

NOTE: These Minutes are being annotated after adoption, as a result of City Council consensus to do so from their September 2, 2020 Regular Meeting (See Page 3 of 6).



**Wednesday, June 24, 2020**  
**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the City Council**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A Special Meeting of the South Pasadena City Council was called to order by Mayor Joe on Wednesday, June 24, 2020, at 7:47 p.m., in the Council Chamber, located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, California.

A brief introduction was provide by Mayor Joe on the procedures in place in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present via Zoom:** Councilmembers Cacciotti, Khubesrian, and Schneider; Mayor Pro Tem Mahmud; and Mayor Joe.

**Absent:** None

**City Staff Present:** City Manager DeWolfe (in attendance via Zoom); City Attorney Teresa Highsmith (in attendance via Zoom); and Chief City Clerk Ayala were present at Roll Call.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Pro Tem Mahmud led the flag salute.

**CLOSED SESSION ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**A. Labor Negotiations**

CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR, Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6

Conference with Labor Negotiators regarding labor negotiations with the following groups:

- Unrepresented Management Employees
- South Pasadena Police Officers' Association
- South Pasadena Firefighters' Association
- South Pasadena Public Service Employees' Association
- South Pasadena Public Service Part Time Employees' Association

City Negotiators: City Manager Stephanie DeWolfe; Interim Human Resources Manager Michael Casalou

**B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL**—Existing Litigation, Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(1)

Name of Case: *Smith v. City of South Pasadena*

City Attorney Highsmith reported the following:

Item A – City Council received a briefing by the City’s Labor Negotiator regarding the status of negotiations with the City’s bargaining unions and unrepresented employees. Direction was provided by City Council to the City’s Labor Negotiator.

Item B - City Council received a briefing on the matter of existing litigation of *Smith v. City of South Pasadena*. Direction was provided by the City Council to legal counsel.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Chief City Clerk Ayala announced Additional Documents for Item No. 1.

**1. Approve a Resolution No. 7660 to Continue Appropriations of the FY 19/20 Budget and Allocate Funding for Temporary Supplemental Staff for the Finance Department to Expedite the Resolution of Historical Accounting Deficiencies**

City Manager DeWolfe provided a brief introduction and background for the item.

Karen Aceves, Finance Director, presented a PowerPoint presentation.

City Council had various questions and comments regarding the City’s credit; City’s ability to pay bills; City’s investment funds; City’s 2018-19 FY audit; Finance Commission presentations of the 2020-21 FY Budget; hiring process for an Accountant position; City’s 2019-20 FY budget; the Citygate Report; current Finance Department staff; etc.

Director Aceves answered all questions accordingly.

Mayor Joe opened the Public Hearing at 8:28 p.m.

Chief City Clerk Ayala read the public comments received aloud.

Public Comment:

- Chris Bray – Provided various comments regarding the City’s Budget.

- Madeline Di Giorgi – Expressed support for the item and provided various reasons for the support.
- William Kelly - Expressed support for the item and provided various reasons for the support.
- Delaine Shane – Expressed support for the item and the City conducting an independent audit.
- South Pasadena Youth for Police Reform – Expressed support for the item and provided various reasons for the support.
- Mary Urquhart – Expressed support for the item and provided various reasons for the support.
- Josh Betta – Expressed concerns regarding the City’s finances and budget.
- Wendy Gutschow - Expressed support for the item and provided various reasons for the support.
- Emily Diaz-Vines – Expressed concerns regarding media articles circulating about the City’s budget and former City employees. \*\*
- Jan Marshall - Expressed support for the item and provided various reasons for the support.
- Mel Trom – Commended City Manager DeWolfe and Director Aceves, and encouraged the adoption of the budget. \*\*
- Joanne Nuckols – Expressed support for the item and provided various reasons for the support.
- Ella Hushagen, Helen Tran, and John Srebalus – Expressed support for the item and provided various reasons for the support.

Mayor Joe closed the Public Hearing at 9:15 p.m.

During their discussion, City Council had various questions and comments regarding the City’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and audit; LA County legal filings and requirements; resolution to continue appropriations; Finance Commission presentations of the 2020-21 FY Budget; pandemic effects to the City’s revenue and budget; restoring trust regarding the City’s finances; community input regarding the City’s Budget; City’s organizational chart; amendments to the staff recommendations; temporary Accountant position; consequences of not approving a staff recommended resolution; community expectations; City’s objectives; etc.

\*\*ANNOTATION ADDED: These e-mailed public comments (Diaz-Vines, Trom) are both pseudonyms of former City Councilmember Marina Khubesrian, M.D., and were submitted as a public record comment to the City on June 24, 2020, when Dr. Khubesrian was also a seated City Councilmember.

City Manager DeWolfe, City Attorney Highsmith, and Director Aceves answered questions accordingly.

Councilmember Schneider made a motion to approve staff's recommendation and amend the staff report to remove accusatory language regarding how previous staff handled the City's budget. A second was provided by Councilmember Cacciotti.

City Council discussed various modifications that could be made to the motion.

Mayor Joe asked the following modifications be considered in Councilmember Schneider's motion: adoption of a resolution to continue appropriations of the FY 19-20 budget; direct staff to bring back to City Council the final numbers for FY 2020-21 budget and provide a list of anticipated revenue and expenditure within 60-days; and appropriating up to \$80,000 for the hiring of a temporary Accountant and financial budgetary module.

**MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER SCHNEIDER, SECOND BY COUNCILMEMBER CACCIOTTI, CARRIED 5-0, to:**

- 1) Approve **Resolution No. 7660** to continue appropriations of the FY 19/20 budget; and,
- 2) Allocate funding for temporary supplemental staff for the Finance Department to expedite the resolution of historical accounting deficiencies

The following amendments made to staff's recommendations were considered and included in the motion and vote:

- Amendment of the staff report presented to City Council to remove accusatory language regarding previous staff handling of the City's budget.
- Direct staff to bring back the final numbers for the FY 2020-21 budget and provide a list of anticipated revenue and expenditure within 60-days.
- Appropriating up to \$80,000 for the hiring the temporary Accountant and financial budgetary module.

Additional Documents were considered in the motion and vote updating the Resolution to remove the reference to GC 3504.5 (the emergency procedure under the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act).

## **ACTION/DISCUSSION**

### **2. Discussion and Direction on the Estimated Costs for Continued Virtual Public Meetings**

City Manager DeWolfe introduced the item and Lucy Demirjian, Assistant to the City Manager, provide the staff report.

City Council has various questions, comments, and suggestions regarding City Meeting requirements during the Covid-19 pandemic; City meetings recorded and televised due to the Covid-19 pandemic; methods to receive public comments; protocols on public comments; holding meetings in the Council Chambers; cuing of public comments in person; physically attending meetings for the City's Commissions; etc.

City Attorney Highsmith and Assistant to the City Manager Demirjian answered all questions accordingly.

Chief City Clerk Ayala read the Public Comment received aloud.

Public Comment:

- William Kelly – Expressed support for submitting verbal public comment.

Councilmember Cacciotti requested input from the City's Commissions regarding the future of how meetings are conducted. Mayor Joe concurred.

Recommendation

~~It is recommended that the City Council provide direction upon reviewing this report estimating the costs for continued virtual public meetings in compliance with guidelines set forth in the Los Angeles County Health Officer's Safer at Home Order.~~

City Council reach a consensus to continue the item to a future meeting so staff can provide more options of how Virtual Meetings can continue to be facilitated.

**3. Appointment of City Council Sub-Committee on the Future of Policing in South Pas (No Staff Report)**

Councilmember Khubesrian provided background information on the item.

Chief City Clerk Ayala read the Public Comment received aloud.

Public Comment:

- Will Hoadley-Brill – Expressed support for the item and asked City Council to support creating the Sub-Committee of the Future of Policing. Also asked the City Council approve the City's proposed budget before the end of the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year.
- Sofie Dreskin – Expressed support for the item and asked City Council to support creating the Sub-Committee of the Future of Policing.
- Madeline Di Georgie - Expressed support for the item and asked City Council to support creating the Sub-Committee of the Future of Policing.
- South Pasadena Youth for Police Reform - Expressed support for the item of creating the Sub-Committee of the Future of Policing and provided reasons for the support
- Ashely Steimer-King - Expressed support for the item of creating the Sub-Committee of the Future of Policing.
- Wendy Gutschow – Expressed support in creating an oversight committee independent

of the South Pasadena Police Department and provided suggestions regarding the committee ability to make recommendations.

- Phung Huynh, Elana Mann, Stefani Williams, and Arts Magnet – Expressed support for the item of creating the Sub-Committee of the Future of Policing and the importance for racial justice in the community.

City Council held a discussion and had various questions and comments regarding Public Safety Commission oversight of the Police Department; Public Safety Commission sub-committee; Police Department Budget; protocols for the Sub-Committee on the Future of Policing in South Pas; etc.

City Attorney Highsmith answered questions accordingly.

Councilmember Cacciotti requested the item be reviewed by the Public Safety Commission for input and recommendations to City Council.

MOTION BY MAYOR JOE, SECOND BY COUNCILMEMBER SCHNEIDER, CARRIED 5-0, to appoint the Sub-Committee on the Future of Policing in South Pas and include the sub-committee of the Public Safety Commission; have the sub-committees report back to City Council with suggestions on the Public Safety Commissions responsibilities stated in the City’s municipal code.

**INFORMATION REPORTS**

**4. South Pasadena COVID-19 Update**

Chief of Police, Joe Ortiz, provided a verbal update on the Police Department, and Fire Chief, Paul Riddle, provided a verbal general update of the City and the Fire Department.

City Council had various questions and comments following each presentation regarding COVID-19 paramedic transportation; resident hospitalizations; etc.

Chief Riddle answered all questions accordingly.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Joe announced the next Regular City Council meeting on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

There being no further business, Mayor Joe adjourned the meeting at 11:09 p.m.

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 Evelyn G. Zneimer  
 City Clerk

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 Robert S. Joe  
 Mayor