

**MINUTES OF THE
LAWNDALe CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
March 3, 2025**

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Pullen-Miles called the meeting to order at 6:30 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 Francisco M. Talavera, Councilmember Sirley Cuevas

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

B. CEREMONIALS (Flag Salute and Inspiration)

Councilmember Talavera led the flag salute. Retired Pastor Dwight Dudley provided the inspiration.

C. PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

1. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Update

Captain Palomino summarized the recent law enforcement activities and invited the community to the next Neighborhood Watch meeting scheduled for March 19, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Harold E. Hofmann Community Center.

2. Los Angeles County Fire Department Update

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

D. PRESENTATIONS

3. Retirement Service Recognition of Deputy Douglas Wada

The City Council recognized retiring Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputy Douglas Wada for his 30 years of service to the City of Lawndale.

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

Joshua Gorman, Resident, inquired whether the City can help local businesses with the increase in tariffs on imported items.

Holly Osborne, Redondo Beach Resident, commented on the I-405 Improvement Project, on the Interstate 405 freeway.

Juan Granados, Resident, commented on parking issues on his street, and insufficient time allowed by traffic signals to cross the street.

Chelsea Schreiber, Resident, recommended a show on Netflix about soil toxicity; Toxic Town, thanked the City Council for their support and commented that she is holding Metro accountable for their actions.

Mathew Harbison, Lawndale Wesleyan Church, commented on the possibility of graffiti on utility boxes with artwork, opposes blinking stop signs in residential areas and commended the City Council for their work.

F. COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

Councilmember Talavera thanked everyone for attending and speaking at tonight's meeting, asked Redondo Beach Resident Osborne to continue updating the City Council, and thanked residents for bringing issues to the City Council's attention.

Councilmember Suarez, thanked everyone that spoke at tonight's meeting, thanked Redondo Beach Resident Osborne for speaking about the I-405 Improvement Project, commented that the South Bay City Council of Governments (SBCCOG) was asked by Cities to not support the project, and asked City Manager Moore to provide an update on the City's request to Metro to test the soil.

City Manager Moore responded that Metro denied the City's request to test the soil, indicating that third party reviews of their property are not allowed; however, peer reviews are permitted.

Councilmember Cuevas thanked everyone for attending and speaking at tonight's meeting, commented that the Shop Local Rebate Program is a way the City helps residents with costs, and requested that the Traffic Committee review the parking issues throughout the City.

City Manager Moore commented that the Traffic Committee will review parking issues.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney had no comments.

Mayor Pullen-Miles thanked Redondo Beach Resident Osborne for bringing the I-405 Improvement Project to the City Council's attention, and asked City Manager Moore to clarify the statement about Metro allowing peer reviews of their property.

City Manager Moore responded that the City can hire a peer review expert to review Metro's environmental review assessment.

G. CONSENT CALENDAR

4. 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.

5. Accounts Payable Register

— Recommendation: that City Council adopts Resolution No. CC-2503-015 authorizing the payment of certain claims and demands in the amount of \$447,537.31.

6. Minutes of the Lawndale City Council Regular Meeting - February 18, 2025

— Recommendation: that the City Council approve the minutes.

7. Second Reading - ADU Ordinance

— Recommendation: that the City Council 1.) Adopt Ordinance 1208-25, Amending Title 17 (Zoning) Section 17.48.056 of the Lawndale Municipal Code regarding ADU regulations; and 2.) Determine that Ordinance No. 1208-25 is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines.

8. Second Reading of Ordinance - City Clerk Compensation

— Recommendation: that the City Council adopt Ordinance 1209-25, Amending Chapter 2.16 of the Lawndale Municipal Code Regarding Compensation for the Elected City Clerk.

9. Consideration of Claims for Damage against the City

— Recommendation: that the City Council reject the claim filed by Steven Harrie and instruct staff to process the appropriate correspondence to the claimant.

Councilmember Suarez requested that Consent Calendar Item No. G.8. be pulled and considered separately.

By consensus, Mayor Pullen-Miles pulled Consent Calendar Item No. G.8. from the consent calendar to be considered separately.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Cuevas to approve Consent Calendar Items No. G.4 through G.9., excluding Item No. G.8. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

8. Second Reading of Ordinance-City Clerk Compensation

- Recommendation: that the City Council adopt Ordinance 1209-25, Amending Chapter 2.16 of the Lawndale Municipal Code Regarding Compensation for the Elected City Clerk.

This item was considered separately at this time.

Councilmember Suarez commented that she is not in agreement with the increase in compensation because it is a ceremonial position.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and seconded by Councilmember Cuevas to read by title only and adopt Ordinance 1209-25, Amending Chapter 2.16 of the Lawndale Municipal Code Regarding Compensation for the Elected City Clerk. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1-0 with Councilmember Suarez voting no.

H. PUBLIC HEARING

10. Public Hearing to Consider Republic Services, Inc. Proposed Solid Waste Service Rates for 2025 and Adopt Resolution No. CC-2501-003 Establishing refuse Collection Service Rates for 2025 for Residential, Multi-family, and Commercial Accounts

— Recommendation: that the City Council 1.) Open the Public Hearing, take testimony and close the Public Hearing; and 2.) Adopt by title only Resolution No. CC-2501-003.

Public Works Senior Management Analyst Huizar presented the staff report.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened the public hearing at 7:06 p.m.

Juan Granados, Resident, commented that he did not receive a protest ballot in the mail and was not aware of the service rate increase.

Rhonda Hofmann Gorman, Resident, commented that the contract indicates that new trash hauling trucks would be provided but they have not, and recommend the contract be reviewed.

Mayor Pullen-Miles issued the last call for ballot protests.

No ballot protests were submitted at this point in time.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed the public hearing at 7:08 pm.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers and staff regarding the number of ballots mailed, how many were received by residents, mailing the ballots again, how many ballots would need to be received to make an impact, and on the status of the trash hauling trucks.

City Attorney Murphy commented that the public hearing can be extended, and staff can be directed on how to publicize the notices in the future.

Councilmember Talavera asked if senior citizen residents are aware of the senior citizen discount, if there is a way to change the criteria to qualify for the discount to include retired residents that are younger than 65 years of age, if a self-addressed stamped envelope was included with the ballots and stated that he is not in agreement with the rate increase.

Councilmember Suarez asked what the notice requirements are regarding solid waste rate increases, and the amount of the liquidated damages the City has received.

City Attorney Murphy responded that any city doing a Proposition 18 vote has the same requirements of notifying parcel owners, and that the City went above and beyond than what is required by also notifying account owners.

Public Works Senior Management Analyst Huizar responded that the City received \$180,000 in 2024 for liquidated damages and that self-addressed stamped envelopes were not included with the ballots.

In response to Councilmember Suarez's question, City Manager Moore responded that staff will look into using some of the liquidated damages funds to assist residents in need with their trash hauling invoices.

In response to Mayor Pullen-Miles' questions, Public Works Senior Management Analyst Huizar explained that a qualifying head of household is someone who is applying for the discount, resides in the home, and the account is under their name, and that the waste hauling fees for commercial businesses in the City are average.

Assistant City Clerk Palomo announced that 53 valid protests ballots were received, and 2,927 were required for a majority protest.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Kearney's questions, Dawn Harris Benton, Republic Services Representative, responded that staff will provide information on how many protest ballots were mailed, new trash hauling trucks will be ready in four months, and that they will work on installing a net to prevent trash from blowing out of the truck.

A motion was made by Councilmember Cuevas and seconded by Councilmember Suarez to open the Public Hearing, take testimony and close the Public Hearing, and adopt by title only Resolution No. CC-2501-003. The motion passed by a vote of 4-1-0, with Councilmember Talavera voting no.

I. ADMINISTRATION

11. Update on Results for 2024 Illegal Fireworks Suppression Detail

— Recommendation: that the City Council receive and file this Staff Report.

Municipal Services Director Reyes presented the staff report.

Councilmember Cuevas asked how the funds received from citations will be utilized, and if staff can start advertising the illegal fireworks fines.

Municipal Services Director Reyes responded that the funds will be used to fund deputies' salaries for this year's 4th of July illegal fireworks enforcement, staff and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) are creating a plan and it will be presented to the Fireworks Ad Hoc Subcommittee.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney commented that the Fireworks Ad Hoc Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on March 18, 2025.

In response to Councilmember Suarez's questions, Municipal Services Director Reyes responded that he will provide information on why the five citations were dismissed.

By consensus, the City Council received and filed this Staff Report.

12. First Amendment for On-Call Civil Engineering Services

— Recommendation: that the City Council approve the First Amendment to the Contract Services Agreement with Transtech Engineers, Inc., SA Associates, Onward Engineering, LAE Associates, Inc., and Willdan Engineering for the contract term of March 5, 2025, through March 4, 2026, with an option to extend up to three one-year extensions.

Public Works Director Rodriguez presented the staff report.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers and staff about the difference between on-call services and staff augmentation, current services received through contracts, allocation of funding and expenditures for projects, services received from each firm and the reason why five firms are retained, what determines which firm gets the job, rates of each firm, and the possibility of hiring fewer firms in the future.

A motion was made by Councilmember Cuevas and seconded by Councilmember Talavera to approve the First Amendment to the Contract Services Agreement with Transtech Engineers, Inc., SA Associates, Onward Engineering, LAE Associates, Inc., and Willdan Engineering for the contract term of March 5, 2025, through March 4, 2026, with an option to extend up to three one-year extensions. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

J. CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Moore announced that a speed hump policy will be presented at a future meeting.

K. ITEMS FROM CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

13. Letter to State Federal Legislators Regarding Metro Project Funding Gap

— Recommendation: that the City Council review the draft letter to be addressed to state and federal legislators requesting assistance in obtaining funding for the Metro C Line Project funding gap and provide direction to staff on next steps.

City Manager Moore presented the staff report.

City Manager Moore clarified that the request is for the alternative Hawthorne Boulevard route.

Councilmember Suarez asked why the request is being submitted at this time.

City Manager Moore responded that the intent is to try anything possible to seek funding to mitigate the impact to the right-of-way route.

In response to Councilmember Cuevas' questions, City Manager Moore stated that he will provide information on why the letter was not submitted sooner, and staff will follow up on the status of the request

after the letter is submitted.

In response to Councilmember Suarez's questions, City Manager Moore stated the letter is being sent to state and federal legislators, and if federal funding is received, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) would be enacted, which would increase the costs for Metro.

Councilmember Suarez commented that some of the language is written as if the City supports the Metro C Line Extension Project being built through the City.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney and Councilmember Talavera commented that they do not support the letter because they do not support any of Metro's proposed options.

In response to Councilmember Talavera's questions, City Manager Moore stated that the City Council provided direction to support the Hawthorne Boulevard option, and project decisions have not been made final.

Councilmember Cuevas asked that the letter be brought back to City Council with changes reflecting that the City is not committing to supporting Alternative 3 – the Hawthorne Boulevard Alignment option and is still opposed to the Metro C Line Extension Project.

Mayor Pullen-Miles opened public comments.

Ray Hollar, Resident, suggested how to revise the letter.

Anette Owens, Resident, does not support asking for funds for the Metro C Line Extension Project.

Joshua Gorman, Resident, commented that City Councilmembers should send the letter united.

Chelsea Schreiber, Resident, commented that the City is being genuine on their wishes regarding the Metro C Line Extension Project, Metro is not being genuine if they are trying to avoid NEPA, and thanked the City Council for working on the letter.

Anonymous, Resident, stated that if funding is received, a guarantee is needed that it would not be used toward the Right-of-Way (ROW) option.

Mayor Pullen-Miles closed public comments.

Discussion ensued among City Councilmembers and staff about the options, requesting federal funding to be applied exclusively to Alternative 3 – the Hawthorne Boulevard Alignment option, scheduling a Metro C Line Extension Ad Hoc Subcommittee meeting and contacting federal legislators, Metro's requirement to prepare a NEPA report and presenting a united front when sending the letter.

By consensus, the City Council directed the Metro C Line Extension Ad Hoc Subcommittee to convene a meeting to discuss the best approach to address the Metro Project funding gap, contact federal and state legislatures, and report back to the City Council.

14. Community Development Department Duties, Overview of Operations, and Customer Survey

— Recommendation: that the City Council 1.) Receive and file this report from the Community Development; 2.) Direct staff to distribute, collect, and analyze the department survey; or 3.) Direct staff to add or delete new questions into the survey; or 4.) Provide further direction to staff.

Community Development Director Kann presented the staff report.

Councilmember Suarez commented that she envisioned a third party performing the department survey to prevent residents from receiving possible backlash, since staff is conducting the surveys, and asked if a low-cost impartial firm can be hired to perform the survey.

City Manager Moore responded that he agrees with the suggestion and will follow-up.

Councilmember Talavera asked why the Los Angeles (LA) County Building and Safety Department is only available on Tuesdays, and if there is a flow chart available to residents.

Community Development Director Kann responded that counter services from LA County Building and Safety Department are provided by a Civil/Structure Engineer who is also available at the South Los Angeles office.

Discussion ensued between City Councilmembers and staff about a timeline schedule, what residents should expect from the City about site plan reviews, correction letters, notifications, and what can be expected from the City to assist in moving the project along, requesting the LA County Civil/Structure Engineer an additional day in the City, what the cost would be, making the process easier for residents, and implementing the feedback received into processes.

By consensus, the City Council directed staff to complete the RFP process to purchase software to streamline the operation's process, bring back information on the cost to hire an LA County Civil/ Structure Engineer for an additional day and provide the cost to hire an impartial firm to implement a customer survey.

15. Report of Attendance at Meetings

Councilmember Talavera met with residents about the Metro C Line Extension Project and the ROW, City Department Directors, thanked everyone for their time, attended the Neighborhood Watch meeting, South Bay Workforce Investment Board Orientation, South Bay Legislative Meet and Greet event, thanked Mayor Pro Tem Kearney for his mentorship, and congratulated women for International Women's Day.

Councilmember Suarez attended California Contract Cities Association (CCCA) Board of Directors meeting, and SBCCOG Board of Directors meeting,

Councilmember Cuevas announced the City's Clean-Up Week event to be held March 15-23, 2025, and that volunteers are needed for the City Clean Up Day scheduled for March 22, 2025.

Mayor Pro Tem Kearney attended the Neighborhood Watch meeting, South Bay Workforce Investment Board Orientation, and South Bay Legislative Meet and Greet event.

Mayor Pullen-Miles received a tour of the ROW from Redondo Beach Resident Osborne, announced that Lawndale Little League will have opening day on March 8, 2025, at Jane Addams Park at 10:00 a.m., and asked if the 30-day Amnesty Program is being promoted.

City Manager Moore responded that the 30-Day Amnesty Program was promoted on the City's Website, a Minute Moore segment and on social media.

Community Development Director Kann responded that there was interest in the program.

L. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Mayor Pullen-Miles adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.



Robert Pullen-Miles, Mayor



Erica Harbison, City Clerk

Approved: March 17, 2025