

June 9, 1975

MINUTES OF A BUDGET WORKSHOP SESSION  
OF THE TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL

OPENING CEREMONIES:

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Torrance City Council convened in a Budget Workshop Session on Monday, June 9, 1975, at 5:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Councilwoman Geissert; Councilmen Armstrong, Brewster, Uerkwitz, and Mayor Miller. Councilman Surber arrived at 5:20 P.M. Absent: Councilman Wilson.

Also present: City Manager Ferraro, City Attorney Remelmeyer, City Clerk Coil, Finance Director Dundore, and Budget Officer Ng.

3. FLAG SALUTE:

Building and Safety Director McKinnon led in the salute to the flag.

4. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE:

Chamber of Commerce findings relative to the 1975-76 Budget, as presented at the Budget Workshop Session of June 5th, and a matter of formal record, were reviewed by Finance Director Dundore. Areas of response encompassed: the Contingency Fund; the Utility Users Tax; the Transit System; and the Water Revenue contribution to the General Fund.

The cutting of Building Department services recommended by the Chamber of Commerce was rebutted by Building and Safety Director McKinnon -- his statement pointed out the fallacy of the recommendation, and he presented transparencies with supporting statistics for his position.

5. WATER SYSTEM - RATE INCREASE/CAPITAL OUTLAY NEEDS:

Water System Manager Borgwat provided a detailed, graphic presentation of Water Department functions, the proposed rate increase, Capital Outlay needs, storage improvements and requirements, proposed Water Revenue Bonds, etc.

It was the direction of the Council, following lengthy discussion, that Staff return with statistics on the impact of a 3¢ water rate increase, as opposed to the recommended 5¢ increase.

Mr. Bernie Hollander, 22939 Nadine Circle, recommended that any water increase not be across the board, but, rather, slanted for a smaller increase on the smaller user, and a much

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heavier increase on the large users; a graduated increase would be equitable and very much in order. Mr. Hollander also questioned the propriety of considering a revenue bond prior to voter approval.

It was stated by Councilman Brewster that the Council should look to the Water Commission for a recommendation as to whether or not to proceed with some kind of an election with respect to revenue bonds in view of the tremendous necessary groundwork prior to such an undertaking.

In response to a question presented by Mr. Neal Casey, 3700 West 190th Street, Water System Manager Borgwat advised that there will be no significant increase in the demands on the water system for the coming year.

6. MANPOWER PROGRAM REPORT.

Assistant to the City Manager Jackson provided the Manpower Program Report, and clarified the proposed revisions in the Manpower budget.

7. RETIREMENT ADJUSTMENT FOR ALL RETIRED EMPLOYEES.

RECOMMENDATION OF FINANCE COMMITTEE:

That Council adopt the resolution implementing Senate Bill 135; that the City Council spread the liability over ten years, and, finally, that the City Council review and analyze what source of funding should be used and what adjustments to the budget should be made in order to offset the estimated \$35,000 1975 fiscal year cost.

It was the direction of Mayor Miller that City Manager Ferraro report back at the next Budget Workshop Session as to what might be eliminated from the existing proposed budget to compensate for such adjustment - or possibly what additional revenue should be raised for the compensation.

8. UTILITY USERS' TAX EXEMPTION FOR SENIOR CITIZENS.

Finance Director Dundore presented the Council-requested alternatives relative to the Utility Users' tax exemption for Senior Citizens.

Following discussion, it was the request of Mayor Miller that Staff return with possible sources of additional revenue in the event of implementation.

Councilman Brewster pointed out the need for proper qualifications, something more than income levels, in setting up such exemption -- net worth must be a consideration. Mr. Brewster also indicated that he would favor other ways of achieving benefits for Senior Citizens, rather than by way of a direct rebate. Concurrence was voiced by Councilman Armstrong. It was the opinion of Mayor Miller that the return of actual cash money, rather than going into a program, would be more meaningful to the Senior Citizens.

It was the request of Councilwoman Geissert that Finance Director Dundore obtain input from the City of Los Angeles regarding their experience in a like program.

9. LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

Library Commission Chairman, Mr. James Pierson, in a prepared statement (of official record) outlined the problems presented by the proposed Library cut-backs, and reiterated the recommendation of the Library Commission: that the total Library budget be restored to last year's level, along with his own recommendation that the details of the Library budget be studied more carefully by the Staff.

Further Council review was indicated, it being the suggestion of Councilwoman Geissert that, in any event, there should be Mid Year Budget Review regarding the impact of the ultimate action taken by the Council.

10. LEGAL OPINION ON OCEAN AVENUE LAND.

The request of AYSO for use of the subject land was noted by City Attorney Remelmeyer who pointed out that were such land acquired, it would be public park land, for public use, and at its optimum should be under the control of the City. Acknowledged by Mr. Remelmeyer was the time which will be required for the improvement of such a park to make it useable for public enjoyment, and the Council policy over the years of making public land available to youth sports organizations on an interim basis until such time as the necessary improvement funds are available.

It would be legal to make this land available, per Mr. Remelmeyer, under certain circumstances, on an interim basis. It was the City Attorney's recommendation that, in this case, the land could be used by AYSO, on a non-exclusive basis, controlled by the City, meeting City specifications, with City programming for other youth organizations and for general public use on hours not used by the sports organization. Also noted by Mr. Remelmeyer was the needed official approval re: Federal and State grants.

11. SUR LA BREA PARK LAND ACQUISITION.

City Attorney Remelmeyer reviewed the June 10th correspondence regarding Sur La Brea Park (of record), along with a color-coded map depicting the locations of the wells -- also noted was the "recanting of position" by Oil Board members Nowicki and Mandell, it now being their position to support the purchase of the surface rights to all the parcels east of the Park and the purchase and abandonment of the four wells, namely Torrance #1, Powers #1 and #2, and Boer #1. It was the further stated opinion of Messrs. Nowicki and Mandell (per June 9th communication) that Orr #1, Baass #2 and Wilson #2 should remain operational under present ownership.

Likewise noted by Mr. Remelmeyer was the \$110,000 budgeted for Sur La Brea Park, via Park and Recreation Facilities Funds, in the 1975-76 Budget, plus some \$85,000 in carry-over from the current budget -- that being sufficient to purchase the Cox and Ripling parcels.

Mr. Remelmeyer then outlined the necessary procedures in pursuing the plans now proposed for Sur La Brea Park, followed by Council review of the overall project.

Mrs. Marion Lyman, 1922 West 237th Street, extended congratulations to the City Attorney for his efforts in this matter, and indicated much pleasure with what is proposed for Sur La Brea Park, urging that abandonment of the wells go forward in order that the land may be graded and planted.

Concurrence with Mrs. Lyman's comments was indicated by Mr. Bill McKim, president, Southeast Torrance Homeowners Association who also stressed the hazards represented by oil wells in play areas for children, and who urged their removal at the earliest possible date.

12. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Mr. Lowell O'Brien, 2306 West 180th Street, noted the Water Commission study over a long period of time regarding the improvement and development of the reservoir and overall water system in Torrance, and the absence of any concerted effort by Administration and the Council to implement any of the projects recommended in the Brown and Caldwell Report.

Mr. O'Brien also expressed his opposition to the proposed transfer of water funds into the General Fund; they should be held for needed projects at hand.

13. BUDGET WORKSHOP CONTINUATION:

It was agreed that Budget Workshop Sessions be scheduled for Wednesday, June 11th, 5:00 P.M., and Thursday, June 12th, at 5:00 P.M.

14. ADJOURNMENT:

At 8:05 P.M., this Budget Workshop Session adjourned to the Regular Meeting of the City Council on June 10, 1975, at 7:00 P.M. -- the next Budget Session to occur on Wednesday, June 11th, at 5:00 P.M.

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APPROVED:

*Ken Miller*

Mayor of the City of Torrance  
Ava Cripe  
Minute Secretary

*Vernon W. Coil*  
Vernon W. Coil, Clerk of the  
City of Torrance

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