

MINUTES
Work Session
San Luis City Council
San Luis Council Chambers
1090 E. Union Street
February 2, 2022
6:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Gerardo Sanchez called the Work Session to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. Although, no quorum was present, an informal meeting was held.

PRESENT: Mayor Gerardo Sanchez-via Zoom
Council Member Mario Buchanan Jr.-via Zoom
Council Member Matias Rosales-via Zoom

ABSENT: Vice Mayor Africa Luna-Carrasco
Council Member Luis Cabrera
Council Member Jose Ponce
Council Member Gloria Torres

OTHERS PRESENT: Lizandro Galaviz, Interim City Manager
Sonia Cornelio, City Clerk
Kay Marion Macuil, City Attorney
Angel Ramirez, Fire Chief
Domingo Sosa, Graphic and Media Specialist
Eulogio Vera, Director of Public Works
Jonathan Dumadag, Senior IT Technician
Jorge Perez, Assistant Director of Public Works
Jose A. Guzman, Director of Planning & Zoning
Jose Luis Cisneros, Acting PIO/Assistant to Mayor and Council
Marco Santana, Police Lieutenant
Maria Muñoz, Human Resources Coordinator
Ralph Velez, Consultant – via Zoom
Richard Jessup, Chief of Police
Ruben Lopez, IT Technician

2. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION ONLY:

2. A. Update and possible directions to staff on any and all matters regarding the construction of roadway from 10th Avenue to County 24th Street and the possibility of expediting the process. (Mayor Gerardo Sanchez and Eulogio Vera, Director of Public Works)

Mr. Eulogio Vera, Director of Public Works, provided Mayor and Council with an update on the project. He mentioned that this project is needed to help with the connectivity of the east and west areas of San Luis.

He informed that the design has been completed, staff has met with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to obtain the necessary permission to build the street. The city has the right-of-way along County 24th Street connecting F ½ Street and 10th Avenue and has the right-of-way along 10th Avenue, but staff still needs permission to build the street. However, during a meeting with BLM, staff learned it is required to go through the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and the city council will have to adopt a resolution to apply. Once the application is submitted, a list of projects that are a priority to the community will also be submitted; this will help expedite the projects to obtain the necessary permits. Furthermore, he informed that the city has funding through the Yuma Metropolitan Organization to fund this project.

Mayor Gerardo Sanchez asked how long it would take to obtain the right-of-way acquisition.

Mr. Vera replied that BLM and BOR never give an actual timeline for the projects, but they will help expedite the process as funding is already available. He informed the mayor and city council that the resolution to apply would be presented in the next scheduled council meeting for approval.

Council Member Mario Buchanan Jr. mentioned that this project is needed in said area; he thanked Mayor Sanchez for discussing this item.

2. B. Discussion and possible directions to staff on any and all matters regarding commercial vehicles (Semi-trucks and Agricultural busses) parking on private property and the need for enforcement, including speed limits. (Mayor Gerardo Sanchez and Richard Jessup, Chief of Police)

Mr. Richard Jessup, Chief of Police, informed that staff members have been meeting during the last several weeks to address the issue of commercial vehicles and commercial parking. He informed that there had been an increase in parking on 10th Avenue. He commented that he contacted the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regarding an authorization letter for the San Luis Police Department (SLPD) to help enforce BLM land. They will draft a new letter to be issued to the San Luis Police Department. Furthermore, he commented that with a conversation with Mr. Eulogio Vera, Director of Public Works, “no parking signs” would be posted as there are currently no signs at the location. Finally, he stated that Ms. Jenny Torres, Economic Development Manager, is currently working on a traffic study, and the SLPD is working on a Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) project, which will be beneficial and will be included in the Five-Year Master plan that SLPD provides during the budget retreat.

Mayor Gerardo Sanchez mentioned that this item was brought up for discussion because he has received several complaints of trucks being left on the street. Some of them carry waste which brings terrible smells to the neighborhood, especially during the summertime. He commented that the city should designate semi-trucks parking where the trucks can be left overnight. Furthermore, he mentioned that the other problem is speeding on Cesar Chavez Boulevard and on other streets in the city. Finally, he stated that he understands that the city is limited in the number of officers, but those officers should be policing the different areas in the community.

Chief Jessup mentioned that one of the things that can be done is to put unmarked vehicles to patrol those areas, as they can sit on the side of the road, allowing officers to make the stop. He commented that residents need to know that something is being done about the truck issues. He informed that another area hit by those trucks would be off 6th Avenue on the south side. He mentioned that one of the ideas would be to speak with private businesses with bigger parking lots that can accommodate the trucks or if the city owns land that can accommodate as well; a great place would be on Avenue E by the San Luis Commercial of Entry.

Council Member Mario Buchanan Jr. commented that the other area with semi-trucks parking is on 6th Avenue by Los Olivos Subdivision. He informed that he has also received complaints from neighbors around that area, and has tried to explain that there is no assigned parking for semi-trucks. Council Member Buchanan Jr. also commented that, as Mayor Sanchez mentioned, speeding is a huge problem, especially in residential areas.

Chief Jessup commented that the best thing to do is to use the unmarked vehicles on Avenue F and other parts of the community.

Council Member Matias Rosales agreed with Chief Jessup to partner with a company to see if the city could allow trucks to park at their location.

Chief Jessup stated that he would be working on these issues.

2. C. Discussion and possible directions to staff on any and all matters regarding compensation rates for Police and Fire Department personnel for their efforts during the pandemic and present circumstances. (Mayor Gerardo Sanchez and Maria Muñoz, Human Resources Coordinator)

Ms. Maria Muñoz, Human Resources Coordinator, mentioned that she conducted a research to see how different other cities do compensations for Fire and Police Departments. She informed that different cities and staff received feedback stating that they are not currently doing any type of compensation, but they have done it in the past. They gave incentives citywide, not only to those in public safety. She added that the city has had 25 COVID-19 work exposures in the last quarter. Ms. Muñoz gave a brief presentation of the current incentives that public safety employees are currently receiving. She mentioned that one of the current issues is that firefighters are working many mandated hours, so they are getting burned out. Under the Federal Labor Standards Act, they can work up to 53 hours per workweek, 212 hours in a 20-day work period. She explained what happens when they are sick or on vacation, but they are mandated to work those hours. Those extra hours worked are not paid overtime; they are being paid regular time because they were scheduled to be off. She mentioned that staff is looking for options to see what can be done. During the research, she informed that the City of Gilbert gave an incentive of \$2,000.00 to public safety and \$1,000.00 for all other employees. Ms. Muñoz mentioned that the Finance Department made an analysis of the hours that were not paid as overtime; if they had been paid as overtime, it would have been \$20,000.00 just in the last month.

Chief Angel Ramirez, Fire Department, commented that the reason there is mandatory overtime is that there always has to be 14 firefighters on shift if for any reason those 14 firefighters are not on shift, then others have to stay over to cover for those who either were on vacation or had COVID. He added that this issue was brought up to him by the firefighters as they were working mandatory overtime, but their hours were paid are straight pay.

Mayor Gerardo Sanchez stated that the city should do something about it, as they are being forced to work overtime, they should be paid overtime. He mentioned that the \$20,000.00 is not an expense as they are constantly exposed. He stated that he believes that those employees should get compensated for their time. He commented if there is no policy, then the city should create a policy that allows the pay to those employees. Mayor Sanchez stated that the city should start budgeting for this type of events as they need to get compensated.

Ms. Muñoz presented the mayor and city council with a recommendation on how this can be done. The recommendation is to pay a lump sum incentive or allow for an administrative directive to apply a premium pay city-wide. She commented that it would be up to the city council to apply it just for public safety or city-wide. Any extra shifts will be paid at time and a half.

Mayor Sanchez stated he liked the second option but commented that the city should focus on first responders and then apply to the rest of the city. He stated that at this moment, the problem here is first responders, and the city should expedite this process.

Council Member Mario Buchanan Jr. commented that he was not aware that firefighters were not getting paid overtime when they worked overtime.

Ms. Muñoz explained that they are getting overtime; the problem here is whenever they have scheduled leave, like a vacation or sick leave, then they get paid regular time just like any other regular employee.

Council Member Buchanan Jr. mentioned that he would go for whatever is needed to fix this problem; they should get compensated.

Mayor Sanchez stated that if the employee is forced to work an extra shift, they need to be compensated for the time worked.

Chief Ramirez explained that firefighters work a 28-day period where a total of 212 hours, anything over 212 hours is considered overtime. So then if an employee worked the 212 hours and then you are mandated to stay overtime, you get COVID, and you are not working, those are hours that you did not work, so those hours that you worked extra are paid as regular time, and that is what is happening right now; that is why the employees are complaining because they work the extra hours, but they are getting regular pay time.

Mayor Sanchez stated that they need to get compensated for those hours worked overtime, and it is fair for them to get compensated.

Council Member Matias Rosales mentioned that staff would have been creative and made sure that the system was not being abused and brought back before the city council for review.

Mr. Lizandro Galaviz, Acting City Manager, informed that staff has been working on this issue and would like to have direction from city council as to what they would like to do. He mentioned that staff would bring recommendations and ensure that procedures are followed. He added that staff would bring this item back to the city council during their next scheduled meeting.

Mayor Sanchez stated that there is no policy for this pay, but staff will be creating something specifically for this item. He commented that there is no other community with such a procedure; he added that he would like to be competitive, which would be an incentive for those employees.

3. ADJOURNMENT

No motion to adjourn the meeting was made, as this was an information Work Session. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:18 p.m.

APPROVED:

Gerardo Sanchez, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sonia Cornelio, City Clerk

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the Work Session minutes for the City Council of the City of San Luis, Arizona, held on February 2, 2022. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and an informal meeting was held as no quorum was present.

Sonia Cornelio, City Clerk