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TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL – JUNE 7, 2010

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At 9:38 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Tuesday, June 15, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. for a workshop on the Strategic Action Plan implementation, with regular business commencing at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

June 7, 2010

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance City Council convened in an adjourned regular session at 6:01 p.m. on Tuesday, June 1, 2010 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmembers Barnett, Brewer, Furey, Numark, Rhilinger, Sutherland, and Mayor Scotto.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Jackson, City Attorney Fellows, City Clerk Herbers, and other staff representatives.

Agenda Item 18 was considered out of order at this time.

18. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council immediately recessed to closed session to confer with the City Manager and City Attorney on agenda matters listed under 18A) Conference with Labor Negotiator, pursuant to California Government Code §54957.6.

The City Council reconvened in open session at 6:41 p.m. No formal action was taken on any matter considered in closed session.

2. FLAG SALUTE/INVOCATION

The flag salute was led by Finance Director Eric Tsao.

Councilmember Rhilinger gave the non-sectarian invocation.

3. REPORT OF CITY CLERK ON POSTING OF THE AGENDA / MOTION TO WAIVE FURTHER READING

City Clerk Herbers reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Thursday, June 3, 2010.

MOTION: Councilmember Furey moved that after the City Clerk has read aloud the number and title to any resolution or ordinance on the meeting agenda, the further reading thereof shall be waived, reserving and guaranteeing to each Councilmember the right to demand the reading of any such resolution or ordinance in regular order. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Brewer and passed by unanimous vote.

4. WITHDRAWN, DEFERRED OR SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS – None.

5. COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Clerk Herbers reminded voters that the Torrance election on the primary ballot will be held on Tuesday, June 8, with polls open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. She noted that the City Clerk's office will be open from 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. to assist voters with finding their poll locations or any other election-related issues at 310.618.2870 and that unofficial results will be posted on the Los Angeles County Registrar's website www.LAVote.net and on Citicable after 8:00 p.m. She offered an apology to those whose polling place is inconveniently located, explaining that the Los Angeles County Registrar, who is fully responsible for locating the polls, did so without consulting the City Clerk's office.

Mayor Scotto announced that the next Ad Hoc Federal Legislative Committee meeting would be held on Thursday, June 10, at 4:00 p.m. in the Third Floor Assembly Room.

Councilmember Sutherland announced that the second public hearing/budget workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, June 15, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers during the regular City Council meeting.

Councilmember Brewer announced that the workshop on the Action Plan for implementing the City's Strategic Plan will be held on Tuesday, June 15, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

7A. Debbie Hays, Torrance Historical Society, invited the public to attend a free presentation on the preservation and archiving of photographs on Wednesday, June 9, at 7:00 p.m. in the community meeting room at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library.

8. CONSENT CALENDAR

8A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Recommendation

Recommendation of the City Clerk that City Council approve the City Council minutes of April 27, 2010.

8B. PURCHASE ORDER FOR CNG-FUELED REFUSE ROLL-OFF TRUCK

Recommendation

Recommendation of the General Services Director that City Council:

- 1) Authorize a "special opportunity" purchase order to Rush Truck Center of Pico Rivera, CA in the amount of \$197,070.95 including sales tax and tire fees, to furnish one (1) new and unused 2009 model year CNG-fueled Peterbilt Model 320 Refuse Roll-Off Truck with AMREP Truck Body; and
- 2) Appropriate \$197,070.95 from the Sanitation Enterprise Fund balance to the Fleet Services Vehicle Replacement Fund.

8C. AGREEMENT RE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CLASSES

Recommendation

Recommendation of the Community Services Director that City Council approve an agreement with Family Fun Time Parent Child Programs to provide child development classes at Greenwood Park in an amount not to exceed \$53,130. Expenditure will be fully reimbursed by class fees. Funding is available in the Parks and Recreation Enterprise Fund 2010-2011 operating budget.

8D. 2010 EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT APPLICATION

Recommendation

Recommendation of the Chief of Police that City Council review the 2010 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant application.

8E. FEE AGREEMENT AMENDMENT FOR LEGAL SERVICES

Recommendation

Recommendation of the City Attorney that City Council approve the fourth amendment to the fee agreement with the law firm of Garrett DeFrenze Stiepel (C2008-185) to provide legal services to the City in connection with the purchase of the 465 Crenshaw Boulevard site, adding an additional \$3,000 for a total contract amount not to exceed of \$92,000.

8F. FUNDING FOR FY2010-2011 COMMUNITY ARTS GRANT PROGRAM

Recommendation

Recommendation of the Cultural Arts Commission and the Community Services Director that City Council approve funding of \$5,000 under the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Community Arts Grant Program.

8G. AGREEMENT RE YOUTH GYMNASTICS, MARTIAL ARTS AND DANCE CLASSES

Recommendation

Recommendation of the Community Services Director that City Council approve a one year contract services agreement with SuperKids to provide youth gymnastics, martial arts and dance classes in an amount not to exceed \$55,160. Expenditure will be fully reimbursed by class fees. Funding is available in the Parks and Recreation Enterprise Fund 2010-2011 operating budget.

MOTION: Councilmember Sutherland moved for the approval of Consent Calendar Items 8A through 8G. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Brewer and passed by unanimous vote.

13. HEARINGS

At 6:49 p.m., the City Council convened as the Redevelopment Agency and Redevelopment Agency Agenda Item 5A was considered concurrently with Agenda Item 13A.

13A. FIRST PUBLIC HEARING/ BUDGET WORKSHOP ON 2009-2011 OPERATING BUDGET

Recommendation

Recommendation of the City Manager and the Finance Director that Council continue the 1st public hearing/budget workshop on the proposed budget revisions for the second year of the City's two-year 2009-11 operating budget and hold the second public hearing on June 15, 2010.

Mayor Scotto announced that this was the time and place for a public hearing on this matter. City Clerk Herbers confirmed that the hearing was properly advertised.

With the aid of slides, Finance Director Tsao reviewed the proposed modifications to the 2009-2011 operating budget as recommended by the City Manager in response to discussion at the May 25, 2010 public hearing/budget workshop per written material of record.

Mayor Scotto invited public comment.

Craig Proctor, Torrance Theatre Company, discussed the benefits of the City's performing arts programs and urged the Council not to eliminate the summer musical program.

Janet Johnson, Torrance Rose Float Association, urged the Council to continue funding the annual Rose Parade float, suggesting that the 2012 float could be used to publicize Torrance's centennial celebration.

Jeannie Moorman, president of AFSCME, Local 1117, proposed using Public Library Funds received annually from the State to retain the Library Assistant I position slated to be eliminated. She stated that the proposal to eliminate a Senior Custodian position will not result in any savings because none of the employees in the position is close to retiring and suggested that it was more likely that a Custodial Supervisor position would become vacant. She recommended that the policy for providing take-home vehicles for supervisors be reexamined because some of those who have them are seldom called out for an emergency and these vehicles are an unnecessary expense. She recommended that the City consider adopting a 4-day/10 hour work week schedule, citing the benefit of longer hours for City Hall service counters. She stated that her organization is strongly opposed to the proposed phase-out of the City's payment of the employees' share of PERS (Public Employees Retirement System) contributions, contending that most cities in which employees pay all or part of this cost have a more favorable retirement formula and a better health insurance program for retirees.

Ms. Moorman reported that some employees have expressed a willingness to take furlough days and suggested that a voluntary furlough program be implemented on a trial basis. She proposed the formation of a debt collection task force to collect unpaid fines/fees/taxes. She also proposed creating a Torrance Pride gift shop at the Civic Center Library, which would sell T-shirts, reusable grocery bags, etc. to fund recreation and library programs. She suggested selling sponsor ads on City vehicles and facilities; not hiring recent retirees as consultants unless they have been gone at least two years; and not building any more parks since the number of park maintenance workers continues to be reduced.

Mayor Scotto asked about taking a more aggressive approach to collecting unpaid refuse fees, fines, etc. and Assistant Finance Director Flewellyn reported that the City currently uses a debt collection agency and has had some success in this area.

Carlos Guerrero, Torrance, expressed concerns about the proposed elimination of two Operations Specialist positions in the Fire Department, noting that he serves in this capacity in the City of Glendale.

Cary Jordahl, Harbor City, urged the Council to preserve the summer musical program, noting that he is part of the Friends of Torrance Theatre Company, a new group that is being formed to raise funds for the Torrance Theatre Company.

Mayor Scotto asked about the Friends of Torrance Theatre Company's fundraising goal, and Mr. Jordahl reported that the organization hopes to raise \$63,000, the cost of the summer musical program, and hold it in reserve in case funding for the program is cut.

Responding to questions from the Council, Community Services staff provided clarification regarding the costs involved in producing the summer musical. A brief discussion ensued regarding the possibility of increasing ticket prices, and Community Services Director Jones cautioned that higher ticket prices could result in a reduction in revenue due to lower attendance.

Perry Shields, Torrance, expressed support for the summer musical program, noting that three generations of his family have participated in the program.

Debbie Hayes, Torrance, reported that Jared Sidney Torrance was on the board of the Valley Hunt Club of Pasadena, the group that funded the first Tournament of Roses Parade in 1890, and urged the Council to continue the City's long tradition of entering a float in the parade. She noted that there is a long waiting list to participate in the parade and it would be difficult to get back in if the City withdraws its float.

Tim Cummings, Torrance Fire Fighters Association, expressed TFFA's willingness to work the Fire Chief, the Torrance Fire Chief Officers Association, and City staff to reorganize the Fire Department to achieve the desired budget reductions.

Curt Dittman, president of Engineers/Fiscal Employees Association, voiced objections to the elimination of one Public Works Inspector position. He maintained that this position was being underutilized because the City hires consultants and private inspection services to perform duties that are within job specifications for this position and related his belief that City employees have the ability and desire to perform this work to a higher standard. With regard to the proposal to eliminate vacant Building Inspector, Engineering Technician and Building Permit Technician positions, he stressed the need to make sure that the new One-Stop Permit Center will not be understaffed.

Public Works Director Beste clarified that before hiring an outside consultant to perform inspection services, staff checks with the Community Development Department to determine whether a City employee is available and estimated that the cost of having this work performed by a consultant was similar to having it done by a City employee.

Ken Carter, president of Torrance Fire Chief Officers Association, voiced objections to the elimination of two Operations Specialist positions and the conversion of one Battalion Chief position and one Fire Captain position to non-sworn positions, noting that TFCOA has offered an alternate proposal as detailed in Attachment B of the staff report. He requested additional time to achieve the desired budget reductions without eliminating Fire Department personnel.

Mayor Scotto stated that he welcomed alternate proposals and offered to meet with Mr. Carter and other employee representatives to discuss them.

Mary Hoffman, president of Torrance Rose Float Association, urged the Council to continue the City's longstanding tradition of entering a float in the Tournament of Roses Parade. She reported that last year's telecast was viewed by 51.9 million people in the United States and it was broadcast to 220 countries and territories and for the \$132,000 spent on the last float, the City received approximately \$350,000 worth of publicity. She explained that if the City withdraws from the parade, it will be required to spend a minimum of \$250,000 on a float in order to participate in the future.

Councilmember Brewer asked about the possibility of down-scaling the float.

Ms. Hoffman explained that the City already spends one of the lowest amounts on a float and while Fiesta Floats has expressed a willingness to work with the City to lower the cost, she felt it would be hard to do without compromising the quality.

Councilmember Rhilinger questioned whether TRFA would be able to raise more funds to offset the cost of the float, and Ms. Hoffman stated that the organization already contributes \$25,000 and efforts to raise more money have been unsuccessful.

Gavin Wasserman, member of Torrance Library Commission, noted that library usage is up and encouraged the Council to continue Sunday service hours.

In response to questions from the Council, City Librarian Weiner reported that according to the check-out of materials, Torrance residents typically account for 70-80% of the usage on Sundays. She explained that the library is only open on Sundays during the school year and it is closed on Sundays when there is a three-day weekend.

Newt Young, Torrance, voiced his opinion that employees should be required to pay their portion of the PERS contribution, noting that if they were required to do so the budget deficit would be eliminated. He stated that he did not support major cuts to the Armed Forces Day Parade or the Rose Parade float because he felt their publicity value was well worth the expense.

Councilmember Sutherland requested that staff explore ways to preserve funding for the Torrance Rose Parade float and expressed support for retaining the summer musical program.

Councilmember Brewer asked for information on the item on the Program Changes Alternative list regarding the recovery of utility costs for park usage with a projected income of \$74,000.

Mayor Scotto expressed concerns that charging fees for park usage would disproportionately affect some youth organizations such as North Torrance AYSO that must use Columbia Park because school sites are unavailable.

The Council requested additional information regarding whether the \$74,000 figure could realistically be achieved.

Councilmember Numark requested that staff provide information regarding the fiscal impact of reducing each councilmember's travel budget to \$3500; furloughing City employees between Christmas and New Year's Day; and utilizing a Public Works Inspector rather than hiring a consultant.

Councilmember Furey asked about Ms. Moorman's suggestion regarding a voluntary employee furlough program. City Manager Jackson advised that there are coverage issues that may make voluntary furloughs impractical, therefore he would not recommend including this item as part of current budget discussions.

Councilmember Furey indicated that he supports continuing the Rose Parade float and felt that there were items on the Program Changes Alternatives list could offset this expense, including eliminating concerts in the park, Oodles of Noodles, the 4th of July Celebration, and reducing community non-profit grants. He suggested that a greater effort be made to collect building permit fees from people who remodel their properties without obtaining a permit.

Councilmember Rhilinger expressed concerns about the proposed reallocation of \$1.2 million from the capital budget to cover one-time expenses since this would leave a bare-bones capital budget. She related her belief that the Torrance Rose Float Association should cover more of the cost for the Rose Parade float because if this is something the community wants, they should support it. Referring to the Program Changes Alternatives list, she indicated that she would not support eliminating four Sundays from the library schedule, reducing park patrols, eliminating the low-income senior/disabled exemption for refuse services, or discontinuing the Halloween Carnival as this is a safe alternative for youths. She favored retaining at least the fireworks portion of the 4th of July celebration and down-scaling the event to suit the needs of residents based on the survey to be conducted at this year's event.

Councilmember Barnett stated that he would support the elimination of the 4th of July celebration and recommended that staff distribute notices to attendees at this year's event to inform them of this possibility. Referring to the Program Changes Alternatives list, he indicated that he favored retaining the summer musical program based on testimony at this hearing and expressed concerns about reducing the General Fund subsidy to the Parks & Recreation fund by \$100,000 as this could affect youth and senior programs. He suggested that it would be helpful if corporate sponsorship could be obtained for the Rose Parade float but was not sure if this is allowed.

In response to Councilmember Numark's inquiry, Community Services staff provided clarification regarding the expenses involved in the Concerts in the Park, Oodles of Noodles, Aquacade, Halloween Carnival and Environmental Fair.

Councilmember Numark indicated that he favored reducing the subsidies to the above-mentioned events by donations and/or sponsorships. With regard to the proposal

to reduce community nonprofit grants (Program Changes Alternatives), he suggested that staff look into the possibility of offering City commissioners an opportunity to donate their stipends to the grant program. He encouraged staff to explore other ways of notifying the public about Parks & Recreation classes so the *Torrance Seasons* publication could be phased out more quickly.

Councilmember Sutherland, referring to the Program Changes Alternatives list, stated that he could support eliminating the 4th of July Celebration, closing the library for four Sundays, and reducing or eliminating community nonprofit grants. He doubted that sponsors could be found for City events, such as Oodles of Noodles, Aquacade, Halloween Carnival and Environmental Fair, given the state of the economy. He indicated that he would not support reducing park patrols or eliminating the low income seniors/disabled exemption for refuse services.

Councilmember Brewer stated that he was open to considering all the items on the Program Changes Alternatives list but noted that they total only \$541,000, which is only a small portion of the City's \$9.8 million deficit. He voiced support for continuing to fund the Rose Parade float because he felt this contributes to community pride and is part of what makes Torrance special.

Mayor Scotto noted that each item on the Program Changes Alternatives list will be thoroughly discussed at the next public hearing/budget workshop on June 15 and encouraged the public to attend.

City Manager Jackson requested direction on staff's recommendation regarding the proposed phase out of the City's payment of the employee's share of PERS (Public Employee Retirement System) contributions, noting that this cannot be implemented until the meet and confer process has been completed.

In response to questions from the Council, City Manager Jackson confirmed that staff was open to discussing other options, including changes to the retirement formula, during the meet and confer process with the goal of achieving the desired budget reductions.

MOTION: Councilmember Rhilinger moved to direct staff to meet and confer with employee organizations concerning PERS contributions to achieve the targeted budget reductions (\$630,000). The motion was seconded by Councilmember Sutherland and passed by unanimous vote.

MOTION: Councilmember Furey moved to close the public hearing and to hold the second Budget Workshop/Hearing on Tuesday, June 15, 2010 as part of the regular City Council meeting commencing at 7:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Brewer and passed by unanimous vote.

The Redevelopment Agency meeting was adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

17. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

17A. Councilmember Furey expressed support for Measure A, noting that its benefits include hundreds of thousands dollars in savings on elections for the City and the Torrance Unified School District and a return to stand alone elections in which local issues do not have to compete with statewide elections.

17B. Councilmember Sutherland commented on the difficulty of making budget reductions and related his belief that the City was in good hands.

17C. Mayor Scotto encouraged residents to vote in the June 8 election. He also encouraged a “yes” vote on Measure A, noting that it would potentially allow for an all mail-in ballot in the future and save money for both the City and TUSD.

18. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Considered earlier in the meeting, see page 1.

19. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:38 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Tuesday, June 15, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. for a workshop on the Strategic Action Plan implementation, with regular business commencing at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. **Tuesday, June 8, 2010, will be a Council dark night.**

Attest:

/s/ Frank Scotto
Mayor of the City of Torrance

/s/ Sue Herbers
Sue Herbers
City Clerk of the City of Torrance

Approved on August 10, 2010