

MINUTES

Special meeting of the City Council of the City of Redlands held in the Council Chambers, Civic Center, 35 Cajon Street, on February 13, 2023 at 6:00 P.M.

Present: **Eddie Tejeda, Mayor**
 Paul Barich, Mayor Pro Tempore
 Denise Davis, Council Member
 Jenna Guzman-Lowery, Council Member
 Mario Saucedo, Council Member

Staff: **Charles M. Duggan, Jr., City Manager; Yvette M. Abich Garcia, City Attorney;**
 Jeanne Donaldson, City Clerk; Janice McConnell, Assistant City Manager; Chris
 Boatman, Assistant City Manager; Carl Baker, Public Information Officer; Chris
 Catren, Police Chief; Danielle Garcia, Management Services/Finance Director;
 Brian Desatnik, Development Services Director; John Harris, Municipal Utilities
 and Engineering Director; Rich Sessler, Fire Chief

Mayor Tejeda called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and explained that comments could be presented in-person, via Zoom, via cell phone or landline. He offered the public an opportunity to provide comment on any subject within the jurisdiction of the City Council, which is not already scheduled on this agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

State Housing Report Card - Dennis Bell pointed out the Redlands Daily Facts reported that most cities were failing to meet the state's housing mandate and they continue to struggle to provide affordable housing. He said the results were simply pathetic.

STUDY SESSION WORKSHOP

California Assembly Bill 2449

Project Manager Ross Wittman summarized California Assembly Bill 2449 (AB 2449) relating to teleconferencing guidelines for open meetings and explained that Governor Newsom signed AB 2449 in September 2022 with the bill taking effect beginning in January 2023. The bill authorized a local agency to use teleconferencing without complying with the traditional teleconferencing requirements of the Brown Act that requires: Each teleconference location be identified in the notice and agenda; and each teleconference location be accessible to the public.

The new legislation allows local agencies to comply with the aforementioned Brown Act provisions provided at least a quorum of the members of the legislative body participate in person from a singular physical location clearly identified on the agenda that is open to the public and situated within the local agency's jurisdiction. Under this exception and until AB 2449 expires on January 1, 2026, members of the legislative body are authorized to participate remotely under two specified circumstances, "just cause" or "emergency circumstances". He defined the terms and noted that whether it be the Just Cause or Emergency Circumstances exception, any Council Member may not attend remotely for more than 3 consecutive months or 20 percent of the regular meetings within a calendar year. The maximum number of meetings a Council Member may teleconference under AB 2449 is 4 meetings per calendar year.

As public comment, Dennis Bell listed his frustrations with Zoom to include the public's inability to consistently access meetings and the lack of toll-free phone numbers for the public. Tracy Wise reminded the Council that zoom had provided a new tool to allow for more public engagement and promote transparency. Zoom caller Stephanie added that she regularly attended meetings via zoom as a way to participate and stay informed and she urged the Council to continue offering this as an option for the public.

Council Members presented their opinions and perspectives on AB 2449 teleconferencing guidelines. They touched on topics including the value of increasing public participation, the provision of greater flexibility for Council Members when attending meetings and the maximum number of meetings a Council Member may teleconference (limit of 4 per year). Mayor Pro Tem Barich said he was not a fan of Zoom and instead, preferred in-person meetings with the public speaking directly to the Council. Staff recommended the Planning Commission follow City Council direction and that all other Commissions and Boards follow traditional Brown Act teleconferencing rules.

On motion of Council Member Jenna Guzman-Lowery, seconded by Council Member Denise Davis, the City Council unanimously approved, by roll call vote, to continue the use of Zoom for all meetings of the City Council and the Planning Commission in order to comply with teleconferencing requirements as described in California Assembly Bill 2449; and authorized all other Commissions, Boards and Committees to follow traditional Brown Act teleconferencing rules.

Vote: 5 - 0 Passed

Priority Projects Review

City Manager Duggan provided a brief review of staff's progress relating to three projects already identified by the City Council. He explained the purpose of the workshop tonight was to discuss and prioritize further projects and, if necessary, ask for additional direction and clarification from the full Council. Prioritizing projects allows the City to focus finite staff time on items the full City Council wishes to pursue and in which order. Mayor Tejeda recommended that if any of these projects could be rolled into existing work already assigned to staff, it would be ideal. Thirty-one projects were listed as "Not Prioritized" and the City Manager briefly reviewed each one, while Council Members added comments and offered suggestions. The list was reevaluated and modified in real time as a result of Council input. It was also noted the list was a living, dynamic document which could be altered. Mayor Pro Tem Barich asked to add the following projects: Texonia Park improvements to accommodate the 2023 fall season of Jr. All American Football League; Possible conversion of Clement Middle School tennis courts to pickle ball courts; and Dog Park lighting installation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further action the special meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

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