

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION MINUTES

March 26, 2012

Vice Mayor Lane called the March 26, 2012, City Council Study Session meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the following in attendance:

ROLL CALL Council Members Durossette, Ingwerson, Kline Vice Mayor Lane

EXCUSED Mayor Vierra

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. REVIEW OF THE RULES THAT GOVERN POLITICAL SIGNS.

Tom Westbrook presented the item stating that during the election season of 2011, the City Council directed staff to bring back, after the conclusion of the election, a discussion about political signs. For reference, political signs are regulated in the Ceres Municipal Code in Section 18.42.120(E). This Section was adopted in 1995, has not been amended and has been referenced and enforced for the last eight election cycles without any significant concerns. For some reason, the 2011 Election cycle generated an unusual number of complaints and concerns by Councilmembers, candidates' staff and Code Enforcement relating to the size and placement of political signs and the enforcement of the Code. It may have been that the increased number of candidates for office was a significant contributing factor to the increase in complaints and concerns. The Council thought it best to discuss the issue in greater detail after the conclusion of those elections.

Council reviewed with staff the existing code language and sign requirements.

COUNCIL DIRECTION

- Requirement for everyone pulling papers for an elected office in Ceres must read and sign a disclosure statement saying they were provided a copy of the code relating to political signs and they understand the provisions. Statement to include contact information of the candidate for Code Enforcement.
- Since candidates often do not know exactly where the City right-of-way line or an easement is located, allow signs to be placed in the right of way with the following conditions:
 - If there is no curb gutter or sidewalk the sign must be at least 10 feet from the edge of the paved portion of the roadway.
 - Signs can be in the public right of way so long as they are not impeding traffic.

2. **DISCUSSION OF THE NORTH VALLEY REGIONAL RECYCLED WATER PROJECT.**

Michael Brinton, Public Works Director presented the report to Council. Mr. Brinton stated that Ceres is currently a partner in the North Valley Regional Recycled water Project (NVERRWP). The primary purpose of the project is to analyze and formalize a plan to send waste-water that has been treated to tertiary standards to the Del Puerto Water District (DPWD) for use in irrigating crops on the west side of the valley. Ceres currently has limited treatment facilities for water-water and sends sewage for treatment to both Modesto and Turlock.

When the NVERRWP was started a few years ago, it was the direction of the City Council to participate as a full partner. Ceres agreed to pay their fair share of any costs involved.

Thus far, the study has determined that the project is indeed feasible and is moving to the next level of analysis. If this project is successful and treated water can be sold to Del Puerto water District and perhaps other entities, the cities of Modesto and Turlock will benefit directly from the sale and Ceres would only benefit indirectly. With only an indirect benefit, the question has been raised as to whether Ceres should participate in the NVERRWP as a full partner.

After some Council discussion, the following direction was given:

COUNCIL DIRECTION

Council determined that there is no benefit to the City to remain a full partner in the JPA and directed staff to deliver a written request for termination to the Chair of the Coordination Committee.

6:38 p.m. There being no further business, Vice Mayor Lane adjourned the Study Session.

/s/ Ken Lane, Vice Mayor

/s/ Cindy Heidorn, City Clerk