

**Minutes of the Blythe City Council**  
**August 13, 2019**

The August 13, 2019 meeting of the Blythe City Council was called to order at 6:00pm in the Council Chambers by Mayor Reynolds. Also in attendance were Vice Mayor Egan and Council Members Rodriguez and Halby. Councilman DeConinck was excused from the meeting. Staff in attendance included: Interim City Manager and City Clerk Crecelius, Finance Director and City Treasurer Elms, Interim Police Chief Coe, Public Works Director Baldizzone and City Attorney Bettenhausen.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Reynolds. The invocation was offered by Vice Mayor Egan.

**REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION:**

City Attorney Bettenhausen stated Council recessed into Closed Session at 5:15pm to discuss items 1-3. Direction was given with no final action being taken.

**PROCLAMATION:**

**Census 2020.** Angelica Villanueva accepted the proclamation on behalf of the Census 2020.

**PRESENTATION:**

**Scott Busa, Executive Director Renewable Development with NextEra.** Mr. Busa was present to give Council an update on the work the company has done in the past and what they are planning to do in the future. NextEra has built the 250MW Genesis project near Wiley's Well Rd, The 500MW Desert Sunlight project in Desert Center which was purchased from First Solar, The McCoy project on the Mesa and the Blythe Solar Project on the Mesa which was also purchased from First Solar and will be built in two phases. Edison has upgraded their transmission capability which has allowed for the development of additional solar fields in the area.

Garret Childers with NextEra stated the next two phases are the rest of the Blythe portfolio totaling 250MW. We are building it in two phases as Blythe III and Blythe IV with a commercial operation date of 2020. We are expecting 200 jobs coming to Blythe around October. The project is on BLM land and will use the existing transmission line. The next project is Arlington which is a 364MW project located west of the McCoy Project and North of the Blythe project. We are looking at a commercial operation date in two phases with the first in 2021 and 2022.

Scot Busa stated construction trailers are on the Blythe III and IV site. We should start seeing a pickup in businesses around town. Starting today through 2022 we will be working on the next phases. He also gave an update on the Eagle Mountain pump storage project which will be a \$3 billion investment. The project is on the site of the former Kaiser Steel iron mine. The project will be under construction from 2022 through 2026 and will have 4,000 construction workers. When the project is complete there will be 350 permanent operational employees. They are still looking for the mechanism to sell this size of a project.

**CONSENT CALENDAR:** *Items on the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted with one motion of the Council. If any item requires individual consideration, it will be removed from the consent calendar and acted upon separately.*

**3. Posting of the Agenda.**

The summary of agenda items were posted on the bulletin boards on the outside of the public entrance to the Council Chamber and near the inside entrance of the Council Chamber on Friday, August 9, 2019.

**4. Approval of the Warrant Register.**

Recommendation: Approve **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 70187 through 70251 in the amount of \$428,772.72; **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 70252 through 70281 in the amount of \$1,505,071.50; **8/13/19**, Utility Billing warrants numbered 70282 through 70299 in the amount of \$2,212.79; **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 70300 through 70326 in the amount of \$159,140.61; **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 70327 through 70390 in the amount of \$1,472,914.24 and **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 70391 through 70393 in the amount of \$14,796.70.

**5. Approval of the Payroll Register.**

Recommendation: Approve **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 51139 through 51142 in the amount of \$23,138.83; **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 51143 through 51160 and Direct Deposits numbered 45121 through 45178 in the amount of \$22,594.32; **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 51161 through 51165 and Direct Deposits numbered 45179 through 45283 in the amount of \$77,179.69; **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 51166 through 51167 in the amount of \$9,933.69; **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 54468 through 51169 in the amount of \$327.15; **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 51170 through 51186 and Direct Deposits numbered 45284 through 45340 in the amount of \$222,065.64; **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 51187 through 51204 and Direct Deposits numbered 45341 through 45397 in the amount of \$220,640.17 and **8/13/19**, warrants numbered 51205 through 51209 and in the amount of \$106,789.27.

**6. Minutes of the July 9, 2019 City Council Meeting.**

Recommendation: Approve the Minutes of the July 9, 2019 meeting.

**7. City of Blythe Fire Department Monthly Activity Report for July 2019.**

Recommendation: Receive and file this monthly report.

**8. City of Blythe Police Department Monthly Activity Report for July 2019.**

Recommendation: Receive and file this monthly report.

**9. Voting Delegate- League of CA Cities Annual Conference.**

Recommendation: Council appoint Vice Mayor Egan as the City's voting delegate during the Annual League of CA Cities Conference October 16-18, 2019.

**10. Municipal Staffing Solutions.**

Recommendation: Council ratify the Municipal Staffing Agreement with Government Staffing Solutions, Inc. DBA:MuniTemps for Interim Public Works Director services.

**11. Agreement for Police Services between City and PVUSD.**

Recommendation: Council authorize the Interim City Manager to execute any and all documents necessary to enter into an MOU with PVUSD to fund one half of an officer's salary for FY 2019/20.

**12. Destruction of Records.**

Recommendation: Council adopt Resolution No. 2019-024 authoring the Interim Chief of Police to destroy all documents pertaining to Employee X103, X128, X158 and X168 regarding matters that became final on 6/1/2010 and 6/11/2011 for employee X103 , 4/18/18 and 7/27/2018 for employee X128, 1/4/13, 3/5/13 and 12/16/16 for employee X158 and 8/31/17 for employee X168.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2019-024. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE DESTRUCTION OF CERTAIN RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS**

*PURSUANT TO THE GOVERNMENT CODE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.*

**13. Adoption of an MOU for the Management Unit.**

Recommendation: Council adopt Resolution No. 2019-026.

*RESOLUTION NO. 2019-026 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA ADOPTING AN ADDENDUM TO THE MANAGEMENT UNIT'S MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020.*

**14. Adoption of an MOU for the Non-Sworn Unit.**

Recommendation: Council adopt Resolution No. 2019-027.

*RESOLUTION NO. 2019-027. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA ADOPTING AN ADDENDUM TO THE NON SWORN UNIT'S MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020.*

**15. Adoption of an MOU for the Clerical/Para-Professional/Recreational Unit.**

Recommendation: Council adopt Resolution No. 2019-028.

*RESOLUTION NO. 2019-028. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA ADOPTING AN ADDENDUM TO THE CLERICAL UNIT'S MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020.*

**16. Adoption of a MOU for the Sworn Unit.**

Recommendation: Council adopt Resolution No. 2019-029.

*RESOLUTION NO. 2019-029. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA ADOPTING AN ADDENDUM TO THE SWORN UNIT'S MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020.*

**17. Adoption of an MOU for the Laborers' International Union, Local 1184.**

Recommendation: Council adopt Resolution no. 2019-030.

*RESOLUTION NO. 2019-030. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA ADOPTING AN ADDENDUM TO THE LABORERS' UNIT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020.*

**18. Part time Assistance at the Water Treatment Plant.**

Recommendation: Council Authorize the Interim City Manager to execute an Agreement for Part Time Services with Gustavo Rodriguez who serves as Chief Water Treatment Plant Operator.

No public comment. Councilman Rodriguez moved approval of the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Egan with a unanimous aye vote.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

**Zone Change-Southern California Edison Expansion Project.** Interim City Manager Crecelius stated the proposed Southern California Edison Expansion Project involves a total of 7.47 acres on three parcels. Proposed improvements include replacement of the existing service center with a new Utility Operations Building, a new Pre-Fab and Haz-Mat Storage Building, a new fuel tank canopy, and a new pre-fabricated metal employee parking canopy. Site improvements include new parking lots, reconfigured entrance for SCE pole trucks, and new water, fire and sewer services, and storm drainage improvements. The expansion area which is 2.6 of the 7.47 acre project will be developed with a new access road and automatic gate, new concrete lay-down areas, pole storage racks, pole-climbing training area, gravel lay-down yard, and storm drainage improvements. An Initial Study and Negative Declaration were prepared for this project to comply with CEQA. The IS/ND was approved by Council during a public hearing on October 30, 2018. Due to the expansion, SCE is required to prepare a parcel merger to merge the three existing parcels into one, 7.47 acre parcel. Two of the three parcels totaling 2.6 acres on the western portion of the property have a zoning land use classification of "General Commercial". This property is proposed to be rezoned to "Public / Quasi Public" (P-QP) which is consistent with the existing SCE service center

(4.87) acres. It is recommended, subsequent to the public hearing, Council conduct the first reading of Ordinance No. 896-19 by title only, waiving further reading.

No public comment. Councilman Rodriguez moved approval of the first reading. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Egan with a unanimous aye vote. City Clerk Crecelius read the title of the Ordinance into the record.

*ORDINANCE NO. 896-19. AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE APPROVING ZONE CHANGE 1810-001 BEING A CHANGE OF ZONE FROM C-G (GENERAL COMMERCIAL) TO P/QP (PUBLIC/QUASI PUBLIC) FOR 2.6 ACRES OF THE 7.47 ACRE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON EXPANSION SITE.*

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Mike Cyr and Jeff Randall Flagpole Memorial at Blythe Municipal Golf Course.** Interim City Manager Crecelius stated on August 26, 2013 the community lost Mike Cyr and Jeff Randall in a fatal aviation accident in Desert Center, CA. These men had a positive impact on the workforce of the surrounding area and were influential in the Desert Sunlight Solar Project that was being constructed at the time. When the solar project was completed in 2016 First Solar and California Compaction Corporation donated a flagpole and memorial with plans for placement at the Blythe Municipal Golf Course. Headway was made in planning/completing this memorial in the latter part of 2016; but somewhere along the way the project was stalled. In July staff began working with Jacob Padilla, Scott Januscheski and Julian Presley to complete the Memorial. The proposed memorial consists of a 25 foot Internal Halyard Flagpole and a granite stone engraved with both men's names and a short phrase. After the flagpole is installed, a three foot by three foot slab will be poured around the pole for the memorial stone to be placed on. It is recommended Council authorize the rehabilitation of the Flagpole at the Blythe Municipal Golf Course in memory of Mike Cyr and Jeff Randall.

No public comment. Vice Mayor Egan moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez with a unanimous aye vote.

**Issuance of Cultivation, Distribution and Manufacturing Commercial Cannabis Business Permits.** Interim City Manager Crecelius stated Mother Nature's Cannabinoids submitted applications for Cultivation, Distribution and Manufacturing licenses at 2168 McKinley and 2161 W. Hobsonway, APN #824-194-009. The site consists of a residential home and shop/warehouse and is zoned General Commercial which allows for the development of commercial cannabis structures on lots of at least 5,000 square feet. Mother Nature's Cannabinoids has submitted the information required for the first three phases of the application process, including an in-depth interview with staff. Ms. Trina Lopez, CEO of Mother Nature's Cannabinoids completed the background investigation with nothing found to preclude her from being issued cannabis licenses. It is therefore recommended Council issue commercial cannabis cultivation, distribution and manufacturing permits to Mother Nature's Cannabinoids.

No public comment. Vice Mayor Egan moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez with a unanimous aye vote.

**Changes to Position Staffing for the Blythe Fire Department.** Interim City Manager Crecelius stated the current composition of the Blythe Fire Department is a Chief, Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief/Training Officer filling an Engineer position, 5 Captains, 7 Engineers and 20 Fireman for a staff of 35 employees. To become an Engineer you must have a Commercial Drivers License in order to operate the Fire trucks and equipment. Chief Kem has requested an increase in the number of Engineer positions. He has several Firemen who are certified to operate Fire equipment he would like to promote to Engineer. Staff is recommending an increase in engineer positions from 8 to 10. This would decrease the number of Fireman positions available by 2, keeping the total employee count at 35. There is a \$1 per hour pay difference between Fireman and Engineer. Assuming an average of 40 calls per month, if both engineers made every call, the cost increase would be \$1,000 per fiscal year. Chief Kem believes this change is necessary to ensure enough members of the department are available to operate equipment. An Engineer who responds to the fire call but is not needed to operate equipment would work as Firemen during the call. It is therefore recommended Council authorize staff to increase the number of Engineer positions to 10 and reduce fireman positions to 18 retaining a total department staff of 35.

No public comment. Vice Mayor Egan moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez with a unanimous aye vote.

**Recreation Center Family Package Pricing.** Interim City Manager Crecelius stated on May 14, 2019 Council Adopted Resolution No. 2019-008 setting user fees for various City Departments. User Fees at the Recreation Center were reviewed as part of the study. Council approved fee increases for youth monthly, quarterly and yearly memberships and increases for the adult quarterly and yearly memberships. No changes were made to the daily fees or adult monthly membership fees. The new rates went into effect on July 15, 2019. The Recreation Center had an average fee increase of 2%. After the new fees went into effect staff realized changes were not adopted for the Family Package Rates. The family package is structured to charge the first adult the standard monthly, quarterly or yearly rate. Each additional adult and child added to the plan receives a discounted rate. As these fees were not addressed in the study, they no longer correlate with the current user fees for the first adult and are discounted for each additional member of the family plan. To correct this oversight it is recommended Council Adopt Resolution 2018-025 setting the Family package rates for the Joe Wine Blythe Recreation Center.

No public comment. Vice Mayor Egan moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez with a unanimous aye vote.

***RESOLUTION NO. 2019-025. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA REVISING THE FAMILY PACKAGE USER FEES FOR THE JOE WINE BLYTHE RECREATION CENTER.***

**ORAL REPORTS:**

Interim City Manager Crecelius stated this would be Public Works Director Baldizzone's last Council meeting as he will be leaving to work as the Public Works Director in Yucca Valley. She wished him the best of luck on his future endeavors.

Public Works Director Baldizzone thanked Council for the opportunity to work for the City of Blythe and the support provided during his time here.

Mayor Reynolds thanked Mr. Baldizzone for his service and wished him the best of luck.

Councilman Halby stated he met with the US Department of Labor last week and provided some information. They were visiting businesses and making sure they know there was an office in California.

Mayor Reynolds reported on the 90 Days of Summer event and the upcoming 2019 Christmas Parade. The theme this year is an Old Fashion Christmas. Entry forms are now available.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Daniel Kelly of 7679 Sage Wood Drive Huntington Beach, CA stated he is with a collection of pastors from Los Angeles, Hollywood and Orange County. We are looking to build at 401 S. Third St. We are in ownership of it and wanted to show you who we are ask if there was a spare community building for events. We plan to have community events and a multicultural ministry and would need a place until this school is built up. There is a lot of potential here.

Esmeralda Perez, a representative from Supervisor V. Manuel Perez's office introduced herself as the liaison to Blythe and the Palo Verde Valley and stated their office is always available for questions or concerns.

Troy Love with Blythe Little League reported on some projects they would like to start to enhance the ball fields at Todd Park with Council's permission. Improvements include painting newly installed dugouts, laying a cement slab for a storage container, installing two containment walls for material storage, installing shades and a foul ball net at Alexander Field and painting and refurbishing the snack shack at Todd Field. They have obtained an annual seed donation for summer and winter grass and would also like to store 24 tons of in-fill material at the Public Works yard. We ask that you let us start working on these things and as they are completed accept the donation.

**ADJOURN:** The City Council meeting was adjourned at 7:05pm.

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Dale Reynolds, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Mallory Crecelius, City Clerk