CITY OF EL CERRITO

MINUTES

Monday, March 5, 2007

SPECIAL CLOSED COUNCIL MEETING

CONCURRENT CITY COUNCIL/REDEVELOPMENT MEETING

Meeting Location
Council Chambers, Community Center
7007 Moeser Lane, El Cerrito

ROLL CALL
Present: Councilmembers/Agency Members: Abelson, Bridges, Jones and Moore
Absent: Councilmember Potter

7:10 p.m. CONVENE SPECIAL CLOSED MEETING

Mayor Moore convened the special closed meeting at 7:10 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF CLOSED SESSION

1) Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation
   Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(a)
   Vaughn v. City of Antioch
   Case No. C07-00045

2) Public Employee Performance Evaluation
   Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957
   Title: City Attorney

ADJOURN SPECIAL CLOSED MEETING

The special closed meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

POSSIBLE REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN AT CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Moore announced that there was no report out of closed session.

7:30 p.m. CONVENE CONCURRENT CITY COUNCIL/REDEVELOPMENT MEETING

Mayor Moore convened the concurrent City Council/Redevelopment Agency meeting at 7:45 p.m.
1. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag** was led by Councilmember Abelson.

2. **Council/Staff Communications/Announcements.** (Informational reports on matters of general interest by Council & Staff.)

   Janet Coleson, City Attorney, introduced Assistant City Attorney, Alexander Abbey.

   Mayor Pro Tem Jones and Mayor Moore reported on the Commissioners Workshop sponsored by the Human Relations Commission, commended the Commission on the workshop and stated that the workshop was informative and well attended. Mayor Moore commended the commissioners for taking time to attend and the workshop and said she very much appreciated the work done by commissioners.

3. **Presentations**

   **A. Presentation of Plaque Honoring Police Sergeant Wayne D. Mann upon his Retirement**

   Mayor Moore presented a plaque honoring Wayne Mann.

   Scott Kirkland, Police Chief, introduced Sgt. Wayne Mann, Commander Gary Priebe, Reserve Officer Flavio Meiorin, and Officers Donovan Brasas, Bailey Thepkaysone, Scot Barr, and Corporal David Hartung. Chief Kirkland acknowledged Sgt. Mann for being so capable, thoughtful, eager and considerate and said that Sgt. Mann is a special person who will be difficult to replace. Chief Kirkland said he and the department will miss Sgt. Mann tremendously.

   Mayor Moore offered her congratulations to Sgt. Mann, thanked him for his service and encouraged him to serve in a volunteer capacity.

   Sergeant Mann said that he was grateful to his team and that he is fortunate to have good people to work with and that El Cerrito is a wonderful city to work for.

   Councilmember Abelson thanked Sergeant Mann for his service and wished him well in his retirement.

   **B. East Bay Regional Public Safety Communication System**

   Provide direction to the City Manager on the future involvement of the City of El Cerrito with the East Bay Regional Communications System.

   Lance Maples, Interim Fire Chief, introduced Retired Chief William McCammon. Retired Chief McCammon formed the group of chief stakeholders in the East Bay Regional Public Safety Communication System (EBRCS). Interim Chief Maples stated the goal of this evening’s presentation as obtaining direction from the City Council on El Cerrito’s involvement with this project. If Council supports the project, staff will return with a letter of
intent to support the formation of the East Bay Regional Public Safety Communication System
governed by a Joint Powers Authority for Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

Chief McCammon provided context for how Alameda and Contra Costa Counties could work
together. During the initiation of Homeland Security an Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)
was formed which identified Alameda and Contra Costa Counties as a regional body brought
together to plan funding through the UASI program. Both counties found out that each was
working on interoperability and that there were commonalities between the two counties.
Chief McCammon provided an overview of interoperability and described the primary levels of
interoperability as: 1) Swapping Portable Radios; 2) Gateway (Fixed or Mobile); 3) Shared
Channels; 4) Proprietary Shared Systems; and 5) Standards-Based Shared Systems. Chief
McCammon also outlined the current communication systems in Contra Costa and Alameda
Counties and the need to move toward a P25 system which allows all agencies to talk to each
other and achieve interoperability. An EBRCs is needed because existing communication
systems in both counties are fragmented and nearing the end of their useful lives. There is a
desire to achieve significant cost savings by being part of a regional system and receive grant
funding from the federal government. The new EBRCs would include: 1) Two county digital
P25 Compliant Communications Systems with 32 sites; 2) Provide the highest level of
interoperability; 3) Provide funding through multiple sources including federal grants, one-time
assessments and ongoing subscriber fees; and 3) A Joint Powers Authority with local
jurisdictions becoming members to own and operate the system. The backbone costs are
based on the number of radios each jurisdiction operates on the system. Ongoing systems will
be funded through a subscriber fee. The Joint Powers Authority Board of Directors
responsibilities will include owning the system and its assets, setting policies and assumption
of liability.

Chief McCammon introduced the System Management Structure of a 23 member board and
highlighted progress to date: 1) Committees formed and are working to address governance,
system design and implementation issues; 2) Digital microwave network linking both counties
has been approved and procured using 2004 UASI funding at a cost of $5.6 million; and 3)
Preliminary system design completed with the project estimated at $55 million; 4) A Digital
Master Site Controller, dispatch console upgrades and overall system design for the two county
system has been approved; 5) Additional radio equipment for 10 of the 32 planned sites has
been purchased and warehoused while site preparation is completed; and 6) a National Public
Safety Planning Advisory Committee (NPS PAC) has approved a "frequency repacking plan"
which reallocates frequencies supporting the EBRCs build out; 7) Contra Costa County has
contracted for an independent review of the Motorola proposal to review the system design and
costs; and 8) Additional review of system design is under way through the USDHS
Interoperable Communication Technical Advisory Program (ICTAP).

Chief McCammon also reported that in terms of Local Government Participation, participation
of each governmental agency is determined by council action including financing and approval
of operational funding through a yearly budget process. Chief McCammon asked the Council
to adhere to EBRCs Task Force timeframes for presentation and consideration; support the
proposed JPA Structure; establish an accurate radio count; and sign a letter of intent which
includes a good faith contribution of $100 per radio. Chief McCammon outlined timeframes
for JPA Establishment with a target of January - March for formation of a JPA and City
Council approvals of local participation by March/April. Future Funding Opportunities
include; 1) the 2007 Super UASI funding program which will include a $9 million grant request for EBRCs; 2) Commerce Department $1 billion funding of nationwide interoperability grant submittals slated for 9/2007; 3) gain possible congressional support for EBRCs resulting from a Tri-Valley Mayors visit to Washington D.C.; and 4) a county lobbyist working with San Francisco and Contra Costa County in Washington D.C.

Mayor Moore asked if the different regions will be able to communicate together and asked whether the Highway Patrol can communicate.

Chief McCammon replied that there is a regional effort of nine counties to work together and upgrade infrastructure and the goal is for the entire region to work together in an operable system. The Highway Patrol is also working toward interoperability regionally and statewide.

Councilmember Bridges asked about interoperability with state and federal agencies and asked about the infrastructure bid responses.

Chief McCammon said that it would increase the abilities of these agencies to come into a system that is P-25 compliant. Chief McCammon also discussed the vendors involved and bid responses.

Councilmember Abelson asked for clarification about types of communication equipment and the longevity of the equipment.

Chief McCammon said that the system would move everyone into a 900 megahertz spectrum initially and stated that one of the benefits of moving to the new system would allow cities and counties to work together and to realize economies of scale.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones asked about the life of the system.

Chief McCammon replied that the life is 10-15 years and that he is hoping for replacement in 15 years.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones also asked how the JPA will go out to get bonds.

Chief McCammon responded that the JPA would have to align with the statutory requirements of Alameda County. Those involved in the formation of the JPA are currently in the process of obtaining financial advice and advice from bond counsel.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones asked about the $507,000 obligation and confirmed that the amount represented payment over time.

Chief McCammon explained that the numbers were put together based on the number of radio counts received from all jurisdictions to provide an order of magnitude. Three models were put together. The numbers will be brought down as grants are received based on participation.
Councilmember Abelson asked for a radio count.

Interim Chief Maples responded that the city has 137 which differs from the count in the estimate of 145 and stated that there is a radio for every on duty employee.

Chief McCammon clarified that radios could be for general government such as Public Works and Parks as well.

Al Miller, 625 Ashbury Avenue, noted that there are 30 special districts in Contra Costa County and noted that only BART and the East Bay Regional Park System are listed. Other special districts include EBMUD, AC Transit, Stege Sanitary, Kensington etc.

Chief McCammon replied that he is working with EBMUD now to share frequencies and transmitter sites and that EBMUD also has resources such as water tanks and reservoirs and that he will be reaching out to special districts but wants cities to be on board first.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones stated that he is very much in support of the EBRCS and explained that disasters always illustrate that communication could be better. He also said that he sees advantages in day to day operations. Jurisdictions are separated by only a political boundary. It would be helpful to police to be able to call ahead rather than having to chase through three to four cities. This would benefit the Fire Department as well.

Councilmember Abelson said she was aware of issues of incompatibility between neighboring jurisdictions and stated that it is in everyone’s best interests to communicate effectively as best as possible.

Councilmember Bridges also stated that she supports the EBRCS and described the potential for disasters with BART, terrorism, earthquakes, Chevron, and the possibility of fire in the open space areas.

Mayor Moore agreed that the EBRCS is necessary and long overdue. She stated that a great deal of progress has been made, the effort is impressive and that staff has its direction to come back on March 19, 2007 and thanked Chief McCammon for his presentation.

4. **Oral Communication from the Public**
   No Comments.

5. **Adoption Of The Consent Calendar – Items 5A through 5F**

   Moved, seconded, carried (Abelson/Bridges; Absent – Potter) to adopt to adopt items 5A through 5F on the consent calendar. Vote: Unanimous
CITY COUNCIL ITEMS

A. Commending Police Sergeant Wayne D. Mann

Adopt a Resolution commending Police Sergeant Wayne D. Mann, for his devoted service to the City of El Cerrito and for his continued success upon his retirement from city service.

Action: Adopted Resolution No. 2007-12.

B. Claims against the City: Melvin R. Morgan

Action: Rejected claim per Claims Administrator.

C. Landscaping and Lighting Assessment District

Adopt a Resolution authorizing Leptien, Cronin, Cooper, Morris & Poore, Inc. as the Engineer of Work for the Landscaping and Lighting Assessment District No. 1988-1, and further direct the Engineer of Work to prepare the annual report.


D. Funding Agreement with Bay Area Air Quality Management District for San Pablo Avenue Improvements.

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a funding agreement between the City and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District in the amount of $351,508.


E. Special Meeting – Goal Setting

Approve the City Manager’s recommendation to convene a special meeting on Sunday, March 11, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the El Cerrito Community Center, 7007 Moeser Lane, to discuss Council priorities and goal setting.

Action: Approved recommendation to convene a special meeting on Sunday, March 11, 2007.

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ITEM

F. Unreinforced Masonry Building Contract

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement for consultant services with SEISCO Engineering and Environmental Design Associates, Inc. for structural engineering analysis of un-reinforced masonry (URM) buildings.

Action: Adopted Agency Resolution No. 565.
6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Solar Permit Building Fee Reduction

Conduct a public hearing and upon conclusion adopt a Resolution revising the City Master Fee Schedule to reduce the building permit fee for a solar voltaic system to a flat figure between $0 and $300 as deemed appropriate by the City Council.

Mayor Moore opened the public hearing.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Brian Fenty, Building Official, stated that the Sierra Club requested that the City reduce the solar electric permit fee to between $200 and $300. Mr. Fenty reported that staff had considered the request, noted that the current fee is $800 and stated that the building permit fee study concluded that the fee should be approximately $400. Research conducted on fees set by other cities found that cities had reduced the fees to between $200-$300 and that some cities had waived fees completely. To promote a sustainable earth, energy efficiency and green building, staff recommended that the solar electric fee be reduced to a level between $0 to $300 as determined by Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones requested clarification on the review process being one to two days.

Mr. Fenty replied that the review approval process for residential systems from two to five days.

Councilmember Abelson asked if the ten permits issued in FY 05-06 was typical.

Mr. Fenty replied that the level of permits issued is relatively low at approximately 10 permits per year but that he did foresee more permits being issued in the future.

Councilmember Bridges noted that there were solar installations on Terrace and Arlington and asked for an approximation of how much a solar installation costs.

Mr. Fenty replied that the typical installation runs between $15-30,000.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

The Mayor opened the public hearing.

Rita Minjares, 7361 Rockway Avenue, identified herself as vice-chair of the West Contra Costa County group of the Sierra Club. Ms. Minjares noted that El Cerrito has the highest fee in the area and reported that her group voted for a solar panel installation fee waiver. Ms. Minjares also stated that the city should have an ordinance requiring green building practices for new and remodeled construction and that the group will be bringing recommendations to the Council in the future.

Al Miller, 625 Ashbury, echoed the comments of Ms. Minjares and encouraged Council to set a goal at its Goal Setting Worksession to comply and take part in the program pushed by Governor Schwarzenegger to reduce the carbon impact on climate change. Mr. Miller stated that if the goals of the fee reduction are for a good purpose, such as global warming,
everyone can understand and take advantage of this subsidy. Mr. Miller asked the Council to review planning, building and housing regulations to provide incentives to promote compliance with green building.

Paul Allen, 2346 Mono, identified himself as a citizen, member of the Sierra Club and a green power advocate. He stated that he does green power installations throughout the Bay Area and finds it embarrassing that El Cerrito has the highest solar fee in the area. Mr. Allen said El Cerrito needs to adopt a solar fee reduction or elimination in order to promote clean energy in the jurisdiction for the benefit of future generations and to reduce global warming.

Moved, seconded, carried (Jones/Abelson; Absent – Potter) to close the public hearing.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Abelson stated that the current solar permit fee contradicts the city’s policies supporting the U.S. Mayor’s Agreement in Support of the Kyoto Protocol and Global Warming. Councilmember Abelson further stated that reducing the fee will not cost the city a lot of money and that council needs to show its commitment in reducing global warming. Councilmember Abelson said she would like to take this small but important step based on principle and asked that the fee be set at $0. She also stated that the City needs to push the Green Team more to the forefront.

Councilmember Bridges agreed with Councilmember Abelson in reducing the fee to $0 and stated that the City needs to think about what it can do at the local level. Councilmember Bridges further stated that El Cerrito residents are committed and concerned about the environment and that the fee reduction does not result in a large fiscal impact.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones stated that he favors a green program as a priority but would like to see the fee set at $300 which is a substantial reduction because there are other groups that pay fees including youth groups. Mayor Pro Tem said he was concerned about reducing rates because of causes because it sets a problematic policy precedent. A fee of $300 is reasonable to support solar installation and ensure people are contributing to the community.

Mayor Moore stated that it sounded like the Council wanted to send a strong message on this issue and that the strongest message is to waive the fee 100 per cent with minimal fiscal impact. Mayor Moore stated that there needs to be a lot of incentives to get people to move in this direction.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones stated that reducing the fee 60-70% would send the same message, that others pay permit fees and that he would like the Council to consider a fee between $50-$100.

Councilmember Bridges and Abelson reiterated their support of a $0 fee to send a message.

Mayor Moore asked for clarification as to whether administrative review was still required.

Mr. Fenty confirmed that an applicant would still have to submit a plan for review, obtain a permit and that the installation would still require inspection by the Building Department.

Moved, seconded, carried (Bridges/Abelson; Absent – Potter) to close the public hearing.
Action: Moved, seconded, carried (Abelson/Bridges; Absent – Potter) to adopt Resolution No. 2007-15 to revise the Master Fee Schedule to set a flat fee of $0 for a solar photovoltaic system permit.

7. POLICY MATTERS

A. Financial Advisory Board (First Reading February 20, 2007; Noes -- Abelson and Potter)

Adopt second reading of an ordinance amending El Cerrito Municipal Code Section 2.04.300, Financial Advisory Board, to standardize the appointment process. (ACTION: Adopt Second Reading)

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Moore noted that the Financial Advisory Board (FAB) had not been meeting due to lack of quorum. Given the impending budget season and the need to establish a quorum, Mayor Moore proposed making appointments to the FAB before the new ordinance takes effect as the new ordinance would require recruitment, noticing and scheduling of interviews at a time when the budget is being considered for adoption. The purpose of the FAB is to assist with review and advise Council on the budget. Mayor Moore also discussed implementation of the new ordinance with the City Attorney and clarified for the Council that if it did not take action at a later date to terminate Council’s individual appointments, those who are sitting on the FAB will continue to serve until their terms expire.

City Attorney Coleson proposed changing the effective date of the new ordinance to June 30, 2007.

Mayor Moore and Councilmember Abelson also discussed implementation of the new ordinance with the City Attorney and clarified for the Council that if it did not take action at a later date to terminate Council’s individual appointments, those who are sitting on the FAB will continue to serve until their terms expire.

Mayor Moore encouraged councilmembers to make appointments as soon as possible so that the City has a FAB in place during this budget cycle.

Action: Moved, seconded, carried (Bridges/Abelson; Absent – Potter) to adopt Ordinance 2007-02 amending El Cerrito Municipal Code Section 2.04.300, Financial Advisory Board, to standardize the appointment process.

B. Consideration of Future Funding Options for Unfunded Capital Needs

City Council discussion and direction on whether or not to proceed with preparations for a future tax initiative, including the type, timing and amount.
Scott Hanin, City Manager, provided background information by referencing the January 2, 2007 council presentation made by Brian Godbe of Godbe Research regarding placing a measure on the ballot for either a parcel or sales tax and informed the Council that the goal of tonight’s presentation is to provide the Council with potential alternatives and next steps and confirm the Council’s priorities for capital needs, identify the revenue measure and timing for next steps.

Questions for the Council are whether there is consensus on the priorities and is it immediate and does the Council want to act now. There are four significant capital needs that are currently unfunded: 1) New Library; 2) Street Rehabilitation and Maintenance; 3) Public Safety Building; and 4) Senior Center/Community Center. City Manager Hanin outlined the primary issues for each capital project and made recommendations.

For the Library, City Manager Hanin identified the primary issues as a Needs Assessment which confirms the need for a new library with the location driven largely by the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD), possible funding of 2/3 of the cost by a 2008 Library Bond Act, consideration of capital and operating costs and historical voter support. Recommendations included doing nothing until a site is determined, appropriating 33% of projected costs from the Redevelopment Agency as a match, pursue a Bond Act Application if passed by the voters, and consideration of other facility alternatives after the WCCUSD makes a decision.

For the Senior Center, City Manager Hanin identified the primary issues as: 1) the current Center does not meet the needs of most residents; 2) the issue did not poll well in the Godbe survey; 3) the location is on WCCUSD land; and 4) the Senior Center might integrate will with the library or community center. Recommendations included doing nothing until a site is determined, once a site is determined proceed with conceptual and schematic design; consider next steps after there is a bond act decision; and if the lower Portola site becomes available, evaluate it along with the Community Center.

City Manager Hanin identified primary issues associated with streets as: 1) non-arterial conditions are generally poor; 2) the repair backlog continues to grows; 3) annual maintenance is tied to this backlog – as the backlog grows the cost also grow; 4) the Godbe survey ranked streets a top concern of the four unfunded needs; and 5) there is limited current funding. Recommendations include pursuing an additional revenue stream as soon as possible, target the highest impact on PCI (Pavement Condition Index - the score card on our streets), reduce backlog and delay streets with the least impact on residents.

City Manager Hanin identified primary public safety building issues as: 1) the building is not built to essential services standards; 2) substandard conditions for employees; 3) size, evidence room, holding cells and records storage are below industry standards; 4) electrical, plumbing and technology are above capacity; and 5) the issue polled reasonably well in the Godbe survey. Recommendations include Fund/perform facility assessment options analysis with cost estimates; begin design on selective alternative(s) and determine funding options after the library funding is determined.
City Manager Hanin concluded by discussing the differences between a sales tax and parcel tax including timing, voting, survey response, use, collection method, amount and annual revenue. A half cent sales tax would yield approximately $1.2 million per year. A parcel tax of approximately $96 per parcel per year would yield about $1.1 million. The parcel tax requires a 2/3 vote and is a specific dedicated revenue use. Streets polled the strongest. Doing a parcel tax leaves the possibility open for doing a sales tax for any purpose at a later date. One approach will not fulfill all unfunded needs. A half cent sales tax would dramatically improve street conditions, would require a 2/3 vote before November 2008 and would require more debt service coverage to protect against volatility. The sales tax polled stronger than the parcel tax however there are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. When staff returns to Council with additional information, staff will be tieing the length to a sunset and the bonds and formation of an oversight committee.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Moore asked the council if it was interested in moving forward in the same direction as the presentation in establishing streets as the highest priority and establishing a dedicated revenue stream for this purpose.

Councilmember Abelson asked if the Council went with a parcel tax with a sunset then at some point in the future [upon sunset], the city would again end up without any funding for streets unless a new strategy is developed or some other source of funding is identified. If the Council went with a sales tax the funding would continue.

Jerry Bradshaw, Public Works Director, discussed the strategies. Mr. Bradshaw differentiated street repair and maintenance from a library or senior center in that street maintenance is ongoing. There are two ways to approach street repairs: emphasize CIP backlog elimination or emphasize ongoing annual maintenance or blend the two. Either one of the tax measures would provide a finite amount of money. The annual need for the streets is approximately $1 million assuming the city keeps street conditions up to 70% or above. The current programming capacity is $544,000 that can be put together for an annual program in a couple of years. Mr. Bradshaw stated that the shortfall is $456,000 and highlighted funding assumptions between sales versus parcel tax revenues. A sales tax would provide approximately $1.2 million per year with $744,000 available for debt service. A parcel tax would provide approximately $1.07 million per year with $973,000 available for debt service.

Mayor Moore clarified that the $456,000 is a maintenance shortfall once the city gets the streets to where they need to be.

Mr. Bradshaw stated that the sales tax allows the City to bring in $12.84 million in bonds. If nothing was done the streets would be in poor condition resulting in a rating below 28 PCI. Mr. Bradshaw described two options for a Parcel Tax and provided a recap for street improvements which he said would result in a vast improvement over what the city has now.

City Manager Hanin stated that the city essentially has a $65 million dollar problem for which $47 to $50 million in solutions have been identified and described likely funding sources. City Manager Hanin summarized the likely funding sources for each capital project and suggested that the best timing for placing a measure on the ballot as a November 2007 election or the February 2008 presidential primary and stated that this would provide the city with time.
for public information and would also coincide with the 2008 paving season. Turnout in 2008 is likely to be higher based on exposure associated with the presidential election.

City Manager Hanin identified the next steps, if the Council wishes to go forward, as: 1) develop a workplan, schedule, budget and public information approach for council consideration; and 2) work with the City Attorney to prepare necessary documents to meet the election. Mr. Hanin concluded by confirming Council’s desire to prioritize street improvements and asked for direction on whether the Council wished to place a sales or parcel tax measure on the ballot and for which election.

Councilmember Bridges asked about choosing a sales tax in the context of general fund revenue and debt service and inquired about whether the city’s bond rating and ability to borrow in the future would be affected by a decline in the economy.

Mary Dodge, Finance Director, replied that the numbers presented represent a conservative approach which provides a cushion that would not affect the general fund and that she is also optimistic that the economic development program will provide an even stronger base for the sales tax.

Councilmember Abelson commented on the experience the Transportation Authority has had with sales and stated that there has not been much variance in the long run.

Ms. Dodge agreed with Councilmember Abelson and commented that a sales tax is more commonly used for general activities.

Councilmember Bridges expressed concern with the polling associated with the sales tax as opposed to the parcel tax and confirmed that the margin of passage is 2/3 for a specific use sales tax.

Brian Godbe, Principal of Godbe Research and Analysis, stated that there is clearly substantial support for street improvement for either the parcel or sales tax. The increase was greater for the sales tax. The Public Safety facility is focused on emergency preparedness and disaster planning. Mr. Godbe stated that with a presidential primary there will clearly be a higher turnout with potentially more support but that there is likely to be a lot of additional noise associated with the primary.

City Manager Hanin emphasized that sales tax estimate is in today’s dollars and does not reflect revenue that may be generated in future years.

Councilmember Abelson questioned whether a parcel tax could be passed and asked why placement of a measure on the ballot couldn’t occur for the November 2008 election.

City Manager Hanin stated that the cost of addressing the backlog will continue to grow. None of the scenarios entirely solve the problem.

Mr. Godbe added that if the city waits until November 2008 and doesn’t do a parcel tax prior to this election then there may be significant economic and political risks due to unknown factors.
Councilmember Abelson expressed concern about the parcel tax and stated that there could be slippage and commented that if the city wanted to increase the probability of passage it looks like the sales tax is the way to go. Councilmember Abelson also said that she is leaning toward a sales tax as it looks more probable.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones stated that he supports a sales tax because it would be nice to obtain money as soon as possible and has the best chance of winning. Mayor Pro Tem Jones further stated that the city will show a good track record with completing the Swim Center and initiating a new City Hall within budget before it asks people to pay more with a parcel tax. Revenue will increase with a sales tax and this is a good opportunity to tie the revenue stream with the use. Mayor Pro Tem further stated that he likes February 2008 as it will provide an opportunity to conduct community meetings and to talk and listen to people and then finalize a decision. Mayor Pro Tem asked Ms. Dodge if FAB had looked at the tax measure conceptually.

Ms. Dodge replied that Mr. Bradshaw presented a report to FAB on unfunded capital needs approximately a year ago although it is uncertain whether specific revenue sources were discussed.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones stated that the city needs a large sum of money to repair the roads and that there are streets that have not been touched in 40-50 years. A ballot measure will give the city 20 years in today’s dollars and will save money in the long run. Mayor Pro Tem Jones stated that the city could pass a measure by 2/3 however different League of CA Cities presentations suggested that sales tax is better for general purpose use.

Mayor Moore re-iterated the Council’s support of a dedicated revenue source for streets. The Mayor stated that although there are lots of options for Library/Public Safety the city needs a dedicated stream for streets and maintenance that does not compete with other needs. The Mayor stated her preference to go with a specific sales tax for streets with a commitment that it will take care of streets for the length of the measure. The Mayor would like to move forward as soon as possible and communicate with the community with placement of a measure on the ballot by November 2007 or February 2008.

Councilmember Bridges stated that she was initially leaning toward a parcel tax and now supports a specific sales tax for November 2007 and also stated that all residents are very interested in the streets.

Mayor Moore spoke of the history of budget allocations to the streets and stated that the survey says that a 2/3 passage will do as well as 50% and that a measure may do better if the message is sent that [the tax] is for a short and long term need and that the money will be used for what it is intended to be used for.

Councilmember Abelson inquired about a sunset provision for a measure and asked if the polling suggested any correlation between voter acceptance and the length of measure.

Mr. Godbe replied that a sunset analysis for the sales tax had not been done and depends on where the ballot tests are. The higher the ballot test the less need there is for a sunset however it never hurts to have one in place. People are very supportive of streets and the city is in good shape without a sunset.
Councilmember Abelson asked if the analysis for a bond is 30 years.

City Manager Hanin said that a sunset was not assumed for the sales tax.

Councilmember Abelson asked if a sunset of 28 years would pose much harm and asked other questions regarding funding assumptions.

City Manager Hanin stated that a $1.5 million reduction would be significant and that he would need to talk to the financial advisors about debt service payments, that he didn’t feel that there necessarily needed to be a sunset however it is ultimately up to the Council to decide. Bond payments are fixed.

Councilmember Abelson queried as to whether an additional survey should be undertaken to explore the possibility of a sunset and to calculate costs based on tomorrow’s dollars.

City Manager Hanin stated that the bond costs are fixed and the sales tax could decline although it is hoped that funds from sales tax would rise.

Continued Council discussion on a sunset for a sales tax measure did not result in considerable support.

Mayor Moore summarized discussions of the Council as leaning towards a sales tax and asked the Council to begin discussion on timing of the ballot measure.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones stated that he liked the idea of having more time, particularly for a specific tax.

The City Council proceeded to discuss preferences for timing and placement of a measure on the ballot.

Mayor Moore summarized the Council’s direction to staff as the Council wanting to go forward to address street maintenance and repair with a specific half cent sales tax measure placed on the February 2008 ballot. The Mayor also asked the City Manager for a detailed report as soon as possible.

8. COUNCIL ASSIGNMENTS/LIAISON REPORTS

A. Mayor Moore announced the Council’s March 11, 2007 Goal Setting Workshop to be held at the Community Center.

B. Mayor Pro Tem Jones spoke about the JPA Sports Field and reported that the City of Berkeley is conducting discussions with a private party that may bring in substantial amounts of money to cover a construction shortfall and take the project to Phase II. A decision is expected soon with information expected to be presented to the Berkeley City Council on March 20, 2007.
C. Councilmember Abelson reported on the Committee on Aging’s meeting. For people who are 55 or older, Cerrito Theater is offering a movie series entitled Oldies but Goodies every Monday. Councilmember Abelson advised anyone who is interested to call the Senior Center at 215-4340 and mentioned that the Senior Center is offering rides to and from the Theater for $1.00.

D. Councilmember Bridges reported on the Planning Commission’s meeting of February 21, 2007 and the Commission’s granting of a use permit for a 20 unit residential condominium project, which includes 4 affordable units, at 6341 Portola.

E. Councilmember Potter – Absent.

9. ADJOURNED CONCURRENT REGULAR CITY COUNCIL / REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY MEETING at 10:30 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Special Closed City Council and Concurrent City Council/Redevelopment Agency meeting of March 5, 2007 as approved by the El Cerrito City Council.

Cheryl Morse, City Clerk and Secretary to the Redevelopment Agency

Lettitia D. Moore, Mayor

Janet Abelson, Agency Chair