

Torrance, California
May 29, 1944

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

The City Council of the City of Torrance convened in an Ad-
journed Regular Meeting in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Torrance,
California, on Monday, May 29, 1944, at 7:45 P.M.

Mayor Tolson called the meeting to order.

Clerk Bartlett called the roll; those answering present being
Councilmen: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. Absent:
Councilmen: None.

All those present in the Council Chamber saluted the Flag!

Being an Adjourned Regular Meeting, the regular order of busi-
ness was dispensed with.

A communication was read from Mr. M. E. Hammond, Long Beach,
requesting permission to move a house trailer on a lot in Walteria,
to live in until they can complete a garage house thereon.

Councilman Powell asked Mr. Hammond, who was in the audience,
how long it would take to complete the garage house; to which Mr.
Hammond replied that it would take about two weeks.

Councilman Cucci moved that Mr. Hammond be granted permission
to occupy a house trailer, on their lot in Walteria, for a period
of not over thirty days, with the stipulation that the City Attorney
prepare an agreement, to be signed by Mr. Hammond, stating that the
trailer would be vacated within one month or it would be removed
from the lot. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was
carried unanimously.

Councilman Gilbert moved that an appropriation of \$244.93 be authorized for additional expense incurred in the installation of plumbing facilities in the Bus Depot at 1014 South Hill Street, in Los Angeles. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Cucci moved that an appropriation of \$330.19 be authorized for the purchase of fittings for the Water Department stock. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1662

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA,
AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO ENTER
INTO THE ANNEXED AGREEMENT.

Councilman Cucci advised that he had held up action on this Resolution, at the last meeting of the Council, in order to make a further study of the situation, and advised that the State Legislature has recently passed an Act whereby no property can be sold at public auction for the years 1943 and 1944, and therefore could see no reason for the City to renew its contract with the Associated Assessment Engineers, as no property could be sold.

Mr. Basil Greig, a representative of the Associated Assessment Engineers, advised the legislation to which Mr. Cucci referred, applies only to "Tax Sold Property" and not to "Tax Deeded Property," and that there is a vast difference between these two types of delinquent properties.

Councilman Cucci stated that he believed the reason the Legislature passed this Act was to protect the Service Man and his family, and inasmuch as the City cannot sell any property at auction, and inasmuch as the revenue received by the City during the past year is only \$3,075.00, he could see no reason why the City should enter into an agreement at this time, "possibly taking away some service man's land while he is in the service, without giving him a chance to redeem it."

Councilman Cucci further stated that while it may be true that the Associated Assessment Engineers, with the consent of the Tax Collector, can negotiate a sale of tax deeded property to a private owner, "why should we take such a chance while the Legislature has declared a moratorium, and I suggest that the City of Torrance do the same thing."

Whereupon, Councilman Cucci moved that the request of the Associated Assessment Engineers for a renewal of their contract with the City of Torrance be denied.

Mr. Greig advised that what Councilman Cucci said is true of property that was sold to the State during 1937 and subsequent thereto, but it is not true of property sold to the State in 1936 and prior thereto; and furthermore, that most of the land on which they are working was sold to the State in 1932 and no taxes have been paid since that time.

"We have to make a sworn affidavit to the Tax Collector," said Mr. Greig, "that we have examined the title to the property and that the title is not held by any soldier or sailor, or anyone in the armed forces; and further, that this property is not now being used for agricultural purposes. So far we have found only one parcel that belonged to a serviceman. Most of the property is in the hands of older people who are not in the services. I venture to say that not one-half of one percent of the property comes within the category that he designates. We don't even request that the Tax Col-

lector issue a deed to the City for any property that was sold in 1937 and subsequent; all of the requests were for property sold in 1936 and prior."

"I didn't see anything in the Act that required an affidavit," said Councilman Cucci, "But if you do make the affidavit, how do we know it is correct?"

"Well, Mr. Cucci," replied Mr. Greig, "We are not in the habit of making false affidavits." "Councilman Cucci, I feel that you were very close to slandering me and my firm at the last meeting of this Council, so tonight please confine your remarks to the truth."

"Are you willing," asked Mr. Greig, "that we handle only properties that were sold to the State in 1936, or prior? I am perfectly willing to agree to this because the City of Torrance had never made application for property sold in 1937, and subsequent."

Councilman Hitchcock inquired of Attorney McCall if the contract was all right and if there was any reason why the City should not enter into it.

Attorney McCall replied that he had read the contract and it was correct as to form.

Councilman Cucci stated that he could not rely on the advice of anyone who was making money from the sale of tax deeded lands.

Mr. Greig asked Councilman Cucci if he questioned the honesty of the City Attorney. "If so, Councilman Cucci, you should be ashamed to question the integrity of Mr. McCall, the City Attorney, who has served the community so well for so many years."

"I know Mr. McCall," replied Councilman Cucci, "and I also know that the Almighty Dollar plays an important part."

"Councilman Cucci if you insist on reducing the conversation to as low a level as that, I refuse to be a party to it," stated Mr. Greig after which he returned to his seat.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the contract with the Associated Assessment Engineers be signed.

Councilman Cucci stated that he had made a prior motion that the contract be denied.

Mayor Tolson asked if there was a second to Councilman Cucci's motion. None being offered, the Mayor announced the motion was lost for want of a second.

"I guess I am the only one on the Council who really takes an interest in behalf of the serviceman," said Councilman Cucci.

Councilman Powell stated that he was also interested in safeguarding the interests of the serviceman, and suggested that a clause be inserted in the contract to the effect that there will be no tax deeded lands sold, that were sold to the State in 1937 and subsequent thereto; and asked Councilman Hitchcock if he would accept this amendment to his motion.

Upon Councilman Hitchcock's affirmative reply, Councilman Powell seconded his motion, which was amended to read, that the contract between the City and the Associated Assessment Engineers be amended by inserting a clause to the effect that no properties sold to the State of California for the taxable years 1937, and subsequent, be resold by the City of Torrance; and that no fees of any kind or character shall be paid to the Associated Assessment Engineers, affecting properties sold to the State for the years 1937 and subsequent. The motion, as so amended, was duly carried.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1662 be adopted. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Hitchcock congratulated Mr. Greig on the manner in which his Company, the Associated Assessment Engineers, had conducted their dealings with the City, and stated that throughout all these years no argument had ever arisen before, and hoped that it would not happen again.

Mr. Greig thanked Councilman Hitchcock, and expressed his appreciation for the cooperation of the Council.

Attorney McCall stated that he wanted it definitely understood that the fees to be charged by the Associated Assessment Engineers were reduced from 20% to 18%.

Clerk Bartlett read a communication from the Associated Assessment Engineers, advising that if the City Council will agree to pay 2% of their commissions to Mr. McCall, they would reduce the commission charged by them from 20% to 18%.

Councilman Powell asked Mr. Greig the reason for the two percent to be paid to Mr. McCall.

Mr. Greig replied that the reason for this payment is this: "We are trying to get an injunction dismissed on properties deeded to the State of California for 1939 taxes, and if we can succeed, then a law-suit to quiet title will have to be brought by the City of Torrance. That law-suit should be brought, not only by the Special City Attorney, but the regular City Attorney should be a party in this suit as it involves a large sum of money, and Mr. McCall will have to do a lot of work in connection therewith. If the City takes 2% from our contract and pays the City Attorney 2% for representing the City it will not be any additional expense to the City."

Councilman Cucci inquired why Mr. McCall couldn't do this on his regular salary.

Councilman Powell requested Mr. Greig to explain what properties were involved.

Mr. Greig stated, "there are 277 pieces of land in the City of Torrance on which different corporations and people filed injunction suits against the County of Los Angeles, and the Tax Collector, in 1939, forbidding this property to be sold because the taxes levied against it are illegal, and the law suit has been lying there for five years and we are negotiating with these people to get the injunction released so the properties can be returned to the tax rolls, and this will be the first law-suit of this particular type to be brought in the State, to have this injunction released."

"To date," said Mr. Greig, "we have paid only the Special City Attorney, but in this law-suit we believe that the regular City Attorney should act in behalf of the City of Torrance, and there will be at least thirty days of research work to be done before Mr. McCall can pass on the particular procedure which we are proposing, and it is for the protection of the City of Torrance that we are asking this."

Councilman Powell then said, "Thank you Mr. Greig. I and the other members of this Council were perfectly familiar with it, you have outlined it before. I just wanted you to explain it to the audience, some members of which might not know all the details. I feel that with a firm of such proven integrity as the Associated Assessment Engineers handling it, we'll be perfectly safe and everyone's interests will be well protected."

Councilman Cucci stated: "If it is that parcel of land in the Hollywood Riviera Tract, I believe a contract especially designed for those parcels would be in order, but if it is for anything else I would not be in favor of it."

Mr. Greig replied: "If you wish, we will make it applicable only to that area."

Councilman Cucci said: "As far as the Hollywood Riviera Tract is concerned, I have no objection to that; but I do object to any other parcels which may be scattered throughout the City of Torrance."

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the letter from the Associated Assessment Engineers, agreeing to reduce their commissions from 20% to 18% be made a part of the Contract; and that the said 2% be paid to the City Attorney. Councilman Gilbert seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Mr. Greig advised that they have had the Option Agreements prepared by the County Council's office and they are the same as previously used.

Councilman Hitchcock asked Attorney McCall if they were the same as the contracts used before, and was the procedure identical.

Attorney McCall replied that they were.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1663

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES TO PURCHASE TAX TITLES.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1663 be adopted. Councilman Gilbert seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Mr. Greig presented and read:

RESOLUTION NO. 1664

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, AUTHORIZING AND INSTRUCTING THE ASSOCIATED ASSESSMENT ENGINEERS TO DO AND PERFORM CERTAIN SERVICES PURSUANT TO AN AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN SAID CITY AND SAID ASSOCIATED ASSESSMENT ENGINEERS.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1664 be adopted. Councilman Gilbert seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1665

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, ACCEPTING BIDS FOR CERTAIN TAX DEEDED LANDS IN THE CITY OF TORRANCE, AND INSTRUCTING THE CITY CLERK TO APPLY TO LOS ANGELES COUNTY FOR SUCH TAX DEEDS.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1665 be adopted. Councilman Gilbert seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read in full:

RESOLUTION NO. 1666

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, APPOINTING A BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE.

Councilman Cucci moved that Resolution No. 1665 be adopted.

Councilman Hitchcock asked Councilman Cucci how these people, who were named on the Library Board, had been chosen.

Councilman Cucci replied that he had consulted with Mrs. Jamieson, the Librarian, and that most of them had been recommended by her.

Councilman Hitchcock stated that heretofore each Councilman had been given an opportunity to appoint one member of the Board, and for one member of the Council to select them all appeared to him like he was trying to "pack the Board".

Councilman Cucci advised that this matter had been neglected up to the present time and that he was only trying to get a Board selected. Councilman Powell seconded Councilman Cucci's motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. (Councilman Cucci not voting) NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Mayor Tolson asked Engineer Jain for a report on Crenshaw Blvd.

Councilman Hitchcock requested that the Council recess for ten or fifteen minutes as he had a matter he wished to discuss with the City Engineer.

Engineer Jain stated that before the Council recessed, he wished to advise that he had received a copy of a letter from Mr. G. T. McCoy, State Highway Engineer, addressed to the District Engineer in San Francisco, recommending that the Torrance Boulevard project be approved as presented by his office.

Engineer Jain also reported that the two Dodge trucks, which he had been authorized to purchase, had been turned down by the office of Defense Transportation; but that upon making an appeal they had approved the purchase of one truck, but had denied his application for the purchase of the second truck.

At 8:45 P.M., on motion of Councilman Cucci, seconded by Councilman Hitchcock, the Council recessed for fifteen minutes.

At 9:00 P.M., the Council reconvened, and the Mayor called the meeting to order.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the City Engineer be authorized to make a trip to Sacramento on behalf of the City's road work, with expenses paid. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Gilbert moved that Mr. Nick Baker be employed in the Park Department, at the regular salary paid a Park Maintenance man, effective May 30, 1944. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Gilbert moved that Mr. John Tolson be employed in the Park Department, during the summer months only, and not to exceed twenty hours a week, at the regular rate of pay received by Park Maintenance men. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion.

Councilman Powell inquired as to what work he is to perform.

Councilman Gilbert replied that he will be employed to do general clean-up work around the picnic grounds during the summer months.

Councilman Powell explained that the City is carrying quite a number of old men now who are just able to get around, and while it is hard to get anyone he didn't think it very wise to employ men if they can't perform a reasonable day's work.

Engineer Jain asked what department these two men will be charged to; explaining that in the past we have had men working in the Ball Park and around the picnic tables, and some come under one superintendent and some under another.

Councilman Gilbert advised that these men would be under Mr. Blake and will be charged to the Park Department.

Mayor Tolson called for a vote on Councilman Gilbert's motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Gilbert moved that an appropriation of \$100.00 be made for the purchase of playground equipment. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Cucci stated that he had been informed by Mr. Brodie that during this war period he had issued about fifty keys to the Control Center, and it would be a difficult job to collect fifty keys, and suggested that we change the lock combination as there is some valuable equipment stored in the Auditorium.

Chief Stroh advised that only about three keys had been issued and that these persons were still entitled to carry them, in connection with their work.

Councilman Cucci stated that evidently there was some misunderstanding and he would investigate the matter further.

Mayor Tolson stated that a meeting had been held with Mr. Marsteller, just prior to the regular meeting this evening, and he believed Mr. Marsteller was willing to continue on a temporary basis until July 1st, and if at that time it became apparent there would be no change the City would enter into a contract with him as Agent for the Torrance Municipal Bus Lines, at the Los Angeles Office; and that no action would be necessary at this time.

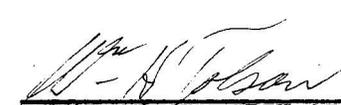
ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Charles Elman addressed the Council very briefly.

At 9:12 P.M., on motion of Councilman Hitchcock, seconded by Councilman Powell, the meeting was adjourned.


CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE

APPROVED:


MAYOR OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE