

Torrance, California
July 25, 1944

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, July 25, 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!

Mayor Tolson advised that the Minutes of a Regular Meeting held July 11, 1944, were ready for approval.

Councilman Cucci requested that a correction be made in these minutes; stating that the roll call vote on Resolution No. 1678 had been incorrectly recorded as he had voted "No" on this Resolution.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the Minutes of a Regular Meeting held July 11, 1944 be approved, as corrected, Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A communication was read from the Cub Scout Committee, Pack 266, Redondo Beach, thanking the City Council for services and considerations tendered the Cub Scouts at the City Park. Matter of record.

A communication was read from the Richfield Oil Corporation, advising that no pipe lines were laid, removed or abandoned during the period from January 1st to June 30, 1944, under Los Angeles County Ordinance No. 1358-1361 (N.S.). Matter of record.

A communication was read from the City Attorney, attaching a letter from the Santa Fe Railway Company, submitting a Franchise Ordinance for the approval of the Council, which letter was also read.

At the request of Councilman Cucci, Attorney McCall read the Franchise Ordinance, as submitted by the Santa Fe Railway Company, pointing out the changes that had been made in the new Ordinance, which was to remain in effect for the duration of the war, and six months thereafter.

Mayor Tolson invited comments from the audience; and Mr. Elder, 2325 Carson Street, stated that he believed it would be satisfactory to extend the Franchise for the duration, and six months thereafter, but he thought something should be done about trains being left standing on street crossings for unduly long periods, as well as abating the smoke nuisance.

Mr. J. B. Hughes stated that he was not satisfied with the Franchise Agreement as written, and believed that a definite period of time should be stated, as it was his understanding that the Statute of Frauds required a definite term to be stated in all contracts or it rendered them invalid. He suggested that the Franchise be given for a period of two years, and at the end of that time, if the war was still going on, that it could be extended for another specified period of time.

Attorney McCall stated that the period of time, as stated in this Franchise, was definite enough; and as to the trains standing on street crossings, it had been requested, by one of the officials of the Railway Company, that the City write a letter to the Company requesting that they break the trains at the intersections.

Engineer Jain called attention to the fact that there were several streets in the City where crossings had never been constructed, and suggested that the new Franchise make provision that the Railway Company bear the cost of constructing these crossings, whenever they are required.

Councilman Powell advised that there had been several narrow excapes at the crossing on Crenshaw Boulevard, as there was no signal there, and thought it should be stipulated in this Franchise that a wigwag signal be installed at this crossing as soon as conditions permit and materials are available; and suggested, if there is no particular hurry, that these requests be inserted in the Ordinance.

Mayor Tolson said he believed it should be held up until the next meeting, and have these corrections made.

After some further discussion, Councilman Powell moved that the Council take the matter under consideration until the next regular meeting in order to give it more thorough study, and that the proposed changes be definitely stated therein. Councilman Gilbert seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the State, County and Municipal Workers of America, Local No. 360, requesting that in the future whenever a vacancy is to be filled, or a new position created, present employees be given first consideration, and suggesting that the City Council discuss this subject with representatives of Local #360.

Councilman Cucci moved that the Council extend an invitation to the members of Local #360 to meet with them on Friday, July 28, 1944, at 6:30 P.M. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the State, County and Municipal Workers of America, Local No. 360, requesting that the Council set a date for a meeting to discuss a wage increase.

Mayor Tolson advised that this would be taken care of at the meeting already arranged for Friday evening, July 28; and the communication was ordered filed for future reference.

A communication was read from Mr. H. C. Neal, owner of the Modern Auto Court, 3902 Pacific Coast Highway, WALTERIA, requesting permission to enlarge his trailer park to accommodate five more trailers.

After considerable discussion, Councilman Powell moved that the applicant be notified that he should make application to the City Planning Commission for a variance. Councilman Cucci seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from the City Engineer, advising that a request had been received from Mr. Gus H. Sudmeier to use the brick building at the northeast corner of Carson Street and Gramercy Avenue, which was damaged by the earthquake and not repaired, for an electrical laboratory for repairing automobile and airplane engines.

After some discussion, Councilman Powell moved that the owner of the property be notified by the City Clerk to make application to the City Planning Commission for a variance.

A communication was read from the City Attorney, reporting on the matter of employing a thirteen year old boy in the Recreation Department, at 40¢ per hour, which was discussed at the last Council meeting.

Attorney McCall advised that the City of Torrance has no Ordinance on the subject of minimum wages to minors; and that the State has no jurisdiction over a City in such matters.

Communication ordered filed.

Clerk Bartlett presented a contract from the South Bay Humane Society, for the fiscal year 1944-45.

Councilman Cucci moved that the Mayor be authorized to enter into the contract with the South Bay Humane Society for the ensuing fiscal year. 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 advised that an estimate had been received from the Torrance Chamber of Commerce for painting the twelve City of Torrance display signs, in the amount of \$240.00.

Councilman Cucci said he thought this was very reasonable, and moved that an appropriation be authorized, in the amount of \$240.00 for the painting of the twelve highway display signs. 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.

A communication was read from the Civil Service Board, recommending that vacation pay, for employees who work in lieu of taking a vacation, be computed on the employee's average annual earnings instead of the present method of figuring such pay on the number of working days between pay periods, which vary from month to month.

It was suggested that this communication be held over for discussion at the meeting to be held on Friday evening, July 28th.

Clerk Bartlett advised that he had been served with an "Affidavit of Publication," of "Notice of Intention to Circulate Initiative Petition Among the Voters of the City of Torrance, California, to Establish Post War Recreation Centers."

At the request of Councilman Cucci, Clerk Bartlett read this Notice in full. Following such reading, Councilman Cucci pointed out that this was in reality a petition to open up gambling in the City of Torrance.

Mayor Tolson remarked that he did not believe the people of Torrance were ready to have gambling opened up on such a wholesale scale, but that it is going to be up to the people to decide, if this comes up for a vote.

Councilman Cucci moved that this Affidavit of Publication be filed for future reference. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Councilman Powell said he was in receipt of a recommendation from Fire Chief McMaster that Mr. Eugene Held be employed as Engineer in the Fire Department, to replace Mr. Sam Shepherd, who desires to be transferred to the Department of Public Works as City Painter; and that Mr. Held's salary start at \$175.00 per month as he had had approximately three years' experience on the Department, as a Callman; his employment to be effective as of July 16, 1944.

Councilman Powell moved that the recommendation of Chief McMaster be concurred in. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Hitchcock, Gilbert, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Cucci advised that the Fun Makers had requested the use of the Civic Auditorium every Wednesday evening for rehearsals

by the "Fun Makers" group of entertainers; and moved that this request be granted. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Cucci brought up the matter of the proposed sewer system on 203rd Street, in the Pueblo District; stating that he believed the Council should take some action to have a trunk line sewer installed and make a connection charge, so that the cost would eventually be paid back to the City. He stated that a deplorable condition existed in the Pueblo District which is exposing the children to all kinds of diseases; that these children attend our public schools, and in turn expose all the children in Torrance. He said he thought the estimated cost of \$5000.00, to build this sewer line, would be a reasonable amount to pay to insure the health of the children of Torrance.

Whereupon, Councilman Cucci moved that the City Council authorize the expenditure of \$5000.00 for the construction of a trunk line sewer in 203rd Street; and that a connection charge be established, of an amount sufficient to reimburse the City for the cost of this sewer line. Councilman Powell seconded the motion.

Mayor Tolson stated that while he was in favor of it, he would first like to ask the City Attorney if such a procedure would be legal.

Councilman Hitchcock inquired of the City Engineer if he was sure that \$5000.00 would be sufficient to construct this sewer line.

Engineer Jain replied that under present abnormal conditions he couldn't be sure of anything; and that the only way to really find out what it would cost, would be to prepare plans and specifications and advertise for bids.

Councilman Cucci withdrew his motion, and made a new motion that the City Engineer be authorized to prepare plans and specifications and advertise for bids for a trunk line sewer, approximately 2,000 feet in length, on 203rd Street. 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.

Attorney McCall stated that he had grave doubts as to the legality of such a procedure, but that he would make a further investigation and have an opinion ready for the Council at the next regular meeting.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that an appropriation of \$60.00, plus tax, be authorized, for the purchase of a set of front and rear wheel weights for the Ford Tractor. 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 Gilbert moved that an appropriation of \$98.00, plus tax, be authorized for the purchase of 200 sprinkler heads for the City Parks. 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 than an appropriation of not to exceed \$150.00, plus tax, be authorized for the purchase of lumber for repairs to the Ball Park grand stand, and other repairs in the Municipal Park. 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 an appropriation of not to exceed \$180.00, be authorized, for the purchase of uniforms for the Torrance Ball Club. Councilman Cucci 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 Powell called the attention of the Reporter for the Torrance Herald to the error made in reporting the salary received by Mr. Jain, as Purchasing Agent, which was referred to as \$100.00 per month; advising that this should have been stated as \$50.00 per month.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that there be no reduction made in the salary of the City Engineer by reason of being relieved of the duties of Purchasing Agent; stating that through an oversight this action had not been taken at the last meeting of the Council. Councilman Gilbert 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 advised that the Kiwanis Club had assigned over all its right, title and interest in the ambulance to the City of Torrance, with the recommendation that it be turned over to the Fire Department for rescue work.

Councilman Powell moved that the City accept this gracious gift from the Kiwanis Club, and that the Ambulance be placed under the jurisdiction of the Fire Chief; and that a letter of thanks be sent to the Kiwanis Club. Councilman Gilbert 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.

Mayor Tolson moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$760.00 be authorized for janitor supplies for the City, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1945. 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.

Mayor Tolson moved that an appropriation of \$103.12 be authorized for architect's fees in connection with alterations in the City Hall offices. 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.

Mayor Tolson moved that an appropriation of \$850.00 be authorized for the purpose of sound-proofing the offices in the City Clerk's Department, in the City Hall.

Councilman Powell questioned the necessity of this sound-proofing; and after considerable discussion, the Mayor suggested that this matter be held over until the next meeting of the Council.

Mayor Tolson reported that the subject of a special census was discussed at the regular meeting of the League of California Cities, and he finds it will be too late to take a census for this year, for the purpose of getting additional tax funds for the fiscal year 1944, but he believed Torrance would receive an increased allotment.

Engineer Jain reported that the approval of the War Production Board had been received for the improvement of Torrance Boulevard, from Sartori to Madrid Avenues, at a cost of not to exceed \$49,500.00.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the City Engineer be authorized to advertise for bids on the resurfacing of Torrance Boulevard upon the completion of plans for said improvement. Councilman Powell seconded the motion.

Engineer Jain explained that the plans, as originally prepared, included a sixteen foot parkway in the center of the street, but as there had been considerable opposition to this, the plans had been revised, with the parkway eliminated; but now several of the merchants along Torrance Boulevard had expressed themselves as being in favor of the parkway. Mr. Jain therefore requested the Council to decide whether a parkway was desired or not.

Councilman Cucci doubted the advisability of a parkway; and Councilman Powell thought the people would appreciate a wide street, similar to Cabrillo Avenue.

Mayor Tolson stated there was a motion before the house, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Cucci, Gilbert, Hitchcock, Powell and Tolson. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Engineer Jain reported that the estimated cost of surfacing the alleys in the Park Knolls Tract is \$835.00; whereupon Councilman Hitchcock moved that an appropriation of \$835.00 be authorized for the surfacing of the alleys in the Park Knolls Tract. Councilman Gilbert 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.

Engineer Jain advised that he had been authorized, at the last Council Meeting, to investigate the method of securing the \$12,945.00 to be allotted to the City of Torrance for Post-War plans, specifications and acquisition of rights-of-way.

He reported that he had attended a meeting of the Post-War Planning Committee of the California League of Cities, of which he is a member, and the entire procedure of awarding the funds was explained.

"Any funds spent for engineering, surveys and plans for post-war work after July 1, 1944 can be included," said Mr. Jain, "but official application for the funds cannot be made until after September 1st." "There is a restriction that engineering surveys and plan costs, not including construction engineering or supervision, cannot exceed 6% of the estimated total cost of the project; all funds applied for must be matched dollar for dollar by the City; outside engineers, architects and surveyors, if properly licensed, can be engaged for this work; all projects must show a definite State or general interest, such as State highways, public health, etc.; any City can assign all or any portion of its funds to any other political subdivision, or to any district; the district cannot apply directly for funds, but must do so through a governmental, political subdivision; rights-of-way costs, incurred prior to approval of applications, cannot be charged against these funds, but engineering surveys and plans can be retroactive to July 1, 1944."

He advised, further, that transportation or bus systems could not be included; nor any utilities, with the exception of water systems.

Attorney McCall reported that he had been requested by the Council to look into the matter of taxing Federal owned property in the City, and advised that a proposed bill has been drafted to be presented to Congress, which would give cities the right to tax property owned by the Federal Government; and as soon as this bill is introduced in Congress the Council may wish to take some action.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. James Evans made a complaint about the bus service between Torrance and Los Angeles; stating that he took the 8:30 A.M. bus one Monday morning and there were 42 passengers on it; additional passengers were picked up on the way, until there were 62 passengers on the bus, which was only supposed to accommodate 27 passengers; and suggested that two busses be put on this run.

Mayor Tolson advised that the City was trying to improve the bus situation, and hoped to have some new busses between the 1st and 10th of next month.

Mr. J. Hagberg, of Walteria, addressed the Council briefly, complaining about the employment of an outsider to manage the bus Department; and complaining about the management of the South Bay Humane Society; and making an appeal for stop signals at the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Hawthorne Avenue.

Mr. Chas. Elman, of Los Angeles, spoke briefly in favor of the proposed sewer line in 203rd Street.

Mr. Roy Palmer, of WALTERIA made a plea for stop signals at the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Hawthorne Avenue. He stated that this matter had been brought before the Council some time ago but no report had ever been received as to what was being done, if anything.

In reply to an inquiry from Mayor Tolson, Engineer Jain said he had some correspondence with the State regarding the installation of a traffic signal at this intersection, and they had suggested that a police officer be stationed at this intersection to direct traffic during rush hours.

Councilman Hitchcock asked Chief Stroh what he thought of placing an officer at this intersection during rush hours.

Chief Stroh replied that in his opinion it would require an officer to be there all day and part of the night.

Mr. Palmer said he had checked on the traffic at this point and there seems to be so many different shifts, when the shipyard workers are going back and forth to work that it makes almost a continuous flow of traffic.

Councilman Powell asked Chief Stroh if it would be possible to install an ordinary four-way stop sign there, for temporary relief.

Chief Stroh replied this would have to be taken up with the Highway Department as the City is not allowed to put anything on the highway.

Mayor Tolson said he would take the matter up with Supervisor Darby and request his assistance to secure a stop signal for this intersection. The Mayor advised that Supervisor Darby had been successful in getting the County to pave Catalina Avenue through the Hollywood Riviera Tract, with County funds.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that all bills properly audited be paid. Councilman Gilbert 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 the Council had promised to hold a meeting with the Industrial Taxpayers' Committee, and suggested that a meeting be held next Monday, July 31, and the members of the Industrial Taxpayers' Committee be invited to attend.

Clerk Bartlett suggested holding the meeting on Tuesday, as the Budget will then be ready and it had been agreed to call in the California Taxpayers' Committee, and this could all be done at the same time.

Mayor Tolson requested Clerk Bartlett to call a meeting for Tuesday, August 1, at 6:30 P.M.

At 9:55 P.M., on motion of Mayor Tolson, seconded by Councilman Cucci, the meeting adjourned.

A. H. B. Baxton
CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE

APPROVED:

W. H. Tolson
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE