

**CITY OF SAN FERNANDO
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**DECEMBER 4, 2023 – 6:00 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING**

**CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
117 MACNEIL STREET
SAN FERNANDO, CALIFORNIA 91340**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Celeste Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Present: Council: Mayor Celeste Rodriguez, Vice Mayor Mary Mendoza, and Councilmembers Joel Fajardo and Mary Solorio

Staff: City Manager Nick Kimball, Assistant City Attorney Richard Padilla, Police Chief Fabian Valdez, Deputy City Manager/Economic Development Kanika Kith, Director of Finance Erica Melton, Director of Community Development Erika Ramirez, Director of Public Works Wendell Johnson, Director of Recreation and Community Services Julian Venegas and City Clerk Julia Fritz

Absent: None

TELECONFERENCING REQUESTS/DISCLOSURE

No requests considered.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by City Clerk Julia Fritz

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Councilmember Fajardo, seconded by Councilmember Solorio approve the agenda. The motion carried, unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

- A. PRESENTATION OF EDUCATION COMMISSION CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION FOR NOVEMBER STUDENT OF THE MONTH (GIVING BACK)
Francisco López (Nueva Esperanza Charter Academy)
- B. PRESENTATION OF A CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION TO DR. STEVEN LOY FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS OF SAN FERNANDO

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- C. PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION HONORING RETIREES DIRECTOR OF RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES JULIAN VENEGAS AND PERSONNEL MANAGER MICHAEL OKAFOR FOR THEIR YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE CITY AND THE COMMUNITY OF SAN FERNANDO (*WALK-ON PRESENTATION*)

It was noted that the City Council recessed the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and reconvened at 6:36 p.m. with all Councilmembers present.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Nancy Peterson thanked City Council for hosting the 3 WINS Fitness Program.

Jonathan Hawes submitted an email requesting support for El Monte Mayor Jessica Ancona.

Liana Stepanyan San Fernando Library Manager submitted an email on updates to the Library's activities and events.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Rodriguez requested to pull Consent Item No. 2 for discussion.

Motion by Councilmember Fajardo, seconded by Councilmember Solorio to approve Consent Calendar Items 1, 3 and 4:

- 1) CONSIDERATION TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE WARRANT REGISTER
- 3) CONSIDERATION TO AUTHORIZE THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION GRANT AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING THE FUNDS
- 4) CONSIDERATION TO ACCEPT MEASURE H FUNDS FROM LOS ANGELES COUNTY FOR HOMELESS SERVICES AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING THE FUNDS

The motion carried, unanimously.

Item pulled for discussion

- 2) CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE CALENDAR YEAR 2024 BUSINESS PERMITS FOR CERTAIN BUSINESS ACTIVITIES AS REQUIRED BY THE CITY CODE

Motion by Mayor Rodriguez, seconded by Councilmember Fajardo to approve 20 Business Permits for Calendar Year 2024 for businesses engaged in certain business activities, as required by Article III of Chapter 22 of the City Code; and authorize the City Manager administrative authority to approve the remaining four (4) applicants for Business Permits, pending completion of outstanding planning requirements. The motion carried, unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

- 5) A CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER APPROVAL OF FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE INCREASING THE MONTHLY COMPENSATION RECEIVED BY CITY COUNCILMEMBERS PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS 36516 AND 36516.5; AND CONSIDERATION TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A CITY COUNCIL BENEFITS AND REIMBURSEMENT PLAN (CONTINUED FROM NOVEMBER 28, 2023 ADJOURNED REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING)

Mayor Rodriguez opened the public hearing.

Assistant City Attorney Richard Padilla and City Manager Nick Kimball presented the staff report and responded to Councilmember questions.

Mayor Rodriguez called for public testimony. There being no public testimony, Mayor Rodriguez closed public comment period and with no objections, the public hearing was closed.

Motion by Councilmember Fajardo, seconded by Councilmember Solorio to introduce for first reading, in title only, and waive further reading of Ordinance No. 1720 “An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of San Fernando amending Section 2-31 (Councilmembers – Salary) of Division 1 (Generally), Article II (City Council), Chapter 2 (Administration) of the San Fernando Municipal Code regarding Councilmember compensation”; adopt Resolution No. 8272 bifurcating Councilmember benefits from the Department Head benefits of Resolution No. 8244, as amended to adjourn tonight’s meeting to a regular adjourned meeting to a date certain of December 11, 2023 at 5:15 p.m. and directed staff to provide additional research regarding City Council compensation of other cities. The motion carried, unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

- 6) DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A SECOND AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT FOR CITY ATTORNEY SERVICES WITH OLIVAREZ MADRUGA LAW ORGANIZATION, LLP (CONTINUED FROM NOVEMBER 28, 2023 ADJOURNED REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING)

City Manager Kimball presented the staff report and responded to Councilmember questions.

Motion by Councilmember Fajardo, seconded by Councilmember Solorio to approve Second Amendment (Contract No. 1698(b)) to the City Attorney Services Agreement with the Olivarez Madruga Law Organization, LLP; with the provision of any contract increases beyond the CPI percentage that staff bring the contract to City Council in February to include for upcoming Fiscal Year budget planning purposes and authorize the City Manager to execute all related documents. The motion carried, unanimously.

7) DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE THE DESIGN FOR THE PIONEER PARK PLAYGROUND RENOVATION PROJECT

Director of Recreation and Community Services Julian Venegas presented the staff report and responded to Councilmember questions.

Councilmembers directed staff to return to City Council in January 2024 with updates to Option 4 focused on minimizing sun gaps and maximize shade, provide cost analysis for future shade maintenance, and continue to pursue bi-annual funding from the County of Los Angeles for future maintenance and related costs.

8) ANNUAL REORGANIZATION OF THE CITY COUNCIL - SELECTION OF MAYOR AND VICE MAYOR

City Clerk Fritz presented the staff report and opened nominations for Mayor.

Councilmember Fajardo nominated Vice Mayor Mary Mendoza for the position of Mayor and the nomination was seconded by Vice Mayor Mendoza.

Mayor Rodriguez nominated herself for the position of Mayor and Councilmember and the nomination was seconded by Councilmember Solorio.

There were no other nominations for Mayor and the nominations were closed.

For Vice Mayor Mendoza as Mayor, the motion failed by the following vote:

ROLL CALL

AYES: Fajardo, Mendoza - 2

NOES: Solorio, Rodriguez - 2

For Mayor Rodriguez as Mayor, the motion failed by the following vote:

ROLL CALL

AYES: Solorio, Rodriguez - 2

NOES: Fajardo, Mendoza - 2

City Clerk Fritz announced a tie vote occurred and presented four options to remedy the tie vote between Vice Mayor Mendoza and Mayor Rodriguez for the position of Mayor. The following options were presented to City Council:

Option 1: City Council proceed with a second round of voting;

Option 2: Preserve the status quo and continue with Celeste Rodriguez as Mayor and Mary Mendoza as Vice Mayor until City Council decides to bring this matter back for consideration at a later date;

Option 3: Postpone reorganization until after the Special Election; or

Option 4: City Council discuss alternative methods to break the tie vote.

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Assistant City Attorney Padilla confirmed that government code does not require the City Council to reorganize annually and that the status quo may remain in place until the next regularly scheduled city election, which is November, 2024.

Councilmembers discussed potential option for the selection of Mayor; however proceeded to the process of selection of Vice Mayor.

City Clerk opened nominations for Vice Mayor.

Mayor Rodriguez nominated Councilmember Mary Solorio for Vice Mayor and the nomination was seconded by Councilmember Solorio.

Councilmember Fajardo nominated Vice Mayor Mary Mendoza for Vice Mayor and the motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Mendoza.

There were no other nominations for Vice Mayor and the nominations were closed.

For Councilmember Solorio as Vice Mayor, the motion failed by the following vote:

ROLL CALL

AYES: Solorio, Rodriguez - 2
NOES: Fajardo, Mendoza - 2

For Vice Mayor Mendoza as Vice Mayor, the motion failed by the following vote:

ROLL CALL

AYES: Fajardo, Mendoza - 2
NOES: Solorio, Rodriguez - 2

City Clerk Fritz announced a tie vote occurred and Councilmember discussion ensued. Motion by Councilmember Fajardo, seconded by Mayor Rodriguez to preserve the Mayor Rodriguez as Mayor and Vice Mayor Mendoza as Vice Mayor, with the understanding that the item shall be brought back for City Council consideration in December 2024. Motion carried, unanimously.

STAFF COMMUNICATION INCLUDING COMMISSION UPDATES

City Clerk Fritz announced the 2023 City-wide Holiday Luncheon Celebration would be held on Tuesday, December 12 at the San Fernando Recreation Park.

Director of Public Works Johnson had no updates to report.

Director of Community Development Ramirez mentioned the Planning and Preservation Commission meeting will be held on Monday, December 11 at 6:30 p.m.

Director of Recreation and Community Services Venegas announced various upcoming program activities, and expressed thanks to staff and the City Council for all the work and successes over during his tenure with the City.

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Director of Finance Melton made an announcement regarding the due date of Business License renewals, mentioned there are utility payment assistance programs available to the community, including the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program.

Police Chief Valdez mentioned that traffic patrol will be enhanced over the holiday season with a focus on traffic safety.

City Manager Kimball mentioned that mental health crises assistance, information and resources are available through the 988 crises hotline number.

GENERAL CITY COUNCIL/BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS AND LIAISON UPDATES

Councilmember Fajardo spoke about the crises hotline, the annual reorganization, commented on the Downtown Master Plan Ad hoc committee appointment, noted his desire to recognize a youth speaker at a future Council meeting on her public speaking skills during the November 6, 2023 meeting and expressed congratulations to retirees Michael Okafor and Julian Venegas.

Councilmember Solorio mentioned she attended the City’s Tree Lighting event; the Los Angeles Mission College Student Services Department Grand opening event, and spoke about the reorganization and Councilmember roles and opportunities.

Vice Mayor Mendoza thanked Councilmember Fajardo for the nomination for Mayor and Vice Mayor during the reorganization process.

Mayor Rodriguez spoke about the reorganization and congratulated retirees Michael Okafor and Julian Venegas, noted she attended the VFW San Fernando Post 3834 Veteran’s event, the American Legion San Fernando toy give away and the City’s Tree Lighting event. She mentioned the liaison and ad hoc committee Councilmember assignments will come back in January; and commented on former Councilmember Cindy Montañez received the 2023 Moreen Blum Lifetime Achievement Award.

ADJOURNMENT (8:20 p.m.)

Assistant City Attorney Padilla adjourned the meeting pursuant to Government Code Section 54955 to an adjourned regular meeting on December 11, 2023 at 5:15 p.m.

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the December 4, 2023, Adjourned Regular meeting as approved by the San Fernando City Council.

Julia Fritz, CMC
City Clerk