



MINUTES SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

February 18, 2023

City of Watsonville
Civic Plaza Community Rooms
275 Main Street, Top Floor

8:38 a.m.

Mayor Montesino, Mayor Pro Tempore Quiroz-Carter and Council Members Clark (left at 1:23 p.m.), Dutra, Orozco, and Parker (arrived at 8:43 a.m.) were present. Member Salcido was absent.

Staff members present were City Manager Mendez, City Clerk Ortiz, Assistant City Manager Vides, Interim Public Works & Utilities Director Vides, Police Chief Zamora, Fire Chief Lopez, Administrative Services Director Duran, IT Director Gill, Parks & Community Services Director Calubaquib, Library Director Martinez, Airport Director Williams, Deputy City Manager Manning, and Principal Planner Meek.

1. ROLL CALL

1.a. MOTION TO EXCUSE ABSENT COUNCIL MEMBER(S)

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Montesino, seconded by Member Orozco and carried by the following vote to excuse Member Salcido's absence.

AYES:	MEMBERS:	Clark, Dutra, Orozco, Quiroz-Carter, Montesino
NOES:	MEMBERS:	None
ABSENT:	MEMBERS:	Parker, Salcido

2. REPORTS TO COUNCIL -- No Action Required

2.a. 2021-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

The Airport update was given by Airport Director Williams.

In answering Member Parker, Airport Director Williams spoke about animals and plants that inhabited certain areas near the Airport, which created challenges with construction due to conservation efforts. He stated he had reached out to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to explore alternatives.

Airport Director Williams, in answering Mayor Montesino spoke about the reasons there were gas discounts for pilots during specific days. Mayor Montesino stated his displeasure at seeing the discounts occur.

In answering Mayor Montesino, Airport Director Williams spoke about the number of aircrafts serviced by the Airport.

Airport Director Williams, in answering Mayor Montesino, stated the Airport had not considered allowing use of the Airport to hold concerts and spoke about the cost of hangars.

Member Orozco requested a presentation regarding how the relocated threshold could impact the City in various areas.

The City Clerk's Office update was given by City Clerk Ortiz.

City Clerk Ortiz answered questions from Member Parker regarding efforts to comply with public records act requests and create a sense of transparency for the public.

In answering Member Orozco, City Clerk Ortiz spoke about collaborating with the Santa Cruz County Clerk to provide services out of the City Administration Offices and potential days and hours of operation.

City Clerk Ortiz answered questions from Member Orozco regarding reasons there were issues with access to candidate statements, ballot measure arguments, and general election information. He highlighted efforts to post said information on City webpages.

The City Manager's Office update was given by City Manager Mendez and Assistant City Manager Vides.

Assistant City Manager Vides responded to questions from Member Orozco regarding access to the Summer in the City Program for undocumented students and challenges in funding their stipends.

In answering Member Parker, City Manager Mendez spoke about how the City could grow its programs.

Mayor Montesino requested the City look into ways of creating more inclusion and increasing participation from the community.

In answering Member Orozco, City Manager Mendez spoke about exploring ways to improve access to local government for underserved sectors of the community.

The Community Development Department update was given by Principal Planner Meek.

Principal Planner Meek answered questions from Member Dutra regarding development at the K-Mart shopping center and on Auto Center Drive. He spoke about ways the City could be proactive in working with developers in determining best uses in different areas of the City.

In answering Mayor Montesino, Principal Planner Meek spoke about effort to create new housing options and challenges with developers meeting the public's expectations for housing needs.

Mayor Montesino stressed the importance of adjusting policies to allow for more business types to be successful in areas they were previously not allowed in.

Member Orozco requested the City look into the affordable housing program and make it more accessible to low income families.

Mayor Montesino asked the Community Development Department to take items to Council on ways in which they could streamline different processes.

Principal Planner Meek answered questions from Mayor Pro Tempore Quiroz-Carter regarding Regional Housing Needs Allocation requirements.

The Finance Department update was given by Administrative Services Director Duran.

In answering Mayor Montesino, Assistant City Manager Vides spoke about ways the budget process could be more transparent and accessible for the community.

Member Orozco asked staff to explore ways in which the City could poll its residents and help them understand the budget.

In answering Mayor Montesino, Administrative Services Director Duran spoke about potential ways Measure R funding could be utilized.

The Fire update was given by Fire Chief Lopez.

City Manager Mendez answered Member Parker's question regarding grant funding potential for Fire and Police, and creation of a Grants Writer position.

In answering Mayor Montesino, Fire Chief Lopez spoke about ways the department would explore mutual aid efforts and mergers.

Fire Chief Lopez, in answering Member Orozco, stated he would contact the Center for Employment Training to explore the possibility of partnering for training and scholarship funding.

The Human Resources Department update was given by Deputy City Manager Manning.

Deputy City Manager Manning and City Manager Mendez responded to questions from Member Dutra regarding efforts to have competitive salaries.

Mayor Montesino asked that staff be incentivized to further their education and professional development.

City Manager Mendez and Deputy City Manager Manning requested staff work on salary adjustments and employee retention.

The Innovation & Technology Department update was given by IT Director Gill.

IT Director Gill answered questions from Member Dutra regarding ways the City could leverage the fiber loop to allow access to internet for residents.

Mayor Montesino requested staff explore improving the internet speed in the Civic Plaza.

The Library update was given by Library Director Martinez.

Mayor Montesino requested the BiblioVan be placed at the Farmers' Market.

Member Orozco asked for increased remote services, particularly for underserved areas, even if these were outside of City limits.

The Parks & Community Services Department update was given by Parks & Community Services Director Calubaquib.

City Manager Mendez answered Member Dutra's question regarding revenue generated from Measure R and pursuing bonds for completing projects in less time. He stated Council would be taking final action on the proposed budget.

In answering Member Parker, Parks & Community Services Director Calubaquib spoke about the importance of the Parks Master Plan in raising and expending funds.

Member Orozco asked staff to continue collaborating on finding ways to keep youth engaged and out of trouble.

Parks & Community Services Director Calubaquib explained how the parks in lieu fee worked and options the City had for creation of parks space.

The Police update was given by Police Chief Zamora.

In answering Member Orozco, Police Chief Zamora spoke about Police's use of dogs, efforts to educate the community on Police programs, and potential for expanding conversations between residents and Police.

The Public Works & Utilities Department update was given by Interim Public Works & Utilities Director Vides.

2.b. CITY COUNCIL PROTOCOLS REPORT AND STUDY SESSION

City Manager Mendez and City Clerk Ortiz provided an update and spoke about potential for making changes to the City Council Protocols at a future meeting.

2.c. SISTER CITY POLICY REPORT & STUDY SESSION

City Clerk Ortiz provided an overview of the Sister City Policy and suggested changes to the guidelines prohibiting use of City funds for Sister City activities.

3. EMERGENCY ITEMS ADDED TO AGENDA

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

Eduardo Montesino, Mayor

ATTEST:

Irwin I. Ortiz, City Clerk