

Gridley City Council – Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 1, 2021; 6:00 pm
Gridley City Hall, 685 Kentucky Street, Gridley, CA 95948

Approved as Submitted

“Our purpose is to continuously enhance our community’s vitality and overall quality of life. We are committed to providing high quality, cost-effective municipal services and forming productive partnerships with our residents and regional organizations. We collectively develop, share, and are guided by a clear vision, values, and meaningful objectives.”

Notice of Temporary City Council Meeting Procedures

This meeting is being held in accordance with the Brown Act as currently in effect under the State Emergency Act, Governor Gavin Newsom’s Emergency Declaration related to COVID-19, and Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-29-20 issued March 17, 2020 that allows attendance by City Council, City staff and the public to participate and conduct the meeting by teleconference and to participate in the meeting to the same extent as if they were present. Comments from the public on agenda items will be accepted until 4 pm on March 1, 2021, via email to jmolinari@gridley.ca.us or via the payment/document drop box at Gridley City Hall and will be conveyed to the Council for consideration. The Mayor and Council appreciate the public’s adaptation and patience during this crisis.

You may attend via teleconference:

- Dial 1-888-204-5987
- Enter the Access Code 5767603#

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order at 6 pm.

ROLL CALL

Council Members

Present: Johnson, Calderon, Sanchez, Farr
Absent: None
Arriving after roll call: Torres

Staff present:

Rodney Harr, Police Chief / Acting City Administrator
Tony Galyean, City Attorney
Ruben Quihuiz, Lieutenant
Danny Howard, Electric Utility Director
Ross Pippitt, Public Works Director

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance

INVOCATION - None

PROCLAMATIONS - None

INTRODUCTION OF NEW OR PROMOTED EMPLOYEES - None

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION FORUM

The Mayor opened the forum and seeing no one present wishing to speak, it was closed.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. February 16, 2021 City Council Minutes
2. Adopt Resolution Number 2021-R-005: A Resolution Approving an Allocation of Funding and the Execution of a Grant Agreement and any Amendments Thereto from the CDBG-DR Program

Motion to approve the consent agenda by Vice Mayor Farr, seconded by Council Member Calderon.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Ayes: Calderon, Johnson, Farr, Sanchez

Motion passed, 4-0

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

3. City of Gridley Employment Contract with Paul Eckert

Mayor Johnson opened by briefly reviewing a portion of Paul Eckert's contract and reading a portion of the City Administrator's Duties outlined in the Gridley Municipal Code. He then announced the resignation of Mr. Eckert, ending the contract as of March 1, 2021.

Council member Sanchez expressed her disappointment that she felt the contract had been considered without public input and transparency. She went on to question Mayor Johnson regarding circumstances surrounding the contract.

Council member Calderon also expressed dismay to find out that Mr. Eckert was still employed by the City. He stated he has nothing against Eckert personally as he only met him twice. His only concern is how the contract was handled.

Vice Mayor Farr reminded Sanchez and Calderon that at their Council member orientation in November it was announced that Eckert had been hired as a consultant for NCPA. Sanchez denied the announcement happened. Farr stated that the City Attorney and Chief of Police were present as well and it could have been at the point in time when Sanchez had stepped out of the orientation meeting. Sanchez continued to deny being made aware of the contract.

Mayor Johnson then opened it to public comment and Mr. Coghlan had questions regarding the writing and approving of the contract. He asked about work products provided by Paul.

Randy Howard of NCPA spoke briefly detailing the workings of NCPA, the importance of having an experienced, knowledgeable representative from the City and the role Paul has played in representing the City and negotiating savings for the City, most recently \$358,000.

Seti Long of the Gridley Herald had questions as to the repercussions to the City of no longer having a representative.

Chris Williams spoke stating Council is elected by the Public to work on their behalf. As a citizen, he does not expect Council to get his approval on every item. Council is elected to be responsible and it's their job to make those decisions. He spoke of Paul Eckert's immense involvement along with other City Department Heads during the Oroville Spillway Incident and the Camp Fire disaster and noted that they did these things not for adulation, but because it was their job and they did what was in the best interest of the City and it's residents. They did not ask citizens' permission to do these things.

Vice Mayor Farr stated this issue needs to be put behind us and stop with all the negativity. In reference to previous Administrator Paul Eckert, he said the City has lost a great man and a great asset because of the negativity. It's time to move forward with the business of the City.

CITY STAFF AND COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Vice Mayor Farr reported on the meeting he attended with the Butte Subbasin Advisory Board.

POTENTIAL FUTURE CITY COUNCIL ITEMS - (Appearing on the Agenda within 30-90 days):

Approval of Mid-Year Budget Adjustments	4/19/2021
Bernard Rezone	4/19/2021
Edler Estates Pre-Application	5/17/2021
Sphere of Influence Update	6/21/2021
Introduction General Plan/Prezone/Annexation for north 400 ac.	7/19/2021

CLOSED SESSION

4. Closed Session discussion with City Attorney pursuant to Government Code 54956.95 to discuss money damage claims presented to the City by Claimants Scott McMillan, Michael McMillan, Allison Woolbert and Tyrell Ford".

Council went into Closed Session at 7:00 pm and came out at 7:50 pm with no reportable action.

ADJOURNMENT

With no items for further discussion, Council adjourned at 7:50 pm to the next regularly scheduled meeting on March 15, 2021.


Rodney Harr, Interim City Clerk

