

I N D E XAdjourned Council Meeting held April 29, 1968

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Adjourned at 5:40 P.M. to April 30, 1968 at 5:30 P.M.

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April 29, 1968

MINUTES OF AN ADJOURNED REGULAR MEETING
OF THE TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL

OPENING CEREMONIES:

1. CALL TO ORDER:

An adjourned regular meeting of the Torrance City Council was held on Monday, April 29, 1968, at 4:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

Those responding to roll call by City Clerk Coil were: Councilmen Beasley, Johnson, Miller, Sciarrotta, Uerkwitz, Wilson, and Mayor Isen. Absent: None. Also present were City Manager Ferraro, City Treasurer Rupert, City Attorney Remelmeyer, and City Clerk Coil.

3. FLAG SALUTE:

At the request of Mayor Isen, following congratulations on her recent marriage, Mrs. Barbara Ziegler led in the salute to the flag.

4. INVOCATION:

In the absence of the Minister of the Month, well qualified Councilman Wilson opened the meeting with an invocation.

STANDARD MOTIONS:

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

On motion of Councilman Sciarrotta, seconded by Councilman Uerkwitz, there being no objection, the minutes of the regular meeting of April 16th were approved as written.

6. APPROVAL OF DEMANDS:

There were no demands.

7. MOTION TO WAIVE FURTHER READING:

There were no Resolutions nor Ordinances on the agenda.

PERSONNEL MATTERS:

8. Police and Fire Committee recommendation on 50-20 Retirement Plan.

Mayor Isen invited anyone who wished to be heard on this matter to come forward.

Sergeant Charles Oates, Torrance Police Department, responded; he first requested a correction in the recommendations from the Police and Fire Committee, pertaining to the recommendation in paragraph 3 that the implementation of this matter be deferred until the Finance Committee of the City Council reviews the 1968-69 proposed budget to determine the source of funds to finance this amendment; it being Sergeant Oates' understanding that this matter was not to be part of the budget study. Councilman Miller pointed out that there was no

consideration of the time factor in these meetings; City Manager Ferraro clarified that this particular statement had been written by Staff, calling attention to the last paragraph of the same letter wherein referral to the Council Finance Committee is recommended. Discussion followed, with Councilman Miller defining the position of the Police and Fire Committee as one of approval of the 50-20 Plan, subject to financing of the program and the assumption that there would be no tax increase, with referral to the Finance Committee.

Sergeant Oates then requested that the Council, if they are in agreement that this is a good and necessary program and will assist in recruiting and retaining qualified, experienced police officers, to approve the 50-20 Retirement Plan and request that the funds be found for it. An estimated \$350,000 surplus in the Police Department budget was noted by Sergeant Oates which could be used in implementing this program.

A series of motions evolved, starting with Councilman Sciarrotta who moved that the Council approve the subject plan, but refer it to the Finance Committee and management to see if there is money available to institute the program. The motion was seconded by Councilman Beasley.

A substitute motion was then made by Councilman Johnson who moved for approval of the plan, subject to the City Manager coming up with the money without increasing the taxes.

Mayor Isen stated that with the discussion of Council Committees yet to be considered by the Council, and, as yet, an undecided issue, Councilman Sciarrotta's motion above would ratify a standing Finance Committee, in effect. Further, that finding the money is an administrative function, in Mayor Isen's opinion, who also recommended that the City Council as a whole serve as a committee in a special meeting to go further into this matter, this being the logical, proper way to handle an issue of this importance, rather than a committee of three submitting a recommendation. In this manner, Mayor Isen, continued, City employees can participate in such an open Council meeting and he feels this would be to their liking. Councilman Miller stated that Committee recommendations to the Council result in just such hearings before the whole Council and does not preclude Council participation in any manner.

Councilman Johnson restated his motion above, which was now seconded by Mayor Isen. Councilman Miller recommended that the committee question first be resolved, since it now appears that is the issue, with the Retirement Plan caught in the crossfire.

Prior to any action on the motion, Mr. Richard DeArmitt was permitted to speak, and advised that he would welcome, and had anticipated, the opportunity to present his case to the entire Council. Mr. DeArmitt also stated that he not only represents the Torrance Firefighters but all safety members on the Fire Department, and expressed their hope that this proposal would be adopted today by the Council, having waited since 1953, and expressed his confidence in the Council's ability to find the money if in agreement with the merit of the plan. Mr. DeArmitt added that they are willing to pay their share, as is done with Social Security.

Next to speak was Mr. Ray Saukkola, President, Torrance City Employees' Association, who stated that his organization supports the 50-20 Plan as recommended by the Police and Fire Committee, and stated their understanding as well that this problem would be resolved prior to the 1968-69 budget; having, however, now been informed that there are not funds available to implement this plan as

of this date. Mr. Saukkola then questioned if approval of this plan in principle established a priority for next year's fiscal budget; if so, then it must be pointed out that the miscellaneous employees currently are trailing the safety members in retirement benefits by approximately 2.3% - if the 50-20 Plan, and it is certainly most worthwhile, is added and the miscellaneous employees do not have their retirement benefits increased, they will then be trailing by 8.06% in retirement benefits. Mr. Saukkola continued, stating that, in addition, were a priority established on next year's budget which might have an effect on wage and salary negotiations, then the recommendation to the Council would be that the wage and salary problems be solved first, and then take whatever available monies are left, deciding fringe benefits on that basis. Mr. Saukkola concluded with the recommendation that the entire program be referred to the Council Finance Committee, that all employee groups be asked to appear before that Committee, or, as recommended by Mayor Isen, before the whole Council acting in special session.

Mr. Sam Hunegs, representing Local #1117, stated that they have studied the 50-20 Retirement Plan, they find it desirable, and recommend that it be enacted. Pointed out by Mr. Hunegs was the long standing Council policy of equal treatment for all employees, and it is their hope that this principle will continue.

Mr. DeArmitt returned to advise that there is legislation pending to reduce the retirement for miscellaneous employees by five years, and pledged the support of the Firefighters in their obtaining such a benefit if it becomes a fact, with the same privilege of negotiating separate from wage negotiations.

It was the comment of Mr. Saukkola that TCEA has made no agreement with the Police Officers' Association and the Firefighters to give them any priority on any budget requests for fiscal year 1968-69; it is their position that if monies are available now which would permit the plan to be enacted now that TCEA would wholeheartedly endorse this plan - however, if it means that it must be considered along with other items, no such agreement has been made.

Sergeant Oates returned to further state that this Plan is necessary if ample police protection is to be provided the City of Torrance; there are not enough experienced Policemen operating patrol cars to do the job properly, past experience having been that after a few years the experienced officers resign to go to work for other agencies. Such fringe benefits would provide incentive to retain experienced officers, in Sergeant Oates' opinion, who then recited the legislative background in connection with this Plan.

Mayor Isen then inquired: (1) The date of enactment by the State Legislature, and was advised May, 1966; (2) Is it a fact that the Fire Department of a city put this into effect, and then withdrew it; that no city up until now has adopted it. Mr. DeArmitt stated that 17 cities have requested this plan this year, and it is his understanding that the withdrawal by the one city was for the reason that they went to L.A. County Retirement System, which is even superior to the subject plan. (3) Have any cities adopted this plan as yet? The reply was "no, to their knowledge". (4) Can it be assumed, as a result of the earlier comments, that the Police and Fire should have preferential treatment in this benefit without compensation for the other employees to keep it equal? Sergeant Oates stated that the need is genuinely acute, and that should be the consideration.

Councilman Miller stated at this point that if benefits received by the Police and Fire prior to budget time did indeed affect the other employees, then the Council would have to concern themselves with their position since they do want to give equal treatment to all employees. Mr. Miller then inquired of Sergeant Oates, should the raising of the necessary funds short of increasing taxes prove impossible, would he be adverse to making this a ballot issue? Sergeant Oates advised that failing all else they would look to the November ballot, confident that the citizens share their feeling as to the merits of their cause.

Mayor Isen then commented on the fiscal responsibility of the Council as well as their desire to provide the best that is practical and possible for City employees, and the monumental decisions before them with requests for additional funds from all directions.

Councilman Sciarrotta concurred with Mayor Isen and Councilman Miller in the "equal treatment" policy of the Council, one from which he does not intend to depart, acknowledging the merits of the 50-20 Plan and the hope that financing will prove available, which will be equitable for all.

It was the comment of Councilman Uerkwitz that agreement is unanimous as to the merits of the 50-20 Plan, the unknown factor being from whence the money is to come. If Councilman Johnson's earlier motion will provide the answer, he suggested that it be voted on.

Councilman Johnson restated his motion for approval of the plan, subject to the City Manager coming up with the money without increasing the taxes.

Requested by Councilman Wilson was further information as to what would be the actual reduction in cost for the Workmen's Compensation Insurance, particularly between the ages of 50 and 55; further, what statistics are available to support the claim that this would reduce the number of voluntary terminations, thereby saving money.

Added by Councilman Beasley was the request that the City Manager, in his search for funds, make it clear what has to be done to accomplish this - the most important aspect being what services might have to be eliminated. Councilman Uerkwitz added that the source of the money is of prime interest to him as well.

Councilman Johnson then amended his motion to state: That the Council approves of the Police and Fire 50-20 Plan, subject to the City Manager coming up with the money without increasing the taxes, as well as the source of the money, it being further understood that the City Manager may have flexibility in this assignment. The amended motion was seconded by Mayor Isen.

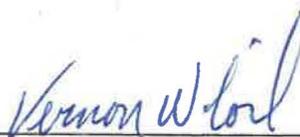
Prior to roll call vote, Mr. Bill Roberts, 3937 West 188th Street, came forward, as a taxpayer, to request information as to the present personnel turnover among the safety employees, and longevity average, pointing out the taxpayer concern for anything affecting the tax rate.

The amended motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Comments were as follows, pertaining to their "yes" votes: Councilman Beasley reiterated his reservations pertaining to the funds. While the motion revises the Fire and Police Committee recommendation somewhat, Councilman Miller, in a spirit of cooperation, cast his affirmative vote; Councilman Sciarrotta felt similarly. Mayor Isen again expressed his approval of the Plan, and the hope that the money can be found.

It was unanimously agreed to hold the remaining agenda items for the April 30th meeting.

At 5:40 P.M. Councilman Sciarrotta moved to adjourn to April 30, 1968 at 5:30 P.M. His motion was seconded by Councilman Uerkwitz, and there were no objections.



Vernon W. Coil, Clerk of the
City of Torrance, California

APPROVED:



Mayor of the City of Torrance

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