

CITY COUNCIL STUDY MINUTES

July 25, 2011

Mayor Vierra called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the following in attendance:

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL: Council Members Durossette, Lane, Ochoa (Arrived 5:40 p.m.), Mayor Vierra

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Request to supply water to the Monterey Park Tract Community Services District.

- Francisco Diaz, President of the Monterey Park Tract Community Services District addressed Council stating that the district is located a few miles southwest of Ceres near the intersection of Crows Landing Road and Monte Vista Avenue. The community encompasses roughly 71 lots and 44 homes. Our District's sole responsibility is to provide water to our residents. Unfortunately, our two wells produce water that is contaminated with nitrate and arsenic over State and Federal drinking water standards. As such, we are required to notify our residents not to drink the District water.

The District has been seeking a solution to our water quality problems for years. Last year they secured a grant from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Stanislaus County Redevelopment Agency to evaluate the feasibility of various options to secure potable water. It appears that the best long term sustainable solution to the poor quality of drinking water would be to make a connection with the City of Ceres water system.

The District requested Council consider the option of providing water to them with the understanding that the District will need to find the resources to pay for all project related costs and there would be no subsidy from the City. In addition, the project will if LAFCO approves their annexation into the City and the CDPH is willing to fund the project.

Mr. Diaz further stated that a feasibility study must be completed by September 23, 2011 in order to apply for grant funding.

- Garth Pecchenino, representing Parson and Pecchenino, the District Engineers, spoke regarding the poor quality of the water and the cost to the District should they try to find another well that may have better quality water. Mr. Pecchenino outlined the proposed design of the pipeline, storage tank and booster location. The District is hoping to qualify for a grant to put in all of the infrastructure.
- Miriam Gordon, representing, Clean Water Action, stated that they have been working with the residents of Monterey Park for solutions to providing healthy drinking water to the community. Ms. Gordon stated the residents do not have the resources to treat their current ground water and drilling a new well is not viable as recent test have shown that the ground water in the entire area is likely contaminated. She thanked Council for their consideration.
- Betsy Reifsnider, representing Catholic Charities, spoke in support of Monterey Park Tract and urged Council's support of the project.

- Betty Yelder, resident, stated that when she moved to Monterey Park Tract she was unaware that the water was as bad as it was. She purchases water from the store for most of her uses however it is becoming increasingly expensive to do so. She requested Council's support.

Council stated that the following conditions will need to be met:

- 1) Approval by LAFCO
- 2) Monterey Park Tract District residents must pay all costs associated with the project.
- 3) Monterey Park Tract District is responsible for the water infrastructure and design of the system.
- 4) City of Ceres is not responsible for the system.
- 5) Residents of Monterey Park Tract will be subject to any increases as a result of 218 votes.
- 6) The City of Ceres can provide the requested 42 gpm of water without any detrimental effects to the water system.

Vice Mayor Lane asked staff if they have had any discussion with LAFCO regarding the project.

Tom Westbrook, Planning/Building/Housing Manager responded that he had. LAFCO officials have expressed concerns about the growth inducing affects that a water line extension could have on this area. LAFCO officials were also concerned that in order for the City to provide out-of-boundary service, this would have to be the only solution available to the residents of Monterey Park Tract. Mr. Westbrook commented that the reports presented tonight offered other solutions as well.

COUNCIL DIRECTION:

Council stated that this is a project the County approved years ago and there is no one from the County requesting the City of Ceres provide Monterey Park Tract with water. The City however, is willing to help the County even though County assistance is not always reciprocal.

Council directed staff to move forward with the preparation of the documents. Monterey Park Tract Community Services District will develop a draft MOU that would be approved provided that Monterey Park Tract Community Services District can meet the conditions of the State Prop. 84 Funding Grant, the City of Ceres would provide them with 60 mgd. All fees including application fees and staff's time will be charged to Monterey Park Tract.

Schedule for future Council Meeting:

Draft MOU (to be submitted by Monterey Park Tract Community Services District.)

Mitigated Negative Declaration (T. Westbrook)

Resolution confirming submission of application to LAFCO (T. Westbrook)

There being no further business, Mayor Vierra adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Chris Vierra, Mayor

Cindy Heidorn, CMC, City Clerk