

EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, December 4, 2012 – 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

Meeting Location

El Cerrito City Hall

10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito

Bill Jones – Mayor

Mayor Pro Tem Greg Lyman
Councilmember Rebecca Benassini

Councilmember Ann Cheng
Councilmember Janet Abelson

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Abelson, Benassini, Cheng, Lyman and Mayor Jones all present.

7:00 p.m.

CONVENE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Jones convened the regular City Council meeting at 7:04 p.m.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG** was led by Councilmember Benassini.
2. **COUNCIL / STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

Karen Pinkos, Assistant City Manager, welcomed and introduced Liz Ruhland, the new manager of the El Cerrito Library. Ms. Ruhland stated that she has worked for the Contra Costa Library for twelve years and previously worked for the Kensington Library for seven years. Ms. Ruhland said that she is very familiar with this part of the County and is excited to be serving the El Cerrito community. Ms. Ruhland also noted that she will be working with library staff to improve services and welcomes comments from the City Council and the community.

Mayor Pro Tem Lyman announced that the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) will be convening public meetings on the smart meter program. Meeting dates and other information about the smart meter program is available from the California Public Utilities Commission website, cpuc.ca.gov/puc. Mayor Pro Tem Lyman also announced that there are a number of vacancies on the City's boards and commissions and encouraged all residents to take a look at vacancy information posted on the City's website and apply by December 10.

3. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Al Miller, El Cerrito, invited everyone to help with the Sundar Shadi holiday display installation on December 15. Mr. Miller thanked the City Council, particularly Mayor Jones and Councilmember Cheng, for their work on the City Council, and stated that he is thankful for all

efforts to keep the City Council and the City going.

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Proclamation Recognizing Teri McKeever

Present and approve a proclamation recognizing and commending Teri McKeever on her accomplishments not only as the head coach of the U.S. Olympic Women's Swim Team for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London and as head coach of the California Golden Bears Womens Swim Team but also for making strides for female coaches in athletics and the field of swimming.

Action: Proclamation approved and presented to Ms. McKeever.

B. Proclamation Recognizing Carol Tang, Ph.D.

Approve and present a proclamation recognizing and commending Dr. Carol Tang on her designation as one of twelve women honored as "Leading Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)," and for her significant contributions in working to advance and recognize the importance of education for youth.

Action: Proclamation approved and presented to Dr. Tang.

5. ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT CALENDAR – Item Nos. 5A through 5C

Moved, seconded (Benassini/Abelson) and carried unanimously to approve Consent Calendar Item Nos. 5A through 5C as indicated below.

A. Minutes for Approval

Approve the November 20, 2012 Regular City Council meeting minutes.

Action: Approved minutes.

B. Declaring and Confirming the Results of the November 6, 2012 General Election *(To be delivered)*

Adopt a resolution declaring and confirming the results of the November 6, 2012 election.

Action: Adopted Resolution No. 2012-88 including final election results certified by the Contra Costa County Registrar of Voters and the City Clerk.

The total number of votes cast in the City of El Cerrito was 12,437 votes. The following candidates for City Council were elected to terms ending in 2016, and each received the total number of votes, including absent votes, as set forth after their names as follows:

Mark Friedman	6732
Greg Lyman	6338
Jan Bridges	6223

C. Co-Sponsored Groups – Grant to the Community Alliance for Learning for the Writer-Coach Connection Program

At the request of Councilmember Benassini, accept an application from the Community Alliance for Learning for the Writer Coach Connection Program and approve a one-time grant in the amount of \$2,500 for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 off-cycle from the budget process.

Action: Application accepted and grant approved in the amount of \$2,500.

6. RECOGNITION OF CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS LEAVING OFFICE

Special recognition of Mayor Bill Jones (City Council 2004–2012, Mayor December 2007– 2008 and December 2011 – 2012); and Councilmember Ann Cheng (City Council 2008 – 2012, Mayor December 2010 – December 2011).

Councilmember Cheng stated that her husband Wiley Osborne was a rock of support throughout her term in office and also thanked her family for their support. Councilmember Cheng reflected on her history and path to the City Council and noted the incredible leadership of City Manager Hanin. Councilmember Cheng stated that it has been her privilege to live and serve in El Cerrito and to be a part of the leadership group in El Cerrito. The level of cooperation, congeniality, and respect shared among the City Councilmembers is rare in the region. Councilmember Cheng stated that she was lucky to experience such harmony among past and current council members. El Cerrito is beginning to be recognized throughout the county as the little city that gets things done. Everyone from the street maintenance crew to the childcare workers, public safety, the community, and community leaders do an amazing job. It has been an amazing gift to experience this first hand. Councilmember Cheng stated that she has more hope in humanity because of what everyone does and contributes despite witnessing the dissolution of redevelopment. There has been incredible change in the past four years including the beautiful new streets, a new hometown brewery and a great theater. El Cerrito's heritage and collective identity is full of leaders who are also humble and contribute without any expectations of gratitude and this is what gets things done. Councilmember Cheng concluded by thanking the public for the opportunity to serve on the City Council, expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to meet so many people and said she is looking forward to being a part of the community again. She extolled the many benefits and resources of the city and expressed her pride in being an El Cerritan.

Mayor Jones acknowledged family members present including his wife of thirty eight years, Gail, his son Christopher and daughter Haley who is expecting her first child in June and her husband James and Mayor Jones sister Nancy, and her husband Brian. Mayor Jones stated that he had formerly worked for local cities and hesitated before he ran for office. He realized, as an elected official, that he would be representing his family as well as himself. Mayor Jones also thanked his wife Gail for her support over the past eight years and also thanked his kids. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to work together with the Council, Commissions, staff and the community toward what the residents want. Mayor Jones also thanked City Manager Hanin for shaping and encouraging an environment of service, expertise, hard work and transparency in operations at all levels of the organization. When things are not on track employees have the desire, ability and creativity to correct and improve situations and go forward in a positive and productive manner. Mayor Jones expressed sincere appreciation for all the men and women who work for the residents of the City and stated that city employees take pride in providing services to the residents of El Cerrito and also thanked Mary Dodge, Administrative Services Director and Jerry Bradshaw, Public Works Director, for all of their years of service to the City.

Mayor Jones noted that it has been a pleasure to serve with the current City Councilmembers as well as past members Sandi Potter, Letitia Moore and past and new Councilmember Jan Bridges. Mayor Jones thanked the current Council leadership and noted that Councilmember Abelson is most appreciated for her work on regional boards and helping to secure grants. Mayor Pro Tem Lyman is greatly appreciated for his attention to detail which has served El Cerrito well, particularly on the Integrated Waste Management Authority Board and the Sports Field Joint Powers Authority. Councilmember Cheng taught him about sustainability and transportation and Councilmember Benassini is admired for her critical analysis of the city's issues and for her continuing interest in education.

Mayor Jones emphasized the necessity of trust – and how the promotion of trust is in the best interests of the city. He never doubted the sincerity of the Council or any of the Councilmembers

he has worked with. Mayor Jones shared the following quote from the ancient Greek statesman, Pericles, "What you leave behind is not engraved on stone monuments but what is woven into the lives of others" and thanked the residents of El Cerrito for the opportunity to serve. He noted the faith, support and trust of the City's forward thinking resident base and called attention to the residents' consistent support of issues that serve the community well such as the streets and operations sales tax, building quality schools, and support for civic projects such as the community center, swim center, recycling center, and new City Hall. He is always proud to tell people about El Cerrito and even prouder when people take the opportunity to come up and tell him about the city. Mayor Jones stated that for him, serving on the City Council is the pinnacle of public service. He has enjoyed every minute of working for a special community the past eight years and thanked the community for making it possible. Mayor Jones also thanked the City Clerk for her service.

Mayor Pro Tem Lyman stated that it has been a pleasure to serve with Councilmember Cheng and noted that he is looking forward to seeing Councilmember Cheng involved in the community. Mayor Pro Tem Lyman also expressed appreciation for Mayor Jones, particularly his interest and passion in serving the community, his preparation and professionalism, his patience in working through items, his leadership during the state's dissolution of redevelopment and also his sense of justice.

Councilmember Benassini thanked Mayor Jones and Councilmember Cheng and expressed appreciation for their passion and enthusiasm on the City Council. Councilmember Benassini said she has loved coming to meetings and hearing the Council's positions on different items and acknowledged how much has been accomplished. Councilmember Benassini thanked Councilmember Cheng for inspiring her to participate not only in Bike to Work Day but also to purchase and ride a bicycle to work. Councilmember Benassini stated that she looks forward to seeing Councilmember Cheng working out in the community and also thanked Mayor Jones for his ability to listen and for being an example of how to act on the Council.

Councilmember Abelson stated that she has really enjoyed working with individual Councilmembers and as a team. She will miss Mayor Jones and Councilmember Cheng on the Council and noted that she will always consider them as family. Councilmember Abelson expressed appreciation for Councilmember Cheng's enthusiasm and willingness to try new things, say yes and stick with it and also stated that she appreciates her friendship with Mayor Jones. It has been a pleasure to work with each councilmember and experience the respect that the Council shares for each other. Councilmember Abelson looks forward to seeing Mayor Jones and Councilmember Cheng out in the community and at city events and knows that both will continue as good citizens of the City.

7. BRIEF RECESS

8. SWEARING IN AND SEATING OF NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Administration of the Oath of Office and Presentation of Certificate of Election:

Mark Friedman, elected to the City Council to a term ending 2016. Mr. Friedman previously served on the El Cerrito City Council April 1997– December 2004.

Greg Lyman, re-elected to the City Council to a term ending 2016. Mayor Pro Tem Lyman's first term on the City Council was 2008 – 2012.

Jan Bridges, will be sworn in prior to the December 18, 2012 City Council meeting. Ms. Bridges previously served on the City Council 2004 – 2008.

Action: City Clerk Morse administered the Oath of Office to Councilmember Friedman and Mayor Pro Tem Lyman and presented each with a Certificate of Election.

9. POLICY MATTERS

City Council Reorganization

Election of City Council Officers.

Mayor Pro Tem Lyman called for the reorganization of the City Council.

City Clerk Morse declared the Offices of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore vacant and called for nominations for the office of Mayor.

Councilmember Benassini nominated Mayor Pro Tem Lyman to the office of Mayor.

Moved, seconded (Abelson/Friedman) and carried unanimously to close nominations and select Mayor Pro Tem Lyman as Mayor of the City of El Cerrito.

Mayor Lyman called for nominations for office of Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilmember Friedman nominated Councilmember Abelson to the office of Mayor Pro Tem.

Moved, seconded (Friedman/Benassini) and carried unanimously to close nominations and select Councilmember Abelson as Mayor Pro Tem.

Mayor Pro Tem Abelson stated that this new Council, just like the prior City Council, will be great to work with and that she looks forward to facing the challenges ahead in a way that is effective for the residents of El Cerrito. Mayor Pro Tem Abelson also thanked the Council for their support and congratulated Mayor Lyman.

Mayor Lyman stated that he is humble, grateful and optimistic. He is grateful for the foundation and support that his parents, Virginia and Sandy, gave him as well as the support of his wife Mary, his daughter Hannah, his friends and the voters of El Cerrito who re-elected him. Mayor Lyman explained that like any public project, it took him a lot of time and a lot of support to get to the place of where he is this evening. He thanked everyone who has helped him along the way. Mayor Lyman stated he is humbled that the voters re-elected him and extended their trust in him. With four years of service behind him he realizes now, how much prior City Councils contributed to the foundation of the Council's recent successes such as new street paving, San Pablo Avenue streetscape and rebuilding of the Recycling Center. Mayor Lyman said he realizes this coming year and every year is a new foundation for future Council successes. City Councilmembers are temporary stewards of the public's trust and the public expects the Council to keep the city's services and businesses moving. He acknowledged his gratitude for the voters who trust him and elected him to office.

Mayor Lyman said that he accepts the assignment of Mayor with humility and noted his responsibility for transparent, efficient, professional and civil discourse of both the Council and the public at Council meetings. Mayor Lyman also stated that he is optimistic that this coming year will set the foundation for the Council to finish the City's Strategic Plan, see the San Pablo Avenue art icons installed, adopt the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and attract new businesses to El Cerrito. He hopes to see the beginning of the General Plan update this year and solidify support for upgrading the City's major city infrastructure including the library, senior center and public safety buildings. He is optimistic that city revenues will stabilize and that the City Council will adopt a balanced budget and be in a position to support these long awaited initiatives.

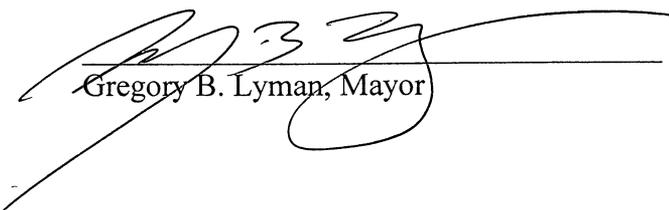
Councilmember Friedman thanked the voters for electing himself and Councilmember Bridges and for re-electing Mayor Lyman. Councilmember Friedman said that when he was considering running for office he had a lot of great memories from his prior service on the City Council and some other memories that were not quite as pleasant. Everyone told him that the Council is great and that staff is also great and that the City is entering a period where people are getting along and working together on behalf of all the residents in a really positive and wonderful way. Councilmember Friedman stated that this was also his observation and noted that this is why he is able to serve with his colleagues. Councilmember Friedman thanked his campaign treasurer Scott Lyons and his wife Carolyn Said and also stated that it is really an honor to serve on the City Council and that he knows there are a number of priorities that are really important. He hopes to offer his skills and talents to meld with the wonderful team that is already in place and also reflected on the contrast between meetings held in the old community center versus the beautiful new city hall that exists today. Councilmember Friedman concluded by saying he is happy to be serving the public again.

10. ADJOURNED CITY COUNCIL MEETING at 8:19 p.m.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular City Council meeting of December 4, 2012 as approved by the El Cerrito City Council.



Cheryl Morse, City Clerk



Gregory B. Lyman, Mayor