



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
RIDGECREST CITY COUNCIL
RIDGECREST HOUSING AUTHORITY
RIDGECREST FINANCE AUTHORITY**

**City Council Chambers
100 West California Avenue
Ridgecrest, California 93555**

**May 2, 2012
5:30 p.m.**

This meeting was recorded and will be on file in the Office of the City Clerk for a certain period of time from date of approval by City Council/Redevelopment Agency. Meetings are recorded for the purpose of preparation of minutes.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Council Present: Mayor Ronald H. Carter; Mayor Pro Tem Marshall 'Chip' Holloway; Vice Mayor Jerry D. Taylor; Council Member Steven P. Morgan; and Council Member Jason Patin

Staff Present: City Manager Kurt O. Wilson; City Clerk Rachel J. Ford; City Attorney Keith Lemieux (via teleconference); and other staff

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Added information to item 6.

Motion To Approve Agenda As Amended Made By Council Member Morgan , Second By Council Member Holloway . Motion Carried By Voice Vote Of 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain, And 0 Absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT – CLOSED SESSION

No members of the public presented comments.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 2 of 20

CLOSED SESSION – 5:30 p.m.

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| GC54956.9(A) | Conference With Legal Counsel, Existing Litigation. City of Ridgecrest v. Benz |
| GC54956.9(A) | Conference With Legal Counsel, Existing Litigation. County Of Kern v. City Of Ridgecrest |
| GC54957.6 | Labor Negotiations – United Food and Commercial Workers Golden State 8 (UFCW); Police Employee Association of Ridgecrest (PEAR); Management; Mid-Management; Confidential; Part-Time Employees. Agency Negotiator City Manager Kurt Wilson |

REGULAR SESSION – 6:00 p.m.

- Pledge Of Allegiance
- Invocation

CITY ATTORNEY REPORTS

- Closed Session
 - Litigation items City of Ridgecrest v. Benz and County of Kern v. City of Ridgecrest – reports received and no action taken on either item
 - Labor negotiations – report received and no action taken
- Other
 - none

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Ash

- Cannot see vehicles on downs when turning due to the overgrown medians. This is safety issue. Provided a photo for council members to view.
 - Jerry Taylor – placed item on infrastructure committee agenda for discussion
- Stated she contacted Parks and Recreation and understands the reductions to staff but safety concern needs to be addressed.

Harris Brokke

- Measure 'L' advocacy and referred to websites available for people to view.
- Wildflower Report – successful event and vendors, USO lectures, and other events matched last year. Planning next year's festival has begun.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 3 of 20

Chuck Hinson

- Past employee addressing council on comments of Mayor and Jim Fallgatter regarding smart meters.
- Made statements pertaining to State requirements and smart chips.
- Objects to State knowing which appliances are being used at what times.
- Spoke on liberty and freedom.
- Requested City fight the State to prevent tracking inside homes.

Dave Matthews

- Agrees with Chuck Hinson regarding the smart meters.
- Spoke on the book titled 1984 by George Orwell.
- Spoke about Closed Session negotiations with employees, no reports to public and does not see any progress.
- Appreciates the employees but a suggested steady part time job with benefits is sometimes better than no job.

Howard Auld

- Gave history of League of California Cities 100th anniversary. Presented plaque to Council Member Holloway for his efforts with the League on behalf of the City of Ridgecrest.

Barbara Auld

- Supports Measure 'L'
- Spoke on the political signs that have been stolen and damaged.

Mike Neel

- Spoke on the fiscal emergency mailer received.
- Disappointed in the borderline illegal campaign for Measure L
- Objects to taxpayer money being used in this manner.
- Stated the action was unethical.
- Asked council to have courage to state they either approve or disapprove. Assumed council approved the flyer.
 - Keith Lemieux – made clear to public that the attorney offices did review the mailer and determined that it was not an unlawful use of funds.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 4 of 20

Jim Davis

- Commented on success of the wildflower as well as other tourist events coming in May that is creating work and activity in the area.
- Questions for Council, item 2-5 on agenda. Does not see dollar amounts for these items. Anxious to hear presentations for more knowledge.
- part time employment helps reach budget restraints. Spoke on last year's personal business experience. Reviewed changes made with personal business and effects of the changes.
- If operating hours and staff are cut then not providing the services.
- Commend Ridgecrest police department for response received on incident at property. Is concerned that in process of investigation police were pulled to another call. Asked if cuts have been made too far. Commends police for their action but concerned about response issues.

Walt Maurer

- Echoed previous speaker's comments.
- Recently read about grant award for 10 tasers. Numerous incidents across the united states of misuse and concerned police have adequate funding for proper training.
- Spoke on the mailer previously mentioned by Mr. Neel. Objects to the photograph used of police in SWAT equipment.
- Comment that the mailer is borderline on the legal side but recalls California code section that prohibits active advocacy of the measure. Asked City Attorney if spend \$30,000 of private funds opposing Measure L, would I have to form a committee to legally challenge the measure.
 - Keith Lemieux – the mailer mentioned does not advocate for Measure L.

Mary Ash

- Original response was the mailer was informational. Asked how City plans on maintaining services as State continues to take funding. City needs funds to support the services. Local tax the public can state how the funds are to be spent. Supports the City and the tax.
- Asked council to bring back a code enforcement officer which is needed.

Tom Wiknich

- Spoke about a previously requested agenda item regarding parks and recreation projects.
- Asking for full disclosure of the parks projects.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 5 of 20

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approve A Resolution Authorizing The Application For And Acceptance Of The United States Department Of Justice, Byrne Program Grant Strand
2. Approve A Consultant Agreement – Willdan, College Heights Boulevard III Speer
3. Approve A Consultant Agreement – Willdan, Drummond Avenue Norma Street to China Lake Boulevard Speer
4. Approve A Consultant Agreement – Quad Knopf, Downs Street Inyokern Road to Ward Avenue Speer
5. Approve A Consultant Agreement – Quad Knopf, Downs Street Ward Avenue to Drummond Avenue Speer
6. Approve A Construction Contract – Civic Center Exterior Lighting Speer
7. Approve Proclamations For The Month Of May 2012 Ford
 - a. Armed Forces Day – May 18, 2012
 - b. Be Kind to Animals Week – May 6-12, 2012
 - c. Youth Week – May 1-7, 2012
 - d. Mental Health Month – May 2012
 - e. Child Care Provider Appreciation Month – May 2012
 - f. National Police Officer Week – May 13-19, 2012
8. Approve Draft Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting Dated April 18, 2012 Ford

Items pulled from consent calendar for further discussion – 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; & 6

Motion To Approve Consent Calendar (As Amended) Made By Council Member Taylor , Second By Council Member Patin . Motion Carried By Voice Vote Of 5 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstain; And 0 Absent.

Item 1 Discussion

Cpt. Paul Wheeler

- Responded to Walt Maurer training question on Taser purchase and training.
- Model currently used is obsolete and will be replaced with new safer version.

Chip Holloway

- asked how long Ridgecrest has used and if they are beneficial.
 - Paul Wheeler - Several years and no major incidents.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 6 of 20

Dave Matthews

- Asked about limitations of the grant.
 - Paul Wheeler – reviewed the Byrne Grant program including additional POST training which is performed in-house.

Jerry Taylor

- Asked the color, Yellow.
 - Paul Wheeler - Yellow and Black

Motion To Approve A Resolution Authorizing The Application For And Acceptance Of The United States Department Of Justice, Byrne Program Grant By Council Member Taylor, Second By Council Member Morgan. Motion Carried By Voice Vote Of 5 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstain; And 0 Absent.

Items 2-5 Discussion

Jerry Taylor

- Asked staff to give brief overview.

Dennis Speer

- All projects went thru selection process of Kern COG for selection.
- This is the regular program year for these projects.
- Authorization to proceed has been issued by CalTrans.
- Typically need matching funds and Council authorized TAB money.
- Contract for construction must be awarded by July 1 or the projects go away.
- Consultants are for contract administration for required reporting from funding agencies.

Jerry Taylor

- Reminded public the TAB funding will also expire shortly.

Dave Matthews

- Contracts for a consultant at the construction sites.
- Asked why are we doing that rather than using in-house staffing.
 - Dennis Speer – ordinarily use local money for designs and construction management. Local staffing has been cut and do not have the capability of performing the function in-house.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 7 of 20

Steve Morgan

- These projects were applied for years ago, as they go thru the COG process and move up the ranking list and other individuals push their projects, have to have the match and designations written in the contracts.
- A couple of these are Transportation funding which has more requirements. By hiring a consultant, we were able to get the funding.
- Asked Dennis Speer for ballpark total funding price.
 - Dennis Speer – approximately 2.5 million dollars.

Chip Holloway

- Traffic impact fees being used?
 - Jerry Taylor – using TAB rather than general fund. Are using traffic impact fees.

Motion by Morgan, second by Holloway, 5 ayes.

Item 6 Discussion

Dave Matthews

- Asked what the project entails.
- Dennis Speer – gave overview of project replacing civic center parking and walkway lighting retrofit to energy efficient lighting.

Motion To Approve Items 2; 3; 4; & 5 Made By Council Member Holloway, Second By Council Member Taylor. Motion Carried By Voice Vote Of 5 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstain; And 0 Absent.

DISCUSSION AND OTHER ACTION ITEMS

9. Discussion of Real Property Donation To The City And Approving Resolution 12-XX Establishing Its Value And Acceptance McRea

Jim McRea

- Gave staff report outlining the real property donation locations and summary of actions taken by staff and donating estate.

Jerry Taylor

- Reiterated that this was a Tax incentive to donor and no burden to City.

Motion To Approve A Resolution Establishing Real Property Donation Value And Accepting Donation Of Real Property Made By Council Member Morgan, Second By Council Member Patin. Motion Carried By Voice Vote Of 5 Ayes; 0 Nays; 0 Abstain; And 0 Absent.

10. Discussion Of Council Actions Regarding CalPERS Contributions For Unrepresented Employees Patin

Jason Patin

- Referred to Council decision taken several weeks ago, that removed 8% PERS member contribution from employee salaries and Social Security offset for unrepresented employees. Certain employees were affected where other were not. Want to give some type of representation to those employees and review impacts before moving forward to next budget cycle.
- Referred to comments written in the newspaper.
- Stated that from talking to employees, they feel they were made an example to the bargaining units. City managers recommendation was to not make the cuts. Rather than taking one group of people and affecting them, then real issue is conversation with unions should be more firm as to the urgency of why we need to get this done. If no agreements can be made then more jobs will be lost. Hopefully the process can come to agreement as soon as possible and help preserve jobs. Did not feel the changes made were well planned. Not for making cuts just to make cuts. Want cuts that will affect the big picture. Feel the decision was untimely and our responsibility as council to ensure the unrepresented employees are heard before being cut and being the only ones cut while everyone else is still whole. Feel we would be better served to go thru the process with everyone and then make the decisions.
- Still feel the cuts are going to happen but would like to see these cuts reinstated until a well thought out comprehensive plan is developed.

Jerry Taylor

- Appreciates the comments. Those cuts were made because they were the ones available to council. Is not willing to wait until July 1 to make the changes. City is still burning funds we do not have and are adding more debt daily. Personally suggested cuts that will affect the long-term cost savings needed. This change was achievable that evening and more are coming on a long and painful road. Feel bad about anything we have to do to employees, but have to be fiscally responsible. Need to cut, other assumption made was that by this time we would have labor agreements that were not different from everybody else. Want to continue to move forward whether we get Measure 'L' or not.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 9 of 20

Chip Holloway

- The one statement made that cannot be defended is the fairness. Nothing done the past few budget cycles is fair. Employees that are represented pay a premium for the representation. This is a symptom of what happens when put into the situation by the State and we try to manipulate the City Manager's plan. Our actions affected the overall plan.
- Comfortable with taking the steps to create an overall plan for the big picture. Asked about the process to rescind the action.
 - Tyrell Staheli – resolution change that would have to be amended by resolution. Minor changes to the system.
- Have to get to the same number with all employees. Willing to admit personally as part of the budget process, when we get agreement with all parties concern, make a onetime payment back to the employees who have been taking the cuts.

Steve Morgan

- Tough decisions by the council are inherently unfair. Going thru this process several times, and respectfully disagree with Mr. Patin. It is not possible to figure out what is fair between unions. Have to take action and follow thru until completed. Did affect a group of employees and understand and agree with that action. Agree it is unfair, but agree we have to get there with the other staff. Need to make across the board cut that affects everyone and in the end is fair and equal. These are the tough choice that Council has to make. Have made estimates and calculated the savings. Stands by Council's choice, difficulty is in being able to look an employee in the eye and tell them that I did not play a game without full understanding of the situation.

Ron Carter

- A lot of thinking since last council and agree and support a resolution rescinding the action until all employees are done at the same time.

Public Comment

Jim Fallgatter

- Thinks the taxpayers should be heard from.
- Recapped past history.
- Asked if Council understands how nice that action was all these years?
- Does not happen to other agencies and now we don't have the money to continue.
- Not a matter of being fair, but can't afford to give it now.
- Urged Council not to feel bad about the action.
- This was a wonderful gift to the employees, and does not understand Council feeling bad about doing a wonderful thing back then that was fiscally possible and not possible now.
- Does not understand the employees being upset.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 10 of 20

- This is not an inequity, just the end of a great run.
- Unfortunate the great run did not end concurrently for the unions but does not mean it was a bad decision.

Jim Davis

- Congratulations for having empathy for union and non-union employees.
- Spoke on previous job.
- Council must make tough choices.
- Mission is to balance the budget in a bad economic time.
- Think it was wonderful that council paid into the retirement, but council job is to balance the budget.
- Know council will come to a good decision and in future, other benefits may come.

Chip Holloway

- Mr. Fallgatter is half right.
- Understand what can happen when you do not have a benefit package.
- This is not sitting into an account the employees could make up elsewhere, was an 8% cut to their salary.
- Represented employees need to take heed.
- Affect to unrepresented employees was instantaneous with no warning to prepare for the action.
- This is not a pot of money like a savings plan.
- This was a direct cash flow cut.
- Not willing to change my decision now but am willing to look at the proposed reimbursement at the time all other employees are cut.

Jason Patin

- Do not disagree with the comments, need to make deeper cuts and believe we should have delayed the decision until the deeper cuts could be made across the board. Disagree with the manner in which this decision was made.
- Interested in giving a voice to the unrepresented employees. Unions get a negotiation process and the other did not get that. Has nothing to do with the cut made, feel it needs to happen to the other side also. Only disagree with the manner the cut was made for the employees who were not given a fair shake at the table like the unions were.

Ron Carter

- Eventually these cuts must be done.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 11 of 20

Jerry Taylor

- Better debate than congress has, my opinion has not changed.
- Referred to redevelopment decisions.
- Related dates actions occurred and patience is out.
- Have to step it up and make the changes faster. Expected us to be further along by this time and expected layoffs to remove furloughs on the other employees.
- No problem with the debate and am torn when discussing the issue with employees.

Ron Carter – called for a motion

Motion To Bring Resolution To Council To Rescind The Calpers Employee Contribution For Unrepresented Employee Group Was Made By Council Member Patin, No Second To The Motion. Motion Does Not Carry.

11. Discussion Of Furloughs For Employees Not Currently On Furlough Status

Taylor

Jerry Taylor

- Looking at the fairness issue, brought this request forward because there are employees who have been on furlough for 3 years and previous city manager wanted direct reporting staff/department heads not to be on furloughs. Bring this forward to be fiscally responsible and fair across the board. Don't want to vote on future loans to pay existing debt. Last audit report, general fund ended with a negative balance. In terms of fairness, want department heads to be the same as other employees have been for the past 3 years.

Chip Holloway

- Concern is we had 5 consent items we almost missed because of deadlines which is a symptom of staff time and capability. If one had not gone thru, we would have lost the savings under guise of fairness. Frustration of council is getting information and projects in a timely manner. Are we cutting our own throat?

Jason Patin

- Took no action on the previous item, why is it fair to do that and not the other.

Jerry Taylor

- Not about fairness but because we are spending money we do not have.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 12 of 20

Steve Morgan

- Not willing to change current operation because when we cut staff we place more burdens on the department heads and not putting them under furlough is the same justification for not insisting police go on furlough. Public safety is not where we should do this. Once again one for all is not feasible. With reductions in staff and our requests of department head making them work longer and harder is not fair. Unpopular and unfair to some, but I believe it to be correct.

Jason Patin

- Keep making little decisions that do not affect the budget. Let us get to the big decisions rather than piece it together. Get the budget where it needs to be.

Jerry Taylor

- Agreed with Jason Patin

Ron Carter

- Stay in reality. Dates have been set and staff is compiling the data.

Jerry Taylor

- A year ago we already had a budget.

Ron Carter

- Staff will get it to us as soon as they can unless council wants to hire more staff.

Chip Holloway

- Last year's level of uncertainty was not as great as this year. Finance is having difficulty getting answers from the state.

Public Comment

Tom Wiknich

- Asked if public would have the chance to see the budget before action is taken.
 - Tyrell Staheli – will release to public and council at the same time.

No motion was made.

12. Discussion Of Council Priorities With Regard To The Draft Budget Wilson

Jerry Taylor

- When council meets for the budget discussions, we lost approximately \$2 million from RDA and council needs to sustain police and potentially increase police and city priorities. Need to be able to do the other services and critical functions. Have not been maintaining our streets adequately to avoid a bigger bill later. Can take optimistic view of potential revenue could plug the hole but need to maintain police and streets. Spoke on picking up rocks coming out the streets. Need to set the number for how much we are going to set aside in the budget. Need to spend more than we have been spending in past. Part of what we paid before has to go since the funds are now gone. Want to have the discussion to build consensus or understanding of a percentage reduction to departments to provide wiggle room for increasing the areas we need to fund. If a budget comes in with the police and streets are covered and then essential services then fine with that. Established public safety and streets and personal priority.

Steve Morgan

- Agree that police followed by roads and commodes is a priority. Not advocating for a two-tiered budget, I am advocating for a nuclear winter budget like our dearly departed Harvey Rose used to advocate for. Think we might be able to utilize something done in the past if council thinks it is a good idea. I believe we have a good feel for target numbers. In past we had department heads put forward their priorities for their departments and working with finance department there were numbers associated with that and then a department head presentation to council and public of what they believed they could do with their target. Then council picked apart the proposal. Public discussions. Referred to the colored dots used in past indicating preferences for projects. Would like to utilize that type of process when coming up with how to finalize the budget. Give target number and give department heads the opportunity to represent their department. Include public opinion.

Jason Patin

- Agrees that public safety and infrastructure including parks maintaining as priorities. To be fiscally responsible need to get budget back to bare bones and know what we have coming in. One-time money and grants is great but should not be included in the discussion. Use same approach as in personal home. Get back to the basics. Already had some employee layoffs, need to look at projects and programs and salary adjustments. Benefits are being addressed. Look at all areas we are spending money. Wants Staff to take it back to bare bones, live within our means, and not count on possible monies. Make deep cuts and create a solid budget.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 14 of 20

Chip Holloway

- Agree with Harvey Rose's Nuclear Winter Budget. Need a budget that assumes nothing will change for the good. Majority of cuts in past have been in parks and recreation. Would like furloughs to end, pay remaining employees a competitive wage, feel there will have to be cuts in police in benefits. Elimination of health benefits and compensate employees with pay difference. Control future health care costs. Already going down the pension path. Want to see the 1.5 million to maintain our roads. Will support a budget we can afford without one-time money. Less employees working full time and doing what we can do. Cannot afford fairness.

Ron Carter

- Looking forward to draft budget, not going to look good and will be less employees. No wiggle room and cannot give certain things. A lot of employee cuts coming. Not going to be shocked, community may be shocked because there will be services we will no longer be able to do. Do not know how staff will put together, but have confidence in staff. Let us get it done and deal with it.

Steve Morgan

- May 17-20 and June 9-12 will be out of town. If there are all day sessions then go ahead and do it, I do not have to be here, go ahead and get it done.

Public Comment

Barbara Auld

- If any reason to pass measure L then you just heard it. City is important to everyone and needs our help. Work hard to get measure N passed but city was not willing to do that, do not understand why people for a little bit of money are going to fight the no-tax battle. Need to support the city. Four generations living in Ridgecrest. Vote yes on measure I.

Jim Davis

- Public can see your concern, can't make a decision, why? Set your priorities. See the frustration. Do not lose sight of the facts related to personal business experience. Gave personal experience. Get a draft budget so you can begin to do the revision. Can we revamp the priorities? Draft budget is important. Staffing guides go along with draft budget. Explained marketing plan and goals with monthly revisions and reviews. Urged council to ask the tough questions and get the draft budget. Referred to forecasts and formulas available to finance department. Balanced basic budget that can be changed as economy changes. Safety issues are the greatest concern in the community. Can't make a decision unless there is a draft budget.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 15 of 20

Tom Wiknich

- Agree with Council comments on police being important aspect of the community. Invited council to participate in a ride along before making decisions about the police.

Jim Fallgatter

- Getting budget without the underlying supporting documents handicaps the council and public. Need to be able to study the basic document. Like the colored dot idea presented by Mr. Morgan. When all is said and done, you do not have to second-guess what the public wants.

Jerry Taylor

- Expectations is to assume no success in June; no RDA funding or minimum of 3%; road funding; police department; one-time dollars found should go to bringing reserve out of deficit; additional dollars can then move forward with additional roads, reinforcing police; bringing employees to full time equivalent. Set priorities from there down. Not here to close parks but may have to charge more fees or cut programs. Redevelopment funds built the parks and not willing to let them die if we can.

Jason Patin

- Agree furloughs need to go and all employees remaining after this budget be whole. Want us to be careful that we are not taking the city issue and making it just an employee issue. We have many programs and other ways the city spends money and we need to look at those before we start cutting employees. Be mindful of the people and families we affect along the way. We want to have a draft budget to look at the earliest possible time, not saying we feel staff isn't doing their job, just want the process to get going.

Ron Carter

- Agree that as many cuts we can make before cutting employees is important.

Jerry Taylor

- Need to adopt something as soon as possible.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 16 of 20

DEPARTMENT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Infrastructure Committee

Members: Steve Morgan, Jerry Taylor, Craig Porter, James Sanders
Meeting: 2nd Wednesday Of The Month At 5:00 P.M., Council
Conference Room
Next Meeting: May 9, 2012

Jerry Taylor

- May 10 at 5pm date change
- Reviewed agenda discussions to take place.
- Explained purpose in reviewing street light options.

Quality Of Life

Members: Chip Holloway, Jason Patin, Craig Porter, Carter Pope
Meeting: 1st Thursday Of Every Even Month At 12:00 P.M.; Kerr-
McGee Center
Next Meeting: May 3, 2012

Jason Patin

- Announced next meeting

City Organization

Members: Ron Carter, Jerry Taylor, Lois Beres, Christopher LeCornu
Meeting: 1st Tuesday Of The Month At 5:00 P.M.; Council Conference
Room
Next Meeting: June 5, 2012

Jerry Taylor

- No meeting scheduled

Community Development Committee

Members: Steve Morgan, Jason Patin, Christopher LeCornu, James
Sanders
Meetings: 1st Thursday Of The Month At 5:00 P.M.; Council
Conference Room
Next Meeting: May 3, 2012

Jason Patin

- Announced next meeting and discussion items.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 17 of 20

**Activate Community Talents And Interventions For Optimal Neighborhoods
Task Force (ACTION)**

Members: Ron Carter, Chip Holloway, Ron Strand

Meetings: 2nd Monday Of Odd Numbered Months At 4:00 P.M., Kerr-
McGee Center

Next Meeting: May 14, 2012

Ron Carter

- Cancelling the meeting

Ridgecrest Area Convention And Visitors Bureau (RACVB)

Members: Chip Holloway, Jason Patin

Meetings: 1st Wednesday Of The Month, 8:00 A.M.

Next Meeting: June 6, 2012 at Location to Be Announced

Chip Holloway

- Read director's report from today's meeting. *(copy available in city clerk's office)*

OTHER COMMITTEES, BOARDS, OR COMMISSIONS

Jerry Taylor – Desert Mountain Friday at Apple Valley

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

Kurt Wilson - none

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Ron Carter

- very difficult time. In 15 plus years have never been faced with what we are faced with. Appreciate community comments and the process is not going to be easy. Encouraged public to come and give advice. Thanks those who spoke tonight.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 18 of 20

Jason Patin

- tough times. Congratulated Harris Brokke on the wildflower festival and what they have accomplished in two years. Just returned from Sacramento meetings with legislators. Our focus is on our fiscal situations and is frustrating to listen to people argue about how to get the city to pay for sidewalks if a tree breaks it. Hope our state and legislators who take their time to argue about these things are replaced and focus on what is really important. Mayor's prayer breakfast at 6am in the morning. Busy day tomorrow. Discussed unrepresented employees and unions. Hoping all city staff work diligently to get the situation resolved with concessions. Bottom line is we will lose jobs. Hot topic right now is medians and parks maintenance. Not sure what we will do about that subject. On the flip side have had a lot of private businesses request to help maintain the medians. There is a significant savings in parks and medians if we can come up with a program. Want to see a program in place. If money not in the budget then need to find other ways to get it done.

Jerry Taylor

- Appreciate citizens contributing to oversight committee to allow us to begin moving forward on projects. Where are we with disposal of property for digital 395?
 - Kurt Wilson – still waiting on answer from legal counsel. More complicated than originally believed. Because the issue is not in staffs hands am hesitant to estimate a timeline of the transfer of property from the business park.
- Would like a report on the current median issues. Maintenance, water, overview of all maintenance issues for public knowledge. Also in budget report, explanation of \$10,000 received from Waste Management and understanding of how those funds are to be used.

Chip Holloway

- Congratulations to everyone who organized and participated in the wildflower festival. Family fun days at the fairgrounds did not realize the attendance anticipated. Encouraged public to get out and participate and support the fairgrounds. If you want these events then have to support them. Fairgrounds are on life support and we need the community to support the spring event and the fall event. League of California cities meetings with legislators was very bad. Senator Fuller has a bill called the CARE bill, reduced cost energy program on the honor system with no auditing in place, the bill would help all rate payers. Attended ribbon cutting of jawbone canyon visitors expansion. Private public partnership allowed them to do 70% more than the grant anticipated. Thanked BLM and Ed Waldheim for their efforts and representation of Ridgecrest. Encouraged public to stop and visit the center. Budget, this is the worst time ever as a council member. This is not fun or cute. Employees who have given to this city for years are now being demonized. Our hesitation is because of the people, we are cutting people along with programs.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 19 of 20

- I hope that in a couple years, things will turn around and then we will have to recreate what we destroyed. The 8% taken from the employees, in past PERS was super funded but now it isn't and the employee does not have the option to opt out. Everybody in the state is going thru this. Need to give relief to employees to opt out. On medians, am amazed with a wide strip of dirt that won't grow anything but a small strip on the edge that flourishes, need some weed killer. Apologize to employees.

Steve Morgan

- Sacramento discussions with elected representatives, been told to my face that legislators on one side of the aisle cannot put their name on legislations from the other side of the aisle because senior legislators won't allow it. It is mind-blowing and frustrating. Doesn't do us any good to go up there but we consistently try. The most maddening thing is for my state senator and assembly member come here and give reports like it is somebody else's fault. City of Ridgecrest is about \$2 million upside down because we lost \$2 million in RDA funds. Council members have never experienced this before. We've lost ERAF funds to the school systems and survived by making cuts and difficult decisions. Employees have made sacrifices and continue to make sacrifices. Have come full circle, cuts in years past then were able to make raises. We allowed city to pay employee portion of PERS. Unions bargained away past benefits to get this benefit. Unfortunately, because of our current situations we need to stop paying that benefit. All subsequent KernCOG employees will pay their PERS membership contributions. Just because I am not up here pounding the desk and raising my voice adamantly, doesn't mean that I or any other council member have not been expressing our concerns and working with the staff and talking to the city manager about trying to get things done. Not always the quote in the paper that is important, but is important that all five council members are actively engaged and involved. Been here 15 years and have dealt with it all, one-time money was used to keep things alive and I'm not sorry for that, we did it because we could until the money ran out. Used up the reserve when the state tanked and we tried to be prudent with that reserve to keep things alive and active. The symptoms you see now are a long time coming because we have protected it and band aided it for years. I do care about the staff. When accused of being cavalier, I speak to the employees to find out what they think. Staff understand council is in a difficult situation same as the employees. Staff take tremendous abuse from the public which you don't see, we take that abuse from the bloody pulpit but that is nothing to what staff has to put up with. When we put staff on furloughs which meant a lot to me, the next day I had my council salary cut 25%. Didn't announce it but did it because it was the right thing to do. When Mr. Taylor said council should not have benefits, the next day I had my benefits cut 100% and took the additional PERS amount from my salary because it is the right thing to do. I didn't go the press because I didn't think it was necessary. Since I'm being accused of not caring you should know that I am doing these things.

MINUTES - CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR

May 2, 2012

Page 20 of 20

Ron Carter

- thanked people who came to the meeting. Need more people to get involved. These are not good times and I'm seeing the negative from public and employees. Encouraged positive comments and participation. Come to the meetings and give input on your tax dollars.

ADJOURNMENT at 9:05pm



Rachel J. Ford, CMC
City Clerk