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Torrance, California  
April 8, 1941

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

The City Council of the City of Torrance convened in a Regular Meeting in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Torrance, California, on Tuesday evening, April 8, 1941 at 7:45 P.M.

Mayor McGuire called the meeting to order.

Clerk Bartlett called the roll, those answering present being Councilmen: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. Absent: Councilmen: None.

Councilman Murray moved that the minutes of a Regular Meeting held March 25, 1941 and of an Adjourned Regular Meeting held April 1, 1941 be approved as written. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A communication was read from The Regional Planning Commission of the County of Los Angeles, advising that the request of the City of Torrance to change the name of the proposed Lomita Airport to Torrance Airport will be given serious consideration by said Regional Planning Commission.

A communication was read from Richfield Oil Corporation, enclosing check in the amount of \$121.18 to cover payment of Franchise earnings for the period from January 1, 1940 to December 31, 1940 under City of Torrance Franchise Ordinance No. 92 and County of Los Angeles Franchise No. 1358 (amended by Ordinance No. 1361). Matter of record.

A communication was read from the Metropolitan Water District advising that the District will deliver, free of charge, during the period of June 1 to July 31, 1941, soft and filtered aqueduct water to the City of Torrance in such quantities as may be required, this to be in connection with the District's construction program in order that whatever adaptations are required to put the works on an operating basis may be made. It was requested that the City advise the General Manager and Chief Engineer of the District whether the City of Torrance desires the District to deliver aqueduct water into its municipal water system without charge during the period between June 1 and July 31, 1941; and, if same is desired, in what quantities it will be required.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the City Council meet with Water Manager Stanger and discuss the advisability of having the Metropolitan Water District make delivery of aqueduct water into the Torrance Municipal Water System during the period June 1 to July 31, 1941, free of charge as outlined by the Metropolitan Water District; the Chief Engineer and General Manager of the District to be notified of the decision. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from Anthony Prutch, requesting permit to sell fireworks at 2206 - 239th Street, Torrance, during the 1941 \*\*\*\*  
Councilman Hitchcock moved that the request be granted. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

\*\*\*\* fireworks sales period.

A communication was read from Wilbur A. Hornstra, requesting permit to operate a dairy on the north 1/2 of Lot 20, Meadow Park Tract.

A communication was read from the County of Los Angeles Department of Health, advising that the location is suitable for a dairy provided certain requirements for the milking barn and drainage are met.

Council Hitchcock moved that the request of Mr. Hornstra be granted. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the Torrance Municipal Water District recommending the purchase from the Wm. R. Staats Company, 640 South Spring Street, Los Angeles of two \$1,000.00 M.I.D. #1 bonds for \$2635.38, including \$33.00 accumulated interest to date, at a saving of \$1,764.62 to the Water District in the life of the 1962 bonds. It was stated that Mr. Robinson of the Wm. R. Staats Company had advised by telephone that the bonds could be purchased for the amount above mentioned.

Councilman Babcock moved that the purchase of two (2) 1962 \$1,000.00 M.I.D. bonds from the Wm. R. Staats Company be authorized. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read from J. H. Stroh, Chief of Police, recommending that parking limit signs be placed (1) at the corner of Marcelina Avenue and Sartori Avenue and (2) one at Carson Street and Andreo Avenue, at a cost of \$4.50 each, plus sales tax.

Councilman Powell moved that Chief Stroh's recommendation be complied with. Councilman Murray seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read from the Loyal Order of Moose No. 785, signed by J. A. Evans, Acting Secretary, objecting to the manner in which applications for the positions of bus drivers for the Torrance Municipal Bus Lines has been handled, contending that the applicants had not been given an opportunity to fill out applications stating their qualifications for the jobs.

Councilman Murray remarked that he felt convinced the Moose Lodge had been misinformed as to the manner of handling the matter and moved that L. J. Gilmeister, Manager of the Torrance Municipal Bus Lines, be authorized to direct a letter to Mr. Evans, furnishing him with the real facts. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the Crown Water Company, requesting the City to assume responsibility for furnishing water to fifteen consumers in North Torrance, formerly served by Crown Water Company, now insolvent, and offering to turn over all land, pump and equipment of said company to the City. It was mentioned in the letter that a communication had been directed to the Council some two months ago regarding this matter, and that, in the meantime, the consumers concerned had been furnished water from a privately owned well.

A memorandum from City Attorney McCall was read regarding this matter, stating that the persons connected with Crown Water Company had contacted him several times, submitting their offer as outlined in the above communication.

Engineer Jain said he had estimated the cost of putting the well into operating condition at \$3000.00

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the matter be referred to the City Council as a whole for further investigation. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

\*further

Councilman Murray asked Mr. Kirsch, owner of the private well, who has been furnishing water to the fifteen consumers, if he could be called upon to furnish information, the answer being in the affirmative.

A communication was read from B. J. Scott, urging that the City Council abandon the reported intention of dismissing City Judge Robert Lessing from office.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

ORDINANCE NO. 323

AN ORDINANCE CHANGING AND ESTABLISHING THE NAME OF STREETS ALONG THE ROUTING OF U. S. HIGHWAY 101, ALTERNATE, STATE ROUTE 60 VARIOUSLY KNOWN AS STATE HIGHWAY WILMINGTON BOULEVARD, REDONDO-WILMINGTON BOULEVARD, WILMINGTON ROAD, AND 258TH STREET, IN THE CITY OF TORRANCE.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that further reading of Ordinance No. 323 be dispensed with. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Ordinance No. 323 be adopted for final reading. Councilman Murray seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented the application of Shell Oil Company, Inc. for a franchise for pipe line, which matter has been held in abeyance since March 25, 1941.

Attorney McCall said a few changes had been made in the application whereby the City will receive between \$1300.00 and \$2,000.00 for the franchise and excavation, and after five years for the next forty years, the City will receive a minimum of \$40.00 per mile for pipe line laid pursuant to said franchise. Further, he said, if any future legislation is passed which will be more favorable to the City than the present legislation, the application provides that the City will receive the benefit of the more favorable legislation.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1436

RESOLUTION DIRECTING PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF SALE OF FRANCHISE.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1436 be adopted. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1437

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE ACCEPTING EASEMENT DEEDS FROM CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNERS FOR STREET AND HIGHWAY PURPOSES (HAWTHORNE AVENUE-TORRANCE BOULEVARD TO REDONDO BEACH BOULEVARD).

Councilman Babcock moved that Resolution No. 1437 be adopted. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1438

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE ACCEPTING QUIT CLAIM DEEDS FROM CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNERS FOR STREET & HIGHWAY PURPOSES (HATHORNE AVENUE-TORRANCE BLVD. TO REDONDO BEACH BLVD.).

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1439

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE ACCEPTING PARTIAL RECONVEYANCE OF DEED OF TRUST AND PARTIAL RELEASE OF MORTGAGE FOR HIGHWAY EASEMENTS (HAWTHORNE AVE.-TORRANCE BLVD. TO REDONDO BEACH BLVD.).

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1439 be adopted. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1440

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE ACCEPTING EASEMENT DEED FROM CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNERS FOR STREET AND HIGHWAY PURPOSES (S.E. COR. SEPULVEDA BLVD. & NARBONNE AVE.).

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1440 be adopted. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1441

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE ACCEPTING DEED HIGHWAY EASEMENT FROM CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNERS FOR STREET AND HIGHWAY PURPOSES (HAWTHORNE AVENUE-HUNTINGTON STREET TO 190TH STREET).

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Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1441 be adopted. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1442

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO SIGN RIGHT OF WAY CONTRACTS FOR PROPERTY ACQUIRED FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENT ON HAWTHORNE AVENUE BETWEEN TORRANCE BOULEVARD AND REDONDO BEACH BOULEVARD IN THE CITY OF TORRANCE.

Councilman Babcock moved that Resolution No. 1442 be adopted. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1443

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE FINDING AND DETERMINING THAT THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND NECESSITY REQUIRE THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION AND COMPLETION BY THE SAID CITY OF TORRANCE OF A CERTAIN PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT, TO-WIT: THE IMPROVEMENT OF HAWTHORNE AVENUE, IN SAID CITY, BETWEEN TORRANCE BOULEVARD AND REDONDO BEACH BOULEVARD, AND THAT THE ACQUISITION OF AN EASEMENT FOR HIGHWAY PURPOSES OVER THE REAL PROPERTY HEREIN DESCRIBED IS NECESSARY THEREFOR; AND DIRECTING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO BRING AND PROSECUTE AN ACTION IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE CONDEMNATION THEREOF.

Councilman Babcock moved that Resolution No. 1443 be adopted. Councilman Murray seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Mayor McGuire explained for the benefit of those in the assemblage that the resolutions just passed are in connection with acquiring right of way on Hawthorne Avenue, a state highway, in order that said highway may be widened to 100 feet, and paved from 60' to 80', 1/4 State Highway Gas Tax Funds to be expended therefor.

A communication was read from the Division of Highways, enclosing first supplemental memorandum of agreement for expenditure of 1/4 gas tax for State Highways within the City of Torrance for the 1939-41 biennium, in accordance with project statement submitted by City of Torrance. Suggested form of resolution for execution of the agreement by the City was attached.

Clerk Bartlett read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1444

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
TORRANCE APPROVING FIRST SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM  
OF AGREEMENT FOR EXPENDITURE OF 1/4 CENT GAS TAX  
ALLOCATED FOR STATE HIGHWAYS.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1444 be adopted. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Engineer Jain reported the Vista Highlands Sewer Project completed as of March 31, 1941, and suggested that a letter be directed to the Works Progress Administration expressing appreciation for fine cooperation rendered while the job was in progress.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Engineer Jain be requested to write a letter to the Works Progress Administration expressing appreciation for cooperation given the City in connection with the Vista Highlands Sewer Project. Councilman Murray seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Powell moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$194.50 be made for supplies for the Fire Department, an itemized list of which he read. Councilman Murray seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Powell moved that the office of City Judge Robert Lessing be vacated, effective as of this date. Councilman Murray seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Murray and Powell. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Hitchcock and McGuire. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Murray moved that John Shidler, Attorney of this City, be appointed to fill the vacancy in the office of the City Judge. Councilman Powell seconded the motion.

Councilman Hitchcock offered a substitute motion at this time, moving that Albert Isen, Attorney, be appointed Judge of the City of Torrance.

Councilman Hitchcock introduced his motion by remarking that "There is a gentleman in town here who has been a practicing attorney for a number of years, who has been very highly recommended numerous times for that office at any time it was vacated."

After a brief period, Councilman Hitchcock's substitute motion was declared lost for want of a second.

The following roll call vote was taken on Councilman Murray's motion, seconded by Councilman Powell, to appoint John Shidler to fill the vacancy in the office of City Judge. AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Murray moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$100.00 be made to enlarge the picnic area at the Municipal Park. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

In connection with the action taken by the City Council at an Adjourned Regular Meeting held April 1, 1941 in denying the Coordinating Council the use of the Civic Auditorium for the purpose of holding regular Friday night dances after April 4, 1941 until such time as the Coordinating Council can assure the Council that the dances will be conducted in an orderly manner to the complete satisfaction of the City Council, Councilman Murray remarked that it had not been, and never would be, the intention of the City Council to discontinue the dances permanently, but that it was felt either the dances should be under different management, or that the other management should handle the dances in a different manner. He said the action should not be construed to mean that the Coordinating Council could not have the dances at a later date.

Councilman Murray moved that, in the meantime, the dances be placed under the supervision of the Recreation Department of the City of Torrance. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Hitchcock. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Note: (In repeating the motion, Mayor McGuire stated "the motion has been made and seconded that the public dances which have been sponsored by the Coordinating Council, be put under the supervision of the Recreation Department of the City Council, composed of Mr. Powell, Mr. Murray and Mr. Babcock", at which time Councilman Murray remarked that Mr. Riley should also be included, being advised by Mayor McGuire that, although Mr. Riley is a member of the Recreation "Department", he is not a member of the Recreation "Committee" of the City Council, the roll call vote being taken subsequently).

Councilman Murray advised Mr. Dale Riley of the City Recreation Department that a set of rules had been drawn up, which he (Mr. Riley) could obtain during or after the Council Meeting.

Councilman Babcock moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$110.00 each be made for two (2) cash boxes for the Torrance Municipal Bus Lines. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Babcock read a communication addressed to him from W. H. Stanger, Manager of the Water Department (Torrance Municipal Water District No. 1) in answer to Councilman Babcock's inquiry regarding the offer of the Metropolitan Water District to furnish free water through the municipal water system during the months of June and July, 1941. Mr. Stanger submitted comparative figures of profit and loss to be experienced by the Water Department in the event the City elects to allow the Metropolitan Water District to furnish water as outlined above. (This communication directed to Councilman Babcock as a result of a news story published in the Torrance Herald April 3, 1941 in which statements were made to the effect that the water would not be free to the residents, which statements, remarked Mr. Stanger, were his opinions only and could be overruled at any time by a 3/5 vote of the Council).

Councilman Murray moved that the communication addressed to Councilman Babcock from W. H. Stanger, and read by Councilman Babcock, be referred to the Torrance Herald with the request that it be given the same prominence in the newspaper as was given the April 3, 1941 article relating to the subject. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Mayor McGuire moved that an appropriation of \$350.00 be made for one Allen-Wales Duplex electric adding machine for the City Clerk's office. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

letter was never read here. There was no mention made of the request for that \$100.00. Don't misunderstand me, now. That appropriation is merited in every sense. There is a question as to whether there is a cover-up, and if there is a cover-up in the matter of \$100.00, there is an indication that there are other things that are worse. The meeting the other day was not a regular Council meeting. I understand four of you gentlemen participated in it and there were some rather rough things said. I would like to have a statement on that."

Mayor McGuire explained that money cannot possibly be appropriated by the City Council to a private organization under any circumstances; that requests of this nature must be referred to the City's advertising agent, the Torrance Chamber of Commerce, who can appropriate funds to private organizations who advertise the City of Torrance. He added that the Chamber of Commerce furnishes the City with an itemized bill on all appropriations of this nature. He said the letter in question had been handled in this manner. Further, he stated, every cent expended by the City of Torrance is authorized by the City Attorney, City Clerk, City Treasurer and every member of the City Council.

Mrs. Roxie Sleeth, 1616 Post Avenue, said that an answer as to why Judge Lessing had been dismissed was still awaited and that, so far as the matter referred to which took place a "long time ago", Judge Lessing had been absolved of blame and that the Council had seen fit to retain him in office. Therefore, she continued, if any blame is to be placed, let it be placed on the City Council, the members of which are as guilty as Judge Lessing or they would not have retained him as Judge for so long a time.

(Applause from the assemblage)

Mrs. Flora Wright, 1951 Carson Street, representing the Coordinating Council, expressed the Coordinating Council's faith in Judge Lessing and vigorously protested the removal of Robert Lessing from the office of City Judge. She stated that she had three petitions signed by residents protesting the removal, and that a number of other persons in the assemblage were also holding petitions similar.

(Applause)

Councilman Powell moved all bills properly audited be paid. Councilman Murray seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Murray, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Murray moved to adjourn the meeting, which action brought forth disorderly conduct of the assemblage, protesting that they would stay all night if necessary to get the answer they were demanding.

Mr. Straszer requested that the petitions referred to by Mrs. Wright be read. He was advised that Mrs. Wright had not presented them to the Council, but had only remarked that she had them.

Mayor McGuire stated that he wished to correct the Torrance Herald on a statement made in last week's paper in which it was asserted that the Council would not read a letter written by Judge Lessing in answer to the letter sent him by the Ministerial Association requesting that the dances be closed. He said that the letter in question was not addressed to the City Council, and was unsigned; that it is not customary to read letters addressed to others than the City Council; that the copy of the letter had been handed to the City Clerk's office for reference and convenience.

The assemblage exhibited quite a display of chagrin when no definite commitment was forthcoming from the Council in answer to their direct demand for an answer as to why Robert Lessing was dismissed from the office of City Judge. They evidenced their displeasure by repeatedly "booing" the City Council, Mayor McGuire being compelled to call the meeting to order several times.

There appeared to be quite an attempt on the part of the assemblage to coerce the City Council into making individual statements, giving the reason or reasons for the dismissal.

Councilman Babcock stated as follows:

"I would make this statement. At the time that the proposition was brought up before, I did not see fit to be drawn into anything that was political, so far as that setup was concerned, which you know about. I have always been of the contention that Judge Lessing was wrong and I have always been in favor of somebody else in the office, but I could not at that time justify myself to vote for someone that I did not think would not satisfy me in that office and as I think John Shidler is satisfactory to me and to the rest of the Council, I was therefore willing to vote for the removal of Judge Lessing and placing John Shidler in as Judge of the City of Torrance."

The assemblage again gave a demonstration of its unrest by its unfavorable reception of this statement, resorting to bold remarks and insinuations. It was again necessary for Mayor McGuire to call the meeting to order.

Grover Whyte, Editor of the Torrance Herald, stated he would like to clarify the point in regard to the letter assertedly presented and not read.

Mayor McGuire asked him whether or not he had been present at the meeting at which time the incident took place, his answer being "no, but my representative was."

He continued by stating that the letter was addressed to the Ministerial Association, a copy of which was furnished the City Clerk's office, and that the reason given for not reading it was that it was a carbon copy, but that, even so, Reverend Roloff, Secretary of the Ministerial Association, had been present and presented the original of the letter, properly addressed and signed by the President of the Coordinating Council. As such, he said, he felt this was information that "any broad-minded Council should welcome."

Mayor McGuire stated that Mr. Whyte had not been present at the meeting in question, and that there had been no reference made as to the letter being a carbon copy, adding that Mr. Whyte's information is second hand, Councilman Murray inserting the statement "and it is not correct information", Mr. Whyte's answer being "my representative will verify my statements."

Mr. Straszer requested that certain portions of the minutes of April 1, 1941 be read, which request was complied with.

Councilman Murray remarked that this is another exhibition of the Torrance Herald trying to influence the Council to some extent, and added that, to his own knowledge, the Torrance Herald had had access to last meeting's minutes immediately they were finished. Councilman Murray added that he had also read the rough copy of the minutes and had asked that a certain clause be inserted in the minutes wherein, he said, he made the remark that, although the Torrance Herald had been used as a club over the heads of previous Councils, such would not be the case with the present Council. In his opinion, he said, the Torrance Herald is run "on the basis of hoodlumism".

Mrs. Wright asked if it is customary to take away the rights of good renters, such as the Coordinating Council had been during the time the Auditorium has been rented for dances for the past four years.

Jack Miller, also representing the Coordinating Council, said the Coordinating Council intended to protest this move, and that every dance held in the Auditorium would also be protested by the Coordinating Council. Mr. Miller asked whether or not the Council could close the Coordinating Council dance, to which Mayor McGuire replied that the building could be closed. Mr. Miller stated that if the Council did not rent the building to the Coordinating Council at the same price it is rented to others, "you are going to close it to the others."

Mr. Ray Burdick, 1006 Sartori Avenue, remarked that he had known Bob Lessing for many years, having worked with him through scouting and other activities. He said he considered Bob Lessing to be one of the finest and most outstanding citizens of the City of Torrance. He added that he also feels John Shidler is a fine young man, but that the ousting of Bob Lessing from the office of City Judge and appointment of John Shidler to fill the office is a rash injustice. He said matters have reached a pitiful stage when men of the city government handle things in such an underhanded manner as he feels this matter has been handled. Notice was taken, he continued, of the two Councilmen who voted in favor of retaining Judge Lessing, and notice also taken of the Councilmen who voted in favor of dismissing him.

Grover Whyte read a portion of the minutes of April 1, 1941 in which Councilman Murray remarked that Judge Lessing being Chairman of the Coordinating was "another thing I have against the Coordinating Council." He asked Councilman Murray if that was what he said, the reply being "that is exactly what I said; that is exactly what I meant".

Mrs. Flora Wright presented the three petitions referred to on Page 8, which were read by Clerk Bartlett, the petitions bearing 131 signatures of persons protesting removal from office of Judge Lessing.

Wallace Gilbert, 1631 Cota Avenue, said about 90% of the businessmen in the City had signed one of the petitions being circulated protesting removal of Bob Lessing from office.

Jack Miller asked that it be stricken from the record that the Council had closed the dances sponsored by the Coordinating Council, and that a substitute motion be made indicating that the Council refused to rent the auditorium to the Coordinating Council. He said he wanted it made clear in the record that the Council refused to rent the auditorium to the Coordinating Council.

Councilman Powell said his understanding of the motion was that the building was to be denied the Coordinating Council for the purpose of holding dances until such time as the City Council could be assured that the Coordinating Council would conduct the dances in a manner proper and suitable to the Council.

Mr. Miller said what he was referring to was the Council's action to turn the dances over to the Recreation Department of the City of Torrance. He said he would like an opportunity to meet with the Council and present the record of the Coordinating Council for the past four years, showing that the Coordinating Council had paid all necessary expenses, it not being necessary to ask for donations of any kind.

Councilman Babcock moved that Jack Miller be given an opportunity to appear before the Council and present the record of the Coordinating Council as requested. Councilman Powell seconded the motion.

Councilman Hitchcock said Mr. Straszer had made the very same request at the meeting of April 1, 1941, in asking that the Coordinating Council be allowed to appear before the Council and present their defense before the dances were closed. He said the request coming from Jack Miller is in the form of an individual request, and, as such, he cannot see the advisability of granting it.

Jack Miller asked the Council to present the Coordinating Council with a bill for property damaged, or claimed to be damaged, at the Auditorium during the Coordinating Council dances.

Mrs. Wright advised that the Coordinating Council had heretofore granted to the Toy Loan Library \$30.00 per month and now, since the Coordinating Council's main source of income had been cut off, she said she felt the City Council should assume the obligation of paying the Toy Loan the \$30.00 per month.

The discussion continued along the same lines, Jack Miller insisting that the Council cannot stop the Coordinating Council dances, but can only deny the use of the Civic Auditorium to the Coordinating Council, and that the City Council cannot take away the dances sponsored by the Coordinating Council and place them under the supervision of the City Recreation Department. He asked that the motion be rescinded until his committee has been given an opportunity to meet with the Council and present facts and figures for study. In connection with the motion made to allow Jack Miller to meet with the City Council, he said the motion in itself meant nothing if the motion of turning the dances over to the City Recreation Department is allowed to stand. He started to make a motion, but was informed he could not do so from the floor.

After prolonged discussion, being a repetition of the above, Mr. L. D. Redmond, 1626 Amapola Avenue, moved that the motion passed by the Council in turning the dances over to the City Recreation Department be rescinded until after a meeting is held between the City Council and the Coordinating Council Committee, the motion being out of order, coming from the floor.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the City Council rescind its action of turning the dances over to the Recreation Department until after a hearing is held with the Coordinating Council Committee. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Jack Miller thanked Councilman Hitchcock for making the above motion before the motion was seconded.

Grover Whyte asked whether it was meant to rescind the motion denying the Coordinating Council the use of the Civic Auditorium for the purpose of holding weekly dances until such time as they can assure the City Council the dances will be conducted to their satisfaction, or whether it was meant to rescind only the motion made in turning the dances over to the City Recreation Department.

Councilman Hitchcock answered that the motion was to rescind the motion turning the dances over to the City Recreation Department.

Councilman Murray said the City Council will be only too glad to have the Coordinating Council conduct the dances if they will agree to certain requirements, the requirements being only those which anyone renting a public building would make.

Grover Whyte remarked that all the irregularities charged to the dance had taken place outside the building, which would bring it under the jurisdiction of the Police Department, of which Councilman Powell, he said, is Commissioner. Therefore, he said, it is up to the Police Department to look into the matter.

V. W. Coil, 2107 Andreo Avenue, said he managed the dance and had been aware that Councilman Murray wanted to put the dances under the supervision of the Recreation Department. So far as supposed disorderly conduct of those attending the dances, he said, he would like to know if "anybody here can tell me of any of the kids that get any drunker than one of the councilmen here."

James O'Toole, 1225 Madrid Avenue, made the following statements:

"This is the second time in my memory in this town that the Judge has been removed. It is a proven fact in the United States that the politicians lay their hands off Judges. In my memory, there has been only one Judge removed in the State of California, and only once in my memory has an incumbent Judge been defeated, and the most popular man in the United States ran into trouble when he started to push the judiciary around, and I believe that the City Council will find the it will run into a lot of trouble by removing Judge Lessing. It is in my opinion, although I may be wrong, that this is the will of the people; I do not cast any reflections on Judges preceding Judge Lessing, but in my opinion, and what I have seen of Judge Lessing, he has been the finest Judge that Torrance has ever had. I cast no reflections on Charlie Rippey. I think he is a fine attorney. He is hard to beat, and prior to him, Mr. Dennis was a fine judge, but from what I have seen of Lessing, and I have studied him closely -- and I was never a very good friend of Bob Lessing, but I think it is a rash injustice to remove him from office after seven years of hard work with no specific charges. There should be something wrong when you remove this boy after seven years hard work. If you worked for a corporation and tried this, 2000 members would go out on strike. He is entitled to support, and if this august body is functioning for the benefit of the people of this town, they will do as the people of the town wish and I believe there is a representative body here tonight and I don't think that they coincide with your opinion in removal of Judge Lessing."

Mrs. Quaggin asked how many signatures on a petition would be necessary to convince the Council that a majority of the residents are not in accord with the action to dismiss Bob Lessing from office.

Mr. Carl Marsteller, 1311 Sartori, asked "do we, or do we not get a reason for the dismissal of Judge Lessing?" He asked for a "point blank" answer to a "point blank" question.

The assemblage appeared annoyed and irritated when their demand for an answer, which they were demanding by this time more particularly from Councilman Powell and Councilman Murray, was not given. After the demand had been repeated several times, Mayor McGuire announced that apparently neither gentlemen prefers to make further comment on the matter.

Councilman Murray moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Powell seconded the motion.

Again, the motion to adjourn met with loud protests.

Carl Gramlin, 908 Cota Avenue, said he wondered if any of the Councilmen who voted to dismiss Bob Lessing from the office of City Judge had the intestinal fortitude to get up and say why he did it.

Someone from the assemblage yelled "we are waiting for an answer. We're in no hurry to go home."

Councilman Hitchcock said he knew of no answer, therefore, he had voted against removal of Judge Lessing from office.

(Applause)

Councilman Powell asked Councilman Hitchcock who had authorized the men to spend all day with the bulldozer leveling ground for Judge Rippey (C. T. Rippey), someone in the assemblage shouting, "what does that have to do with it - were not interested in that."

Councilman Powell said his answer had been given - that the answer is public record.

Jack Miller asked "is there any reason you would not rent me the auditorium on Friday night?", the answer from Mayor McGuire being, "I know of no reason. We rent it to every citizen who requests it".

Mr. Miller said he would like to take this opportunity of informing the Council that the dances will be changed and cleaned up, if such is what is required, and added that he knew the Directors of the Coordinating Council were all sincere. Mayor McGuire said there had been no question as to the sincerity of the Directors.

Homer Kirkpatrick, 2360 Torrance Blvd. said he and all the others present would like to know the answer as to why Judge Lessing was dismissed.

As individual statements were desired, Mayor McGuire remarked that he did not vote for removal of Bob Lessing from the office of City Judge.

Mr. Kirkpatrick said he would like to see Councilmen Murray and Powell get up and state why they made and seconded the motion.

Councilman Murray said he would not be bullied into giving an answer.

Councilman Babcock said his answer was given when Mrs. Quaggin requested it.

Mayor McGuire announced that neither Councilman Powell or Councilman Murray elected to give a statement and said that the meeting would adjourn to Thursday, April 10, 1941 at 5:00 P.M. the time agreed upon for meeting with the Coordinating Council as requested by Jack Miller.

Vernon Coil asked if he could rent the auditorium Friday night. Mayor McGuire said there is no reason the building cannot be rented to an individual.

Mr. Leatherman, 912 Cota Avenue, expressed confidence in Judge Lessing's ability, and suggested that a letter expressing appreciation for his services be directed to him.

Mr. Gilbert suggested that, to avoid injured feelings, the Councilmen who voted to dismiss Judge Lessing should make a statement as to why they voted in such manner.

Councilman Murray told Mr. Gilbert to let the Councilmen do the worrying about what the consequences would be of not making a statement.

Mr. Gilbert still insisted that Mr. Powell, the maker of the motion, and Mr. Murray, the seconder of the motion, offer statements as requested.

Mrs. Roxie Sleeth volunteered the information that, according to Parliamentary Law, the seconder of a motion is unimportant.

Mr. Amyruld, 1737 Martina Avenue, suggested that the motion to dismiss Judge Lessing from office and to place John Shidler in his place be tabled for the time being, at least until the people are given a chance to show their feeling in the matter. He said he thought that if a sufficient number of people signed to the effect that they wished to retain Bob Lessing in the office of City Judge of the City of Torrance, the Council would have no other alternative than to comply with their wishes.

Mrs. Loughridge of Walteria ventured the opinion that there may be a lot of people who do not feel the same way the people in this meeting feel. She said they might be on the "other side."

Mrs. Hudson said she was interested in the matter from the standpoint of the young people to be affected. She said two daughters of hers had attended the dances. She asked what assurance the parents have that the Recreation Department will conduct the dances in a more orderly or properly manner than has the Coordinating Council.

Mrs. Flora Wright stated that she had asked one of the ministers, who voted in favor of closing the dances on the grounds that immoral conduct was prevailing at the dances, to tell her exactly what specific charges the ministers had, and that he had only been able to offer hearsay reports, instead of concrete evidence.

In answer to Mrs. Hudson's question about whether or not the dances would be conducted properly, Mr. Grover Whyte told her that her assurance that "the dances will be conducted on a higher plane is the fact that Councilman Murray is Chairman of the Recreation Committee."

Mrs. Hudson remarked "I wondered if this was purely political or if the Recreation Department would have the interest of the young people at heart. My question has been answered."

Jack Miller said he would like to substantiate Mrs. Wright's statements regarding the minister, adding that this same minister had opposed the dances from the day they started.

Vernon Coil said that one of the men who help out on the dances, O. D. Butterfield, is himself a preacher and can vouch for the dances.

Mayor McGuire advised that City Employees will not be required to commit themselves in the matter. He said Mr. Butterfield and Mr. Brodie have acted as custodians of the building during the dances, and have done very fine jobs.

Councilman Babcock said he was interested in the Coordinating Council meeting with the City Council, and wanted the time definitely understood as being Thursday, April 10, 1941 at 5:00 P.M.

Carl Marsteller said the answer to the question is still awaited. He said the Council knew the answer but would not give it. He asked further that the motion to dismiss Judge Lessing and appoint John Shidler as his successor be rescinded until next Council meeting.

Vernon Coil asked Councilman Hitchcock or Mayor McGuire to make such a motion.

Mrs. Sleeth advised that no one except the original maker of a motion could rescind the motion.

Mr. Burdick remarked that the maker of the motion "sits there with a scowl on his face and has nothing to say."

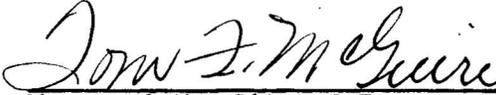
Mrs. Lela Gonner, North Torrance, suggested that perhaps the Councilmen who have refused to make commitments are doing so in an effort to protect the reputation of the one involved.

Mr. Wm. Wylam suggested that the minutes referred to by Councilman Powell when he said the reason was public record, and in the minutes, be read.

Mayor McGuire announced that the maker of the motion to dismiss Judge Lessing apparently does not wish to make a statement, at which time the meeting adjourned to April 10, 1941 at 5:00 P.M., it being 10:00 P.M.

  
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City Clerk of the City of Torrance

Approved:

  
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Mayor of the City of Torrance