

MINUTES
STUDY SESSION/RETREAT OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MONTEREY
MONDAY, June 29, 2009
1:00 – 5:00 P.M.
LARKIN ROOM, ONE PORTOLA PLAZA
MONTEREY CONFERENCE CENTER
MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Della Sala called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Council Members

Present: Councilmembers Downey, Haferman, Selfridge, Sollecito, Mayor Della Sala
Absent: None

City Staff:

Present: City Manager, City Attorney, Assistant City Manager, Senior Assistant City Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Former Mayor Dan Albert stated he would not be able to attend the July 7, 2009 meeting and urged the Council to support First Night and the State Theater at that time, providing several examples of why he feels they are important to the City of Monterey. Mr. Albert applauded the work of the Conference Center and closed his comments by indicating how important the value teamwork brings to a Council, citing several examples of how teamwork was invaluable to him during his term as mayor.

STUDY SESSION/RETREAT

1. Discussion of Topics of Mutual Interest to Include:
 - a. Council-Staff Relations: How We Can Develop Better Relationships Among Ourselves, City Staff and the Public at Large
 - b. City Council Roles and Responsibilities 701-01)

Action: Items discussed

Councilmembers discussed interactions with each other and the trust and control necessary between them, the City Manager, and other City staff to be a successful public organization. Councilmembers asked for a better understanding of how they can agendize topics of interest. Councilmember Downey discussed her responsibilities representing the City on outside agencies. City Manager Meurer asked that any questions Councilmembers may have for staff are funneled through him. Councilmember Selfridge stated current staff report formats should include alternatives whenever possible and Councilmember Downey asked that staff reports include an executive summary with statistics included to back up the executive summary. Mayor Della Sala suggested Councilmembers provide questions on staff reports to the City Manager in advance of a Council meeting, thus allowing staff an opportunity to respond to those questions at the meeting. Councilmembers articulated their preferences for what should and should not go on consent agendas. Mayor Della Sala called a recess at 2:55 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 3:07 p.m.

Councilmembers discussed the three minute time limit for public comment, as well as the time used by staff to respond to public comments, suggesting any staff comment be brief and end with a statement that the City will provide a written follow up. In reference to decorum at Council meetings, Councilmembers asked that Councilmembers and the City Manager to receive permission to speak from the Mayor before speaking at Council meetings. Mayor Della Sala

asked the Council to continue to work together as a team and, that once a vote takes place, to move on optimistically to the next issue. Councilmembers discussed the quality and levels of service as it relates to recent changes in staffing and budgeting.

CONTINUED PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mike Dawson asked Council to always fix any issues that occur might lead to a lack of trust and control between them, staff, and the public. Mr. Dawson described problems that non-profits face when renting facilities in Monterey and other locations on the peninsula. Mr. Dawson concurred with Council's request that City staff responses to public comments are brief, stating lengthy staff responses may prevent the public from speaking. Mr. Dawson thanked staff for producing Council packets on Wednesdays as this allows him sufficient time to review the material and, if necessary, respond well in advance of the Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Della Sala adjourned the meeting at 4:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved,



Catherine A. Raynor
Senior Assistant City Clerk



Chuck Della Sala
Mayor