



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
RIDGECREST CITY SUCCESSOR AGENCY,
FINANCING AUTHORITY, AND HOUSING AUTHORITY**

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

**February 18, 2015
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 solely for the purpose of preparation of minutes.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Council Present: Mayor Peggy Breeden; Mayor Pro Tempore James Sanders; Council Members Eddie B. Thomas, and Mike Mower

Council Absent: Vice Mayor Lori Acton

Staff Present: City Manager Dennis Speer; City Clerk Rachel J. Ford; City Attorney Keith Lemieux; and other staff

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Added

GC54956.9 (d) (4) Conference With Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation - Balfour V City Of Ridgecrest

GC54956.9 (d) (4) Conference With Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation - Squillacote V City Of Ridgecrest

Motion To Add Items To Closed Session As Announced And Approve The Agenda Made By Council Member Sanders, Second By Council Member Mower. Motion Passed By Roll Call Vote Of 3 Ayes (Mayor Breeden, Council Members Sanders And Mower); 0 Noes; 0 Abstain; And 2 Absent (Council Members Thomas And Acton)

PUBLIC COMMENT – CLOSED SESSION

- None presented

Council Member Thomas arrived prior to closed session discussions

CLOSED SESSION

GC54956.9 (d) (1) Conference With Legal Counsel – Liability Claim Of Southern California Edison – Claim No. 15-01

GC54956.9 (d) (4) *Conference With Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation - Balfour V City Of Ridgecrest*

GC54956.9 (d) (4) *Conference With Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation - Squillacote V City Of Ridgecrest*

REGULAR SESSION – 6:00 p.m.

- Pledge Of Allegiance
- Invocation – Mayor Breeden announced Council will be sending letters to all churches and organizations to receive volunteers for the invocation.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

- Closed Session
 - Liability Claim of Southern California Edison – Claim No. 15-01, Report received, denied claim and City Clerk to send notice of denial.
 - Added Belfour v. City Of Ridgecrest- report received, no reportable action taken
 - Added Squillacote v. City Of Ridgecrest – report received, matter has been dismissed against the City and employees without cost to the City.
- Other
 - Due to personal issues, staff is unavailable to respond to questions on Item No. 9 so will be tabled.
 - Undisclosed litigation previously in closed session. Attorney approved to file a lawsuit against the Department Of Finance and will be filed shortly.

PUBLIC COMMENT opened at 6:10 p.m.

Robert Eierman

- Land use plan is not on the agenda and asked if would be on the next agenda.
 - Lorelei Oviatt will be attending Council meeting on March 4
 - Peggy Breeden announced other meetings.
- Hopes Council will decide what their recommendation will be on the plan.
 - Peggy Breeden would like to hear the formal presentation before Council decision.
- Spoke on the constitution preventing persons from being deprived of life, liberty, and property.
- Suggested the county board of supervisors hold their meeting in Ridgecrest to interface with the people most affected by the plan

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Robert Eierman *(continued)*

- Requested update on request for an extension.
 - Dennis Speer – county approached but due to the amount of people to be notified they are not prepared to move forward.

California Highway Patrol

- Hosting a child safety seat inspection February 26, 2015. Citizens may contact the office at 661-823-5500 Monday - Friday to schedule appointment
- Car seat replacement program available for seats that do not meet requirements.
- Owner is taught proper installation and funding available to replace car seats.
- Appointments range from 30-45 minutes

Dave Matthews

- Attended workshop on the water EIR and Ms. Oviatte made clear she would not allow an extension but comments made after the deadline would be incorporated and forwarded to the planning commission and staff recommendation to the board of supervisors.
- Planning commission meeting will be held in Ridgecrest.
- Past discussions about bicyclists on W. Ridgecrest Blvd. Had to maneuver and slow down today because of bicyclist riding between the parked cars.
- Regarding suggestion of sending letters to churches, good idea, however some pastors are not able to attend due to services on Wednesday.
- Infrastructure meeting tomorrow. Suggested Kerr McGee and City Hall parking lot be a topic of discussion. Condition may be improved with a seal.

Mike Neel

- Regarding W. Ridgecrest Blvd. bulb-outs. Related experience observing a bicyclist and vehicles pulling over to allow passage around bulb-outs. Concerned about drivers making left turns not being as observant or able to avoid bicycles.
- Regarding land use plan, meetings are informational; citizens need to write letters and emails to both Kern County planning commission and Board of Supervisors. Suggested letters be sent because a response is required. Comments are only thing that will change the land use plan. Encouraged people to speak up and enunciate their objections clearly.
- Commented on agriculture water use.

Tom Wiknich

- Commented on lights being out and effect on video.
- Asked if Infrastructure committee will be discussing ADA options for the doors.
 - Dennis Speer – staff is already working on options.
- Suggestion of County Board of Supervisors holding EIR decision meeting here is an excellent idea. Asked City Council to press for this to happen.
- Regarding City attorney report, asked for specifics on the claim that was dismissed.

Public Comment Closed at 6:26 p.m.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Economic Development Presentation By Kosmont

Parsons

Gary Parsons

- Presented staff report and introduced Kosmont Companies spokespersons

Ken Hira, Dan Massiello, and Joseph Dieguez

- Presented 'Retail Sector Strategy & Action Plan Update' *(Copy Available In The City Clerk's Office)*

Mike Mower

- Asked for outline of other locations included in Ridgecrest area.

Peggy Breeden

- Expressed surprise at the housing costs in outlying areas.

Mike Neel

- Requested future trend data.
- Commented that some numbers used are being disputed including unemployment, students living at home, and whether the economy is up-turning.

Gary Parsons

- Outlined efforts taken to attract retailers to Ridgecrest at various conferences.

Mike Neel

- Observations of retail leakage. Gasoline sales will not improve, have plenty of gas stations.
- Clothing and accessories, typical buyers are females who want to go to a mall and compare
- Suggested throwing these two numbers out of the formula
- Encouraged continued avoidance of spending tax dollars to bribe retailers to come into Ridgecrest.
- Asked about Kosmont contract cost.
 - Gary Parsons – approximately \$50,000 per year
- Suggested these numbers were already known and hope Kosmont's ability to bring businesses to Ridgecrest is worth \$50,000
- Suggested Chamber of Commerce is better qualified to do this type of work and not take tax dollars away from repairing streets.

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Tom Wiknich

- Asked if there is an effort to recruit car dealers to the community.
 - Gary Parsons – have been in discussion with existing dealers regarding expansion and should investigate new dealers coming to the City.
- Agree with the need for apparel but suggested discussions with new car dealers.

Dan Massiello, and Joseph Dieguez

- Presented 'Refinancing Tax Allocation Bonds For Saving' *(Copy Available In The City Clerk's Office)*

Peggy Breeden

- Supports the City looking at this seriously. Against giving the money back to the state.

Gary Parsons

- Reducing the debt service cost frees up money and City needs to explore the options and determine what kind of funding is available.

Jim Sanders

- Refinancing debts the agency has now will lower the total amount paid into the debts, bringing a portion of the difference back to the City as general funds.

Dan Massiello

- Refinancing similar to refinancing a mortgage, money is then redistributed to taxing agencies and a portion comes back to the City. If there is a cost to the City to do the refinance then refinancing is not allowed by law. The State is encouraging successor agencies to explore the opportunity to refund the bonds and save money. All costs would be rolled into the loan and the approval process includes the successor agency, the oversight board, and the department of finance before refunding can proceed.
- Spoke on other refunding options for outstanding fiscal obligations, available for review.

Gary Parsons

- Commented on interest rates and funding options that reduces debt and increases general fund. Kosmont is willing to work with us at no cost to find ways of producing funding option that reduce City debt and increase general fund budget.

Dan Massiello

- Exploring opportunities while interest rates are low helps decide where to go in the future.

Mike Neel

- Realize redevelopment scenario is complicated. Hope to see clear figures on these proposals.
- Civic center debt refinance without pulling more capital out but only to reduce the debt can be beneficial. Taking out capital only increases debt.

Solomon Rajaratnam

- Good idea to refinance if saving money. Asked about current rating.
 - Gary Parsons – not talking about increasing the amount of the loan, just refinancing the debt at a lower interest rate, which allows money in the budget but having lower payments. Kosmont has reviewed the audit and our finance director believes we do not have a deficit.

Jim Sanders

- Thanked Kosmont for presenting the information and believe this information is helpful for every business in the community to receive this information to see where they can benefit the community.

Peggy Breeden

- Agree with Mr. Sanders. Every business needs to review this information and this item is to go before the City Organization committee.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 2. Adopt A Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Ridgecrest Approving Contract Change Order Numbers Fifteen, Sixteen, Seventeen, Eighteen, Nineteen, And Twenty With The Contractor, Griffith Company, For The West Ridgecrest Boulevard Project And Authorize The City Manager, Dennis Speer, To Sign The Change Order Numbers Fifteen, Sixteen, Seventeen, Eighteen, Nineteen, And Twenty** Speer
- 3. Adopt A Resolution Awarding A Construction Contract For The Traffic Signal Modification Of 7 Intersections Utilizing Funds From Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Cycle 5 To Traffic Development Services And Authorizing The City Manager, Dennis Speer, To Execute The Contract** Speer
- 4. Adopt A Resolution To Accept Funding From The California Department Of Transportation (Caltrans) And The Division Of Rail And Mass Transportation For The Low Carbon Transit Operations Program And Authorizing The City Manager, Dennis Speer Or His Designee To Execute All Documents To Obtain Funding** Speer

**5. Adopt A Resolution Of The Ridgcrest City Council Authorizing
Recordation Of The Final Tract Map For Tract 6221 Unit B** **Speer**

Items Pulled From Consent Calendar

- Item Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5

Item No. 2 Discussion

Dave Matthews

- Asked City Manager to review each change.
 - Dennis Speer – complied.
- Questioned if City can get reimbursed for the additional expenses for utility delays

Motion To Approve Item No. 2 Made By Council Member Mower, Second By Council Member Thomas. Motion Carried By Roll Call Vote Of 4 Ayes (Mayor Breedon, Council Members Sanders, Thomas, And Mower); 0 Noes; 0 Abstain; And 1 Absent (Council Member Acton)

Item No. 3 Discussion

Mike Neel

- Asked for clarification of which seven intersections are being approved.
 - Dennis Speer – information from the contract will be provided.
- Asked what would be modified
 - Dennis Speer – outlined the scope of work.
- Commented on delays of traffic signal timing and recommended a blinking red light at Down and Ridgcrest Blvd.

Dave Matthews

- Commented the seven intersections are the City intersection and not Caltrans intersections.
- Observed additional traffic on Norma street due to work on China Lake Blvd.

Motion To Approve Item No. 3 Made By Council Member Mower, Second By Council Member Sanders. Motion Carried By Roll Call Vote Of 4 Ayes (Mayor Breedon, Council Members Sanders, Thomas, And Mower); 0 Noes; 0 Abstain; And 1 Absent (Council Member Acton)

Item No. 4 Discussion

Mike Neel

- Asked what these funds would accomplish
 - Dennis Speer – explained funds process and new funding based on population allocation. Money will be used for operations due to short application period.

Motion To Approve Item No. 4 Made By Council Member Mower, Second By Council Member Thomas. Motion Carried By Roll Call Vote Of 4 Ayes (Mayor Breeden, Council Members Sanders, Thomas, And Mower); 0 Noes; 0 Abstain; And 1 Absent (Council Member Acton)

Item No. 5 Discussion

Peggy Breeden

- Requested clarification of approved with the exception
 - Dennis Speer – improvement of security.

Motion To Approve Item No. 5 Made By Council Member Sanders, Second By Council Member Mower. Motion Carried By Roll Call Vote Of 4 Ayes (Mayor Breeden, Council Members Sanders, Thomas, And Mower); 0 Noes; 0 Abstain; And 1 Absent (Council Member Acton)

DISCUSSION AND OTHER ACTION ITEMS

6. Confirmation Of Planning Commissioner Nominations To Standing Committees Ford

Rachel Ford

- Announced the names of Planning Commissioners nominated to serve on standing Council committees.

Minute Motion Approving Planning Commissioner Nominations To Council Committees As Announced Made By Council Member Thomas, Second By Council Member Mower. Motion Carried By Roll Call Vote Of 4 Ayes (Mayor Breeden, Council Members Sanders, Thomas, And Mower); 0 Noes; 0 Abstain; And 1 Absent (Council Member Acton).

7. Discussion And Approval By Minute Motion Renaming The Ridgcrest Skate Park In Honor Of Former Mayor Ronald H. Carter **Speer**

Dennis Speer

- Presented staff report

Patrick Shappa

- Knew Mr. Carter a few months but felt like a lifetime, encouraged Council to support this nomination.

Dave Matthews

- Comments are not a reflection against Mr. Carter
- Recall an effort to rename the Denny's park after Rose Varga and much discussion.
- Thought we passed an ordinance stating parks and streets would not be named after people unless first going thru a review committee.
- Do not feel should go ahead with renaming at this time.
- When Skate Park was being developed, a lot of the effort behind it was Mr. Dan Clark when he was not on the Council. He had a lot to do with raising the money and incentivizing the youth to build the park.
- Not sure it is a good idea to name the park after a person. Don't want to rush into it and embarrass people whose names have been presented before and been denied.

Mike Neel

- What is the cost of changing or adding the sign for the park?
- Suggested letting the members of the public who want this renaming provide the sign.

Steven P. Morgan

- Mr. Carter was 100% a community servant in this City, both as Council, principal and mentor. More people in the community believe this honor is appropriate. His family would be honored because he was the primary driver in getting the skate park accomplished. Volunteered to donate \$250 toward the sign.
- Not sure if the ordinance exists and asks Council to make the appropriate decision and rename the park.

Peggy Breeden

- Sat on the committee to name the park, and there were no ordinances established.

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Dave Matthews

- Not sure if this was an ordinance or resolution but thought the discussion ended with the thought that these things should go before committee.
- Suggest looking at the minutes.

Mike Mower

- Precedence was set with Pearson Park.
- Have no problem taking to committee but also volunteer to match Steve Morgan's donation.

Eddie Thomas

- Volunteered to match the \$250 donation, take to committee and return at next Council meeting.

Jim Sanders

- Do not oppose renaming but would like to postpone and hear from Mr. Patin.

Peggy Breeden

- Volunteered to match the \$250 donation.

Total donations committed:

- Steve Morgan \$250
- Mike Mower \$250
- Eddie Thomas \$250
- Peggy Breeden \$250
- \$1000

Minute Motion To Refer Item To The Parks, Recreation, And Quality Of Life Committee And Bring Back To Council At The Second Meeting Of March Made By Council Member Mower, Second By Council Member Sanders. Motion Carried By Roll Call Vote Of 3 Ayes (Council Members Mower, Thomas, And Sanders), 1 Noes (Mayor Breeden) 1 Absent (Council Member Acton)

8. Presentation Of Funding Proposal For Downs Street Widening Project

Speer

Dennis Speer

- Presented staff report and PowerPoint presentation *(Copy Available In The City Clerk's Office)*

Peggy Breeden

- Clarified that Council decided not to do the work twice with working around the poles and then going back later after the poles were moved and doing the work again.
- Asked about time frame for design and construction
 - Dennis Speer – responded with timeline of 2-3 years for poles to be undergrounded. Spoke on CMAQ funding opportunities that are along the same timeline as moving the poles. Outlined the CMAQ process for projects that have been submitted and approved for CMAQ funding. If we respond with this project for future funding we would have opportunity to get the funding for the project sooner than the normal 2-3 years.

Mike Mower

- Asked total poles and which ones would not be underground.
 - Dennis Speer - 7 distribution poles could go underground but the 1 transmission pole cannot and would have to be relocated.
- Edison would take 3 years for undergrounding?
 - Dennis Speer – correct. Explained the cost breakdown.

Peggy Breeden

- Kern COG funding available for roads, as opposed to Transit, more is going to Transit.
 - Dennis Speer – concept is politically driven. Commented on complaints due to low ridership on transit buses. Commented on mass transportation which works well for dense populations but not for rural areas. Explained TDA funding being dedicated to transit first and roads second, based on fare box ratios. No indication they will give up on sustainability before considering road requests. Pedestrian and bicycle projects come first. Over 25% of the roadway is dedicated to bicycles who pay nothing toward maintenance of the roads.

Mike Mower

- Asked City Attorney about timeline for hearing in May on the AMG loan
 - Keith Lemieux – should have a ruling shortly after the hearing. Result within 60 days. State has lost similar lawsuits and has not appealed so is possible they would return the money by end of year.
- If we win AMG and lose the solar loan then is a wash.
- If project is submitted to Kern COG, will Edison begin process to underground utilities?
 - Dennis Speer – before they get started will need a resolution forming the underground utilities district, approved engineer plans, and other items which then go to long beach for approval which can take up to 18 months.
- Proposes doing the resolution to form the district and get our project on the list as soon as possible.

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Tom Wiknich

- Other TAB funds have been allocated for parks and recreation, 2.5 million set aside for the ball field's expansion and this street is next to those fields. Suggested pulling some of the allocated funds for this street project. Can reduce the overall demand versus cutting Ridgcrest Blvd. and other street projects.

Mike Mower

- Asked for an enlarged version of this allocation listing.

Dennis Speer

- There are funds allocated to parks and a master plan has been prepared which is currently being updated. Mr. Patin will be coming back to Council with the updated master plan.

Mike Neel

- Asked about the total cost to do this street project?
 - Dennis Speer - \$2.5 million
- Regarding undergrounding, having to wait a long time and still have poles above ground. This project needs to be completed.
- Gave history of TAB allocations and Pavement Management Study. Need to spend \$15 million to fix the roads and then \$1.5 million annually to bring the grade up to a average PSI.
- With TAB funding, previous Council did not allocate the original \$13 million, allocation kept going down.
- Commented on police and Measure 'L'
- Could have used \$18 million TAB funding on roads including residential. No reason why Parks funds cannot be reallocated for this street project.
- Inappropriate allocations to sports fans in this town. \$2.5 million is being spent for a small interest group. 10% of needs for the streets is being done but 100% of the needs of sports is being served.

Jim Sanders

- Need time to digest a lot of the information provided. Need to take a look at all the allocations and prioritize them. Downs Street project takes priority over other things previously allocated. Also Richmond Road.

Mike Mower

- Can't prioritize without a paper I can read. Need to take some action toward getting on the Kern COG list, doesn't cost anything to get on the list or if we go another direction later. Agree with Mr. Neel; do not want to wait 3 years to see this project completed.
 - All poles north of Church Street are transmission and will not be underground.

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Jim Sanders

- Do not feel it is worth spending the money to underground a couple of poles, move the poles. Agree with getting on the list.

Mike Mower

- Downs Project is on the infrastructure committee agenda, let's count the poles and discuss at that meeting.

Peggy Breeden

- Suggested curb, gutter, and sidewalk just for the crosswalk.
 - Dennis – infrastructure discussion also, have to have pavement in addition to curb, gutter, and sidewalk for that area. Charter school is supposed to put in the curb, gutter, and sidewalk and we will find the funds to do the pavement.
- This is the safety issue; a few weeks ago Sgt. Myers and a little girl were almost hit while trying to cross the street. Do not think there is any issue more important than doing what we need to do to make the children safe. Do not want to wait 3 years to do this.
- Direction to staff to start the process to get on the list and come back with agenda item to reprioritize the allocations
- Infrastructure will discuss tomorrow.

ORDINANCES

1. **Waive Reading In Full And Introduce, By Title Only, An Ordinance Of The City Council Of The City Of Ridgecrest Amending The Ridgecrest Municipal Code Chapter 6, Article 24 With Regard To License Tax Rates And Classifications** **McQuiston**

- Pulled due to staff unavailable to present.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

City Organization and Services Committee

Members: Lori Acton; Mike Mower
Meeting: 4th Wednesday each month at 5:00 p.m.
Location: Council Conference Room B

- No Report

Infrastructure Committee

Members: Jim Sanders; Mike Mower
Meeting: 2nd Thursday each month at 5:00 p.m.
Location: Council Conference Room B

- Announced meeting date and time. Next meeting March 12

❖ **Ad Hoc Water Conservation Committee**

Members: Jim Sanders; Peggy Breeden
Meeting: 1st Monday each month at 5:00 p.m.
Location: Conference Room B

Jim Sanders

- Special meeting tomorrow morning at 10:00 a.m.
- Lorelei Oviatt will present the Land Use Management Plan

Parks, Recreation, and Quality of Life Committee

Members: Eddie Thomas; Lori Acton
Meeting: 1st Tuesday each month at 5:00 p.m.
Location: Kerr-McGee Center Meeting Rooms

Eddie Thomas

- Have not established a meeting yet.

❖ **Ad Hoc Youth Advisory Council**

Members: Eddie Thomas
Meeting: 2nd Wednesday of each month, 12:00 p.m.
Location: Kerr-McGee Center Meeting Rooms

Eddie Thomas

- No Report

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

Members: Eddie Thomas; Lori Acton
Meeting: 3rd Tuesday every other month at 4:00 p.m.
Location: Kerr McGee Center Meeting Rooms

- No Report

Ridgecrest Area Convention And Visitors Bureau (RACVB)

Members: Lori Acton and Eddie Thomas
Meetings: 1st Wednesday Of The Month, 8:00 A.M.
Next Meeting: To Be Announced

- No Report

OTHER COMMITTEES, BOARDS, OR COMMISSIONS

Peggy Breeden

- Requested volunteer to work with the Median Art Committee, 2nd Tuesday of each month. Volunteered to sit with the committee

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Dennis Speer

- Read letter from Kern COG congratulating Ridgecrest for receiving the regional award of merit. Thursday March 5 award dinner.
 - Peggy Breeden – purchased a table for the dinner and need to get a headcount of those who want to go to the dinner.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Jim Sanders

- Thanked staff for getting presentations available ahead of the meeting.
- Asked Mr. Speer about traffic lights. Asked if left turn can be configured with a solid green which yields to oncoming traffic. Seems like left turn arrow slows the flow of traffic.
 - Dennis Speer – Responded that if there is a dedicated turn lane it has an arrow. If there are a lot of people in the stacking lane, the cycle time can be shortened for the thru traffic. Is also a safety issue.
- Suggested future study of lighter traffic intersections to avoid wasted time.

Eddie Thomas

- Commend staff who have worked hard to have everything prepared for tonight. A lot of information.

Mike Mower

- Commend staff, spent the morning going thru financial presentations.
- Edison company has put in three drives into their property at Downs street
- Received a lot of comments from customers and employees about the length of time to cycle at the intersection of Downs. Understand the equipment malfunction and hope it will be fixed soon.
- West Ridgecrest Blvd. comments are 50/50. Many people still concerned with safety of bicyclists. Appreciate staff correcting the striping.
- Thanked the public participation tonight.

Peggy Breeden

- Reported on trip to Washington D.C., go as far as phoenix and flight was cancelled. Will reschedule because there are important projects that need to be discussed.
- My appreciation to staff. I used to wonder what you did all day and now I know.
- Thanked everyone for coming in and making comments and participating.

ADJOURNMENT at 9:55 p.m.



Rachel J. Ford, CMC
City Clerk