

029

Torrance, California
January 2, 1957

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

The City Council of the City of Torrance convened in an Adjourned Regular Meeting at 5:30 P. M. Wednesday, January 2, 1957, in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Torrance.

Those responding to roll call by Deputy City Clerk Hallanger were: COUNCILMEN: Benstead, Drale, Jahn, Isen. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: Blount. City Manager Stevens and City Attorney Remelmeyer were also present.

At the request of Mayor Isen, Lt. Carmel Cook of the Police Department led the salute to our Flag.

Councilman Jahn opened the meeting with an invocation.

Mayor Isen said the Council had discussed plans for further annexation with Planning Director George C. Powell at the Pre-Council meeting, and asked Mr. Powell to come forward and outline the procedures discussed for the record. Mayor Isen said the City Council had indicated a policy favoring this.

Planning Director Powell presented a map under the subject of annexation, and outlined the area as being bounded by Palos Verdes Boulevard North at the southerly side, Rolling Hills Road on the East, and the boundaries of the City of Torrance and the City of Palos Verdes on the north and west, calling this the "Rolling Hills-Crenshaw area".

Councilman Drale moved Planning Director Powell file the map with the County Boundary Commission at 8:00 A. M. tomorrow morning, Thursday, January 3, 1957.

Motion, seconded by Councilman Benstead, carried unanimously by roll call vote of those present.

Councilman Benstead moved to approve the Minutes of the Adjourned Regular Meeting of the Council held December 26, 1956, as written.

Motion seconded by Councilman Drale, no objections, so ordered.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

1. A letter dated December 25, 1956, from Robert B. Ryan of 5025 Lillian Street, asked why the City Council did not provide a playground for the Southwood homes area instead of improving the airport; this letter also asked why the donor of the paintings at the City Hall had not provided playground equipment instead, and why Torrance doesn't install a traffic light at the corner of Anza and Torrance Boulevards.

Councilman Jahn said a reply should go to Mr. Ryan explaining the money to be used for Airport improvement is in a fund that can be used for no other purpose than the airport.

Mayor Isen suggested the reply also tell Mr. Ryan the gift of paintings for the new Civic Center was a gift, and the City had no option as to how the donor chose to give to the City.

Councilman Drale agreed with both the Mayor and Councilman Jahn, and asked that the query about the stop light at Anza and Torrance Boulevards be referred to the Traffic Commission for study.

There were no objections, and it was so ordered, with Mayor Isen asking City Manager Stevens to reply to the letter, with all these comments in mind.

2. A letter dated December 19, 1956, from J. H. Hull, secretary to the Board of Education, enclosed a letter from Wayne Hilton of Rolling Hills. Mr. Hilton discussed the new South High School and the relationship of the proposed Airport expansion to that school. Mr. Hull's letter

said several such letters have been received, and asked for information pertaining to airport development.

Councilman Jahn said the Airport Commission should be instructed to follow through on this, although pointing out that Mr. Hilton is not a resident of Torrance.

There were no objections, and it was so ordered.

3. A request dated December 28th, 1956, from Mac Frankel, LL.B., who has opened an office in a building at 17227-17225-17223 Crenshaw Boulevard, asking the trees immediately north of these buildings be removed. Mr. Frankel enclosed with his request a letter he wrote to the Engineering Dept., attention of Mrs. Deininger, on October 25, 1956, and a copy of a letter he received from C. W. Clemmer, Assistant Park Supt., dated December 21, 1956. Mr. Clemmer's letter informed Mr. Frankel of the City's policy regarding trees.

Mr. Frankel was present, and told the Council the trees almost hid the buildings at the above addresses, and the signs are not visible to south-bound traffic on Crenshaw on account of the trees. He presented pictures to illustrate his point to the Council, saying the pictures do not show the full degree of interference as the trees have lost their foliage.

Councilman Benstead pointed out the trees are not in front of the property involved.

Mr. Frankel said the owner of the property had spoken to several of the people in the duplexes where the trees are, and they favor removal of the trees. He pointed to the comments these people had made about the trees, which he had embodied in his letter to the Council.

Councilman Drale asked Planning Director Powell if the trees being discussed here are in a commercial zone.

Mr. Powell said he would have to check the map of the area to be sure.

Mayor Isen asked him to do so, and ordered this matter held over until Mr. Powell had checked and returned with the information.

4. A letter dated December 27, 1956, from Major Gas Stations, Inc., 1939 W. 174th St., Gardena, asked the Council for permission to remove two evergreen pine trees and one palm tree at Sepulveda and Kent, where they plan to build a service station. The letter offered to deed to the City the 25 feet for the widening of Sepulveda, and said they propose to put in the curbs and gutters if the City will pave the balance of the shoulder to the street and give them permission to have the trees removed.

Appended was a recommendation from City Engineer Bishop that construction be worked out so the trees can be saved.

C. W. Clemmer, Park Foreman, approved the request conditionally, saying the trees are growing into secondary electric wires and will have to be removed at some future date. According to Mr. Clemmer, this is particularly true of the palm tree, and the deodars are not good specimen trees.

Councilman Jahn asked if the removal of the trees is a condition of the dedication of the land.

Councilman Benstead said Major Gas Stations should put in the curbs, gutters, and sidewalks and paving if they want it.

City Manager Stevens said this is partly a dedicated street.

Councilman Drale said if the trees are in the way they should be removed, as this is commercial property and they could cause a hazard.

Councilman Drale moved the request for removal of the trees be granted, subject to the 25' easement on Sepulveda being given to the City for street widening purposes, and the petitioner being required to put in curbs, gutters and sidewalks, the City receiving any easement necessary for the width of Kent Street, and the petitioner being required to put in the curbs, gutters and sidewalks on Kent as well as on Sepulveda.

Motion, seconded by Councilman Jahn, carried unanimously by roll call vote of those present.

Councilman Benstead moved the City remove the palm tree to one of the City's parks or to the grounds of the new Civic Center.

Motion seconded by Councilman Drale.

There was no objection, so ordered.

Mayor Isen suggested the Council's policy of using trees they move in such a manner be made a matter of record. Whenever trees are removed with the permission of the Council, he went on, they are to be saved if it is economically feasible and if, in the opinion of the Park Superintendent, it is practical.

Councilman Benstead so moved.

Motion, seconded by Councilman Jahn, carried unanimously by roll call vote.

At this time, Mayor Isen returned to the matter of Mr. Frankel's request.

Planning Director Powell reported that from 17219 Crenshaw south to 174th Street, the zoning is for commercial usage.

Mr. Frankel said the trees he is asking to have removed are in front of duplexes. He said the trees will completely hide a neon sign he is having put up at a cost of about \$3,000.00. He said the cleaning business in one of these buildings has a neon sign worth about \$2,000.00 which is hidden by the trees. The photos handed to the Council do not depict the truly bad situation, he said.

Councilman Jahn said he would not mind removing the trees in front of commercial property if the owner of the property requested it. He said he could not vote for this unless the owner of the property requested removal of the trees.

Councilman Drale moved the request be denied because the trees are on residential property and it is uniform along there.

Motion seconded by Councilman Benstead.

Mr. Frankel protested that the people do not want the trees, and would not want to lose an opportunity to get them removed.

Mayor Isen moved to table this matter.

Motion died for lack of a second.

Councilman Jahn said he was going to vote for the motion, but he thinks the man should have the opportunity to come back with the request if he wishes and if he can get sufficient backing from his neighbors.

Mayor Isen moved to amend the motion by adding the words "without prejudice".

Councilman Drale refused to accept the amendment to the motion.

Mayor Isen moved the amendment "without prejudice".

Motion, seconded by Councilman Jahn, carried unanimously by roll call vote of those present.

Motion, as amended, carried unanimously by roll call vote of those present.

Planning Director Powell, who had to leave the meeting, asked to report at this time regarding the old Japanese Church in Waltheria. He said the New Year's Holiday is of great importance to the owners of the building, and he had not been able to contact them. He asked to have this continued for another week.

Mayor Isen said the Council has looked at the building, and find themselves in agreement with the various departments of the City. It does not seem to them to violate any Ordinances of the City, although it does not look too good.

There were no objections, and Planning Director Powell's report was postponed for a week.

Communications from the City Manager:

The following recommendations were submitted to the Council for their consideration and approval:

PERSONNEL:

At a recent meeting the City Council asked me to investigate the status of salaries for Crossing Guards employed by the City. I find that the present salary of \$1.50 per hour was established October 1, 1954. Based on standard increases granted to other employees, the salary should be at the rate of \$1.70 per hour.

I recommend that, effective January 1, 1957, the salary for Crossing Guards be established at \$1.70 per hour.

This will be in keeping with salaries paid in other cities.

Councilman Benstead moved to concur with the recommendation of the City Manager to increase Crossing Guards' salaries to \$1.70 per hour effective January 1, 1957.

Motion, seconded by Councilman Drale, carried unanimously by roll call vote of those present.

MISCELLANEOUS:

We have received a bid from Dust Control, Inc., 3330 W. El Segundo Boulevard, Hawthorne, California, for furnishing and changing filters for the City Hall, Police Station, Lounge and Pistol Range, for the sum of \$19.50 per change. It is believed it will be necessary to change the filters every two months.

I recommend that a contract be signed with Dust Control, Inc., for the above service.

Councilman Drale moved to concur with the recommendation of the City Manager.

Councilman Benstead asked if this price is for each filter.

City Manager Stevens said there are about 19 filters, which will be pulled out and cleaned at each filter change. He explained that the filters are removed, replaced with clean filters, and the ones removed are taken to the factory where Dust Control cleans them, coats them with adhesive, and then exchange them at regular intervals, thus keeping clean filters in the ventilating system at all times. He said Dust Control does this for the schools in Torrance.

Councilman Jahn seconded the motion.

Councilman Benstead said he thought the custodians could do this.

Councilman Drale asked if we had anyone qualified to do this.

City Manager Stevens said we could use throw-away units, and have it handled by the custodians. He said the throw-away units would be more expensive. He said this contract recommended is a one-year contract.

Councilman Blount entered the Council Chamber at 6:03 P. M.

Motion carried by the following roll call vote: AYES: COUNCILMEN: Benstead, Drale, Jahn, Isen. NOES: COUNCILMEN: None. ABSTAIN: COUNCILMEN: Blount. ABSENT: COUNCILMEN: None.

PLANNING COMMISSION MATTERS:

1. A letter from George C. Powell, Planning Director, dated December 28, 1956, submitted the following Street Name Changes for the Planning Commission thru action taken at the Planning Commission meeting of December 19, 1956:

Garnet Street	-	letter and sketch submitted
Onyx Street	-	" " " "
Talisman Street	-	" " " "
170th Street	-	" " " "

It was agreed that these streets are extensions of existing streets, and the easements have already been accepted by the City Council.

Councilman Drale moved to concur with the recommendations of the Planning Commission on the Street Name Changes.

Motion, seconded by Councilman Jahn, carried unanimously by roll call vote.

REPORTS:

At the request of Mayor Isen, Deputy City Clerk Hallanger read in full a report the Council had requested from C. W. Clemmer, Park Foreman, regarding the removal of eucalyptus tree at the corner of Crenshaw and Torrance Boulevards. Mr. Clemmer's report was dated December 28, 1956, and read as follows:

"It has been the policy of this department to remove trees in this particular area only in cases where a tree interfered with the construction of a building.

I do believe this consideration was justifiable at this time."

There were no objections, and the report was ordered filed as a matter of record.

The Office of the City Clerk reported a summons was received in the office of the City Manager on December 26, 1956, asking judgment in the amount of \$854.57 plus costs, in the claim of Stanford H. Rowe vs. the City of Torrance, State of California, Donald S. Michalski, John Doe #1 and John Doe #2 -- Henry S. Rupp, Attorney, for damages incurred in automobile accident at intersection of Hawthorne and Sepulveda September 3, 1955. This claim was denied by the City Council on October 25, 1955.

Deputy City Clerk Hallanger read:

RESOLUTION NO. 3084

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO EXECUTE THAT CERTAIN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY AND THOMAS F. MC NEIL AND BERTHA F. MC NEIL WITH REFERENCE TO BUILDING AT 1124 CRENSHAW BOULEVARD.

Councilman Jahn moved to dispense with further reading of the Resolution.

Motion, seconded by Councilman Benstead, carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Councilman Benstead moved for adoption of Resolution No. 3084.

Motion, seconded by Councilman Jahn, carried unanimously by roll call vote.

City Attorney Remelmeyer pointed out to the Council that a correction should be made in the Urgency Ordinance which would be read next. He asked the Council to strike the word "from" in line 3 of the Ordinance, and insert the word "at" in its place, making the phrase read "be removed at Ocean Avenue" instead of "be removed from Ocean Avenue".

Deputy City Clerk Hallanger read:

ORDINANCE NO. 850

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE ESTABLISHING A CERTAIN TRAFFIC CONTROL MEASURE PURSUANT TO ARTICLE IV, SECTION 17.35 OF "THE CODE OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE, 1954".

Councilman Jahn moved to dispense with further reading of the Ordinance.

Motion, seconded by Mayor Isen, carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Councilman Jahn moved for adoption of Urgency Ordinance 850, as corrected, at its first and final reading.

Motion, seconded by Mayor Isen, carried unanimously by roll call vote.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Councilman Benstead reported that there should be a school crossing at 220th and Arlington Streets, saying this is only half a block from the school. He said this should be done at once.

Councilman Blount asked if there is not a crossing guard there.

Chief of Police Haslam said there is not a guard there. He reported the traffic is light there and not too many children use the crossing.

Councilman Benstead moved this be painted with a yellow school crossing and a crossing sign be installed at once.

Motion seconded by Councilman Blount.

Chief of Police Haslam said there is a painted cross-walk there, and we cannot paint it yellow unless it is contiguous to a school. He reported there had been a misinterpretation of the law when many of these yellow 'school cross-walks' were painted. He said the State law prohibits the yellow cross walks except contiguous to a school, although they will allow special exceptions for divided highways or railroad tracks.

Councilman Benstead said this is less than half a block from a school.

Councilman Blount moved this be referred to the Traffic Commission.

Motion seconded by Councilman Drale, no objections, so ordered.

Councilman Blount: "I want to make a statement that I want thoroughly understood.

I deplore, and a number of my neighbors deplore, the fact that the Mayor took upon himself the authority to shoot off a bunch of aerial bombs in the middle of a residential section, which just by the grace of God did not cause serious injury to some children - one of which was my own - and some adults. I don't think that would have ever passed this City Council had we known where these bombs were to be fired from, and I don't like it and I want the record to show that I don't like it and that I think it's a deplorable state to deliberately expose people to that type of danger. That's all I have."

Mayor Isen: "Okay. Gentlemen, may I answer out of turn since this is particularly directed against me.

Number 1: The Mayor did not take it on himself the authority to shoot off bombs, and I think I have verification --"

Councilman Blount: "The location. I said the location."

Mayor Isen: "No, the location. I think that --"

Councilman Blount: "You did not authorize the location?"

Mayor Isen: "No sir; for your very --"

Councilman Blount: "Well, I will make an apology providing you will get the Fire Chief to tell me you didn't."

Mayor Isen: "Well, I think I'm honorable enough to say that, and I think the Fire Chief will corroborate it. I didn't choose the location."

Fire Chief Benner: "Well, Mr. Blount, the statement I made to you in regards to our Mayor was: I could not get the owner of the location of the property where we had anticipated exploding these bombs; the man that exploded the bombs suggested that they be exploded in the Torrance Park - rather, the El Prado Park. I told that man I had no jurisdiction of granting that permission. About then, our Mayor walked up, and I said 'Here is our Mayor'. That is all I said. I did not say that the Mayor said that they could or could not explode them there, nor did I."

Councilman Blount: "That's good enough for me. Thank you. I don't withdraw any remarks."

Mayor Isen: "All right, let's go on from there, then.

These so-called bombs were of an intensity that they could be held in their hand, I am told, and lit, and all that would happen would be a blackening of the hand.

"Secondly they were of such an intensity that most of the people here at City Hall didn't even hear them go off.

"Thirdly, and this has been checked, the Police Department, the Fire Department, the switchboard here and the Chamber of Commerce received not a single complaint over the telephone.

"Fourthly, the hospital, I am advised, was phoned in advance that these would be shot off.

"Fifthly, I don't know all these people on El Prado who have the complaints."

Councilman Blount: "I'll get you a list - "

Mayor Isen: "All right. At least, nobody has complained to me."

Councilman Blount: "They don't figure it would do much good. If a citizen would do the same thing he would be subject to arrest."

Mayor Isen: "Secondly - or fifthly - we're on about seventhly now, I will stand by the fact that the City was informed in a very safe and sane manner of the All America Award.

"Next to last, I believe that there is nothing illegal here. A majority of the Council ordered it, this would be tantamount to a amendment of the Ordinance, because we are the legislative power here, and the Ordinance could at any time be amended that such fireworks, or pyrotechnic display or whatever you want to call it, could be on the Fourth of July or any other day approved by a majority of the Council,

"And lastly, I hope this is the end of the tempest in a teapot over this matter, and a fiasco which started that evening and carried itself through up to tonight.

"That's all I have to say about it."

Councilman Blount: "Well I have this further to say - that when the matter was brought up, this Council was led to believe that these so-called harmless fireworks you can't hear across the street would be shot at a safe place, namely, around the P.E. property. I would suggest that this 50 acres out here you gentlemen have under condemnation would be a far better place to shoot off any further displays."

Mayor Isen: "Is that all?"

Councilman Blount: "Yes, that's all."

Mayor Isen: "Mr. Drale?"

Councilman Blount: "But if my boy had been hurt that wouldn't have been all, sir; I'll guarantee you that".

Councilman Drale said there are two, or perhaps three, hospital districts being formed in the Torrance area, and that west Torrance and a part of north Torrance are being included in the South Bay district. He suggested an investigation be made to avoid our residents being taxed in some manner we know nothing about. He asked that the proper City official investigate and make a recommendation, contacting the proper County offices. He said the Board of Supervisors is aware of this.

Mayor Isen suggested this be referred to the City Manager and the City Attorney.

There were no objections, and it was so ordered.

Councilman Jahn: "I just have one question, and I'll direct it to the City Attorney. Since last week we had a reading of the Code section and I've had a chance to contemplate it, and I don't understand exactly what was meant and I'd like to ask you and I don't know whether you can answer it right now or not I'll leave that up to you, as to whether this would preclude an individual Councilman or two Councilmen or three, or well, no, if you get three it's illegal I know already - having a conference with the City Manager on any particular subject or any other heads of department. Just what does this mean - that section that was read here about coercion and interfering with duties and so forth?

What would be the status of having a conference or a talk or a telephone conversation or anything else?"

City Attorney Remelmeyer: "Well, let's see - I'm reading the section here which states that neither the City Council nor any member thereof shall give orders or instructions, publicly or privately, to any person

under the jurisdiction of the City Manager. No member of the City Council shall undertake to coerce the City Manager in respect to any of his duties, and/or any municipal contract, and/or in connection with the purchase of any municipal supply.

"Well, the key words here apparently are, quote, 'to give orders or instructions', and the other is 'to coerce'; I would say that you could have a conference with the City Manager-I wouldn't say that one couldn't do that-one or two of you. I think this is just a question of fact and of the circumstances - whether or not you are giving him orders or instructions or you are coercing him. Of course you could do that by implication as well as expressly, but so long as you don't give him any orders or instructions or coerce him, I would say that you could have a conference with him."

Councilman Jahn: "And that goes for the rest of the head of a department or anything of that nature also?"

City Attorney Remelmeyer: "Yes."

Councilman Jahn: "It says in there 'or anyone under his jurisdiction' which would be what? All City employees?"

City Attorney Remelmeyer: "It would be all City employees."

Mayor Isen: "Mr. Remelmeyer, you appreciate that at every Council meeting, the City Manager is given both instructions and orders from this Council."

City Attorney Remelmeyer: "I would have to except, of course, the Council meeting or any formal meeting of the body."

"I must ask Mr. Blount if he agrees with that interpretation."

Mayor Isen: "I don't care if he --"

Councilman Blount: "I just thought I'd read it; it seems to have done some good. It started some people thinking about it."

Councilman Jahn: "I just wanted to know if it's legal for me to call Mr. Stevens on the telephone. I mean - I hate to do anything illegal."

Mayor Isen: "Well, I understand Mr. Blount phoned him on the telephone."

Councilman Blount: "Yes; I'll continue to call him on the phone. It might make some interesting testimony under oath, too, as to coercion and instructions, too."

Mayor Isen: "Mr. Stevens don't have to make them under oath - I'll believe anything he says."

Mayor Isen said a year ago it was suggested Torrance was lacking from the Rose Parade - and we were given some wrong information that it would take a minimum of \$18,000 for a float. A telegram from Frank Froenhoefer to the Torrance Herald asking why Torrance was not represented in the Tournament of Roses Parade was read in full by the Mayor.

Mayor Isen reported the Chamber of Commerce had made an attempt a short time ago to make an entry in the 1957 Parade, but the application was made too late in the year. Mayor Isen suggested it is time Torrance makes such a reservation for an entry in the 1958 Parade, and suggested the Chamber of Commerce, the City, and the Community should all participate in this effort. He asked that the Council go on record as a matter of policy to encourage a float, and ask the Chamber of Commerce to make a reservation for a float in the name of Torrance in the 1958 Tournament of Roses parade, January 1, 1958, and so moved.

Motion seconded by Councilman Drale.

Councilman Blount asked whether this was to be in the Chamber's name or the City's name.

Mayor Isen replied he thought it would be better to have it in the City's name.

There being no objections, it was so ordered.

Councilman Benstead moved all bills properly audited be paid.

Motion, seconded by Councilman Drale, carried unanimously by roll call vote of those present.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 P. M.

APPROVED:

Albert Isen

By

I. J. Hallanger

Deputy City Clerk of the City of Torrance