

## CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

25541 Barton Road, Loma Linda, CA 92354

February 11, 2025, 5:30 PM - February 11, 2025, 9:45 PM

**Roll Call:** *(The following members were in attendance)*

- **Phillip Dupper**, Mayor
- **Ronald Dailey**, Mayor pro tempore
- **Ovidiu Popescu**, Councilmember
- **Rhodes Rigsby**, Councilmember
- **Rhonda Spencer-Hwang**, Councilmember

### 1. Call to Order

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**1A. Call to Order-** 5:30 PM

#### **1B. Roll Call-**

All Councilmembers present.

Staff present: T. Jarb Thaipejr, City Manager; Diane Robbins, City Attorney; Lynette Arreola, City Clerk; Sonia Fabela, Finance Director; Dan Harker, Fire Chief; Lorena Matarrita, Community Development Director; Andy Ramirez, Assistant City Manager, Andrew Sanchez. Customer Support Technician; and Lt. Kaysie Smith, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department

#### **1C. Workshop - 5:30 pm - EOC Emergency Operations Training in the Community Room [Jacob Green and Associates]-** 5:30 PM

The City Council attended an Emergency Operations Training for Elected Officials given by Jacob Green & Associates.

#### **1D. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance - Councilmember Spencer-Hwang-** 7:06 PM

The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Spencer-Hwang.

#### **1E. Items to be Added or Deleted-** 7:07 PM

No items were added or deleted.

#### **1F. Oral Reports/Public Participation - Non-Agenda Items (Each Speaker limited to 3 minutes. Pursuant to the Brown Act, no action or discussion can be taken by City Council)-** 7:07 PM

Milford Harrison, Board Member of the San Bernardino Valley Water District, invited the Council to attend a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on February 20, 2025, at 9:00 am for the \$50 Million Enhanced Recharge Project. He would provide location maps of the event to Council.

Andrea De Leon thanked the Council for attending the Chamber Installation Dinner on January 30, 2025. She acknowledged and congratulated the award recipients, who were: T Jarb Thaipejr - Citizen of the Year; CR&R - Business of the Year; Kyle Mac Gavin - City Employee of the Year; Deputy Roger Alfaro - Deputy of the Year; and Roland Blackiston - Firefighter of the Year.

## **1G. Conflict of Interest Disclosure- 7:12 PM**

No items.

## **2. Scheduled and Related Items**

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### **2A. Presentation by Southern California Edison (SCE) by Mark Cloud- 7:12 PM**

Mayor pro tempore Ronald Dailey stated that he spoke Mr. Cloud last month during the devastating fires and invited him to present at the City Council meeting to discuss SCE's mitigations on the power shutoffs.

Mike Cloud, Southern California Edison (SCE), gave a presentation on SCE's Wildfire Mitigation, discussing the various state and federal Commissions and California Legislature that they are regulated by. He reviewed the legislation regulations related to wildfires: SB 901, AB 1054 and the annual safety updates from CPUC Wildfire Mitigation Plan. He discussed California's wildfire issues, SCE's Wildfire Mitigation efforts that include grid hardening, advanced technology for fire prevention, Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS), vegetation management around powerlines and new technologies to detect fire risks. He provided an overview of the operations of their Emergency Operations Center, the Community Resource Centers and their Resource incentives and rebate programs. He stated that he serves as the liaison to local government officials. During power shutoffs, he kept city and elected officials informed about broad matters, such as the types of circuits affected, rather than specific outage and restoration times. He also mentioned that they continuously learn from past events, including the fires in January. After every major event, their team conducts a follow-up review, known as a "Hotwash," to assess areas for improvement and potential changes. He discussed that they must work to commit to effectively improve communication. He concluded reiterating SCE's commitment to wildfire prevention and grid safety, the resources of portable generators and power station rebates for residents. He invited the public to visit their wildfire safety website and to sign up for the alerts.

Discussion ensued relating to the Public Safety Power Shut Offs. Mr. Cloud provided an overview of operations, noting the hundreds of miles of interconnected electrified circuits. He explained that if an area is identified as being at high fire risk, SCE will de-energize the affected circuit. However, unless they can surgically isolate the outage through a process called sectionalizing, everyone connected to that circuit will also lose power. He noted that SCE is actively working to improve this technology to minimize widespread impacts. He encouraged the public to sign up on their portal for SCE communication, especially those with health issues and medical equipment. He also encouraged residents to be prepared for PSPS.

Councilmember Popescu commended SCE for their email communication. Mayor pro tempore Dailey thanked Mr. Cloud for his presentation.

### **2B. Presentation on Local Tobacco Prevention Efforts by Monika Gracian from California Health Collaborative- 8:58 PM**

Monika Gracian, Director of Program Services with the California Health Collaborative, thanked Councilmember Spencer-Hwang for the invitation to speak. She introduced Patricia Lopez, Program Manager California Health Collaborative San Bernardino County. She noted that they will speak on

local tobacco prevention efforts and local data. She gave a brief description of the California Health Collaborative. She briefly reviewed State Policies pertaining to tobacco prevention efforts that include: Stop Tobacco Access to Kids Enforcement (STAKE); SB 793 and AB 935 that involve e-cigarettes, vaping devices and flavored tobacco products and the enforcement of these policies. She gave an overview of the new Tobacco laws, AB 3218 and SB 1230, that focused on strengthening and initiating enforcement for prohibited flavored tobacco products that went into effect January 1, 2025 and fully implemented no later than December 31, 2025. She added that these two laws strengthen and increased fines in the STAKE ACT. She presented images of trending items that resemble toys, school supplies, or electronic devices, pointing out that the products contain nicotine. She noted that there are 11 licensed tobacco retailers in Loma Linda. In 2022, they conducted a decoy operations at these retailers, having individuals under 21 years of age attempt to purchase tobacco products. The results showed that five out of nine stores did so. She also reviewed the findings of a Public Opinion Poll they conducted. She discussed options for local jurisdictions to adopt a Tobacco Retail License (TRL) Ordinance to regulate retailers to maintain compliance with current laws, pay license fees, and allow local agencies to conduct enforcement. She concluded with a spreadsheet of Local Tobacco Grades.

Councilmember Spencer-Hwang thanked Ms. Gracian to the information. Councilmember Popescu asked if they have a similar advocacy group with cannibals. Ms. Gracian stated that while their focus is on tobacco and nicotine products, they are aware there is an intersection with cannabis. Discussion ensued regarding where the devices are manufactured. She stated that it can be difficult where the manufacturer are located, but noted that the new laws can penalize the manufacturers and distributors. There was continued discussion on enforcement of the policies.

Isreal Fuentes, Chair for the Coalition for a Tobacco-Free San Bernardino County, Board Member and Clerk for Colton Joint Unified School District and Community Liasson for Young Visionaries, noted that the Coalition is made up of organization, governmental agencies and volunteers who share a passion for promoting a healthy, tobacco free lifestyle. He spoke in favor of the presentation and encouraged the City to consider adopt a Tobacco Retail License ordinance. He provided a packet of information to each Councilmember. Laura Cortes, Senior at Redlands High School supports a Tobacco Retail License Ordinance. Anna B. Peterson, Tobacco Control Researcher and a member of the Cancer Center Transdisciplinary Tobacco Research Program, discusses her research and the negative impact of tobacco. She stated that this is a pediatric disease. She supports the City take a stand and adopt an ordinance.

**2C. Public Hearing - Council Bill #R-2025-02 - A Resolution for the Fall 2024 Weed Abatement Program Establishing Liens and Assessments on the Properties [Fire]- 9:09 PM**  
Public Hearing was opened at 8:56 PM and closed at 8:57 PM

Fire Marshal Ingalls presented the report, outlining the Fall Weed Abatement Program, including the inspection process, notifications for property owners to clear vegetation, and the steps taken when vegetation is not removed by the deadline. The City arranges for a contractor to complete the cleanup and bills the homeowner for the clean up costs. If unpaid, the costs are brought to Councils to authorize establishing liens and assessment on the property's tax roll for repayment. He added

that the report includes five unpaid weed abatement invoices from the Spring 2024 Weed Abatement Program that were not submitted to the City by the established deadline.

Motion by Rhodes Rigsby, seconded Rhonda Spencer-Hwang, passing by a vote of 5-0-0-0-0, *to Adopt Council Bill #R-2025-02, Resolution No. 3241 - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING A REPORT AND STATEMENT OF EXPENSES FOR THE FALL 2024 WEED ABATEMENT PROGRAM AND IMPOSING A LIEN UPON PROPERTY FOR PAYMENT THEREFOR*

**2D. Joint Meeting of the City Council and Housing Authority Board Regarding the 2024-25 Mid-Year Budget [Finance]- 9:09 PM**

The Mayor called to order the Housing Authority Board for the Joint Meeting with the City Council.

Sonia Fabela, Finance Director, presented the 2024-2025 Mid-Year Budget Review, reviewing the General Fund Revenue changes with the Total General Fund of \$1,745,500; the General Fund Expenditure changes with a total General Fund Expenditure Changes of \$2,136,800, the Summary of Changes in Fund Balance by Fund Type with a Beginning Fund Balance of \$20,301,373 that includes the General Fund Assigned and Committed funds and the Ending Fund Balance of \$19,324,773; General Fund Budgeted Uses of Funds graph; Other Revenue Changes with Total Sewer Fund of \$319,900, Total LLCCP Fund of \$10,400, Total Water Funds of \$342,300 and Total Other Funds of \$3,023,300 with Total City changes including General Fund to Revenues of \$5,441,400; Other Expenditure Changes with a Total City Expenditure Changes of the Enterprise Funds, Special Revenues, Special Districts, Capital Funds and Housing Authority was \$2,884,000; Summary of Changes in Fund Balance of Fund Type with the Beginning Fund Balance of the Enterprise Capital Funds of \$2,167,065 and the Ending Fund Balance of \$2,978,365; and Summary of Changes in Fund Balance by Fund Type with the Beginning Fund Balance of \$53,853,963 and the Ending Fund Balance of \$58,323,363. In conclusion, Finance Director Fabela recommended City Council approve a Net Increase in city-wide revenues of \$5,441,400 and Net increase in city-wide expenditures of \$2,884,000. She thanked all the departments in assisting in putting together funds.

A discussion followed regarding the projected decrease in property tax and sales tax revenues. Mayor Pro Tempore Dailey expressed concern over the reduction in city revenue and the possibility of the trend continuing. He also commended Councilmember Spencer-Hwang for her efforts with the Revenue Generating Committee. Finance Director Fabela concurred with Mayor Pro Tempore Dailey's concerns.

Motion by Ronald Dailey, seconded Ovidiu Popescu, passing by a vote of 5-0-0-0-0, *to Approve the 2024-2025 Mid-Year Budget with the net increase in city-wide revenues of \$5,441,400 and a net increase in city-wide expenditures of \$2,884,000 as recommended by staff.*

**3. Consent Calendar**

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Motion by Ovidiu Popescu, seconded Rhodes Rigsby, passing by a vote of 5-0-0-0-0, *to Approve the Consent Calendar as submitted.*

**3A. Demands Registers January 28 and February 11, 2025 [Finance]- 9:30 PM**

Approved the Demands Registers dated January 28, 2025, with commercial demands totaling \$2,118,609.23, and Payroll dated January 16, 2025, totaling \$433,750.21; and February 11, 2025,

with commercial demands totaling \$2,157,742.44, and Payroll dated January 30, 2025, totaling \$407,583.50.

**3B. Approval of Minutes January 14, 2025 [City Clerk]- 9:30 PM**

Approved the minutes of January 14, 2025, as submitted.

**3C. Treasurer's Report - January 2025 [Finance]- 9:30 PM**

Accepted the January 2025 Treasurer's Report for filing.

**3D. Fire Department's Activity Report - January 2025 [Fire]- 9:30 PM**

Accepted the January 2025 Fire Department's Activity Report for filing.

**3E. Award Contract to LCR Earthwork & Engineering Corp. for \$230,327.00 for Pavement Rehabilitation at Beaumont Ave. (CIP 24-124) [Public Works]- 9:30 PM**

Awarded contract to LCR Earthwork & Engineering Corp for \$230,327.00 as recommended by staff.

**3F. Appropriate \$50,000 from Water Fund Balance then Award a Contract to Tess Electric for \$46,207.00 to Purchase and Install a Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) at Richardson Well No. 5 [Public Works]- 9:30 PM**

Appropriated the \$50,000 from the Water Fund Balance and Awarded the contract to Tess Electric for \$46,207.00 as recommended by staff.

**3G. Award Contract to Dennis Grubb and Associates for \$50,000 for Fire Department Plan Check Services [Fire]- 9:30 PM**

Awarded contract to Dennis Grubb & Associates for \$50,000 as recommended by staff.

**3H. Council Bill #R-2025-03 - A Resolution Approving an Amendment to the City Classification Plan and Salary Schedule [Human Resources]- 9:30 PM**

Adopted Council Bill #R-2025-03 - Resolution No. 3242

RESOLUTION NO. 3242

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING AMENDMENT TO THE CITY CLASSIFICATION PLAN AND SALARY SCHEDULE.

**3I. Update to the Treatment Plant Operator II Class Specification to Reflect Revised Duties and Qualifications [Human Resources]- 9:30 PM**

Approved the Update to the Treatment Plant Operation II Class Specifications as recommended by staff.

**3J. City Council 2025 Calendar Year Meeting Schedule [City Clerk]- 9:30 PM**

Approved the 2025 City Council meeting schedule.

**4. Old Business**

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No items were scheduled.

**5. New Business**

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**5A. Consider taking action to merge the Trails Development Committee into the Parks, Recreation and Beautification Committee to meet quarterly [City Manager]- 9:31 PM**

City Manager Thaipejr explained that, in the past few year, the City has had challenges achieving quorums with the two committees. He noted that there are vacancies on both committees that they have had difficult filling. The City believes that the Trails Development Committee has successfully achieved its objectives, but their objectives are related and can be handled by the Parks Recreation and Beautification Committee. He recommended to merge the Committees and invite the members to be on the Parks Recreation and Beautification Committee. He noted that he has presented this to both committees and received support to their recommendation.

Motion by Ronald Dailey, seconded Rhodes Rigsby, passing by a vote of 5-0-0-0-0,  
*to Approve the merge of the Trails Development Committee with the Parks, Recreation and Beautification Committee as recommended by staff.*

**6. Reports**

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**6A. Reports of Council Members- 9:35 PM**

Councilmember Popescu shared that he had the pleasure of meeting with Field Representative Ulysses Nera on behalf of Assemblyman Robert Garcia. Mr. Nera introduced himself to the City Council and mentioned that he had discussed key priorities for the City with Councilmember Popescu. He also expressed his willingness to meet with any of the Councilmembers.

Councilmember Spencer-Hwang provided an update on the Revenue-Generating Committee, stating that they looked at the City's past and future. She noted that the Committee discussed the City's weaknesses and strengths of the community; that they discussed the opportunities for the community and some of the threats. She noted that the next step would be to meet with the City Manager and the Assistant City Manager to develop strategies. She noted that they would scale down on the committee and meet with key individuals to determine strategies and how to embrace the wellness identity. Mayor pro tempore Dailey commended Councilmember's Spencer-Hwang for her efforts moving forward establishing this committee.

**6B. Reports Of Officers- 9:45 PM**

City Manger Thaipejr introduced Assistant City Manager Andy Ramirez. Assistant City Manager Ramirez introduced himself and stated that he was looking forward to working with the City Council.

**7. Adjournment**

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The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.