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TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL – AUGUST 18, 2020

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At 11:10 p.m., the City Council adjourned to August 25, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. for closed session, with the regular meeting commencing at 7:00 p.m. via teleconference or other electronic means.

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance City Council convened in a regular meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 5:15 p.m. via teleconference.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmembers Ashcraft, Chen, Goodrich, Griffiths, Kalani, Mattucci, and Mayor Furey

Absent: None.

Present: City Manager Jackson, Assistant City Manager Chaparyan, City Attorney Sullivan, Deputy City Clerk III Harbaugh-Shirazi and other staff representatives

Agenda Item 14 was considered out of order at this time.

14. CLOSED SESSION

The City Council immediately recessed to closed session to confer with the City Manager and the City Attorney on agenda matters listed under 14A) Public Employee Appointment, and 14B) Conference With Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation pursuant to California Government Code §54957 (b)(1) and Government Code §54956.9(d)(1).

The City Council reconvened in public session at 7:45 p.m. No formal action was taken on any item considered in closed session.

2. FLAG SALUTE/ INVOCATION

The flag salute was led by Councilmember Kalani.

The non-sectarian invocation was given by Councilmember Mattucci.

3. REPORT OF CITY CLERK ON POSTING OF THE AGENDA/ MOTION TO WAIVE FURTHER READING

Deputy City Clerk III Harbaugh-Shirazi reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard and on the City's website on Thursday, August 13, 2020.

MOTION: Councilmember Chen moved that after the City Clerk has read aloud the number and title of any resolution or ordinance on the meeting agenda, the further reading thereof shall be waived, reserving and guaranteeing to each Councilmember the right to demand the reading of any such resolution or ordinance in regular order. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Griffiths and passed by 7-0 vote.

4. WITHDRAWN, DEFERRED OR SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

No items were withdrawn or deferred. Supplemental material was available for items 9B and Oral Communications.

5. COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Mattucci reminded the public that the 2020 Census is still accepting submissions online, by mail, and by phone. To submit online visit 2020census.gov.

Councilmember Griffiths announced the Greater Los Angeles Vector Control has received complaints of increased mosquito activity. He shared facts about West Nile virus and provided tips to prevent mosquito breeding and protect against mosquitos. Citizens should report mosquito bites received during the day as well as mosquitos with black and white stripes on the back and legs. For more information visit www.lawestvector.org.

6. COMMUNITY MATTERS

6A. RESOLUTION RE ALAN BRADY

Resolution No. 2020-86 honoring Alan Brady of the General Services Department upon his retirement from the City of Torrance after twenty-two years of service.

MOTION: Councilmember Griffiths moved to adopt Resolution No. 2020-86. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mattucci and passed by 7-0 vote.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the public spoke.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR

8A. APPROVE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Recommendation of the City Clerk that City Council approve the City Council minutes of July 28, 2020.

8B. UPDATE FROM THE SOUTH BAY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

Recommendation of the City Manager that City Council accept and file the 4th Quarter Update from the South Bay Workforce Investment Board.

MOTION: Councilmember Kalani moved to approve the Consent Calendar in its entirety. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Goodrich and passed by 7-0 vote.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

9A. COVID-19 RECOVERY UPDATE AND OPTIONS FOR RESPONDING TO ORDERS FROM LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Recommendation of the City Manager that City Council:

- 1) Receive COVID-19 recovery update; and
- 2) Discuss and consider taking whatever action deemed appropriate for responding to Orders from the County of Los Angeles and the State of California regarding COVID-19.

City Manager Jackson provided an update on the COVID-19 recovery efforts. He shared in the past week LA County has shown stabilization in daily hospitalization and deaths and has hit five out of the six State COVID-19 county benchmarks. Staff is continuing to work with businesses to assist with changing operating conditions. Restaurants and other businesses

interested in pursuing outdoor operations can reach out to the City's Office of Economic Development. City Manager Jackson touched on the Dare 2 Care campaign, downtown dining in Old Torrance, and various programs offered by the Community Services Department. He shared parking enforcement for street sweeping and permit parking is suspended and temporary commercial use of park permits for the fitness sector started on August 17.

City Manager Jackson announced the State of California issued a Flex Alert over the weekend for statewide electrical conservation due to the heatwave. He shared there is a cooling center at Ken Miller Recreation Center.

In response to a question from Mayor Furey on behalf of a member of the public, City Manager Jackson explained the County Health Director has guidelines not allowing playgrounds to open at this time. The City follows County guidelines and will likely have to wait to reach the next step into the next reopening phase.

Councilmember Mattucci voiced his frustration that there are City-sponsored cooling centers that cost money to run, while the mall remains closed and has a similar cooling system as the big box stores that are allowed to remain open. He furthered his opinion the City needs to take a stronger approach to the County Health Department destroying livelihoods, suggesting litigation. He requested bringing back an item to discuss action against the County, rather than a report.

Councilmember Chen stated LA County is meeting five out of six criteria on the watch list. He stated the last criteria of number of cases per 100,000 hasn't been met and asked if there is any insight to next steps if the county reaches the threshold of cases per 100,000 people.

Assistant City Manager Chaparyan stated 200 cases per 100,000 is desired and the county is at 295 now. He stated the County hasn't given any indication as to next steps but there is a call Friday morning and he will follow up with the County to see what next steps are.

Councilmember Chen opined the South Bay cities are doing well in terms of numbers and state leadership doesn't allow separation of cities from the county watch list.

Assistant City Manager Chaparyan clarified the objective is to be below 100 per 100,000 for 14 days.

Councilmember Griffiths voiced his frustration that the State allows certain counties greater freedoms based on their numbers yet the County can't do the same for cities that are doing well, such as Torrance. He opined the method of determining which businesses should or shouldn't be open is arbitrary, stating big box stores with hundreds of patrons are allowed to operate while small businesses with minimal foot traffic cannot survive. He stated it could be months of waiting for the rest of the county to meet the numbers and maybe the South Bay should look to be forming its own county as opposed to being part of Los Angeles County. He concluded Torrance is being penalized for the sins of other cities.

Councilmember Kalani stated at one time Council gathered together to make phone calls and send letters to State and County leadership and asked to continue to communicate that Torrance has met all the numbers.

Mayor Furey stated the country is in a public health crisis and economic crisis and the response was let down at the offset. He furthered this is a national issue and not just a Torrance or LA County issue. He noted the last time businesses began reopening there was a huge spike in numbers since people come from other cities and shop and eat in Torrance. He used the closure of major league sports as an example for how serious the virus is.

MOTION: Councilmember Chen moved to accept and file. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Goodrich and passed by 7-0 vote.

9B. UPDATE ON COYOTE MANAGEMENT PLAN, INTER-DEPARTMENTAL TRANSFER, AND TRAPPING SERVICES

Recommendation of the Police Chief and Community Services Director that City Council:

- 1) Receive an update on the 2019-20 Coyote Management Plan and trapping season; and
- 2) Receive an overview of the inter-departmental transfer and future operations of the Coyote Management Program as it transitions from the Police Department to the Community Services Department; and
- 3) Direct staff on the continuation of coyote trapping services and associated funding for the 2020-21 season.

Police Chief Eve Berg introduced the item.

With the aid of slides, Sergeant David Koenig provided a background on the 2016 Urban Coyote Management Plan since its adoption. He went over the four goals set for the Coyote Management Plan: five-month trapping period; hiring a part-time Coyote Management Staff Assistant; establish education and outreach; staff a 24-hour coyote hotline.

Staff Assistant Peggy Vadillo Orenstein provided an overview of her role and strategies for community outreach.

Sergeant Koenig touched on the 24-hour hotline and the interactive coyote map on the City's website. He explained the methods of outreach and education, as well as the challenges met by staff.

Community Services Director John Jones explained the transition steps as the Coyote Management program transfers from the Police Department to the Community Services Department.

Staff Assistant Vadillo Orenstein explained the strategy for the Coyote Management Plan moving forward through virtual neighborhood forums and creating an outreach program for businesses and citizens.

Councilmember Ashcraft noted the large concentration of sightings in North Torrance on the map, and asked why no coyotes were trapped there.

Sergeant Koenig explained at the beginning of trapping there was an even base amount of coyote activity and sightings across the city. As trapping to the south reduced sightings in the south, coyotes may have traveled north looking for a food source. He explained the north borders Gardena and Lawndale, noting difficulties for trapping near El Camino, the Dominguez flood channel, and the freeway. He stated there is a large number of nurseries in North Torrance and trapping on those properties is challenging due to the openness and the fact that they are privately

owned and leased out. In response to a follow-up question from Councilmember Ashcraft, Sergeant Koenig confirmed staff can work together with some of those businesses and do a site survey to evaluate if there are viable locations to trap within the nurseries.

Councilmember Kalani asked why the five-month timing was chosen.

Sergeant Koenig responded the timeframe was chosen by prior Council and it is based on the mating season as well as when the coyotes are pregnant with pups.

Councilmember Kalani asked if there can be specific trapping days at the nurseries where hiking or walking activities are closed.

Sergeant Koenig explained trapping is a several-day process that involves setting and checking the traps that would interrupt the daily operations of the nurseries. Responding to a follow-up question from Councilmember Kalani, he stated surrounding cities except Rolling Hills don't have a coyote management program like Torrance and those that do base it off Torrance's program. He shared staff reached out to South Bay Cities Council of Governments and other cities in 2016 and 2017 looking for a regional approach, but at the time other cities didn't have an identified problem and were not interested.

Councilmember Kalani asked if it would be possible to reach out to other cities again and look into the program being year-round.

Sergeant Koenig stated the City can reach out to other cities and the trapping timeframe is up to Council.

In response to a question from Councilmember Griffiths, Sergeant Koenig stated the cities on the hill are also trapping but they are contracted with LA County on an as-needed basis. When the City reached out to the County in 2016 they were not taking on any more cities.

Councilmember Griffiths voiced his concern if Torrance traps but neighboring cities don't trap, coyotes will continue to populate around the city and come into the city for food with diminished competition from trapping. He reiterated this is a regional problem. Looking at maps, he noted the problem in north and southwest Torrance with zero coyotes trapped in those regions, asking how many traps have been put up in each area and what the trending patterns for the sightings are. He stated the necessity of statistics and trends to make informed decisions. He suggested statistics by quadrant on a weekly and monthly basis as well as trapping months versus non-trapping months that show trapping efforts and trends to better demonstrate where and how often to trap.

Chief Berg reminded Council this is the first season for trapping so there isn't a lot of data and statistics but staff is currently evaluating trends. She stated this update is to receive guidance on whether or not to trap for 12 months or for five months. She stated staff observed migration into the north end as it occurred and placed traps in the area but didn't get any coyotes. Now, after the first season, the department is seeing problem areas and can work with nurseries to trap safely on public open areas and private areas.

Councilmember Griffiths asked for clarification regarding trapping on private property.

City Attorney Sullivan stated the City must get permission from property owner and there are laws about notification to surrounding properties. He confirmed his office hasn't been asked to create forms or legal components to obtain such permission. He stated the process would be an agreement to allow the traps to be placed, noting concerns surrounding the placement of traps in areas with heavy foot traffic.

Councilmember Griffiths argued trapping on City-owned property limits placement to a small percentage of total land in the city. He suggested better use of data for a more aggressive pursuit of trapping on private property in coyote-prone areas. He suggested a one month on, one month off approach to more regular trapping throughout the year if 12-month trapping is prohibitive to the budget.

Community Development Director Danny Santana explained the CEQA study environmental analysis specifically stated the implementation of an annual coyote trapping program within a five-month period. He furthered if Council wants to extend that five-month period, the City would have to consult with the biologist on retainer in order to add to the technical data used in CEQA checklist and verify there would be no new environmental impact created by an expanded trapping program.

Councilmember Mattucci shared he spoke to Critter Busters and different trappers from different areas for feedback and explained snare traps are the most effective. He shared his opinions about the shortcomings of the coyote hotline, but noted the trappers referred to Torrance's plan as proactive and preventative whereas other cities take action after an incident occurs. He stated his preference for a year-round program that allows staff to follow trends throughout the year and doesn't allow for coyotes to breed and create additional pups to trap. He opined the data behind hazing is for coyotes in the wild and is ineffective against urban coyotes born and raised in urban noise. He asked about Option #3 in the Supplemental regarding month-to-month coyote trapping without going through CEQA.

Sergeant Koenig explained the City would have to consult the company that did the CEQA originally for any change to the timeframe. Option #3 refers to a month-to-month for a five-month fee. Option #1 guarantees five months of trapping with a reduced monthly fee and Option #3 gives the option to stop for any given month so the monthly fee is higher. Anything outside the contract would need to be renegotiated with Critter Busters.

Councilmember Mattucci stated his preference for 12-month approach as it would be aggressive and allow Torrance to set the trend for an eventual regional approach. He requested an item be brought back to discuss year-round trapping, CEQA re-evaluation, amount of traps, and if the City should use a different company.

Councilmember Chen stated he would like to see the tracking data presented similarly to COVID-19 data; times, dates, and locations for sightings as well as locations for trapping and comparison numbers before and after the trapping season. With respect to budget and funding, he concurred with Councilmember Griffiths' recommendation to trap every other month for a year instead of five consecutive months. He suggested looking at other vendors or trappers and comparing with LA County's services to the peninsula cities, concluding this should be treated as a regional issue.

Sergeant Koenig clarified the options, explaining the trapper is guaranteed five months of payment and service for Options #1 and #2 and are therefore a little bit cheaper. Options #3 is seven days a week on a month-to-month basis and #4 is five days a week month-to-month. He explained the month-to-month options are more expensive because the vendor is not guaranteed work after the first month. He reiterated any trapping outside October-March would require CEQA to be revisited and the company that performed the CEQA to see what the environmental impact outside those October-March months would be.

Councilmember Chen stated the data says the city need coverage 12 months of the year, even if not consecutively. He suggested using surveillance rather than manpower to check traps remotely.

Sergeant Koenig explained State law requires traps be manually checked daily, not remotely. He stated he would have to reach out to the vendor to see if it would be cheaper to do the ten months every other month. He explained trapping is regulated by California Fish and Wildlife so each trap is marked with the vendor's own license and has to be checked daily and if trapped, the coyote has to be dispatched or released. He stated traps have to be checked by the company that placed the trap, but he would look into the law to see if any changes were made regarding who can check the traps.

Councilmember Ashcraft asked if this went out to bid and if Critter Busters was chosen because they were the cheapest. She asked if there are other vendors out there and if an RFP was sent out.

Sergeant Koenig responded in 2019 the purchase order was done as a sole-source bid since there was a time restraint and Critter Busters was already familiar with the city and layout and had already done a site survey, so there was no RFP.

Councilmember Ashcraft suggested looking at how many other companies are out there, how they operate, and their prices.

Councilmember Mattucci emphasized this is a public safety issue and urged looking at getting year-round trapping done for under \$150,000 a year to have peace of mind. He stated the City needs to take a proactive approach that can be duplicated across the South Bay and other regions in order to control coyote numbers.

MOTION: Councilmember Mattucci moved to bring back an item to address the Coyote Management Plan with the intent to extend 12 months; compliance with CEQA; an RFP to determine the cost; and approve moving from the Police Department to the Community Services Department as the lead agency. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Chen and passed by 6-1 vote, with Councilmember Goodrich voting no.

9C. APPROVE DESIGNATION OF VOTING AND ALTERNATE VOTING DELEGATE FOR 2020 LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Recommendation of the Mayor that City Council approve the designation of Mayor Furey as the voting delegate and Councilmember Sharon Kalani as the alternate voting delegate to represent the City of Torrance at the 2020 League of California Cities First Virtual Annual Conference from October 7 through October 9, 2020.

Mayor Furey reviewed the staff recommendation.

MOTION: Councilmember Griffiths moved to concur with designation with Councilmember Kalani as the alternate. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mattucci and passed by 7-0 vote.

9D. RESOLUTION APPOINTING INTERIM CITY MANAGER

Recommendation of the City Manager that City Council adopt a Resolution appointing Aram Chaparyan as Interim City Manager.

Mayor Furey reviewed the staff recommendation.

Management Associate Katie Wand stated Aram Chaparyan in his capacity as Interim City Manager will be paid a salary at the rate of \$23,617 per month for the performance of the duties as Interim City Manager with the same benefits as delineated in Resolution No. 2019-89.

MOTION: Councilmember Chen moved to concur with staff's recommendation and adopt Resolution No. 2020-87. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mattucci and passed by 7-0 vote.

9E. AWARD AGREEMENT FOR THE SEPULVEDA BOULEVARD REHABILITATION, I-172

Recommendation of the Public Works Director that City Council:

- 1) Determine that the approval of Sepulveda Boulevard Rehabilitation, I-172 is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15301(c) of the guidelines implementing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and
- 2) Approve the plans and specifications for the Sepulveda Boulevard Rehabilitation, I-172; and
- 3) Award a public works agreement to All American Asphalt of Corona, CA (B2020-17) in the amount of \$3,092,535 with a 10% contingency of \$309,253 for construction of the Sepulveda Boulevard Rehabilitation, I-172, for a two-year period beginning August 18, 2020 and ending August 17, 2022.

Engineering Manager Shin Furukawa reviewed the staff recommendation.

Councilmember Griffiths questioned since the same contractor is currently doing the project in the Walteria area if there is a conflict of the contractor being able to perform both projects simultaneously.

Engineering Manager Furukawa explained the Walteria project will be ahead of the Sepulveda project and certain elements of construction such as concrete are done ahead of asphalt. He added the concrete crew can finish at Walteria and move on to Sepulveda and if there are separate crews for the two projects it would be a non-issue.

In response to Councilmember Griffiths' question regarding penalties for slow performance, Engineering Manager Furukawa stated all projects typically have a liquidated damages clause if they exceed contract duration. This particular project is 110 working days.

At Councilmember Mattucci's request, Engineering Manager Furukawa explained the funding source for this project is Proposition C funds, a tax measure imposed upon the county that are distributed based on a per-capita formula and are not General funds.

Public Works Director Craig Bilezerian stated this project has been proposed in the capital budget for the last two budget cycles and the construction funds became available July 1. The City receives several million dollars in Proposition C funds on a per-capita basis every year and has to propose eligible projects that are backed for approval by Metro to meet the auditing requirements.

MOTION: Councilmember Griffiths moved to concur with the recommendation of staff. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Kalani and passed by 7-0 vote.

- 10. **HEARINGS** – None scheduled
- 11. **AGENCY AGENDAS** – None scheduled
- 12. **SECOND READING ORDINANCES** – None scheduled
- 13. **CITY COUNCIL ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Councilmember Mattucci, Councilmember Chen, Councilmember Griffiths, Councilmember Kalani, and Mayor Furey spoke.

14. **CLOSED SESSION**

The City Council recessed to closed session at 10:46 p.m. and reconvened in public session at 11:10 p.m. No formal action was taken on any item considered in closed session.

15. **ADJOURNMENT**


At 11:10 p.m., the City Council adjourned to Tuesday, August 25, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. for closed session, with the regular meeting commencing at 7:00 p.m. In compliance with Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-29-20, which suspended portions of the Brown Act, members of the Torrance City Council and staff will participate in this meeting via teleconference and other electronic means in our continuing effort to practice social distancing to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Members of the public are encouraged to watch the meeting via CitiCABLE Channel 3 (Spectrum) and Channel 31 (Frontier), streaming on TorranceCA.Gov, Facebook @ City of Torrance CA Government, and YouTube Channel TorranceCitiCABLE.

MOTION: Councilmember Mattucci moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Kalani and passed by 7-0 vote.

Attest:



Rebecca Poirier
City Clerk of the City of Torrance



Mayor of the City of Torrance
Approved on September 15, 2020