

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LA PALMA CITY COUNCIL

April 1, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Waldman called the Regular Meeting of the La Palma City Council to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of La Palma City Hall, 7822 Walker Street, La Palma, California.

CLOSED SESSION

CS-1. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT/RECRUITMENT

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)

Position Title: Interim City Manager

CS-2. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT/RECRUITMENT

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)

Position Title: City Manager

CS-3. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS

Pursuant to Government Code section 54957.6.

Agency Designated Representatives: Conal McNamara, City Manager
Ryan Hallett, Assistant City Manager

Employee Organizations: La Palma General Employees Association
La Palma Police Association
La Palma Professional Employees Association

Unrepresented Employees: Executive Management

CS-4. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2), (e)(2), (e)(3): (1 case – February 3, 2025 letter from Attorney Joseph McGowan, Jr. [attached])

Mayor Waldman recessed to Closed Session at 4:01 p.m.

Mayor Waldman adjourned Closed Session at 5:40 p.m.

OPEN SESSION TO BEGIN AT 6:30PM

Mayor Waldman reconvened in Open Session at 6:30 p.m. and asked for a report out of Closed Session.

City Attorney Thind responded that there are no reportable actions out of Closed Session.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Council Member Vikesh Patel

INVOCATION: Reverend Nader Hanna, King of the Nation Ministries

ROLL CALL: Council Members

Council Members present: Council Member Baker, Council Member Keo, 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
Joe Cisneros, Deputy City Manager
Belinda Deines, Community Development Manager
Joe Guerrero, Police Chief
Kimberly Kenney, City Clerk
Alan Rivera, Management Assistant

PRESENTATIONS:

Mayor Pro Tem Patel presented a proclamation to Donate Life Month ambassador Rita Jackson in recognition of April as Donate Life month.

Mayor Pro Tem Patel presented Certificates of Recognition to Chloe Park and Alia Subedi of American Martial Arts for achieving their Black Belt ranking.

Mayor Pro Tem N. Patel presented a Certificate of Recognition to Gabriel Sanchez acknowledging his efforts as a Gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award recipient.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Misty Torres, an Anaheim resident and the former La Palma Tiny Tots teacher in the Recreation Department, addressed the City Council regarding her history teaching the Tiny Tots program; thanked the parents for their support; and noted concerns regarding her resignation from the organization.

Jocelyn Padilla, a former La Palma Recreation Department employee, addressed the City Council regarding her former employment by the City of La Palma; her history working for the recreation department and concerns that led to her departure from the organization.

Jasmine Ng, a resident of La Palma, addressed the City Council regarding her support for the Tiny Tots program and support for former teacher Misty Torres.

Chris Louie, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding his support for the Tiny Tots program; issues about the program that need to be addressed; and support for former teacher Misty Torres.

Chloe Janoian, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding his support for the Tiny Tots program; issues about the program that need to be addressed; and support for former teacher Misty Torres; and her opposition to the City Manager's response to her concerns.

Maxine Espalin, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding the lack of transparency by not live streaming City Council meetings; opposition to not getting enough community input before decisions are made; and holding elected officials responsible.

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 March 4, 2025, Regular Meeting, and Minutes of the March 20, 2025, Special Meeting of the City Council.

3. Approval of Register of Demands

Adopt Resolution No. 2025-16 approving the Registers of Demands for March 18, 2025, and April 1, 2025.

4. Destruction of Obsolete Departmental Records

Adopt Resolution No. 2025-17 authorizing the destruction of obsolete records pursuant to the California Government Code Section 34090.

5. Authorize Agreements for Development of a Cross-Connection Control Plan

1. Approve and authorize the City Manager to execute the Cost Sharing Agreement with 24 Public Water Systems in Orange County to ensure compliance with State regulations for \$5,981.65 to the Irvine Ranch Water District; and
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute a professional services agreement with John Robinson Consulting, Inc. to prepare the City's Cross-Connection Control Management Plan for an amount not-to-exceed \$24,900.

6. Authorize Budget Allocation for Sidewalk Condition Repairs

Authorize a budget allocation in the amount not-to-exceed \$100,000.00 for Sidewalk Assessment and Repairs to the existing maintenance contract with Precision Concrete Cutting.

7. Authorize a Landscape Maintenance Agreement with Caltrans for SR-91 Right-of-Way at Walker Street (Digital Display Billboard at 6951 Walker Street)

Approve and authorize the execution of a Landscape Maintenance Agreement with the California Department of Transportation for the maintenance of landscape and irrigation for a portion of SR-91 Freeway Right-of-Way at Walker Street (Attachment 1).

8. Authorize the Purchase of Replacement Chlorine Analyzers

Authorize the purchase of replacement chlorine analyzers for the amount not to exceed \$30,000 from the Hach Company.

9. First Amendment to Professional Services Agreement for the Meadowlark (City Yard) Well Rehabilitation

Authorize the City Manager to execute an amendment to the contract with BESST, Inc. (BESST) for the Meadowlark (City Yard) Well Rehabilitation, increasing the not-to-exceed amount from \$320,098 to \$440,000, and to amend the budget accordingly.

10. Event Contract for the 4th Annual Festival of Nations Event

Authorize the City Manager to execute the event quote and any related documents with James Events Productions, Inc. for the provision of vendor booths, rides, attractions, and game booths at the Festival of Nations event on April 26, 2025.

Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel made a motion to approve Consent Calendar Items 1-10.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Baker and carried on the following vote:

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

NOES: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None Scheduled.

REGULAR ITEMS

11. La Palma's 70th Anniversary Commemorative Activities

Recommendation that the City Council receive and provide feedback regarding La Palma's 70th Anniversary Commemorative activities.

City Manager McNamara introduced the item and Management Assistant Rivera gave the Staff Report.

Council Comments and Questions:

Discussion ensued regarding support for Option 2, restoring and repainting the Walker Water well; concerns about the cost and that Option 2 saves money; support for including the new design above the existing artwork on the Walker Well; support for banners versus poles with signage; support for Option 1 as well; that the cost for the double-sided banners is \$110 each; that the cost for the Well Tower is \$15,000 because of the work involved to refresh, update,

and completely redo the City's anniversary; opposition to the expense of \$15,000; that if the City Council is going to spend that kind of money, it should be spent on the 75th anniversary; and support for not spending funds for the 70th anniversary on the well and acquire the banners instead.

Public Input:

Sharon Gutjhar, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding the of public communication regarding the City celebration of its 70th anniversary; support for anniversary signage that everyone can see; and opposition to the cost for one-time use banners.

Discussion further ensued regarding Mayor Waldman's support to save the money entirely; and that the City does not have the funds to come out every year and put up new banners recognizing the next anniversary.

Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel made a motion to table the item to a date uncertain.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Keo and carried on the following vote:

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

NOES: None

12. Review of Land Use Classification for 5962 La Palma Avenue in the Planned Neighborhood Development Zoning District (Clineva Urgent Care)

Recommendation that the City Council uphold the Community Development Manager's determination that the proposed Clineva Urgent Care Center is defined as a "Medical center/clinic" use, which is explicitly prohibited in the Planned Neighborhood Development (PND) Zoning District.

Community Development Manager Deines gave the Staff Report.

Public Input:

Applicant Doug Conrady, Cofounder of Clineva Clinics, addressed the City Council regarding this office site being able to fit his needs perfectly; that there no external modifications planned, only internal tenant improvements; that the proposed clinic is a physician office similar to a dental practice which this

property is zoned for; that this doctors office with exam rooms and one x-ray tech will have extended office hours so that the public can come 7 days a week; that they see approximately 3 patients per hour; that he argued the definitions between medical office versus medical center; and asked the City Council to support his proposal.

Council Comments and Questions:

Discussion ensued regarding how patients book appointments; that patients are appointment based via an online portal; that any type of medical need that you can't get into see your primary care physician is what they treat, including lacerations; that this is an urgent care to see the doctor and faster than the emergency room; that this fills the gap between the primary care and emergency room; patients are billed for first treatment; that medical offices typically do not have extended hours, only urgent care clinics; that they see approximately 3 patients per hour; that Clineva's operating hours are 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m., 7 days a week; that there will be either a Physician's Assistant (PA), a doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO), or a Medical Doctor on site by law that is a California licensed provider; that the City's zoning code does not define medical office, but does define medical clinic and medical center as well as hospital; that the land use matrix in our Municipal Code does define medical office versus medical center; that being next to residential area, a lower intensification is allowed and thus, a medical clinic or center would be a higher use intensification; that the applicant wants to be classified as a medical office, but Staff has designated this as an urgent care - a medical clinic; that this is not a request to change the zoning, but that the applicant is appealing the decision to change the determination to an office and not a center as staff has determined; that they will not have any prescription medications on site, but rather issue prescriptions so the patient will have to go to the pharmacy to fill it; and that essentially, City Attorney Thind noted that the City Council will need to make the determination on the terms of use for this site proposal, and the Council is the ultimate definer of the Municipal Code to interpret the uses.

Public Input:

Maryanna Barrigan, a La Palma resident, addressed the City Council regarding the patient count at peak hours.

Mr. Conrady responded that the patient count is adjusted seasonally; that at any given time, they see a higher count during cold and flu season; however, during the summer time, they see less patients.

Sharon Gutjhar, a La Palma resident, addressed the Council regarding whether patients could come back and see the doctor; that they don't have

prescriptions at the office, but they can call in prescriptions is a misconception.

Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel noted the clinic is not a pharmacy, but they can give the patient a prescription so they can go to the pharmacy; and that they don't have medication on site.

Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel made a motion to uphold the Community Development Manager's determination that the proposed Clineva Urgent Care Center is defined as a "Medical center/clinic" use, which is explicitly prohibited in the Planned Neighborhood Development (PND) Zoning District.

The motion was seconded by Council Member Baker and carried on the following vote:

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

NOES: None

13. Public Works Department Update and Reclassification Recommendation

Recommendation that the City Council adopt a Resolution updating the Salary Schedule and the Comprehensive Listing of Personnel Practices and Benefits for Management Employees to: (1) include the position of Community Development & Public Works Director, (2) establish a new salary for the position, and (3) rescind Resolution No. 2025-07.

City Manager McNamara gave the Staff Report.

Council Comments and Questions:

Discussion ensued regarding Council Member Baker's support for Community Development Manager Deines appointment to this new position; that there will be cost savings as this will combine two department head positions; that the City Council welcomed her to take on the department and the challenges of this new position; that she was congratulated by being recognized by Assemblywoman Quirk-Silva as a woman of distinction; and acknowledgment of her leadership capabilities.

Public Input:

No members of the public wished to speak.

Council Member Keo made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-19 updating the Salary Schedule and the Comprehensive Listing of Personnel Practices and Benefits for Management Employees to: (1) include the position of Community Development & Public Works Director, (2) establish a new salary for the position, and (3) rescind Resolution No. 2025-07.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel and carried on the following vote:

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

NOES: None

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

Council Member Keo Conklin attended the recognition and remembrance ceremony of the Cambodian genocide by L.A. County Supervisor Janice Hahn and recognized the residents for submitting their public comments.

Council Member Baker attended Cypress College Foundation's 50th Anniversary of Americana Awards and congratulated Rick and Jean Daum as La Palma's Citizens of the Year; the 2025 Association of California Cities-Orange County (ACC-OC) Sacramento Advocacy Trip; the Special Council Meeting; the Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District (OCMVCD) Board of Trustees Meeting; the Orange County Sanitation District's (OC San) Strategic Planning and Board of Directors Meeting; the City of Cerritos Celebration of Outgoing Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, and Council Member; the Eagle Scouts Court of Honor Ceremony for Troop 650; the Orange County Board of Supervisors Meeting Celebrating Women's History Month; the City of Cerritos Council Meeting Oath of Office and Mayoral Transition; the Orange County Council of Governments (OCCOG) 2025 Annual Conference; the Orange County Women in Leadership Summit; and Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk Silva's Women of Distinctions Awards Ceremony were both she and Community Development Manager Dienes were recognized; congratulated Gabriel Sanchez on his Gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award; wished everyone a happy Easter; reminded everyone of the upcoming Festival of Nations (FON) parade and celebration; and thanked outgoing City Manager McNamara for his dedicated support and service to the City of La Palma and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Council Member Vikesh Patel attended the OC San District plant tour; Cypress College Foundation's 50th Anniversary of Americana Awards; the OC San Strategic Planning

Special meeting; the Special City Council meeting; the Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Troop 650; congratulated the Community Development Manager Deines on advancing into her new position; and thanked outgoing City Manager McNamara for his dedicated support and service to the City of La Palma and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Mayor Pro Tem Nitesh Patel attended the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) Finance Budget meeting; the Cypress College Foundation's 50th anniversary of Americana Awards; the City of Cerritos Celebration of Outgoing Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, and Council Member; the Each One Teach One (EOTO) non-profit mission trip to Africa with Hands for Hope to Kenya; congratulated Community Development Manager Deines and Council Member Baker for being awarded as Women of Distinction; congratulated Troop 650 on their Eagle Scout accomplishment; and thanked outgoing City Manager McNamara for his dedicated support and service to the City of La Palma and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Mayor Waldman had nothing to report; congratulated Community Development Manager Deines on advancing into her new position; and thanked outgoing City Manager McNamara for his dedicated support and service to the City of La Palma and wished him well in his future endeavors.

CITY MANAGER REMARKS

City Manager McNamara congratulated the Community Development Manager Deines on advancing into her new position; applauded her every endeavor in joining the La Palma family; announced his deep appreciation for the City Council's support over the years; that this has been a very honest relationship and a wonderful Council to work with; that he will treasure his 5 years at La Palma and will watch the City's continued success; and that Staff, the City Attorney, and Council have all been outstanding.

CITY ATTORNEY REMARKS

City Attorney Thind thanked outgoing City Manager McNamara for his many years of dedicated service and appreciated the great working relationship they shared.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Waldman adjourned the Regular Meeting of the City Council at 8:16 p.m.

Mark I. Waldman
Mayor

ATTEST:

Kimberly Kenney, CMC
City Clerk