, Resident, commented on how code enforcement staff have responded and assisted in enforcing City municipal codes, and would like for code enforcement to be to be proactive instead of reactive.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed public comments.

Councilmember Suarez commented on a family member's code enforcement case, and that she would like for processes to be transparent.

Municipal Services Director Reyes commented that he aims for transparency and encouraged residents to speak with him about their violation citation process.

Councilmember Cuevas commented that residents have reported to her that they feel targeted after they receive code enforcement notices.

In response to Councilmember Cuevas's questions, Municipal Services Director Reyes stated that staff enforces the Lawndale Municipal Code in response to complaints, extensions are given when residents communicate with them, violation notices are mailed, he will look into mailing notices via certified mail, and staff cannot control the complaints they receive but must follow up.

Councilmember Talavera commented that residents should be treated with dignity and respect throughout the process and gave examples of his own experiences with Code Enforcement staff.

Councilmember Suarez requested the code enforcement process be outlined to promote transparency and to assist the residents in understanding the process and asked how many code enforcement cases are dismissed.

City Attorney Murphy responded that in general the criminal process leads to compliance with the oversight of a judge, and he will provide a report of how many cases have been dismissed since his firm was hired.

Councilmember Suarez requested that the department's policy manual be updated and shared with residents.

City Manager Moore commented that the policy manual will be updated and brought back to the City Council.

By consensus, the City Council requested a code enforcement workshop and received and filed this report.

18. Consideration and Direction Regarding Funding for Bus Transportation

— Recommendation: that the City Council: 1) review and discuss this item; 2) authorize and direct the Director of Finance/City Treasurer to appropriate \$6,200 from the General Fund to account number 100-160-530.100 Contract Services to fund bus transportation for Lawndale residents attending the Metro C Line (Green) Project meeting; OR 2) provide other direction to the City Manager and staff, if any.

Deputy City Manager/ Human Resources Director Felton presented the staff report.

City Manager Moore stated that the previous time the City provided transportation for residents, it was a success.

In response to Councilmember Cuevas's question, City Manager Moore responded that transportation was provided to Lawndale residents only.

Councilmember Cuevas requested two buses from general funds be funded and to bring the item back if a third bus is required.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened public comments.

Chelsea Schrieber, Resident, thanked the City Council for funding transportation to the Metro meeting, commented that 282 Lawndale residents took advantage of the transportation the City funded last time, and encouraged residents to attend the Metro meeting.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed public comments.

A motion was made by Councilmember Cuevas and seconded by Councilmember Suarez to authorize and direct the Director of Finance/City Treasurer to appropriate \$6,200 from the General Fund to account number 100-160-530.100 Contract Services to fund bus transportation for Lawndale residents attending the Metro C Line (Green) Project meeting. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1 with Mayor Pullen-Miles absent.

19. Report of Attendance at Meetings

Councilmember Talavera attended an ESMoA orientation, and the League of California Cities Mayors and Councilmembers Academy.

Councilmember Suarez attended South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) Board of Directors meeting.

Councilmember Cuevas requested the cost of staffing parks Thursdays and Fridays in the evening and all day Saturdays and Sundays, inquired about creating vertical parking on wide streets, asked how many open code cases there are and how long they have been open, how many residents took advantage of the 30-day Amnesty Program, and the Shop Local Rebate Program.

City Manager Moore responded that staff would follow up on the requests.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney had no meetings to report.

Mayor Pullen-Miles had no meetings to report.

K. CLOSED SESSION

20. Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation -

— The City Council will conduct a closed session, pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9(d)(1), to discuss existing litigation: Name of Case: City of Lawndale v. LA Investment, LLC (LA Superior Court Case No. 20TRCV00065).

21. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation-

— The City Council will conduct a closed session pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9(d)(4), to discuss the potential initiation of litigation: one (1) case.

City Attorney Murphy announced that Agenda Item No. K.20 Conference with Legal Counsel - Existing Litigation and Agenda Item No. K.21 Conference with Legal Counsel - Anticipated Litigation will be continued to a future meeting.

By consensus, the City Council continued Agenda Item No. K.20 Conference with Legal Counsel - Existing Litigation and Agenda Item No. K.21 Conference with Legal Counsel - Anticipated Litigation will be continued to a future meeting.

L. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Mayor Pullen-Miles adjourned the meeting at 10:54 p.m.



Robert Pullen-Miles, Mayor



Erica Harbison, City Clerk