



MINUTES
Town of Atherton
CITY COUNCIL/ATHERTON CHANNEL
DRAINAGE DISTRICT
SEPTEMBER 27, 2004

6:00 p.m.
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
94 Ashfield Road
Atherton, California

SPECIAL MEETING

Mayor McKeithen called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: James R. Janz
Alan B. Carlson
William R. Conwell
Kathy McKeithen

ABSENT: Charles E. Marsala (excused)

City Manager Jim Robinson and City Attorney Marc Hynes were also present.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chris Gould, Atherton, stated that he lives on Eleanor Drive with his backyard adjacent to Melanie which is the area experiencing the recent mountain lion sightings. He expressed his concern with the mountain lions and the safety of the area, and stated that he is in favor of a proactive approach to eliminate the mountain lion problem.

Police Chief Bob Brennan explained the steps the Town Police Department is taking to address the mountain lion issue. He noted that a formal policy is being prepared, and that his instructions to his officers are to dispatch the animal if it is posing a threat. He announced that the Annual Police Department Town Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 4, 2004 at 7:00 p.m., Foley Center at St. Joseph's School, and the topic of the meeting will be mountain lions. He further stated in response to Council Member questions that a representative from the Department of Fish and Game will be invited to the meeting.

REGULAR AGENDA

4. DISCUSSION OF ALTERNATIVES RELATIVE TO SPECIAL MUNICIPAL TAX FOR SUPPORT OF OPERATING AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURES AND EVALUATION OF REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS AND COST-SAVING OPTIONS

Finance Director John Johns presented the staff report. He recommended a change in the methodology regarding how the Town offsets the road impact of excavations through the road impact fee.

Mayor McKeithen asked for the City Council's feeling on a utility users' tax (UUT).

Council Member Carlson stated that a UUT was low on his list of options and that a UUT election could be divisive to the community. He further stated that no one single revenue source would be enough to replace the parcel tax.

Council Member Janz stated that many other cities have a UUT and that he is not opposed to it. He further stated that this type of tax is progressive as it varies with how a family uses utilities, and that we needed to look at how much could be raised.

Vice Mayor Conwell stated that it is imperative that the parcel tax passes on November 2nd, and that UUT would only be considered in the second stage.

Mayor McKeithen stated that the use of other revenue enhancement options hinge on the passage of the parcel tax. She prefers a real property transfer tax over a UUT.

Finance Director Johns explained that the Town of Hillsborough has a tax on the title insurance policy.

Following Council discussion of revenue enhancement alternatives and cost-saving options, the Council provided the following directives to staff (to be accomplished prior to the October 20, 2004 Regular City Council Meeting):

- a. City Attorney Hynes to review the preliminary work completed by Finance Staff to determine if it would justify an ordinance for a surcharge/fee increase on the road impact of excavations/volume of cubic yards of dirt being moved in conjunction with construction projects such as basement removals and swimming pools.**
- b. Finance Director Johns to provide a report on revising the road impact fee ordinance to refer to the amount of funds actually spent on road improvements, using State Controller's Office information as a baseline.**
- c. Finance Director Johns and Public Works Director Jones to provide suggestions on how the Town could regulate landscaping, looking at the City of Belmont's model which uses the amount of soil disturbance per NPDES regulations.**
- d. City Attorney Hynes to research whether a utility users' tax (UUT) would need to be placed on a general or a special election ballot.**
- e. Finance Director Johns to provide a determination of how much money could be raised through a UUT based on a percentage levied.**

- f. **Finance Director Johns to provide a “package” of revenue ideas that could satisfy the ongoing financial requirements of the Town, to include a schedule of alternative revenue sources (for the March 2005 ballot, possibly) to supplement and/or eventually replace the Town’s parcel tax.**
- g. **The Council’s Finance Committee is to meet with staff regarding alternatives prior to the October 20, 2004 Regular City Council Meeting.**

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jerry Carlson, Atherton, spoke in favor of a continued commitment to address costs and a concern about additional taxes that would impact households. He suggested a community survey on the value of police services. He further stated that the ACIL had not taken a position on the parcel tax and that 71% of its directors were in favor of it.

6. COUNCIL REPORTS

Vice Mayor Conwell expressed his concern for the need to have more P.R. for the parcel tax.

Mayor McKeithen announced two meetings where the parcel tax will be discussed: October 7th, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m., at the home of Linda Leibes and October 18th, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m., at the home of Lida Urbanek. Mayor McKeithen was asked to speak at meeting on the 7th and Council Member Marsala was asked to speak at the meeting on the 18th. She further stated that she will be writing letters to the newspapers in support of the parcel tax.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Kelly, Acting City Clerk