

Torrance, California
February 23, 1943

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, February 23, 1943, 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. AB-sent: Councilmen: None.

All those present in the Council Chamber Saluted the Flag!

Councilman Babcock moved that the minutes of a Regular Meeting held February 9, 1943 be approved as written. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A communication was read from the City of Torrance Civil Service Board, offering an interpretation of Rule XIII, Section 3 of the Civil Service Rules and Regulations, relating to vacations, and advising that some members of the City Council who had discussed the matter with the Board had concurred in the decision of the Civil Service Board.

It was stated that the decision was that vacations granted in 1943 should be computed at the rate of five working days for each six months of service during the previous calendar year, i.e. 1942.

Councilman Babcock moved that the communication be placed on file for future reference. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the State, County and Municipal Workers of America, Local No. 360, signed by J. E. Jeffery, Regional Director, requesting a conference with the Civil Service Board at the earliest possible date for discussion of amendments to the Civil Service Rules and Regulations, stating that the Local is not satisfied with the amendments as proposed by the Civil Service Board.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the communication from the State, County and Municipal Workers of America, Local No. 360, requesting a meeting with the Civil Service Board for discussion of amendments to the Civil Service Rules and Regulations be referred to the Civil Service Board for recommendation. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the WALTERIA Civic Organization, requesting that a bus terminal be established at the WALTERIA Post Office and that current bus schedules be made available and kept posted.

Councilman Babcock moved that the communication from the WALTERIA Civic Organization relative to establishment of a bus terminal at the WALTERIA Post Office be referred to the Manager of the Bus Lines. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the California State Council of Defense, addressed to Mr. John E. McCall and signed by E. L. Duffey, advising that the invitation from Mr. McCall that Mr. Ivan Jacobsen speak in the City of Torrance on any Friday in March must be declined, inasmuch as Mr. Jacobsen's schedule for the months of February and March takes him on a tour of the Northern California Communities, making it impossible for him to accept invitations in Southern California during that time.

A communication was read from Jack Vargo, 21318 South Western Avenue, suggesting that, as a means of encouraging Victory Gardening in the City of Torrance, a bounty be offered by the City on gophers killed within the City limits, thereby eliminating a large number of the rodents by City-wide trapping.

Councilman Powell moved that the communication be filed. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from Mrs. Stella Freligh, 1224 Cota Avenue, requesting that trees on her property be topped and trimmed.

Councilman Babcock moved that the communication be referred to the Street Department. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Engineer Jain interjected a thought, advising that many similar requests are being received by the Department of Public Works, but, due to the fact that the City is operating with reduced crews, and inasmuch as some comment had been made to the effect that tree trimming and topping is not necessary to the war effort, this particular work has been held down to the minimum. He asked the Council to establish a definite plan of either topping and trimming trees without restraint, or to advise what limitations are desired on this work.

He advised further that Mr. Gascoigne has been instructed to have topped and trimmed only those trees which are dangerous to life and property, of which there are many in the City.

It was the decision of the Council that only trees which are considered dangerous to life and property should be trimmed, topped and/or removed, and that requests which are received relative to this matter be considered separately and a decision reached only after investigating the trees to determine their condition. If, upon investigation, the trees prove to be healthy and non-dangerous, it was the opinion of the Council that they should not be trimmed, topped or removed. Responsibility in determining condition of trees should rest with the Department of Public Works, it was stated.

Councilman Powell asked whether individuals who so desire may trim trees belonging to the City and located on City property in front of their residences. It was the opinion of the Council that only City crews should trim, top or remove City-owned trees.

A communication was read from Dr. S. A. Robinette, requesting removal of a tree located in front of his property at 2167 Torrance Boulevard.

A communication was read from Mr. and Mrs. Ed Pietzschke, 2765 West Carson Street, requesting removal of five large eucalyptus trees located on Iris Street, adjacent to the acre located on the northeast corner of Hickory and Iris Streets, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ed Pietzschke. It was stated that, if the City will remove the trees, Mr. and Mrs. Pietzschke will replace them with a row of olive trees.

Councilman Babcock moved that the communications from Dr. S. A. Robinette and Mr. and Mrs. Ed Pietzschke relative to removal of trees from their respective residences be referred to the Street Department for investigation, consideration and action to grant or deny the requests. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from Hiram A. Brooks, 4111 Colorado Street, Long Beach, requesting use of the Civic Auditorium and the Public Address System on the afternoon of March 7, 1943 from 2:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. for the purpose of conducting a union religious service.

Chief Stroh advised he had been contacted by Mr. Brooks relative to this matter, but that he had referred Mr. Brooks to the Council. He said he has no particular objection to allowing use of the building for an afternoon meeting.

Councilman Powell stated that, inasmuch as the Civic Auditorium has been set aside and equipped to serve as a casualty station during air raid emergencies, he was of the opinion that the building should be held in reserve for that explicit purpose and use.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that, inasmuch as the Civic Auditorium has been equipped to serve as a casualty station during air raid emergencies, and it is felt the building should be held in reserve for that purpose alone, the request of Mr. Hiram A. Brooks for use of the building during the afternoon of March 7, 1943 be denied, and that Mr. Brooks be notified of the reason for the denial. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

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Councilman Babcock moved that the communication be placed on file for future reference. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

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Councilman Powell moved that the communication be filed. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from Mrs. Stella Freligh, 1224 Cota Avenue, requesting that trees on her property be topped and trimmed.

A communication was read from George H. Moore, enclosing Business License No. 193, requesting refund on unused portion of the license which was issued for the period July 1, 1942 to June 30, 1943 for the business of a hardware store at 1515 Cabrillo Avenue.

Councilman Babcock moved that George H. Moore be granted a refund for six months' unused business license, Mr. Moore having discontinued business December 5, 1942.

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 Supplemental application before the Railroad Commission of the State of California was read, being an application of Frank Atkinson, 200 East 121st Street, Los Angeles, for an order authorizing an extension of his existing motor bus services by means of an additional operation between Compton and Torrance over Compton Boulevard, San Pedro Street, Redondo Beach Boulevard, Vermont Avenue, 190th Street and Western Avenue, with transfer privileges between applicant's existing and proposed services.

Councilman Babcock moved that the application of Frank Atkinson before the Railroad Commission of the State of California be referred to the entire City Council for further study and report. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the Pacific Electric Railway Company, referring to construction of grade crossing of Pacific Electric Railway Company's track at Abalone Avenue and Plaza del Amo. The cost was estimated at \$1205.00, entire cost to be borne by the City of Torrance if the work is done.

An exhaustive discussion followed, at which time it was disclosed that the Doak Aircraft Company is desirous of having this work done to facilitate ingress and egress to and from the Doak Aircraft Company.

Chief Stroh advised that, since the D & M Company, located across the street from the Doak Aircraft Company, has arranged parking space for vehicles driven by D & M Company employees, the congestion heretofore complained of has been eliminated. He advised that, at the present time, Army officials are not pressing the matter, but that prior to the time the D & M Company provided parking space, there had been need for another inlet and outlet to the Doak Aircraft Company. There is no blocking of the road at this time, he added.

It was suggested that no action be taken on this matter unless Army officials request that the grade crossing be constructed for the purpose of providing an additional inlet and outlet to the plant.

Councilman Powell moved that the recommendation of Fire Chief McMaster that Robert Moffitt be employed on a temporary basis as a fireman, Torrance Fire Department, effective February 16, 1943, be complied with, salary to be established at a later date taking into consideration the fact that Mr. Moffitt is an experienced fireman. 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 the recommendation of Police Chief Stroh that Olive Robinson be employed on a temporary basis as a desk sergeant, Torrance Police Department, effective February 22, 1943, at a salary of \$125.00 per month, be complied with. 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 the salary of George Henderson, Patrolman, Police Department, be increased to \$165.00, effective February 16, 1943. 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 the salary of Lucille Stroh, desk sergeant, Police Department, be increased from \$125.00 to \$135.00, effective February 16, 1943. 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 Powell moved that the starting salary of experienced policemen or firemen be increased from \$145.00 to \$160.00 per month, effective immediately, in view of the fact that it is practically impossible to employ experienced men in these two lines of work at the present starting salary of \$145.00 per month, the two Chiefs to use their discretion in determining qualifications of applicants. 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.

Councilman Babcock asked what disposition would be made regarding those policemen and firemen who have been employed recently at starting salaries of \$145.00. He was advised that those hired heretofore have been inexperienced.

Councilman Powell read a communication from Chief of Police Stroh, in which Chief Stroh stated that, due to shortage of help, it may be necessary in the near future to declare an emergency as provided by Section 25 of Ordinance No. 249 and place his staff on 12-hour per day shifts, persons required to work this shift to be compensated for the extra time worked.

Councilman Powell read a communication from Chief of Police Stroh, in which Chief Stroh advised that work being performed by Frederick Tiffany relative to Civilian Defense has dwindled to such an extent that it will no longer be necessary to retain Mr. Tiffany for this particular work. It was suggested by Chief Stroh that he be placed in his former position as custodian of the Rifle Range until such time as his services may again be needed to assist in Civilian Defense Work.

Councilman Powell moved that Chief Stroh be authorized to use his discretion in transferring Frederick Tiffany back to his former position as custodian of the Rifle Range until such time as his services in connection with Civilian Defense matters may again be required, a salary adjustment to be made accordingly, effective March 1, 1943. 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, in consideration of the many hours of overtime work performed by Chief Stroh in organizing and putting into operation the Civilian Defense program and also the many hours of overtime work performed by him during the earthquake emergency, an allowance of \$100.00 be made as compensation to Chief Stroh. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion.

Chief Stroh advised that his work in connection with the Civilian Defense program had been gladly donated, and that he preferred not to be compensated for that work. Councilman Hitchcock advised that, at the time policemen were allowed overtime pay for the many hours worked by them shortly after the advent of the United States into war, it had been the intention of the Council that Chief Stroh should be compensated for his overtime work.

Councilman Hitchcock offered an amended motion at this time to read as follows: Chief Stroh to be compensated for his many hours of overtime work during the earthquake emergency by an allowance of \$100.00. Councilman Powell accepted this amended motion and seconded same, 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 asked Chief Stroh whether or not the action of the Council in increasing the beginning salary of experienced policemen from \$145.00 to \$160.00 per month would afford him any relief in the matter of help. Chief Stroh said this is problematical and only to be determined at a later date.

Councilman Powell advised that the request read at the February 9, 1943 meeting from Chief McMaster in which Chief McMaster requested that \$300.00 be appropriated for purchase and installation of a two-way radio in the Fire Department Oldsmobile is still under consideration and a decision will be rendered at an early date.

Chief Stroh reported that the man who has been attending to maintenance work on the Police Department two-way radio communicating system recently informed that he is entering the Armed Forces in the near future. Whether another man will be found to service the radio is questionable, he said.

Councilman Cucci stated that several weeks ago the matter of the license fee for vending machines had been referred to the Ordinance Committee, as had other sections of the Business License Ordinance. He asked for a meeting with the Council for discussion of this matter before proceeding with a great deal of work on it, after which, he said, the Ordinance Committee will attempt to draw up an ordinance acceptable to the entire Council.

Councilman Powell said the current Western City magazine contains what he considers a fine plan for licensing by cities of businesses operating within the confines of the City.

Mayor McGuire suggested that this plan be studied and used if it is felt that it is applicable to needs of the City of Torrance.

Friday evening, February 26, 1943 was suggested as a suitable time for discussion of matters pertaining to licensing businesses.

Councilman Hitchcock stated that it had been decided by the group which met recently for discussion of Victory Gardens that the City should sponsor a model garden, and moved that Fred Blake, Superintendent of the Park Department, be appointed to supervise the project. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that an appropriation of \$100.00 be made for purchase of road culvert pipe, it being possible for a limited time to secure this item without priorities. 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.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the City Engineer be authorized to request the installation of a water meter on property formerly occupied by the Southern California Gas Company, and which site has been designated as a suitable location for the City-sponsored model garden, and that pipe lines be extended from the meter to the garden project for the purpose of irrigating same. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Mayor McGuire stated that Mr. Paul Findley, Chairman of the committee which arranged the dedication of the flag in honor of Servicemen from this vicinity, which dedication was held Sunday,

February 21, 1943, had requested that the Council forward a letter of appreciation to the committee for its fine work. Clerk Bartlett was instructed to forward a letter of appreciation to the committee as requested by Mr. Findley.

Clerk Bartlett advised that the Fire Department had requested him to ask the Council to authorize the Street Department to plow the ground adjacent to the Fire Station in order that the Fire Department may plant a Victory Garden and maintain it.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the request of the Fire Department that the Street Department plow the ground immediately adjoining the property upon which is situated the Fire Station be granted in order that the Fire Department may plant and maintain a Victory Garden. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Mrs. Bessie Slonecker announced that a class in agriculture will be started Monday, March 1, 1943, 7:30 P.M., to be conducted by a Mr. Stone, and invited all those interested to enroll in the class.

Mr. Tom Babbitt, member of the Torrance Civil Service Board, stated that some thought had been expressed that the Torrance Civil Service Board may be required to conduct examinations, instead of allowing the County to do it as heretofore done. He stated that the Civil Service Board has ample work to do at present without this added responsibility.

Engineer Jain reported that plans are under way to erect several more oil wells in the west end of town. He urged that immediate action be taken to require bonds to insure cleaning up of the grounds upon abandonment of the wells. He cited the example of many wells in south Torrance which have been left in dangerous and unsightly conditions because no bond was required by the City to insure their proper abandonment.

A discussion ensued as to amounts of bonds required by other cities in connection with drilling operations. It was stated that the City of Redondo Beach has a very good ordinance in connection with this matter.

Permit fee was also discussed, Engineer Jain advising that the permit fee at the present time is \$5.00, as compared with \$750.00 for the permit to drill and \$250.00 for construction of the derrick, the former being the Long Beach requirement. Attorney McCall advised that, if the Council would agree on the amount to be required for permit fee and amount to be required for the bond, an ordinance could be drawn up and presented at the next meeting.

Mayor McGuire approved this suggestion, suggesting that the Cities of Montebello and Redondo Beach be contacted and asked what their respective requirements are in connection with oil well drilling operations, an ordinance to be drawn up and presented at the next meeting.

Councilman Hitchcock suggested also that the State Oil and Gas Association be contacted and asked for suggestions.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chief Stroh advised he has a problem which he wishes the Council to consider. He said he has an application for a position as a police officer of a man who is approaching the age of thirty-five, and, inasmuch as the Civil Service Ordinance requires that the maximum age be thirty-five to qualify a man to take the examination, and since no examinations are being conducted at this time, he cannot advise the man what action to take, inasmuch as the applicant is employed at present in a defense plant, but prefers police work, but only on a permanent basis. He said, beginning March 1, 1943, there will be two vacancies to be filled, and the man could be used by his department to very good advantage.

Councilman Powell moved that Mr. Sauter, Leader of the orchestra which participated in the dedication ceremonies Sunday, February 21, 1943, be given a vote of thanks by the Council for the fine performance given, and that the City Clerk be authorized to direct a letter of appreciation to Mr. Sauter to this effect. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

It was suggested that Paul Findley be included when the letter of appreciation is written.

Councilman Babcock, in answer to Chief Stroh's question, advised that a police examination can be conducted at any time and the man in question will be afforded an opportunity to qualify as a permanent police officer.

Councilman Babcock moved that the question submitted by Chief Stroh regarding hiring of a man thirty-five years of age, who will probably be over the maximum age limit as established by the Civil Service Ordinance when regular examinations are again conducted, be referred to the Civil Service Board for recommendation. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Chief Stroh brought up the subject of automobiles parking in alleys, advising that numerous complaints are received daily that cars block the alleys. He asked that some action be taken to relieve this situation. Councilman Cucci, Chairman of the Ordinance Committee, said his committee would be willing to draw up an ordinance to meet with Chief Stroh's recommendations in connection with the question of cars parking in alleys.

Councilman Powell brought up the matter of the numerous automobiles which have been abandoned and left parked at various places on the public streets. He said he thought something should be done to remove the cars from the public streets.

Councilman Babcock moved all bills properly audited be paid. 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.

At 9:11 P.M., upon motion of Councilman Hitchcock, seconded by Councilman Babcock, the meeting adjourned.


City Clerk of the City of Torrance

APPROVED:


Mayor of the City of Torrance