

**Minutes of the Blythe City Council Meeting  
May 9, 2023**

The May 9, 2023 meeting of the Blythe City Council was called to order at 6:00pm in the Council Chambers by Mayor DeConinck. Also in attendance were Vice Mayor Rodriguez and Council Member Halby. Councilman Reynolds was excused from the meeting. Councilman Burton joined the meeting during Continued Business. Staff in attendance included: Interim City Manager and City Clerk Crecelius, City Attorney Roberto, Finance Director and City Treasurer Elms, Police Chief Dale, Fire Chief Hasler and Chief Building Official Brown.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor DeConinck.

The Invocation was offered by Vice Mayor Rodriguez

**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.*

1. **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, May 5, 2023.
2. **Approval of the Warrant Register.**  
Recommendation: Approve **5/9/2023**, warrants numbered 10230 through 10231 and 76640 through 76688 in the amount of \$359,438.83.
3. **Approval of the Payroll Register.**  
Recommendation: Approve **5/9/2023**, warrants numbered 53582 through 53598 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 55690 through 55750 in the amount of \$255,482.61; **5/9/2023**, warrants numbered 53599 through 53616 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 55751 through 55811 in the amount of \$264,359.08 and **5/9/2023**, warrants numbered 53617 through 53622 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 55812 through 55913 in the amount of \$70,903.30.
4. **Minutes of the April 25, 2023 City Council Meeting.**  
Recommendation: Approve the Minutes of the April 25, 2023 Meeting.
5. **City of Blythe Permits Issued for the Month of April 2023.**  
Recommendation: Receive and file this monthly report.
6. **City of Blythe Fire Department Monthly Activity Report for April 2023.**  
Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
7. **City of Blythe Police Department Monthly Activity Report for April 2023.**  
Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
8. **Quality of Life Program Activity Report for April 2023.**  
Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
9. **Purchase of Blythe Police Department Animal Control Unit Body.**  
Recommendation: Authorize the Interim City Manager to issue a Purchase Order to California Truck Equipment for the purchase of a new Animal Control Body in the amount of \$63,904.50.
10. **Annual Military Equipment Report Pursuant to Assembly Bill 481.**  
Recommendation: Receive and file the Annual Military Equipment Report.
11. **Measure A Capital Improvement Plan for Fiscal Year 2024-2028.**  
Recommendation: Adopt Blythe's Measure A Local Streets and Roads five-year Capital Improvement Plan, approve Blythe's Project Status Report, authorize the City Manager to execute Blythe's Maintenance of Efforts Certification Statement and authorize the Director of Finance to

make minor amendments as necessary.

**12. Annual Consumer Price Index and Landfill Rate Adjustment.**

Recommendation: Approve the annual rate adjustments submitted by CR&R pursuant to Section 22.7.1 of the Solid Waste and Recycling Services Agreement.

**13. Annual Assessment of Lighting District Nos. 1 and 2 for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.**

Recommendation: Council adopt the following Resolutions:

*RESOLUTION NO. 2023-005. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, ORDERING THE PREPARATION AND FILING OF A REPORT REGARDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 ASSESSMENTS TO BE LEVIED WITHIN THE CITY OF BLYTHE LIGHTING DISTRICT NO. 1.*

*RESOLUTION NO. 2023-006. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, PRELIMINARILY APPROVING THE ENGINEER'S REPORT FOR CITY OF BLYTHE LIGHTING DISTRICT NO.1, DECLARING ITS INTENTION TO LEVY AND COLLET ASSESSMENTS WITHIN SAID DISTRICT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 AND SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING SUCH ASSESSMENTS.*

*RESOLUTION NO. 2023-007. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, ORDERING THE PREPARATION AND FILING OF A REPORT REGARDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 ASSESSMENTS TO BE LEVIED WITHIN THE CITY OF BLYTHE LIGHTING DISTRICT NO. 2.*

*RESOLUTION NO. 2023-008. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, PRELIMINARILY APPROVING THE ENGINEER'S REPORT FOR CITY OF BLYTHE LIGHTING DISTRICT NO.2, DECLARING ITS INTENTION TO LEVY AND COLLET ASSESSMENTS WITHIN SAID DISTRICT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 AND SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING SUCH ASSESSMENTS.*

No public comment. Councilman Halby feels that on Item 9 the previous bidder should be on the hook for something there. I am not happy we are paying \$14,000 more for that.

Vice Mayor Rodriguez moved approval of the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Councilman Halby with aye votes from DeConinck, Rodriguez and Halby.

**CONTINUED BUSINESS:**

**Save Chuck.** Interim City Manager Crecelius gave an update on Save Chuck. The human-interest videos are posted on the City's YouTube channel. A reporter from CalMatters is here this week working on a follow up story on the closure of Chuckawalla. We believe the story is about the economic impacts this closure will have on Blythe. On Monday, the Blythe and Norco Mayor's went on Air Talk with Larry Mantle and that interview is posted on the City's social accounts. Today the Riverside County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to support efforts to not close Chuckawalla and instead close CRC in Norco. Please visit [savechuck.org](http://savechuck.org) and submit your stories and impact letter.

No public comment. The item was received and filed.

**Abatement of 1203 E. Hobsonway.** Interim City Manager Crecelius stated R&L Watkins has completed all work at 1203 E. Hobsonway to the satisfaction of City staff. The contractor began work on April 25th and the final inspection was conducted on May 1st. No extensions to the warrant were required. R&L Watkins was able to complete the project within the 14 days prescribed by the court. Final costs incurred for abatement totaled \$49,925. Budgeted abatement funds and salary savings in the Development Service Department will cover the costs incurred for this project. City staff would again like to commend the quick actions of Leslie Watkins and her team at R&L Watkins which allowed the City to abate this property within the parameters of

the abatement warrant. Staff would also like to thank CR&R for quickly delivering the bins necessary to clear debris from the site, which contributed to the completion of the project within the necessary time frame. Staff recommends Council receive and file this report.

Mayor DeConinck would like to thank City staff and Chief Building Official Brown.

No public comment. The item was received and filed.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Acceptance of Donation- The Prime Leaf.** Interim City Manager Crecelius stated the Prime Community Event was held in Todd Park on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Prior to the event, organizers asked to paint the Gazebo in Todd Park. The work was coordinated with staff and completed the week of the event. It is recommended Council accept a donation of \$1,300 in labor and materials used in the project. Staff would also like to thank Mike Farage and his Prime Leaf team for their work beautifying the park and Gabe Palacios who performed the work.

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

**City's 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element Update.** Interim City Manager Crecelius stated the City's current housing element was last updated in 2014 with a period of 2013 through 2021. The City started preparation of the City's 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element update in late 2021. To date, two drafts have been submitted to HCD for review. Staff anticipates further revisions will be required as HCD has been requiring 4 to 5 reviews prior to certification. Veronica Tam and Associates, VTA, was established in 2005 and has since provided housing and community development consulting to local jurisdictions. They have more recently assisted 25 jurisdictions in achieving Housing Element Compliance. Therefore, staff would like to contract with VTA to push us over the finish line with 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element update. VTA was recommended to the City by Jones Mayer. It is recommended Council authorize the interim City Manager to execute Agreement No. 2023-023 A between the City and Veronica Tam and Associates.

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

#### **ORAL REPORTS:**

Councilman Burton reported on a successful Day of Prayer. He thanked the Mayor for attending along with the others in attendance that totaled around 100.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Luther Dwane Holley of 955 Lido Lane made statements related to witnessing an encounter involving a Blythe Police Officer and provided the Police Chief with a citizen complaint.

Victoria Pacheco of Grid Alternatives reported they have made 80 solar installations in the City of Blythe as part of the energy for all program. The program is funded by cap-and-trade funding through the State of California. Through the Rose foundation they were awarded \$1.5 million to do more residential installations in Blythe as well as Multi-family apartments at no cost to the

customer. So far we have invested almost \$2 million in the City. With savings that have accumulated up to \$4 million back to the community. We hope to continue our efforts here in the City of Blythe. Grid Alternatives is the largest non-profit solar installer in the United States.

**ADJOURN:** The City Council meeting was adjourned at 6:26pm.

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Joseph DeConinck, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Mallory Crecelius , City Clerk