

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE LA PALMA CITY COUNCIL

January 14, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Waldman called the Regular Meeting of the La Palma City Council to order at 5:32 p.m. in the Council Chambers of La Palma City Hall, 7822 Walker Street, La Palma, California.

CLOSED SESSION

**CS-1. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION
(Pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9)**

Claim No. 3052765, regarding physical and emotional injury.

Claimants: Aini, Alamour, Alrefai, Anabtawi, Assfour, Aweinat, Chang, Gradoni, Habbas, Haley, Hammad, Hernandez, Hijazi, Huskey, Kapogianis, Kharal, Mendoza, Monreal, Nasordeen, Nguyen, Plaskon, Valez, Yu, Zadrán, and Zegar.

**CS-2. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS
Pursuant to Government Code section 54957.6.**

Agency Designated Representatives: Conal McNamara, City Manager
Ryan Hallett, Assistant City Manager
Steve Filarsky, Labor Attorney
Mike Matsumoto, Financial Consultant
Employee Organizations: La Palma General Employees Association
La Palma Police Association
La Palma Professional Employees Association
Unrepresented Employees: Executive Management

**CS-3. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION
(Pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9(d)(2), (e)(2))**

1 case – Proposed AT&T Tower at 8415 Meadowlark

**CS-4. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION
(Pursuant to Government Code section 54956.9(d)(1))**

Name of Case: Sarkis Tatarian v. City of La Palma, et al.
Case No. OCSC 30-2024-01375931-CU-WM-CJC

Mayor Waldman recessed to Closed Session at 5:33 p.m.

Mayor Waldman adjourned Closed Session at 6:52 p.m.

OPEN SESSION TO BEGIN AT 6:30PM

Mayor Waldman reconvened the City Council in Open Session at 6:55p.m. and asked for a report out of Closed Session.

City Attorney Thind reported that the City Council voted unanimously to reject the claim in Item CS-1 and that there were no reportable actions regarding the other items in Closed Session.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Council Member Baker

INVOCATION: Pastor Matthew Agosto, City Church

ROLL CALL: Council Members

Council Members present: Council Member Baker, Council Member Conklin, Council Member V. Patel, Mayor Pro Tem N. Patel, and Mayor Waldman

Council Members absent: None

City Officials present: Conal McNamara, City Manager
Ajit Thind, City Attorney
Joseph Cisneros, Deputy City Manager
Belinda Deines, Community Development Manager
Joe Guerrero, Police Chief
Andy Ramirez, Public Works & Community Services Director
Kimberly Kenney, City Clerk

PRESENTATIONS:

Mayor Waldman presented a Proclamation in Recognition of Korean-American Day.

Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel presented a Proclamation to Dani Hernandez in recognition of being named La Palma's 2024 Employee of the Year. Orange County Supervisor Janet Nguyen issued a Certificate of Recognition to Dani Hernandez.

Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel presented a Proclamation to Jason Hong in recognition of being named La Palma's 2024 Supervisor/Professional Employee of the Year. Orange County Supervisor Janet Nguyen issued a Certificate of Recognition to Jason Hong.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Teddy Lloyd, a Cerritos resident, addressed the City Council regarding his opinion that La Palma has the best pickleball courts; that the lighting is much better than other courts; that as a UCLA Alumni, he offers his services and expertise to La Palma residents.

Breta Nosaka, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding her opposition to the parking violations in La Palma village; that this is putting pedestrians and other drivers at risk; and asked the City Council to address painting the curbs red as a resolution.

Richard Fleshman, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding his opposition to the architecture of the large home being built on Toulouse directly next to his home; his opposition to the window construction giving that house a view directly into his home; the petition from the neighborhood of those in opposition; and the potential fire risk being so closed to his property.

Phil Defrain, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding his opposition to having Denni Park as a staging area for the city's median project; that he lives next door and listed all the concerns as result of the port-o-potty, equipment, debris, and supplies; that both he and his wife work from home; the diminished park use since the project began; and asked that the City Council mitigate this and relocate to another site.

Walter Bauwens, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding his opposition to the street takeovers and frequency in his area on Denni Street and asked the City to stop these actions.

City Manager McNamara asked those speaking to please fill out a Speaker Card with their contact information so the City can follow up regarding their concerns.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Waive the Reading of All Ordinances

Waive the reading of all Ordinances in their entirety and read by title only.

2. Approval of Council Minutes

Minutes of the December 10, 2024, Regular Meeting of the City Council.

3. Approval of Register of Demands

Adopt Resolution No. 2025-01 approving the Register of Demands for December 17, 2024, and January 7, 2025.

4. Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024

Receive and file the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) of the City of La Palma for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2024.

5. First Quarter Operating Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25

Receive and file the First Quarter Operating Report, Fiscal Year 2024-25.

6. Resolution Amending the Salary for Part-Time Employees

Adopt Resolution No. 2025-02 amending salaries for certain part-time positions.

7. Award Professional Services Agreement to Willdan Financial Services to Conduct a Water & Sewer Rate Study

1. Award a professional services agreement in an amount not to exceed \$43,000 to Willdan Financial Services to prepare a Water and Sewer Rate Study;
2. Authorize a 15% contingency for unforeseen needs; and
3. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to execute all required documents.

8. 2025 Legislative Platform

Adopt the City of La Palma's 2025 State and Federal Legislative Platform.

9. Appointments to Citizen Committees

1. Reappoint Irene Hesse and appoint Janelle Frese to the Community Activities and Beautification (CAB) Committee, both with a four-year term expiring December 31, 2028; and

2. Reappoint Rodi Alemendralo, Sergio Alvarez, Henry Lee, and Greg Sambrano and appoint Dee Vincenti to the Development and Circulation Committee (DCC), all with four-year terms expiring December 31, 2028.

Mayor Pro Tem N. Patel made a motion to approve Consent Calendar Items 1 through 9. The motion was seconded by Council Member Baker and carried on the following vote:

AYES: Council Member Baker, Council Member Conklin, Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel, Council Member Vikesh Patel, and Mayor Waldman

NOES: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None Scheduled.

REGULAR ITEMS (1 ITEM)

10. Council Member Request - Revisit Live Video Streaming of La Palma Council Meetings

Consider Council Member Keo Conklin's request and discuss the matter.

Council Member Keo Conklin read the public comment submitted by email from a Stanton resident into the record; that she supports the comments made in the email; that the City Council should consider its senior residents; support accommodating the deaf with closed captioning; that video would help make presentations and site renderings more visible; that streaming makes the meetings accessible to everybody; that transparency and accountability is imperative; that she is trying to protect the City from any potential lawsuit; and asked the City Council to support her request to live stream the City Council meetings.

Public Input:

No members of the public wished to speak.

Council Member Keo Conklin made a motion to approve live streaming of the City Council meetings by having staff provide video as well as audio.

Seeing there was no second on the motion, the motion failed.

11. City Council Code of Conduct Policy Discussion

Recommendation that the City Council adopt the attached resolution approving Policy 1: City Council Code of Conduct.

City Manager McNamara gave the detailed Staff Report.

Public Input:

No members of the public wished to speak.

Council Comments and Questions:

Discussion ensued regarding whether the public had a chance to review the Staff Report; that the Agenda and all staff reports in it were publicly posted online last Thursday, well in advance of the 72-hour requirement; that Council Member Keo Conklin noted her opposition to the changes in the process for City Council agenda item requests; that it now requires two Council Members to support the matter in order to get it on the Agenda; that this goes against transparency and Council Member Keo Conklin requested to delay any action on this matter until there is a further review; that she believes Council Member Baker rewrote an entire policy without getting input anyone on Council; that Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel responded that this is exactly the purpose of the policy change so that not one individual can just place a matter on the agenda without support of at least one additional Council Member; he noted that the purpose is so the Council can work together and have a discussion about putting a matter on the agenda ; that this is not outside the norm and asked the City Manager about neighboring Cities protocols regarding placing an agenda item; that City Manager McNamara noted there are a substantial number of cities in Orange County that also use this same policy in order to place an item on the agenda; that Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel added that this policy is to engage other Council Members to vet through an idea or proposal in order to avoid conflict of interest or moral issues; that the purpose is to do exactly what Council Member Keo Conklin is requesting - to get input and work another Council Member; that if the matter is good for the community regardless of whether Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel agrees with it or likes it, he'd support it; that he added agenda items should be placed on the agenda that are good for the community and not part of a personal agenda; that this is not to punish another Council Member as has been insinuated; that he notes this forces Council Member to discuss matter; that Council Member Keo Conklin felt this policy change is punitive; that Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel stated this item has been on the City Council's Goal Setting list for years and needed to be

addressed; that Council Member Keo Conklin felt all four other Council Members are voting down transparency by not supporting live streaming; that Mayor Waldman noted that the live streaming issue was already addressed and they have moved on in the agenda; and that Council Member Keo Conklin noted her opposition to the lack of support by the rest of the City Council and asked them why they are not supporting live streaming of the meetings.

Mayor Waldman called for a short recess at 7:50 p.m.

Mayor Waldman reconvened the City Council at 7:57 p.m.

Mayor Waldman gave the floor back to Council Member Keo Conklin who had nothing else to add.

Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-03 approving the City Council Code of Conduct. The motion was seconded by Council Member Baker and carried on the following vote:

AYES: Council Member Baker, Mayor Pro Tem N. Patel,
Council Member V. Patel, and Mayor Waldman

NOES: Council Member Conklin

COUNCIL MEMBER AB1234 REPORTS, REPORTS FROM CITY-AFFILIATED COMMITTEES, AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Council Member Vikesh Patel attended the League of California Cities (Cal Cities) Mayors and Council Members Roundtable.

Council Member Baker attended Cal Cities Mayors and Council Members Roundtable; the Orange County Sanitation District (OC San) Board of Directors Meeting; the retirement celebration for outgoing Orange County Fire Authority's (OCFA) Chief Dohman; the Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control (OCMVCD) Board of Trustees Meeting; the OCMVCD Joint Committee Meeting; the Orange County Supervisor Janet Nguyen's Swearing In Ceremony; the Jacob Green One-on-One session in preparation for the annual City Council Goal Setting/Strategic Planning Session; the Orange County Older Adults Advisory Commission (OCOAAC) Board Meeting; the Cal Cities OC Division Board of Directors Strategic Planning Meeting; the Cal Cities City Leaders Summit Planning Meeting; the Postmark Plus Grand Opening/Ribbon Cutting Ceremony; congratulated new Citizen Committee appointees and reappointed Citizen Committee members; congratulated Employee of the Year Dani Hernandez and

Supervisor/Professional Employee of the year Jason Hong on their recognition; and wished everyone a happy new year.

Council Member Keo Conklin attended Orange County Supervisor Janet Nguyen's Swearing In Ceremony; the Postmark Plus Grand Opening/Ribbon Cutting Ceremony; and wished everyone a happy new year.

Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel hosted a lunch for the Staff and Administration at John F. Kennedy High School to further good relations with the City Council and Staff; the retirement celebration for outgoing Orange County Fire Authority's (OCFA) Chief Dohman; the Jacob Green One-on-One session in preparation for the annual City Council Goal Setting/Strategic Planning Session; the Postmark Plus Grand Opening/Ribbon Cutting Ceremony; congratulated new Citizen Committee appointees and reappointed Citizen Committee members; congratulated Employee of the Year Dani Hernandez and Supervisor/Professional Employee of the year Jason Hong on their recognition; and passed on his thoughts and prayers to all those affected by the fires and thanked first responders for their service.

Mayor Waldman attended the Jacob Green One-on-One session in preparation for the annual City Council Goal Setting/Strategic Planning Session; announced the upcoming Goal Setting/Strategic Planning Session next month.

CITY MANAGER REMARKS

City Manager McNamara had nothing to report.

CITY ATTORNEY REMARKS

City Attorney Thind had nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Waldman adjourned the Regular Meeting of the City Council at 8:07 p.m. in the memory of La Palma resident Mary Casey who lost her life at the hands of a criminal who was evading the police; with remembrance for the victims of the California fires; and in memory of former President James Earl Carter.

Mark I. Waldman
Mayor

ATTEST:

Kimberly Kenney, CMC
City Clerk