

Torrance, California
November 24, 1942

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, November 24, 1942 at 7:45 P.M.

Mayor McGuire called the meeting to order.

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

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the minutes of a Regular Meeting held November 10, 1942 be approved as written. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

All those present in the Council Chamber Saluted the Flag!

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A communication was read from the Record Protection Service, signed by Basil R. Greig, offering to microfilm the various City Records for an estimated cost of \$300.00.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the communication from the Record Protection Service offering to microfilm the various City Records for an estimated cost of \$300.00 be referred to the entire City Council for study and report at the next meeting. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the Southern California Gas Company, requesting the City to enact an ordinance regulating the turning on or reconnecting of gas service in or on any premises where and when said gas service is not at the time being rendered.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the request of the Southern California Gas Company be referred to the Ordinance Committee for study and report. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from C. Z. Ward, Manager, Torrance Municipal Bus Lines, requesting the City Council to approve the acceptance of a contract, which was attached, between the Torrance Municipal Bus Lines and the Aluminum Company of America, the contract providing a guaranteed revenue from said Company to the Bus Lines for an additional schedule.

Attorney McCall reported the contract to be in order.

Councilman Babcock moved that the contract between the Torrance Municipal Bus Lines and the Aluminum Company of America, providing a guaranteed revenue from said Company to the Bus Lines for an additional schedule be accepted, and that the Mayor be authorized to sign the contract. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Cucci, Hitchcock, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read from W. H. Stanger, Water Superintendent, and J. E. McMaster, Fire Chief, relative to the request submitted several weeks ago by the Columbia Steel Company that the City provide fire protection for certain property belonging to said Company. It was stated that a conference had been held with Columbia Steel Company officials on November 16, 1942, at which time Mr. Scott, Army Inspector, had recommended that outside protection be furnished to act as auxiliary protection in case of emergency which might disable the company's own system and thereby cut off the company's water supply. Particular emphasis was made on necessity of protecting the Pattern Shop of the Company against destruction by fire.

It was further stated that Mr. Stanger is preparing estimates of cost of installing a fire hydrant at Santa Clara Street and Engracia Avenue, there being three methods of installation possible, and Mr. Stanger preparing to submit estimates on all three methods. Upon the return of Mr. Scott in approximately two weeks, it was stated that another conference will be held, the Council to be kept informed of progress made.

A communication was read from Glenn M. Jain, City Engineer, calling attention to an agreement which was entered into between the City of Torrance and the County Sanitation District No. 5 of Los Angeles County, wherein the City of Torrance placed on deposit with the Sanitation District the sum of \$5542.00, to be used by the District as the City's share as sponsor for the construction of WPA sewers in the Vista Highlands area.

Mr. Jain stated that the City has a claim of \$4868.71 against the amount deposited, portions of which claim the County has questioned and denied.

Mr. Jain stated further that Mr. A. M. Rawn, Chief Engineer and General Manager of the County Sanitation District, had suggested a tentative compromise settlement, whereby the City would be reimbursed for 68% and the County be reimbursed for 32% of their respective expenditures on the project. Mr. Jain informed that Mr. Rawn will present the plan to the Board of Directors of the County Sanitation Districts for their approval if the City so desires. Mr. Jain recommended that the compromise settlement as suggested by Mr. Rawn be approved and that Mr. Rawn be so informed and requested to present the matter to the Board of Directors of the County Sanitation Districts for approval or rejection.

A short discussion ensued, during which it was agreed that the cost to the City had been as low as could be expected.

Councilman Babcock moved that the tentative compromise settlement suggested by Mr. Rawn, Chief Engineer and General Manager of the County Sanitation Districts, whereby claims of the City of Torrance and the County shall be divided in the proportion which the actual expenditures by the two departments bear to the actual deposit of \$5542.00 made by the City of Torrance in connection with the construction of sewers in the Vista Highlands area, be approved, and that Mr. Rawn be requested to present the proposal to the Board of Directors of the County Sanitation Districts for approval. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Powell moved that Mr. J. W. Crowther be re-appointed as a member of the City of Torrance Planning Commission for a period of four (4) years. Councilman Cucci seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Powell moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$125.00 be made for labor and materials for repairing the fire wall of the garage in the rear of the Fire Station. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Cucci, Hitchcock, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Powell moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$100.00 be made for purchase of a Ford pick-up truck for hauling emergency fire equipment. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried the by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Cucci, Hitchcock, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Powell moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$650.00, plus tax, be made for purchase of six hundred feet 2½" double jacketed and coupled fire hose for the Fire Department. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Cucci, Hitchcock, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Powell read a communication addressed to the Mayor and City Council from J. E. McMaster, Fire Chief, in which Chief McMaster requested a meeting with the Civil Service Commission, Mr. Silence, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Treloar and Mr. J. E. Jeffery for discussion of matters pertaining to Civil Service Rules and Regulations.

After a short discussion, Clerk Bartlett was instructed to notify members of the Civil Service Commission, Mr. Silence, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Treloar, Mr. J. E. Jeffery and Chief McMaster that a meeting will be held Tuesday, December 1, 1942 at 7:30 P.M. for the purpose of discussing matters pertaining to Civil Service Rules and Regulations in accordance with request of Chief McMaster that such meeting be arranged.

Councilman Powell remarked that it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain qualified men to serve in the Police and Fire Departments, and moved that the Mayor be authorized to contact the Local Draft Board in the future when it appears a man is about to be inducted, and endeavor to obtain occupational deferments from military service for any member of the above-mentioned departments, and for any member of any department of the City who is considered essential to the welfare of the community. Councilman Cucci seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Powell moved that Fire Chief McMaster be authorized to select two men to be employed as firemen, one to replace a fireman and one to be an increase in the department, to be hired on a temporary basis for the duration of the war, Chief McMaster's selections to be subject to approval of the Council before the men are definitely employed.

When asked why it is deemed necessary to increase the force at this time, Chief McMaster pointed out that trained men are being lost rapidly to the Service, it being necessary to replace them with older men who are untrained, and who cannot be expected to perform duties as efficiently as younger, well trained firemen. It was pointed out, also, that the additional equipment the City expects to receive will require someone to operate same.

A discussion ensued pertaining to shifts worked by members of the Fire Department.

Councilman Cucci seconded Councilman Powell's motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Cucci presented and read title to:

ORDINANCE NO. 340

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE RELATING TO THE LICENSING AND REGULATION OF "PIN GAMES," "MARBLE GAMES" AND OTHER SIMILAR DEVICES.

Councilman Cucci moved that Ordinance No. 340 be adopted for first reading.

Clerk Bartlett advised that it is necessary to read the ordinance before adopting it for first reading, at which time Councilman Cucci handed Mr. Bartlett the Ordinance, which Clerk Bartlett proceeded to read in full.

Councilman Hitchcock objected to imposition of additional taxes upon the businessman at this time, stating that they are already very heavily taxed.

Councilman Cucci stated that the pin and marble game question has been present for the past five years in the City of Torrance and that he felt the machines should be licensed the same as vending machines are licensed.

Councilman Hitchcock remarked that licensing of pin and marble games would be the opening wedge for future licensing of card games and slot machines.

Councilman Cucci again brought up the matter of licensing of vending machines. Mayor McGuire asked Clerk Bartlett if provision is made for licensing such machines, the reply being that a license fee of \$12.00 per year is established by the business license ordinance, but that this section of the ordinance has never been enforced.

Councilman Babcock stated emphatically that he approves the licensing of pin and marble games, but that he feels the license fee of \$180.00 per year per machine as established by the proposed ordinance to be excessive.

Councilman Cucci informed that he had introduced the thought of setting the fee at \$180.00 per year per machine several weeks ago, at which time no objection had been voiced, with the exception of an objection by Mr. Adams of the Southern California Tavern Association.

Councilman Babcock replied that he recalled voicing the opinion several weeks ago that he considered the license fee of \$180.00 too high.

Mayor McGuire asked Attorney McCall whether or not the ordinance could be changed between first and second (final) reading. Attorney McCall informed that such could not be done - that an ordinance must be adopted for final reading in the same form as it is adopted for first reading, and that if it is desired to change any provision of an ordinance, the ordinance as changed must be presented for first reading as a separate ordinance.

Councilman Powell stated that, after giving the matter thorough study, he had concluded that the ordinance as presented by Councilman Cucci is fair in all respects. He suggested that businessmen purchase the machines outright and receive the entire income from the machines instead of renting them from corporations and paying them a percentage of the income derived from the machines.

Councilman Hitchcock said he was convinced that within a short time all the machines would be owned by one syndicate and that the small businessman who depends on revenue from the machines to help pay overhead expenses, such as rent, would be unable to retain the machine in his establishment if compelled to pay a high license fee.

Mr. Herbert Allen, Proprietor of Allen's Cafe, 1333 El Prado Street, voiced his objection to the payment of a high license fee for keeping pin and marble game machines in his place of business, stating that he would be compelled to have the machines removed if the ordinance as submitted is adopted. He stated that he and anyone else who has the machines in his place of business is compelled to pay Federal taxes upon the machines.

Mr. Ray Adams, representing the Southern California Tavern Association, addressed the Council at this time, entering a plea on behalf of eleven on sale establishments in the Torrance district who have machines in their places of business, relating that a great hardship will be imposed upon those eleven licensees if the ordinance as submitted is adopted. Insofar as licensing of the machines is concerned, he said, his organization is in favor of so doing, but at a more reasonable fee than that mentioned in the proposed ordinance.

In answer to Councilman Powell's suggestion that businessmen purchase machines outright and thereby derive all the income from them, Mr. Adams informed that it would be impossible for them to purchase machines, since their manufacture was discontinued in October by order of the War Production Board, and that it is extremely difficult at the present time to even get the machines serviced. He stated that there are approximately forty-five machines in the City of Torrance. Some of the machines, he continued, earn approximately twenty-five or thirty-five dollars per month for the location proprietor. The Federal tax of \$50.00 per year per machine is being increased to \$100.00 per year per machine the first of January (1943) under a new Federal law enacted recently, he informed, payment of which the Government holds the location proprietor responsible. He pointed out that the owners of the machines could very easily remove their machines from the Torrance district and place them elsewhere with no material loss, but that the location proprietors would be the ones to suffer material losses through inability to pay the excessive license fee, thereby compelling them to have the machines removed. He informed also that on sale establishments have had additional heavy liquor taxes imposed upon them, and that, in addition, a floor tax is imposed upon them. He pointed out that his appeal is on behalf of the small business establishments, and not the big establishments. Licensing on reasonable terms, he said, is an excellent means of enforcement of laws pertaining to minors and gambling. He said Councilman Cucci had informed him that it is not the purpose of the City to raise revenue by this means, and also that Councilman Cucci had informed him the pin and marble games had caused no particular police problems. He urged the Council to give much thought to this matter, and to bear in mind the hardship to be imposed upon the eleven licensees in this district if Ordinance 340 is adopted.

Councilman Cucci thanked Mr. Adams for submitting his appeal, stating that he could readily appreciate Mr. Adams' position, but that the appeal had not altered his opinion in any way.

Mr. Vurpillat of Vurpillat's Cafe, 1528 Cravens Avenue, voiced his objection to payment of the license fee provided by Ordinance 340. He reiterated Mr. Adams' remarks about heavy Federal taxation of the machines, liquor and floor taxes. He also mentioned that a military regulation is expected whereby liquor establishments must close at 12:00 M instead of 2:00 A.M., and open at 10:00 A.M., shortening the business hours considerably, which will cause heavy losses.

Mayor McGuire requested Mr. Adams to send a copy of the new Federal Law imposing \$100.00 tax per year per machine. Mr. Adams agreed to send copies to the entire Council and Clerk Bartlett, and volunteered to send copies of ordinances of other cities who license pin and marble games. Councilman Babcock asked him particularly to send the ordinance of the City of Inglewood, which he agreed to do.

Mr. L. B. Balaam, Proprietor of Five-Point Cafe, 1641 Cabrillo Avenue, entered his objection at this time to adoption of the ordinance setting the license fee at \$180.00 per year per machine.

A roll call vote was taken on adoption of Ordinance No. 340, establishing a license fee of \$180.00 per year per machine on all pin and marble games. Councilman Babcock stated that his vote on final adoption of the ordinance will be negative if the license fee of \$180.00 per year per machine remains a part of the ordinance. The roll call vote was as follows: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci and Powell. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock and McGuire. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Mayor McGuire stated he had no knowledge heretofore of the \$100.00 tax imposed upon the machines by the Federal Government, stating further that his personal opinion is that the Federal Government is taxing the citizens of this Country most excessively. He added that the City Council had, when setting the City tax rate, held the rate down as low as possible, being fully aware that with additional Federal taxes now being imposed on all citizens, practically everyone will be suffering extremely high taxation.

Councilman Powell agreed that the City Council had held the tax rate as low as possible, stating that, in fact, he did not believe enough revenue would be derived this year to cover operations. He pointed out that the Fire Department personnel is housed in an unsafe building, due to a lack of funds for repairs to the building, which building was seriously damaged in the earthquake of November, 1941.

Councilman Cucci stated that, inasmuch as the majority of the City Council voted negatively on adoption of Ordinance 340 imposing a heavy tax upon tavern owners, he would appreciate suggestions from anyone well versed on the subject on what might be considered a reasonable license fee for pin and marble game machines, at which time Mr. Adams offered to submit ordinances from other cities which license the machines.

Councilman Cucci asked Clerk Bartlett when the Council could expect a budget report. Clerk Bartlett replied that his office had been unable to furnish a budget report to date, inasmuch as the Council's decision regarding salary increases had been reached only in October, and that, in fact, the budget had not been adopted in any form to date. He said he could possibly prepare a report the first part of next week.

Councilman Cucci asked Engineer Jain what had been done toward eliminating the hazard existing because of the earthquake damaged building on Cabrillo Avenue, formerly used as a Ford garage.

Engineer Jain said he had requested, then demanded, the owners, California Bank, to take immediate action to eliminate the hazard, but nothing to date had been done. He pointed out that materials for reconstruction of the building cannot be purchased.

Attorney McCall suggested that a time limit be established, and if no action is forthcoming, the City demolish the building and charge the company for this service.

Engineer Jain stated he had been very hesitant about beginning complicated condemnation proceedings, not only because of time involved, but because of the fact that most of the buildings are constructed of good materials and are worth re-habilitating. Regarding the building mentioned, Engineer Jain said it is his opinion the building, if it should fall, would not fall beyond the barricade.

A lengthy discussion ensued pertaining to liability of the City in case of damage resulting from the unsafe building, Attorney McCall advising that the City would be held liable, for which insurance is carried by the City.

Engineer Jain advised that there are three extremely unsafe earthquake damaged buildings, upon which some action should be taken immediately. The building located at Carson Street and Gramercy Avenue is in a highly unsafe condition, he stated, and advised that he had been unable to get the owners to barricade the building. One building, he said, which formerly housed the Jessen Brothers Garage business, is damaged to such extent that it is beyond repair, and should be demolished.

Councilman Cucci requested Engineer Jain to furnish the Council a list of the buildings which he considers badly enough damaged to be condemned, and asked Attorney McCall to check the law thoroughly pertaining to condemnation proceedings.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$127.96, plus tax, be made for purchase of four new tires and tubes for the Electrical Department Dodge truck. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Cucci, Hitchcock, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None. *****

Mayor McGuire moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$60.00, plus tax, be made for purchase of Commutation Tickets for Municipal Bus Lines. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Cucci, Hitchcock, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Mayor McGuire moved that Harvey Drysdale be employed as a Bus Operator, Municipal Bus Lines, to fill vacancy created by loss of John E. Mock to the United States Army, at the regular salary allowed probationary drivers, Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Mayor McGuire moved that Dorothy Treloar be employed as a Part-Time Stenographer for Municipal Bus Lines, on a temporary basis, at the regular salary paid probationary Stenographers in the City Clerk's Office. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Mayor McGuire moved that Lots 4, 5 and 6, Block 14, Torrance Tract, located across the street from the City Hall and owned by the City of Torrance, be designated as a City Park; that Associated Assessment Engineers be notified to this effect in order that exemption from further taxation on the property may be applied for, in accordance with a communication from the Associated Assessment Engineers read at a regular meeting November 10, 1942. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Engineer Jain reported he had been unable to date to locate used trucks to be purchased by the City for use in transporting emergency fire equipment.

Mayor McGuire asked Clerk Bartlett whether or not he had received a letter from the Secretary of the Planning Commission regarding request of Mary F. Koshak for zoning variance to permit operation of a woodyard in the vicinity of 236th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, Mr. Bartlett's reply being in the negative.

Mayor McGuire moved that the City Council, upon recommendation of the Planning Commission, grant a variance to Ordinance No. 316 of the City of Torrance to allow Mrs. Mary F. Koshak to operate a woodyard in the vicinity of 236th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, and that a temporary business license be issued for a period of six months beginning November 25, 1942, with the provision that the lot be cleared and cleaned thoroughly at the expiration of the six months' period. Councilman Cucci seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Cucci, Hitchcock, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Babcock stated he understood a business license has been issued for a woodyard in the Walteria vicinity, the owner not

Councilman Hitchcock moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$400.00 be made for labor and materials for repair of trucks and driving gears on Caterpillar loader for Street Department. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Cucci, Hitchcock, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

having applied for a variance to Ordinance No. 316. He stated that this is in direct conflict with the Ordinance and emphasized the importance of adhering to the zoning ordinance and applying for a variance when it is desired to conduct any business in a zone other than the business for which that area is zoned.

Clerk Bartlett stated that the business license had been issued for conducting a lumber yard. He advised that the Clerk in his office had apparently not been aware that it would be violating the zoning restrictions when the license was issued, and acknowledged that the license was issued through error. In the discussion which followed, it was established that the license was issued to Percy Tait to conduct a lumber yard on Madison Street between 236th Street and 238th Street in Walteria. A question arose as to the best method of correcting the mistake, Councilman Hitchcock moving that Clerk Bartlett be authorized to notify Mr. Percy Tait that the business license for operation of a lumber yard, or woodyard, on Madison Street between 236th and 238th Streets, Walteria, will not be renewed upon expiration of the current license, inasmuch as it was issued through error. Councilman Cucci seconded the motion.

Mr. McCall advised that the license, issued in violation of the zoning ordinance, has no force or effect whatsoever.

Mr. Crowther, Member of the Planning Commission, urged that this matter be considered carefully, stating that Mr. Tait should be expected to follow the regular procedure for obtaining variance to Ordinance No. 316. He added that something should be done toward compelling Mr. Tait to clean the lot within a specified period of time.

Councilman Hitchcock withdrew his motion. Councilman Cucci withdrew his second.

Councilman Hitchcock suggested that Engineer Jain investigate the condition complained of and make a detailed report to the Council. Engineer Jain advised he had already done so, but had been unable at any time to contact Mr. Tait. He advised that he had on November 23, 1942 left a note on the door at the woodyard for Mr. Tait to call and see him.

Councilman Powell moved that the City Clerk be authorized to notify Mr. Percy Tait that his business license, issued, September 24, 1942, for conducting a Lumber Yard on Madison Street between 236th and 238th Streets, Walteria, is suspended, due to the fact that issuance of the license was through error, and is in direct conflict with City of Torrance Land Use Ordinance No. 316; that Mr. Tait be advised that he will be accorded the privilege of applying for a zoning variance in the manner prescribed. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Engineer Jain stated that some difficulty is expected in attempting to locate trucks to purchase for transporting emergency fire equipment, and advised that, whenever a truck is located, it will be necessary to complete the purchase transaction immediately. It was agreed that Mr. Jain should contact several members of the Council immediately he locates a suitable vehicle in order that the transaction may be completed immediately.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

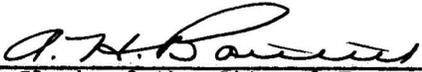
Mr. Paul Findley, representing the Auxiliary Police, recommended that an Honorary Plaque be erected at the Civic Auditorium, on the outside, to be maintained as a record of all men from the City of Torrance who enter the United States Military or Naval Service.

This suggestion met with the approval of the entire Council.

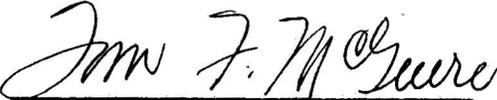
Councilman Hitchcock moved that Mr. Paul Findley be appointed Chairman of a Committee to present to the City Council a report of cost, size and type of Plaque desired. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

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

At 10:00 P.M., upon motion of Councilman Hitchcock, seconded by Councilman Cucci, the meeting adjourned to December 1, 1942 at 4:45 P.M.


City Clerk of the City of Torrance

APPROVED:


Mayor of the City of Torrance