

Torrance, California
December 16, 1941

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 Adjourned Regular Meeting in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Torrance, California, on Tuesday evening, December 16, 1941 at 7:45 P.M.

Mayor McGuire called the meeting to order.

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

Being and adjourned meeting, the regular order of business was dispensed with.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A communication was read from the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company, a corporation, petitioning the City Council of the City of Torrance to allow said Company to locate, lay down, maintain and operate a spur track at grade across Crenshaw Boulevard and Western Avenue in the City of Torrance. Manner and locations were indicated on drawings attached and made a part of the petition. The drawings were presented to each Councilman for examination.

Mr. Weiss of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company addressed the Council regarding this matter, and assured the Council that wig-wag signals will be properly placed if this petition is granted. Councilman Hitchcock requested that, if the petition is granted by resolution, the clause requiring placing of wig-wag signals be included as a part of the resolution, his request being complied with and Clerk Bartlett was instructed to include a specific clause in the resolution requiring placing of the signals.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1510

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY
OF TORRANCE GRANTING PERMISSION TO THE
ATCHISON, TOPEKA AND SANTA FE RAILROAD COM-
PANY TO LAY RAILROAD TRACKS OVER AND UPON
CERTAIN STREETS IN THE CITY OF TORRANCE.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that Resolution No. 1510 be adopted. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read from the Fisher Research Laboratory, Palo Alto, California, quoting prices on emergency transmitters for us in operation of the two-way radio communication system during times when power might be cut off or discontinued. No action.

A communication was read from the National Supply Plant Corporation, requesting removal of eucalyptus trees on the North side of Carson Street from Border Avenue to Ferrocarril Avenue

the first or second week in January, 1942, being for purpose of facilitating the expansion program scheduled to begin in February, 1942.

Councilman Powell moved that the request of the National Supply Plant Corporation for removal of eucalyptus trees on the North side of Caron Street from Border Avenue to Ferrocarril Avenue be granted. Councilman Kail seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from H.B. Schermerhom, requesting license to operate a retail ice cream, sandwich, pie and pop route in the City of Torrance.

Councilman Babcock moved that the request be referred to the Police Department for investigation and report. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from Crill Crawford, requesting license to operate a billiard room at 1325 Sartori Avenue.

Councilman Powell moved the request be referred to the Chief of Police for investigation and recommendation. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion.

Councilman Hitchcock reported Mr. Crawford had contacted him and expressed anxiety that this matter be acted upon at the earliest possible date. He said he had referred Mr. Crawford to Chief Stroh.

Chief Stroh advised that he has no objection to granting permission for a billiard room if it is satisfactory with the merchants on Sartori Avenue. He added that Mr. Crawford had been given the alternative recently of having his license revoked or surrendering it, the license having been surrendered. Clarence Pinkham began operations in the location for which Mr. Crawford surrendered his license, Chief Stroh said.

Councilman Babcock moved the request of Crill Crawford for license to operate a billiard room at 1325 Sartori Avenue be granted. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion.

Harvel Guttenfelder asked permission to interject a statement regarding this matter, which permission was granted. He proceeded to relate that his building on Cravens Avenue had been desired by Mr. Crawford for this business; that Mr. Crawford had given Mr. Guttenfelder a check for rental of the building, but that Mr. Guttenfelder had been compelled to return the check upon refusal of the City of Torrance to issue an occupancy permit for the building. He stated that another person in the City of Torrance has had a similar experience.

Councilman Hitchcock withdrew his second to the motion to grant license for operation of billiard room at 1325 Sartori Avenue.

Engineer Jain explained that the Building Code provides for withholding of occupancy permits on buildings which were unoccupied at the time of earthquake or other disaster, if the building is damaged to the extent that it is felt the tenant would be endangered by occupying the building, until such time as the building is placed in condition for occupancy in accordance with building requirements. He stated further that, in cases where the buildings were occupied at the time of the disaster, and were damaged and subsequently posted as unsafe for occupancy, and where the tenants continue to occupy the building, they do so at their own risk, in which case some of the owners of the buildings discontinue collection of rental on the building, thereby assuming no responsibility for continued occupancy of unsafe buildings.

Councilman Babcock withdrew his motion to grant license for operation of billiard room at 1325 Sartori Avenue.

Councilman Babcock moved that action on the request of Crill Crawford for permission to operate a billiard room at 1325 Sartori Avenue be deferred until the Regular Meeting scheduled for December 23, 1941, to allow time to investigate the matter thoroughly. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

At 8:10 P. M., Mayor McGuire announced that time had arrived for opening of bids for repairs and furnishings for Water Department building at 1511 Cravens Avenue.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that all bids received be returned to bidders unopened, due to the fact that plans have been changed. Councilman Powell seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that the City Clerk be authorized to readvertise for bids for repairs and furnishings for the Water Department building at 1511 Cravens Avenue. Councilman Kail seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote; AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None. Previous to the roll call vote on the above motion, Mr. Eisen, Architect, made a few remarks regarding the matter. Also, Clerk Bartlett read in full the notice inviting bids.

A communication was read from the City of Torrance Civil Service Board, submitting bill for services rendered by W. C. Bradford as Secretary of the Civil Service Board of the City of Torrance during the months of September, October and November, 1941.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that payment of \$100.00 to W. C. Bradford be allowed for his services as secretary of the Torrance Civil Service Board during the months of September, October and November 1941. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication addressed to John H. Stroh, Chief of Police, from Harold G. Peery, 720 8th Street, Hermosa Beach, was read, in which Mr. Peery offered to service and maintain in proper operating condition the transmitting and receiving units comprising the two-way communication system of the Torrance Police Department for the sum of \$7.50 per week.

After a short discussion, Councilman Powell moved that the Chief of Police be authorized to enter into contract with Harold G. Peery for Mr. Peery's service in maintaining in proper operating condition the transmitting and receiving units comprising the two-way communication system of the Torrance Police Department for the sum of \$7.50 per week, and in accordance with letter submitted by Mr. Peery to Chief Stroh. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read from the Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D. C., enclosing statement showing the number of Japanese aliens in each city having a Japanese population of 500 or more. The statement indicated a total of 1,189 Japanese people in the City of Torrance, 781 being American born (citizens) and 408 being foreign born (aliens). Matter of record.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1511

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF TORRANCE REQUESTING DRAFT DE-
FERMENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE TORRANCE
FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS.

Councilman Powell moved that Resolution No. 1511 be adopted. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Powell moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$71.00 be made for overhauling of electrical truck. Councilman Kail seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Powell moved that the Oldsmobile automobile in use by the Police and Fire Departments be assigned to the Fire Department and that \$35.00 be appropriated, plus tax, for painting the automobile fire department red. Councilman Babcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read by Councilman Powell from J. E. McMaster, Fire Chief, in which it was stated that Engineer Northington of the Torrance Fire Department has offered the Fire Department the use of his trailer for the duration of the war, which trailer, Chief McMaster stated, will be used for hauling first aid equipment. It was stated that \$25.00 will complete the trailer, work to be done by the local firemen.

Councilman Powell moved that the offer of Engineer Northington to loan his trailer for use of the Fire Department in hauling first aid equipment for the duration of the war be accepted, and that \$25.00 be appropriated to complete the trailer. Councilman Kail seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Powell moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$139.00, plus tax, be made for two running board pump can holders, five pump cans with spray nozzles complete, ten hose straps, and 1 die for the Fire Department. Councilman Hitchcock seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$150.00 be made for recapping of tires for the Street Department. Councilman Kail seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Hitchcock moved that an appropriation of not to exceed \$100.00 be made for sheet metal for lining Officers' quarters for California State Guard at the Municipal Park. Councilman Kail seconded the motion which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

Councilman Babcock moved that the Homemade semi trailer owned by E. A. Newell and offered for use of the Red Cross Unit by Mr. Newell, be accepted, and that ownership be transferred from Mr. Newell to the City of Torrance, \$1.00 fee for transferring the ownership to be appropriated. Councilman Kail seconded the motion, which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Babcock, Hitchcock, Kail, Powell and McGuire. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

At the suggestion of Chief Stroh, it was agreed that an exempt license be applied for.

Mr. McCall, City Attorney, reported he had conferred with Office of Production Management officials in Washington, D. C. for three days, during which time the priority matter had been discussed to great length. Mr. McCall advised he had eventually been instructed that property owners of buildings which were damaged in the earthquake of November 14, 1941 will be able to secure necessary steel and building materials to repair their buildings without priority numbers. He said there had been many interchanges of views during the conferences, and that only after exhaustive discussion had he been informed the materials can be obtained without priority numbers. He said he had been referred to Mr. McGregor in the Los Angeles office of the Office of Production Management, although, he continued, he had been further informed that Mr. McGregor has only the authority to act in an advisory capacity.

Mr. Stanger, Manager of the Water Department, questioned the possibility of getting the materials without the priority numbers, advising that the materials companies are unwilling to sell without the priorities.

Mr. McCall offered to make a test case of the first person who has his list of materials prepared and prove whether or not it will be possible, by contacting Mr. McGregor in the Los Angeles office, and by following information given him in Washington, D. C., to secure the materials without priority numbers. Mr. McCall said he felt confident the materials can be obtained in this manner.

During the ensuing and prolonged discussion, several property owners participated, together with various members of the Council and Mr. Jain and Mr. McCall.

Mr. Harvel Guttenfelder, Mr. Earl Conners, Mr. Fay Parks, Mr. Stanger and Mr. Bowen expressed opinions regarding the matter. The opinions voiced by the above mentioned gentlemen indicated that they felt something more definite than verbal instructions should be furnished them, especially since there will be instances where the contractors will purchase their materials from firms other than local ones.

Mr. Stanger suggested that the Council request the Los Angeles Office of the Office of Production Management to appoint a deputy for duty in the City of Torrance, in order that he can have actual knowledge of whether or not the material requested is for repair to earthquake damaged buildings, this one point appearing to be a determining factor in being allowed to purchase materials.

Mayor McGuire instructed City Attorney McCall to contact the Los Angeles Office of the Office of Production Management and determine exact procedure to be followed to obtain materials for repairs to earthquake damaged buildings without priority numbers.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Earl Conners inquired as to the status of the Cabrillo Avenue right of way matter. Engineer Jain advised he had been informed December 12, 1941 that the Pacific Electric Railway Company has removed their part of the materials, and that the City of Torrance can proceed at any time to remove rails and other materials by giving notice to the Pacific Electric Railway Company officials.

Harvel Guttenfelder inquired as to why he has been unable to obtain an occupancy permit for the building owned by him at 1618 Cravens Avenue. He said the Engineering Department had refused to issue the permit on the grounds that the building was damaged during the earthquake and must be repaired before an occupancy permit will be granted. He said several engineers had informed him the damage to the building is slight. Numerous other

buildings more damaged than his building are being occupied, he said. He contended that the emergency earthquake repair ordinance adopted recently (referring to Ordinance No. 331) is too stringent, stating that it was drawn to favor the engineers and gives no consideration to the property owners who are compelled to abide by it. He objected to the requirement that the plans for repairing earthquake buildings must be drawn by a structural engineer.

Mr. Fay Parks also objected to the requirement that a structural engineer must draw the plans. It was mentioned that the engineer must in some cases present several sets of plans before they are finally accepted and approved by the Engineering Department, an additional expense for the property owner.

Councilman Powell remarked that it is the responsibility of the person drawing the plans to acquaint himself with the various requirements by calling at the office of the Engineer and examining the ordinance.

Engineer Jain reported that a great deal of Mr. Cannon's time (Mr. Cannon being the structural engineer hired by the City to assist in the earthquake reconstruction work) is devoted to going out on the various jobs and offering advice on what can and cannot be done, but not in instructing the engineers how to do their jobs, as there are naturally differences of opinions as to how jobs should be done.

Mr. Cecil Smith entered the discussion at this point, remarking that he had been offered the services of the engineer for the Gilmore Oil Company, upon whose property his business is located, but that, inasmuch as he was not a licensed structural engineer, he (Mr. Smith) had been compelled to hire a licensed structural engineer at great expense to himself.

Mr. Bowen asked why it is necessary for a licensed structural engineer to draw the plans when the City of Torrance employs a licensed structural engineer to check them.

It was suggested that the structural engineer hired by the City could make recommendations to the persons drawing the plans. Mr. Jain pointed out that the Engineering Department is not in a position to recommend to engineers how they should perform their job, advising that the Engineering Department could as easily draw the plans as to do this.

Mr. Eisen, Architect from the firm of Walker and Eisen, made a few remarks pertaining to the matter, stating that the Riley Act, a State Law, supersedes any city ordinance passed relating to earthquake repairs if the city ordinance is more lax than the Riley Act.

When asked how long after plans are left in the Engineering Department it will be before they are checked by the Engineers, Mr. Cannon informed that it would be approximately ten days or two weeks, and advised that twenty-nine sets of plans are on file now and are being checked in the order in which they were received.

Engineer Jain advised it has been impossible to obtain additional engineering help, and stated that it has been the thought that no engineers who are engaged in repair work in the City should be hired in this capacity. He said no assistance can be had from either the State, County or City of Los Angeles.

Councilman Hitchcock asked whether there are other buildings in the City of Torrance which are occupied and which were damaged during the earthquake to the extent that repairs are necessary. Mr. Jain advised that there are buildings being occupied which were posted as unsafe for occupancy, but that they are buildings which were occupied at the time of the earthquake,

and that the tenants are occupying the buildings at their own risk. In cases where buildings were unoccupied at the time of the earthquake, and which buildings were damaged during the earthquake, he stated, the City is within its rights in withholding issuance of occupancy permits, both as a protection to the prospective tenant and as a protection to the City. So far, he added, he has no knowledge of action being started to repair the building at 1618 Cravens Avenue.

Mr. Bowen said he felt the City should issue occupancy permits for the buildings, regardless of whether or not they were occupied at the time of the earthquake. He cited one case where the building had been occupied, vacated, then reoccupied,

Mr. Conner asked what rate of progress is being made in the Engineering Department. Mr. Jain advised that the plans are being checked as rapidly as it is possible so to do with the limited help it has been possible to secure. Mr. Conner said he thought matters had moved rather slowly in the Engineering Department.

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

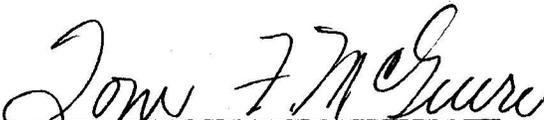
Mr. Guttenfleder inquired as to whether or not the bank building would be rented.

Mayor McGuire advised that the building will not be occupied until the Engineering Department inspects it, and that no license will be granted for business to be conducted at the address.

At 10:10 P.M., upon motion of Councilman Hitchcock, seconded by Councilman Kail, the meeting adjourned.


City Clerk of the City of Torrance

APPROVED:


Mayor of the City of Torrance