

**MINUTES OF MENDOTA  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

---

**Regular Meeting**

**January 24, 2023**

**Meeting called to order by Mayor Martinez at 6:00 p.m.**

**Roll Call**

**Council Members Present:** Mayor Victor Martinez, Mayor Pro Tem Libertad “Liberty” Lopez and Councilors Jose Alonso and Oscar Rosales

**Council Members Absent:** None

**Flag salute led by Councilor Rosales**

**Invocation led by Police Chaplain Ophelia Lugo**

**FINALIZE THE AGENDA**

1. Adjustments to Agenda.
2. Adoption of final Agenda.

A motion was made by Councilor Rosales to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Lopez; unanimously approved (4 ayes).

**PRESENTATIONS**

1. City Council and Mid Valley Disposal to present the 2022 Best Recycler Award to Mendota High School.

Mid Valley Disposal presented the 2022 Best Recycler Award to Mendota High School (MHS).

The Council congratulated MHS Principal Mr. Kirby, MHS student Robert Uribe, and MHS staff and student body for receiving the 2022 Best Recycler Award.

Robert Uribe shared his thoughts on MHS receiving the award.

*At 6:07 p.m. the Council took a brief recess and reconvened in open session at 6:10 p.m.*

2. Public Works Superintendent Banuelos presented the Public Works Department's 2022 Employee of the Year Award to Maintenance Worker I Armando Sandoval.

Public Works Superintendent Banuelos presented the Public Works Department 2022 Employee of the Year Award to Armando Sandoval and commented on Armando's hard work and dedication.

Armando Sandoval thanked staff and Council for the recognition.

The Council congratulated Mr. Sandoval and thanked him for his hard work.

*At 6:16 p.m. the Council took a recess and reconvened in open session at 6:18 p.m.*

3. Chief of Police Smith to present the Police Department's 2022 Employee of the Year Award to Police Sergeant Santiago Jurado.

Chief of Police Smith presented the Police Department's 2022 Employee of the Year Award to Police Sergeant Santiago Jurado.

The Council congratulated Police Sergeant Santiago Jurado and thanked him for his hard work.

Sergeant Jurado thanked Chief Smith, the Mendota Police Department, and the Council for the recognition.

*At 6:25 p.m. the Council took a recess and reconvened in open session at 6:29 p.m.*

4. City Manager Gonzalez to present the City Administration Department's 2022 Employee of the Year award to Finance Administrative Supervisor Marilu Sandoval.

City Manager Gonzalez presented the City Administration Department's 2022 Employee of the Year Award to Finance Administrative Supervisor Marilu Sandoval.

Marilu Sandoval thanked Council and staff for the recognition.

The Council congratulated Mrs. Sandoval and thanked her for her hard work.

*At 6:35 p.m. the Council took a recess and reconvened in open session at 6:40 p.m.*

## **CITIZENS ORAL AND WRITTEN PRESENTATIONS**

**Kevin Romero** - provided an update on local youth sports.

Discussion was held by the City Council on Mr. Romero's update.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND NOTICE OF WAIVING OF READING**

1. Minutes of the regular City Council meeting of January 10, 2022.
2. Notice of waiving of the reading of all resolutions and/or ordinances introduced and/or adopted under this agenda.

A motion was made by Councilor Rosales to approve items 1 and 2, seconded by Councilor Alonso; unanimously approved (4 ayes).

## **BUSINESS**

1. Council discussion and consideration of **Resolution No. 23-06**, appointing an individual to fill the vacant seat on the City Council.

Mayor Martinez introduced the item and City Clerk Cabrera-Garcia provided the report.

Albert Escobedo welcomed the newly elected Council Members; stated that the City Council has his support and urged the community to accept and support the City Council's decision in good faith.

**Rocio Lua** – stated that she loves the community and that she supports Jose “Lupe” Gallardo for appointment to the City Council vacant seat.

**Ofelia Ochoa** – stated that she wished she could have a seat on the Council and recommended Jose “Lupe” Gallardo for appointment to the City Council vacant seat.

**Jose “Lupe” Gallardo** – shared his vision for Mendota and thanked the Council for their consideration.

**Kevin Arias-Romero** – shared his experience with City projects and developments and as a former Planning and Recreation Commissioner.

**John C. Flores** – shared his background and shared his vision for Mendota.

**Ramiro Espinoza** – shared his background and experience including his community service

and public service work.

**Joseph R. Riofrio** – commented on the item and shared his experience with public service.

**Moses Macias** – shared his background and his vision for Mendota.

**Veronica Rasmussen-Gil** – shared her background and her community service work.

Discussion was held on the public's comments; the City Council vacancy; and issues that the City is facing; and the City Council thanked the applicants for their ambition and commitment to serve the community.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Lopez to nominate John C. Flores for appointment to the vacant seat on the City Council. The motion failed due to the lack of a second.

A motion was made by Councilor Rosales to nominate Joseph R. Riofrio for appointment to the vacant seat on the City Council. The motion failed due to the lack of a second.

A motion was made Councilor Alonso to nominate Jose "Lupe" Gallardo for appointment to the vacant seat on the City Council, seconded by Mayor Martinez.

City Clerk Cabrera-Garcia announced that a roll call vote would be conducted to consider the motion to appoint Jose "Lupe" Gallardo to the vacant seat on the City Council.

Roll call vote:

Mayor Martinez: Yes; Mayor Pro Tem Lopez: Abstain; Councilor Alonso: Yes; Councilor Rosales: Abstain

Based on a vote of two (2) ayes and two (2) abstentions, the motion to appoint Jose "Lupe" Gallardo to the vacant Council seat failed.

Discussion was held by the City Council on the item.

**Joseph Amador** – shared his thoughts on the City Council vacancy.

A motion was made by Councilor Rosales to hold a special meeting to further discuss the City Council vacancy, seconded by Councilor Alonso; unanimously approved (4 ayes).



## **SWEARING IN**

1. City Clerk Cabrera-Garcia to swear in newly appointed City Council Member.

*The item was skipped due to an appointment not being made to fill the City Council vacancy.*

## **RECESS**

*The item was skipped.*

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

1. JANUARY 4, 2023 THROUGH JANUARY 9, 2023  
WARRANT LIST CHECK NOS. 52766 THROUGH 52787  
TOTAL FOR COUNCIL APPROVAL = \$189,292.26

A motion was made by Councilor Rosales to approve item 1 of the Consent Calendar, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Lopez; unanimously approved (4 ayes).

## **BUSINESS CONTINUED**

2. Appointment of Mendota residents to the Mendota Recreation and Planning Commissions.

Mayor Martinez introduced the item and City Clerk Cabrera-Garcia provided the report.

**Albert Escobedo** – commented on his experiences with the Recreation and Planning Commissions, and shared his desire to continue serving on the Pool Park Subcommittee.

**Jose Gutierrez** – commented on his experience with the Planning Commission and his vision for the City of Mendota.

**Alex Garcia** – thanked the Council and staff; shared his background; and shared his vision for the Planning Commission and the City.

**Kevin Romero** – commented on his experience on the Planning and Recreation Commissions.

Mayor Martinez appointed Albert Escobedo and Alex Garcia to serve as regular members and Jose Gutierrez to serve as the alternate member of the Planning Commission.

Discussion was held by the City Council on the item.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Lopez to approve Mayor Martinez's appointments to the Planning Commission, seconded by Councilor Rosales, unanimously approved (4 ayes).

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Lopez to appoint Albert Escobedo, Alicia Escobedo, and Kevin Romero to the Recreation Commission, seconded by Councilor Rosales, unanimously approved (4 ayes).

Kevin Romero announced that he has decided to formally withdraw his application for the vacant City Council seat due to his appointment on the Recreation Commission.

*At 7:52 p.m. Mayor Martinez left the Council Chambers and returned within the same minute.*

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

1. Animal Control, Code Enforcement, and Police Department
  - a) November Monthly Reports

Chief of Police Smith provided the report for the Police Department including monthly statistics and issues surrounding homeless individuals.

Discussion was held on the statistics for the police department and on traffic and safety issues near schools.

Chief Smith provided the report for the Code Enforcement Department including monthly statistics.

Discussion was held on department personnel and illegal fireworks being used in the community.

Chief Smith provided the report for the Animal Control Department including loose dogs in the City; the capacity of the dog pound; and that he and City Manager Gonzalez recently toured the City of Kerman's Animal Shelter.

2. City Attorney
  - a) Update

Assistant City Attorney Castro commented on the ethics and sexual harassment training that will be scheduled soon.

Discussion was held by the City Council on the upcoming trainings.

3. City Manager

City Manager Gonzalez provided an update on an available grant that the City will be applying for to receive funding to develop a navigation center; the scheduling of a joint meeting with the Mendota Unified School District Board of Trustees; and the Pool Park Subcommittee.

## **MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

### 1. Council Member(s)

Councilor Rosales thanked the City Council, Mr. Vargas, and audience for attending the meeting; and shared his opinion on comments made by the City Council.

Councilor Alonso thanked the City Council vacancy applicants and the audience for attending the meeting, and requested that the City considered holding Coffee with a Cop or Council Member and Town Hall events.

Mayor Pro Tem Lopez commented on resources offered by the AMOR Wellness Center.

### 2. Mayor

Mayor Martinez commented on the purpose of the Mendota Transactions and Use Tax that was approved by the voters in November 2022; the Council's goal and community's desire to fix roads in the City; the community and the City Council working together to create change; issues with illegal dumping and homelessness; and the need for a community center.

Discussion was held on the cost of fixing City roads; the need for the community and the City Council to work together; and the status of the inclusive playground at Rojas-Pierce Park.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

1. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION  
Pursuant to subdivision (b) of Government Code section 54957  
Title: City Manager
2. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION  
Potential initiation of litigation pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (d) of Government Code section 54956.9 (one potential case).

At 8:39 p.m. the Council moved into closed session.

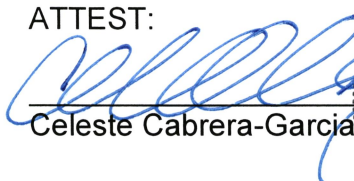
At 9:41 p.m. the Council reconvened in open session and Assistant City Attorney Castro stated that in regard to items 1 and 2 of the Closed Session, there were no reportable actions.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no more business to be brought before the Council, a motion for adjournment was made at 9:41 p.m. by Councilor Rosales, seconded by Mayor Martinez; unanimously approved (4 ayes).

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Victor Martinez, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Celeste Cabrera-Garcia, City Clerk

