

**City of Laguna Hills
City Council / Planning Agency
Regular Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, April 22, 2025**

General Business Convening at 6:00 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Sweeney.

Invocation: Council Member Pezold

Pledge of Allegiance: Council Member Wheeler

Roll Call of City Council Members

Present:

Mayor Joshua Sweeney
Mayor Pro Tempore Don Caskey
Council Member Erica Pezold
Council Member Jared Mathis
Council Member Dave Wheeler

Absent:

1. Presentations and Proclamations

1.1 Laguna Hills High School Student Liaison Report

The City Council received a report from Laguna Hills High School 2024 Spring Student Liaison Kyden Brown.

1.2 Certificate of Recognition for Laguna Hills High School Student Liaison Kyden Brown

Mayor Sweeney presented a Certificate of Recognition to Kyden Brown recognizing their service as a Laguna Hills High School Student Liaison.

1.3 Presentation from Southern California Gas Company

The City Council received a presentation from Juan Gonzalez, Public Affairs Manager and Jessi Davis, Energy and Environmental Affairs Manager for Southern California Gas Company.

2. Schedule of Future Events

2.1 Schedule of Future Events

Deputy City Clerk McDonald announced the upcoming meetings and events.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments on non-agendized items.

4. Consent Calendar

A motion to approve the balance of the Consent Calendar with Council Member Pezold removing Item No. 4.9 and Council Member Wheeler removing Item No. 4.10 and Item No. 4.11 was moved by Council Member Pezold, seconded by Council Member Wheeler.

Roll Call Vote Result: Passed

Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0

Ayes: Mayor Sweeney, Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey, Council Member Pezold, Council Member Mathis, Council Member Wheeler

Nays: None

Abstain: None

4.1 Waive Reading in Full of all Ordinances and Resolutions on the Agenda

Recommendation: That the City Council waive reading in full of all ordinances and resolutions on the agenda and declare that said titles which appear on the public agenda shall be determined to have been read by title and further reading waived.

4.2 Approval of Minutes for April 8, 2025, 330pm Special Meeting

Recommendation: That the City Council approve the City Council Minutes for the April 8, 2025, 330pm Special Meeting.

4.3 Approval of Minutes for April 8, 2025, 4pm Special Meeting

Recommendation: That the City Council approve the City Council Minutes for the April 8, 2025, 4pm Special Meeting.

4.4 Approval of Minutes for April 8, 2025, Regular Meeting

Recommendation: That the City Council approve the City Council Minutes for the April 8, 2025, Regular Meeting.

4.5 Ratification of April 22, 2025 Warrant Register

Recommendation: That the City Council ratify the accompanying Warrant Register for the period from March 28, 2025, to April 10, 2025, in the amount of \$2,374,782.69.

4.6 Treasurer's Investment Report for March 2025

Recommendation: That the City Council receive and file the Treasurer's Investment Report for the month of March 2025.

4.7 Development Application Status Report

Recommendation: That the City Council receive and file the report.

4.8 Informal Bidding Ordinance Use Quarterly Report

Recommendation: That the City Council receive and file the report.

4.12 Rescindment of the Approval and Award of Work Order Agreement with Western Exterminator Company for Termite Fumigation at the Laguna Hills Civic Center

Recommendation: That the City Council rescind the approval and award of the Work Order Agreement with Western Exterminator Company for termite fumigation at the Laguna Hills Civic Center, awarded at the February 25, 2025, regular meeting.

4.13 Recommendation to Oppose Unless Amended: SB 16 (Blakespear) Homeless Housing Reporting Requirements

Recommendation: That the City Council adopt an "Oppose Unless Amended" position on SB 16 (Blakespear) and authorize the Mayor to transmit a letter to the appropriate legislative offices conveying the City's position.

4.14 2025 Fourth of July Celebration Pre-Event Report and Fireworks Agreement

Recommendation: That the City Council 1) Receive and file the 2025 Fourth of July Celebration pre-event report; and 2) Approve the Fireworks Display Agreement between Garden State Fireworks ("GSF") and the City of Laguna Hills for 2025 and authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement.

4.15 2025 Memorial Day Nonprofit Beer Garden Partner

Recommendation: That the City Council approve the Parentis Foundation as the 2025 Memorial Day Nonprofit Beer Garden Partner.

4.16 Opposition to AB 647 (Gonzalez) – Housing Development Approvals: Residential Units

Recommendation: That the City Council adopt a position of opposition to AB 647 (Gonzalez) and direct staff to transmit a letter of opposition to the bill author, legislative committees, and relevant advocacy organizations.

Items Removed from the Consent Calendar

4.10 Purchase of Two Alternative Fuel Vehicles for Use at City Hall and for the Community Services Department Pursuant to Section 3-08.130 of the Laguna Hills Municipal Code

Recommendation: That the City Council: 1) Approve the purchase of two (2) alternative fuel vehicles pursuant to LPMC Sections 3-08.130 from the list of approved vehicles; 2) Authorize the appropriation of funds from the City's AB 2766 Subvention Fund for the purchase of the approved vehicles; and 3) Authorize the City Manager to execute purchase agreements from dealers in order to procure the vehicles from the list of approved vehicles.

Council Member Wheeler removed Item No. 4.10 from the Consent Calendar to amend staff's recommendation.

A motion to approve staff's recommendation with the amendment to buy American was moved by Council Member Wheeler, seconded by Council Member Pezold.

Roll Call Vote Result: Passed

Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0

Ayes: Mayor Sweeney, Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey, Council Member Pezold, Council Member Mathis, Council Member Wheeler

Nays: None

Abstain: None

4.9 Proposed Lease Agreement with Serenity Escrow, Inc., a California corporation, for 24031 El Toro Road, Suite 300, Laguna Hills, California

Recommendation: That the City Council: 1) Approve the lease agreement with Serenity Escrow, Inc., a California corporation, for 24031 El Toro Road, Suite 300, Laguna Hills, California; 2) Authorize the City Manager to make minor modifications to and negotiate the final terms of the lease agreement, as necessary; and 3) Authorize the City Manager to execute the lease agreement.

Council Member Pezold removed Item No. 4.9 from the Consent Calendar to oppose the Item.

A motion to approve staff's recommendation was moved by Council Member Mathis, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey.

Roll Call Vote Result: Passed

Yes 4, No 1, Abstained 0

Ayes: Mayor Sweeney, Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey, Council Member Mathis, Council Member Wheeler

Nays: Council Member Pezold

Abstain: None

4.11 Side Street Stop Sign Installation on Sunburst Avenue at Largo Drive

Recommendation: That the City Council: 1) Find and determine that the proposed stop control intersection is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15301(c) of the CEQA Guidelines, Cal. Code of Regs, Title 14, Chapter 3 (the operation and maintenance of existing highways and streets is categorically exempt); and 2) Adopt Resolution No. 2025-04-22-1: "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Laguna Hills, California, Designating the Intersection of Sunburst Avenue and Largo Drive as a Stop Intersection and Authorizing the Installation of a One-Way Side Street Stop Sign on Sunburst Avenue at Largo Drive."

Council Member Wheeler removed Item No. 4.11 from the Consent Calendar to provide comments on the item.

At Mayor Sweeney's request, Traffic Commissioner Miller provided comments on the item and responded to Council Member requests for additional information.

A motion to approve staff's recommendation was moved by Council Member Pezold, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey.

Roll Call Vote Result: Passed

Yes 5, No 0, Abstained 0

Ayes: Mayor Sweeney, Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey, Council Member Pezold, Council Member Mathis, Council Member Wheeler

Nays: None

Abstain: None

5. Planning Agency

There were no separate Planning Agency Business Items for this meeting.

6. City Council Public Hearings

There were no City Council public hearings.

7. Administrative Reports

7.1 City Manager

7.1.1 Request by Merlone Geier Partners for Initiation of Proposed Major Project Modifications to the Village at Laguna Hills Development Agreement and Formation of Ad Hoc Committee

Recommendation: That the City Council:

- 1) Receive a presentation by Merlone Geier Partners regarding their request for initiation of Major Project Modifications to the Development Agreement for the Village at Laguna Hills Mixed-Use Project;
- 2) Review and provide direction to staff on whether to engage in negotiations with MGP Fund X Laguna Hills, LLC (“MGP”) regarding the proposed Major Project Modifications to the Development Agreement for the Village at Laguna Hills Mixed-Use Project; and
- 3) Consider the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee comprised solely of two members of the City Council (less than a quorum) to help facilitate the requested negotiations and to make recommendations to the City Council.

City Manager Hildenbrand provided introductory remarks on the item.

Jamas Gwilliam, Managing Director, Merlone-Geier Partners, provided a presentation on the item and responded to Council Member requests for information.

The following individual(s) provided public comments on Item No. 7.1.1:

Ahn Nguyen

Andy Saymour on behalf of the Higher Wages Lower Rent Alliance

Matthew Johnson, a resident of Laguna Hills

Sophia Wigglesworth

Rona Henry, Chair, Welcoming Neighbors Home

City Attorney Simonian responded to Council Member requests for additional information.

A motion to continue the item to the June 24, 2025, regular meeting was moved by Mayor Sweeney, seconded by Council Member Mathis.

A substitute motion to continue the item to the September 23, 2025, regular meeting was moved by Council Member Wheeler, seconded by Council Member Pezold.

The main motion was amended by Mayor Sweeney and Council Member Mathis to direct staff to engage in negotiations with Merlone Geier Partners Fund X Laguna Hills, LLC and to form an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey and Council Member Mathis.

Mayor Sweeney called for a roll call vote on the substitute motion.

A motion to continue the Item to the September 23, 2025, regular meeting was moved by Council Member Wheeler, seconded by Council Member Pezold.

Roll Call Vote Result: Failed

Yes 2, No 3, Abstained 0

Ayes: Council Member Pezold, Council Member Wheeler
Nays: Mayor Sweeney, Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey, Council Member Mathis
Abstain: None

City Attorney Simonian responded to Council Member requests for additional information.

Mayor Sweeney called for a roll call vote on the amended main motion.

A motion to direct staff to engage in negotiations with Merlone Geier Partners Fund X Laguna hills, LLC and to form an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey and Council Member Mathis was moved by Mayor Sweeney, seconded by Council Member Mathis.

Roll Call Vote Result: Passed

Yes 3, No 2, Abstained 0

Ayes: Mayor Sweeney, Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey, Council Member Mathis
Nays: Council Member Pezold, Council Member Wheeler
Abstain: None

7.1.2 License Agreement for Suite 255 – Termination or Shared Use Policy

Recommendation: That the City Council provide direction to staff regarding either of the following:

- 1) Terminating the License Agreement with the Chamber of Commerce and proceeding with converting Suite 255 into City Council office space; or
- 2) Adopting a proposed shared use policy that allows both the City Council and the Chamber to utilize Suite 255 on designated days.

City Manager Hildenbrand reviewed the information provided in the staff report and responded to Council Member requests for additional information.

The following individual(s) provided public comments on Item No. 7.1.2:
Christina Kennedy, President & CEO, Laguna Hills Chamber of Commerce

City Attorney Simonian responded to Council Member requests for additional information.

A motion to continue the item to the May 13, 2025, regular meeting was moved by Council Member Mathis, seconded by Mayor Sweeney.

Roll Call Vote Result: Passed

Yes 4, No 1, Abstained 0

Ayes: Mayor Sweeney, Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey, Council Member Pezold, Council Member Mathis

Nays: Council Member Wheeler

Abstain: None

8. Matters Agendized and Presented by City Council Members

There were no matters agendized by City Council Members.

9. City Council Member Committee Reports

9.1 Committee Assignment Report

The City Council received reports from City Council Members on the City Council Committee Assignments listed in the staff report.

10. City Council Member Comments

Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey

Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey indicated that he received requests from constituents for the City to look into parking enforcement to allow street sweeping and requested to direct the Traffic Commission to review the issue and report their findings back to the City Council, receiving a second from Mayor Sweeney.

Council Member Pezold

Council Member Pezold requested that the previously approved creation of a business recognition program be referred to the Events, Communication, and Beautification Committee with input from the Chamber of Commerce and received a second from Mayor Pro Tempore Caskey.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the City Council at this session, Mayor Sweeney declared the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Jennifer Lee, City Clerk

ATTEST:

Joshua Sweeney, Mayor

Approved at meeting of May 13, 2025.