

**PORTOLA CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
AUGUST 23, 2012
6:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Mark called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Oels, McBride, Weaver, Mayor Pro Tem Larrieu and Mayor Mark responded to the roll call. City Manager Leslie Tigan and Planner Karen Downs were also in attendance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Planning Commission Vacancy

Mayor Mark reminded everyone of the current vacancy on the Planning Commission.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Mayor Mark informed the public that the City will be awarded the \$263,230 grant for Hazardous Fuel Reduction at Willow Creek Springs, from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Moment of Silence

Councilmember Weaver asked for a moment of silence for Bob Nally and asked for the City to do a plaque in Mr. Nally's honor.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. Presentation- Signage in Portola

Dr. Richard Beaver thanked Councilmember Phil Oels for his cleanup efforts in Portola.

Dr. Beaver explained that he was told last year that he was not allowed to install "feather signs" for his chiropractic business at 793 E. Sierra Street. He has spoken with some Portola business owners and did a video survey of Sierra Street. Andy Rhode, a videographer, showed the video of Sierra Street. Dr. Beaver presented information about Portola's vacant storefronts- he counted 20 along Commercial Street and Sierra Street- and how he felt that added color, flags, banners, and sandwich board signs would give tourists a reason to stop in Portola and residents to know where businesses are located.

Mayor Mark agreed and asked if his flags have been working to increase business. Dr. Beaver responded that his flags signs have since been approved as a temporary sign and they have increased his business with 7 new contacts of people that did not know where he was located.

Dr. Beaver would like to see a 60 day amnesty period for sign permit fee and a one year grace period for new businesses for their business license fee and sign permit fee. He said that canopy shouldn't be restricted and that restaurants should have special dispensation to announce specials.

Mr. Bob Morton, Portola resident, said that there shouldn't be so many sign regulations.

Rachel Lewis, Portola Reporter, said that she spends time each week welcoming any new businesses and that many aren't aware of City fees and functions. Mayor Mark responded that it would be good to have a uniform marketing tool and some uniformity.

Ms. Tigan and Ms. Downs presented pictures of signage throughout the City- temporary and approved signs, and examples of A-frame signs, and discussed existing sidewalk widths at various locations along Commercial Street and Sierra Street.

Ms. Terri Woods 108 W. Sierra Street, said that she felt flea markets should be allowed and that there should be more flexibility for business advertising. Awnings cost money; flags are cheap.

Ms. Pat Morton, Portola resident, asked how much of the businesses frontage was located within Caltrans right-of-way. Ms. Downs responded that, along Highway 70, most of the sidewalk area up to the front of the business was located within Caltrans right-of-way and that signs cannot be located within the Caltrans right-of-way.

Dr. Beaver reported that Caltrans told him there is a variance that allows for promotion and signage in their right-of-way.

Planning Commission Vice Chair Gill said that the Planning Commission has previously reviewed the sign code related to election signage and that it was an extensive, complicated review process.

Ms. Sue Wildermuth, 33 Commercial Street, said that she would also like to have a flag sign but thought they weren't allowed so she gave up on the idea.

B. Zoning Ordinance

City Manager Leslie Tigan and Planner Karen Downs explained that staff had been keeping a list of potential changes to the City's zoning ordinance and noted that the list was lengthy and did include various references to portions of the sign ordinance. The requested the City Council provide staff with direction regarding the priority of the potential changes.

After a brief discussion it was moved by Councilmember Weaver, seconded by Councilmember Oels to direct staff to present a Draft Sign Ordinance for Planning Commission review because of the economy. All members present voted in favor.

Dr. Mario Garibotti, 145 N. Pine Street, mentioned that the abandoned car wash at the east entrance of the City is an eyesore and should be abated. There was general discussion and agreement among the City Council members that staff should move forward to abate the property.

C. Safe Routes to Schools

City Manager Leslie Tigan presented a report from the City Engineer outlining Change Order #12-02 for the Safe Routes to Schools project. City Engineer Dan Bastian participated telephonically and responded to questions from the City Council.

After a brief discussion it was moved by Councilmember Weaver, seconded by Councilmember McBride to approve Change Order #12-02 subject to approval by Caltrans. All members present voted in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss it was moved by Councilmember Weaver, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Larrieu to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m. All members present voted in favor.

Leslie Tigan, CMC
City Clerk