

Torrance, California
May 25, 1948

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, May 25, 1948, at 8:10 p.m.

Mayor Sherfey called the meeting to order.

Clerk Bartlett called the roll, those answering present being Councilmen: Drale, Haggard, Jackson, Powell and Sherfey. Absent: Councilmen: None.

All those present in the Council Chambersaluted the Flag.

Councilman Drale moved that the minutes of a Regular Meeting held May 11, 1948 be approved as written. Councilman Jackson seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

A communication was read from the United Steelworkers of America, Local Union 1414, C.I.O., advising that their union has adopted a resolution urging the Torrance City Council to favor a 40-hour week for city workers, and in particular, members of the Police Department; and any greater number of work hours to be accounted as overtime, the pay to be at the accepted overtime rate.

Councilman Jackson moved that the communication be filed for future reference. Councilman Haggard seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

Clerk Bartlett presented for payment a bill from the Torrance Herald, for \$135.50 covering advertising change in Long Beach-Hawthorne and local bus schedules, and read a request from Mr. W. H. Murphey, Bus Manager, for the payment of \$81.00 to the Lomita News for advertising change in Long Beach-Hawthorne schedules.

Councilman Haggard moved that the Council Authorize the payment of \$135.00 to the Torrance Herald and \$81.00 to the Lomita News for advertising change schedules. Councilman Jackson seconded the motion which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Drale, Haggard, Jackson, Powell and Sherfey. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read from the County of Los Angeles Health Department, enclosing contract covering public health services to be performed by that department in the City of Torrance during the fiscal year 1948-49.

Councilman Jackson moved that the contract be referred to the City Attorney for study and recommendation. Councilman Haggard seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

Clerk A. H. Bartlett, recommended that an appropriation of \$10,000.00 be made from the Sales Tax Fund for payment to the Municipal Water District No. 1 on the City's \$35,000.00 indebtedness.

Mayor Sherfey explained that it is the intention of the Council to pay off this indebtedness by July 1st, and asked for figures to substantiate the recommendation.

Clerk Bartlett replied that Fund Balance sheets have been furnished showing this indebtedness.

Councilman Jackson moved that the recommendation be referred to the Council as whole for further study and action at the next Regular Meeting. Councilman Haggard seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

A communication was read from City Administrator Stevens submitting the following recommendations for the Council's consideration and approval:

PERSONNEL:

- (1) That the following named Firemen and Police Officer, having satisfactorily served their term in their present pay bracket, be advanced to the next higher pay bracket, effective on the dates indicated, and that their compensation be at the rate of \$253.00 per month:
 - (a) Robert Lucas, Fireman, effective May 15, 1948.
 - (b) Harlan Whitacre, Fireman, effective May 19, 1948.
 - (c) John W. Maestri, Police Officer, effective May 16, 1948.
- (2) That William H. Stanger be granted his regular vacation period and an additional two-weeks Leave of Absence, without pay, during the period June 1 to June 30, 1948.

APPROPRIATIONS:

- (1) For the purchase of garden hose for the Park Department, the sum of \$55.10, plus tax.
- (2) For the purchase of rock and oil for seal-coating 171st Street from Yukon Avenue to Prairie Avenue, the sum of \$215.00 (County Aid Funds).
- (3) For the purchase of rock and oil for seal-coating 168th Street from Yukon Avenue to Crenshaw Boulevard, the sum of \$215.00 (County Aid Funds).
- (4) For the purchase of one drum of Kelite soap for the City Garage, the sum of \$82.50, plus tax.

ABG943

- (5) For the purchase of the following used office furniture and equipment, a sum not to exceed \$250.00.

2 Desks
2 Chairs
4 Steel Cabinets
1 Typewriter

REMOVAL OF TREES:

That permission be granted to remove trees at the following location, with the provision that the abutting property owners remove and dispose of same at their own expense:

- (1) Mable Duncan, 2204 Cabrillo Avenue, two pepper trees.

RE-ZONING:

- (1) That Case No. 131, petition for Change of Zone of Tract No. 14898 from A-1 to R-1 be referred to the Planning Commission for necessary action.
- (2) That the petition for Vacation of Alley in Block F, Tract No. 10300, be referred to the Planning Commission for necessary action.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- (1) That the City initiate proceedings for the granting of a franchise to the Southern California Edison Co. in accordance with the regulations of the Franchise Act of 1937.
- (2) That the Brownie Girl Scouts of Hermosa Beach be granted the use of the City Park from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., on June 15, 17, 22 and 24, for their Summer Activities Program.
- (3) That the contract with the South Bay Humane Society for collection of dog licenses and furnishing of pound services be continued for one year.
- (4) That Ordinance No. 367 be amended so that registration of bicycles in the City would be by the calendar year. Next licenses to be issued January 1, 1949, for the year 1949.
- (5) That a permit be granted to the Torrance Hobby Shop for the sale of Safe and Sane Fireworks for the period July 1 to July 4, 1948, inclusive, subject to the regulations of the Fire Department.
- (6) That notice be given to Carl E. Marsteller of Intention to terminate the contract with the City for the selling of bus tickets and maintaining premises at 1014 South Hill Street, Los Angeles.

Councilman Jackson moved that the Council concur in the recommendations of City Administrator Stevens. Councilman Haggard seconded the motion which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Drale, Haggard, Jackson, Powell and Sherfey. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read from John R. Patrick, Secretary, Torrance Planning Commission, advising that at a meeting of the Commission held May 18, 1948, the following matters were considered and approved:

VARIANCES:

- (1) Case No. 118, Petition of F. R. Taylor for a Variance and Conditional Permit to permit the construction of an office Building, lumber sheds and other buildings

incidental to the operation of a lumber and building materials yard; located on that portion of the east one-half of Lot 15, Meadow Park Tract, lying north of Pacific Coast Highway and east of Ocean Avenue. Approval was given on the condition that no milling or milling machinery be included.

- (2) Case No. 124, Petition of Henry Leivas for a Variance from Land Use Ordinance No. 316, to permit the construction of a store building on the south 75' of Lot 20, Meadow Park Tract, to be used as a grocery store. This property is located on the west side of Hawthorne Boulevard, between 230th Street and 236th Street. Approval was given for a building approximately 18' x 34' to front on Hawthorne Boulevard, as per the sketch accompanying the application.
- (3) Request from the Riviera Housing Corporation for a Variance of set-back from twenty to fifteen feet on the following lots: Block A, Lots 1-19 inclusive, Block B, Lots 2-4 inclusive, Block C, Lots 2-15 inclusive, Tract No. 14898.

SUBDIVISION MAPS:

- (1) Final Tract Map No. 15139 (Weston Ranch), consisting of 298 lots, bounded on the west by Madison Street, on the north by 101 Highway and on the east by Tract No. 3265, was approved with the recommendation that it be sent to the City Council for concurrence.
- (2) Tentative Tract Map No. 13994 (Weston Ranch), consisting of 200 lots, bounded on the east by Crenshaw Boulevard, on the north by 101 Highway and on the west by proposed Tract No. 15139, was approved with the recommendation that it be sent to the City Council for concurrence.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- (1) The four tentative elementary school building sites, chosen by the School Board were approved as to location. Approval had been requested in a communication from Mr. J. Henrich Hull.

Councilman Jackson moved that the Council concur in the recommendations of the City Planning Commission. Councilman Powell seconded the motion.

There was some discussion regarding the action to be taken on matters submitted by the Planning Commission.

City Administrator Stevens explained that Petitions for Variance which have been approved by the Commission require no action by the Council, but are submitted to the Council as a matter of routine; however, subdivision maps require the approval of the Council.

Councilman Jackson then amended his motion to read: that the Council concur in the action of the Planning Commission in approving Final Tract Map No. 15139 and Tentative Tract Map No. 13994, and the four tentative elementary school building sites chosen by the School Board. Councilman Powell seconded the motion which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Drale, Haggard, Jackson, Powell and Sherfey. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication was read from the Torrance City School District enclosing Lease with the City of Torrance for the use of the Fern Avenue Annex School Site for playground purposes, and requesting the Council to execute its portion of the lease.

City Attorney Smith advised that this is the same kind of lease which has heretofore existed and recommended that it be accepted.

ABG943

Councilman Drale moved that the Mayor be authorized to execute the lease for use of the Fern Avenue Annex School Site. Councilman Powell seconded the motion which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Drale, Haggard, Jackson, Powell and Sherfey. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

A communication from the Office of the District Attorney, addressed to City Attorney Smith, was read, enclosing copies of the summons and complaint, and the original copy of Stipulation of Entry of Judgment, in the case of the People of the State of California vs. City of Torrance, a Municipal Corporation, et al, for abatement of public nuisance, and requesting execution and return of the Stipulation.

City Administrator Stevens suggested that the signing of the Stipulation be held in abeyance pending further study of the question and to determine the action of other cities on the same matter. He said the City would endeavor to abate the nuisance but he believed it will be difficult to live up to the requirements of the Stipulation, and asked the City Attorney for his recommendation.

City Attorney Smith agreed with Mr. Stevens that the Stipulation should not be signed at this particular time, that the City has until July 1st to answer, and moreover the Stipulation names three Councilmen who no longer sit on the Council which fact alone may require another document.

Councilman Haggard moved that the Council concur in the recommendation of the City Attorney and City Administrator to withhold signing of the Stipulation of Entry of Judgment at the present time. Councilman Jackson seconded the motion which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Drale, Haggard, Jackson, Powell and Sherfey. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

An application for Electric Franchise was presented by the Southern California Edison Company, the term of said Franchise to be indeterminate, as provided in the Franchise Act of 1937.

City Attorney Smith advised that the City would derive considerable revenue by granting this application under the Franchise Act of 1937, and recommended that the Council accept the application and act on the Resolution of Intention to grant this Electric Franchise.

Councilman Haggard moved that the application of the Southern California Edison Company for Electric Franchise be accepted and that the Resolution of Intention be adopted. Councilman Drale seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1905

RESOLUTION OF INTENTION TO GRANT
ELECTRIC FRANCHISE.

Councilman Jackson moved that Resolution No. 1905 be adopted. Councilman Haggard seconded the motion which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Drale, Haggard, Jackson, Powell and Sherfey. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

The matter of vacation of a portion of Palos Verdes Parkway was considered at this time.

The City Attorney announced that all legal papers were in order and the question of the future school sites had been settled.

Councilman Haggard moved that the Resolution to vacate a portion of Palos Verdes Parkway be considered at this time. Councilman Jackson seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Oliver Clark, Attorney for Sunhaven Properties, Inc., explained to the assemblage the purpose and benefits of this vacation.

Mr. Mason, President of the Hollywood Riviera Homeowners Association, stated that the people in his community were in favor of the vacation, and that the City would benefit therefrom.

Clerk Bartlett presented and read title to:

RESOLUTION NO. 1906

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF TORRANCE ORDERING THE VACATION
OF A PORTION OF PALOS VERDES PARKWAY
IN THE CITY OF TORRANCE.

Councilman Jackson moved that Resolution No. 1906 be adopted. Councilman Drale seconded the motion which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Drale, Haggard, Jackson, Powell and Sherfey. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

City Administrator Stevens said that he had received from the High School students, who recently took over the administrative duties of the City for one day, several communications setting forth their recommendations for various departments for the betterment of the City.

Mayor Sherfey advised that anyone desiring to read these communications could do so after the meeting.

Councilman Drale declared that the City Council is anxious that J. J. Newberry and J. C. Penny stores located in the City of Torrance be reopened, said stores having been closed since July, 1947 because of labor disputes; and moved that City Administrator Stevens be instructed to contact Haskell Tidwell, Secretary of the Clerks Local No. 905, A. F. of L., as well as representatives of both stores, with a view to working out some amicable arrangement whereby the above-mentioned stores will be reopened. Councilman Powell seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

Mayor Sherfey read a newspaper article on a Superior Court decision wherein a Los Angeles property owner was enjoined from selling separately, units in a court, the plot of ground for each individual unit being approximately 25 x 28 feet.

Mayor Sherfey explained that a like situation exists in Torrance, namely, Spurlin Court which has been split up into units and sold to various owners, and declared that if one of the houses should be burned down, under the City Ordinance it could not be rebuilt.

It was his opinion that some action should be taken to prohibit such sales.

After considerable discussion, Mayor Sherfey moved that the City Attorney be instructed to investigate the situation and advise the Council if it has the authority to take any action in this matter.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. R. C. Brown, 1004 Crenshaw Boulevard, presented a petition signed by several hundred residents of Torrance, requesting the Council to take immediate action to eliminate the menace and hazard, which confronts the citizens living in the vicinity of the perpetually plowed farm lands situated at the Northwest sections of Torrance and Crenshaw Boulevards, by placing a restraining Order or Injunction against the owners, lessees or users of this land to prohibit any further plowing, discing or turnover of this acreage. The petition also asks that this land be kept wet and that sod coverage be allowed to grow, until such time as the land is released for sale or sold for a residential subdivision; and that a high, tight, closed fence be temporarily erected to protect residents from the dust storms.

Councilman Drale asked the City Attorney if there is a State law whereby land which is unimproved over a period of five years could revert to the City, and requested the City Attorney to look into this question and report his findings to the Council.

ABG943

Councilman Drale moved that the owners of the property in question be requested to erect a temporary fence on the south side of the land.

There was considerable discussion on whether the erection of a fence would be an effective means of overcoming the dust menace.

Councilman Haggard suggested that it would be better to refer this matter to the City Administrator and City Attorney for them to work out with the owners a satisfactory solution to the problem.

Councilman Drale's motion was lost for want of a second.

City Administrator Stevens reported that the lessor, whom he had recently interviewed, was not very cooperative, and had informed him (Stevens) that he had leased the land for a farm and he intended to operate it as such. Mr. Stevens asked him not to disc the land any more, but the lessor had done so several times since.

It was pointed out that the constant plowing and discing of this land, known as the "Dust Bowl", creates so much dust that it is now recognized as a menace to the health of the citizens of the community, as well as being a constant source of annoyance to householders in that vicinity.

There then followed discussion on various ways and means of eliminating this nuisance, such as the possibility of rezoning for commercial use or subdividing the land for much needed homes.

Councilman Powell pointed out that the first step is to abate the nuisance rather than to go into the question of planning.

City Attorney Smith said that the District Attorney has the right to bring an injunction to abate this nuisance; that he did not know if the City has this authority; however, if this menace constitutes a public nuisance the matter comes within the jurisdiction of the District Attorney, which makes it a penal offense.

Councilman Haggard moved that the City Attorney be instructed to notify the owners or lessees of this land of the seriousness of the condition which exists; that an injunction or restraining order be brought against them to abate this nuisance; and that the proper authorities be contacted with regard to the health menace created by the dust emanating from this perpetually plowed farm land, and that he report back to the Council at the next meeting. Councilman Powell seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

Councilman Jackson moved that the City Attorney convey to the owners or lessees of the property the thoughts of the residents and the City Council on this problem. Councilman Haggard seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

Mr. Peterson asked about the resurfacing of Beech and Acacia Streets and asked that the alleys be improved.

City Administrator Stevens replied that the Engineering Department had set up a program for this improvement.

Mr. Cheadle complained about the poor garbage and tin can collection.

Councilman Drale, as Street Commissioner, replied that this matter will be referred to the proper department for attention.

Mr. B. J. Michels of Walteria extended an invitation to the members of the City Council to attend a parade and Memorial Service being sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars in the Walteria Park, Sunday, May 30, 1948 at 10:15 a.m.

Councilman Jackson moved that all bills properly audited be paid. Councilman Haggard seconded the motion which was carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Drale, Haggard, Jackson, Powell and Sherfey. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

At 9:35 p.m., upon motion of Councilman Haggard, seconded by Councilman Jackson, and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned to June 3, 1948 at 8:00 p.m.


CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE

APPROVED:


MAYOR OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE

ABG943