

Torrance, California
September 18, 1942

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

The City Council of the City of Torrance convened in a Regular Adjourned Meeting in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Torrance, California, on Friday, September 18, 1942, at 4:45 P.M.

Mayor McGuire called the meeting to order.

Clerk Bartlett called the roll, those answering present being Councilmen: Babcock, Hitchcock, Powell, and McGuire. Absent: Councilmen: Cucci.

This being a Regular Adjourned Meeting, the regular order of business was dispensed with.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Clerk Bartlett opened a sealed bid in the sum of \$30.00 for certain property situate City of Torrance known as Lot 65, Tract No. 9901, said bid having been submitted on a total bid price of \$30.00 by Reverend Joseph L. Bauer on behalf of Roman Catholic Archbishop John J. Cantwell of Los Angeles City.

Mayor McGuire opened bids for the sale of Lot 65, Tract No. 9901, but none were received.

Councilman Babcock moved that Resolution No. 1551, authorizing the sale of Lot 65, Tract No. 9901, to Roman Catholic Archbishop John J. Cantwell, be adopted. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Powell, and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: Cucci.

A communication addressed to the Mayor from the local chapter of the American Red Cross was read thanking the City for the use of the Civic Auditorium on the many occasions when it was needed by the Red Cross in the performance of its various duties.

Mayor McGuire advised that Mrs. R. R. Smith, who is in charge of the local American Red Cross Chapter, has requested more chairs for the Chapter's new location.

Following a short discussion, a gentleman in the audience arose and stated that Mrs. Smith had requested him to ask the Council if it would be possible to borrow one table and twenty-four iron folding chairs for the ladies who are doing the sewing.

Mayor McGuire suggested to City Engineer Jain that he contact Mrs. Smith to see what kind of chairs she could use.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1552

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF TORRANCE FIXING THE SALARIES
AND WAGES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 1942-43.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1552 be adopted. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Powell, and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: Cucci.

Councilman Powell moved that Percy Bennett be granted mileage at the rate of five (.05) cents per mile for the use of his personal car while performing City duties on behalf of the City Police Department. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Powell, and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: Cucci.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the City Engineer be authorized to attend the Pacific Coast Building Inspectors' Meeting in Reno from October 6 to 8, 1942, inclusive, with expenses paid. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Powell, and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: Cucci.

The communication from Glenn M. Jain, City Engineer and Director of Public Works, which was read at the previous meeting and referred for action at this meeting, was reread advising that Fire Chief McMaster has requested permission to arrange a transfer of John Fess and Casper Clemmer from the Park Department to the Fire Department for the duration or until they can be replaced by men on the Civil Service list. The writer stated that the transfer met with the approval of his department providing that permission is granted to replace one or both of these men in the Park Department inasmuch as a transfer at this time without a replacement would seriously handicap the working schedule of the Park Department.

Councilman Hitchcock stated that he was in favor of transferring the men to the Fire Department but thought it would be advisable to replace the men in the Street Department rather than in the Park Department as the work in the latter could be cut down. Engineer Jain requested that the Council designate the work which they think can be "cut down". A discussion ensued relating to the amount of work and the number of men in the Street and Park Departments.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the request of Fire Chief McMaster for the transfer of John Fess and Casper Clemmer from the Park Department to the Fire Department for the duration or until they can be replaced by men on the Civil Service list, said request having been approved by the City Engineer, be granted together with the request of the City Engineer that two additional men be hired to replace John Fess and Casper Clemmer, the two additional men to be hired in the Street Department rather than in the Park Department as requested by City Engineer Jain. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

As per instructions received at the Regular Meeting held September 8, 1942, Attorney McCall reported on the tentative contract with the B. F. Goodrich Company for the rental and lease of tires for the Torrance Municipal busses with reference to the contract period. Attorney McCall stated that the portion of the contract setting forth the contract term was not filled in and that although the tentative five years could be cut down, he didn't think a one-year term would be acceptable to the company. He stated, however, that the fluctuating clause in said contract could not be changed. A discussion arose regarding the contract period, most of the Council at first opposing a period longer than one year in view of the fact that rubber prices might increase to the point where the City would not be financially able to pay the contract price for the duration of the contract term. Attorney McCall disclosed that the prices quoted to the City of Torrance were much lower than those quoted to other cities, and that it might be well to sign for two or three years.

The matter was temporarily tabled while the City Attorney searched for further information in the contract.

Mayor McGuire at this time addressed the audience on the subject of proposed housing for Torrance, stating that he had contacted three men in Los Angeles who were interested in seeing what could be done to expedite the construction of homes in this community; and that one of these men, who has built thousands of houses in this country, came to Torrance about a week ago and looked over the entire district inside and outside the City. The Mayor revealed that in two conversations which he had with the builder on the day of this meeting, the matter of receiving recommendations from the F. H. A. for the erection of between 250 and 500 houses in Torrance was discussed.

"This private building project will be entirely conceived and built by the company represented by this man. He furnishes all of his own money which he borrows from a large insurance company in the East," said McGuire.

Officials of the F. H. A. and the N. H. A., have their eyes on three locations here as possible sites for housing projects, reported McGuire: one very close to Torrance; one large location inside the City Limits; and one outside the City Limits.

The Mayor spoke of the barracks type housing projects which are being constructed by the Government only at present and which are rapidly being endorsed by Government officials as living quarters for men only, regardless of whether or not they are family men. The officials maintain that workers in defense industries should not have any more privileges than the men who must leave their homes and families to enlist in the service. He also told of a proposed plan to transport men here from the Middle West, minus their families, to take care of them while they are working here, and then to transport them back to their homes after the war.

The Mayor said that one of the many responsibilities of the person appointed to relieve the housing shortage here will be the task of obtaining the barracks type buildings in the vicinity of the aluminum and rubber plants.

Referring again to the private enterprise, McGuire stated that the builder expected to erect two or three bedroom homes similar to those in the Park Knoll Tract, provided he receives recommendation from the F. H. A. and the necessary priorities for building materials.

Mr. Fay Parks, who was in the audience, stated that he was afraid that the Council was losing sight of the fact that this community is under-built and that most of the homes which are to be built will be permanent. He said that the ideas thus far presented were fine. He reminded the Council that the Doak Aircraft Company and other defense plants would soon be expanding considerably and that we needed a promotional man who can work on all angles to get plenty of permanent homes here as quickly as possible.

Councilman Powell moved that the Mayor and the City Clerk enter into a contract with the most practical man available to promote housing in the City of Torrance.

Mayor McGuire requested that the motion designate a specific person.

Councilman Powell amended his motion to the effect that the man chosen by the Mayor and the City Clerk to promote housing in the City of Torrance meet with the Council before a contract is signed.

Mayor McGuire stated that he had an application from Mr. MacDonnell of Gardena which included a contract price.

Councilman Powell rescinded his original motion and the amendment thereto.

Councilman Powell moved that the Mayor and the City Clerk enter into a contract with Mr. MacDonnell of Gardena for the latter's active participation in promoting housing for the City of Torrance at the prices quoted by Mr. MacDonnell on his application, said contract to become effective immediately. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Powell, and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: Cucci.

Mr. Evans asked the Council if the Pacific Electric Railway Company or the Santa Fe Railway Company had been contacted with reference to the critical problem created by the lack of transportation for the 1,258 men living in this community and working at the Harbor. He said that now would be the time for the City of Torrance to submit a bid to the State Railroad Commission for some kind of transportation system which would run through the City rather than "sliding" by on the outskirts.

The Mayor referred Mr. Evans to Mr. Grover Whyte who stated that since the last issue of his paper was published he had heard that the idea of trying to solve the housing shortage by transportation had been practically abandoned, and that the Government would soon send a man from the War Production Board to see "how much housing is needed and where it is going to go for all this area".

"That isn't the angle I'm thinking of," replied Mr. Evans. "I'm thinking of the 1,258 men working in Harbor area who have no transportation. The P. E. could run shuttle service to Torrance and then back to Normandie."

Mayor McGuire stated that although he would like to get lines through the main part of Torrance he hadn't discussed the matter with any company because he didn't know what their plans were.

Mr. Evans suggested that the City submit a bid to the Commission before the companies actually decide on a definite route.

Mr. Whyte made comment on the matter to the effect that the Pacific Electric had no plans whatever for any additional service to Torrance but that that was no reason why a "pressure man" couldn't go to work and get results.

Councilman Hitchcock's suggestion that perhaps Mr. MacDonnell could handle the transportation angle also did not meet with the approval of the Mayor who stated that "he had enough to do."

City Engineer Jain requested permission to contact and interview men for the purpose of obtaining an assistant to replace Ralph Perkins who, Mr. Jain believes, is well on his way into the Army.

Councilman Powell moved that the City Engineer be authorized to contact available assistant engineers to replace Ralph Perkins, provided that Mr. Perkins is inducted into military service.

City Engineer Jain requested that he be given an idea of what salary he might offer prospective employees.

Councilman Powell and the other Councilmen agreed to discuss this matter after the meeting.

Councilman Powell moved that the City Engineer be authorized to contact prospective assistant engineers to replace Ralph Perkins, in the event that Mr. Perkins is inducted into the armed forces. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Attorney McCall at this time reported that he had discovered in his further reading of the tentative tire contract with the B. F. Goodrich Company that the City would only have to pay for mileage actually used by the busses at the rate stated in the contract, and that the only possible deviation in cost during the contract term would be caused by the reduction in the price of rubber which would in turn decrease the contract rate.

Councilman Babcock moved that the Mayor and the City Clerk enter into a contract with the B. F. Goodrich Company for the rental and lease of tires for the Torrance Municipal busses at a price of six (.006) mills per mile, said contract to become effective October 1, 1942, and to expire three (3) years thereafter. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Powell, and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: Cucci.

At 5:32 P.M., upon motion of Councilman Babcock seconded by Councilman Hitchcock, the meeting adjourned.


City Clerk of the City of Torrance

APPROVED:


Mayor of the City of Torrance