

**MINUTES
VERNON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025
COUNCIL CHAMBER, 4305 SANTA FE AVENUE**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Merlo called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Merlo led the Flag Salute.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Judith Merlo, Mayor
Melissa Ybarra, Mayor Pro Tem
Leticia Lopez, Council Member (arrived at 9:20 a.m.)
Jesus Rivera, Council Member
Crystal Larios, Council Member (left at 10:03 a.m.)

STAFF PRESENT:

Brian Saeki, City Administrator
Angela Kimmey, Deputy City Administrator
Zaynah Moussa, City Attorney
Deborah Harrington, Interim City Clerk
Gigi Decavalles-Hughes, Interim Finance Director
Fredrick Agyin, Health and Environmental Control Director
Lisette M. Grizzelle, Interim Human Resources Director
Robert Sousa, Police Chief
Dan Wall, Public Works Director
Todd Dusenberry, Public Utilities General Manager

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION

Mayor Pro Tem Ybarra moved and Council Member Larios seconded a motion to approve the agenda as revised to consider Closed Session after Public Comment. The question was called and the motion carried 4-0, Council Member Lopez absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Aisha Reyes with the South Coast AQMD provided public comment on proposed changes to Rule 1111 and 1121 related to space and water heater emissions.

RECESS

At 9:03 a.m., Mayor Merlo recessed the meeting to Closed Session.

Council Member Lopez arrived at 9:20 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION

23. Public Employment

Government Code Section 54957

Title: City Administrator

24. Public Employment

Government Code Section 54957

Title: City Clerk

25. Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation (3)

Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(1)

Jason K. Haugen v. City of Vernon

Workers Compensation Claim No. 25-184471

Workers Compensation Appeals Board Case No. ADJ19074308

Todd A. Hewett v. City of Vernon

Workers Compensation Claim No. 21019883

Workers Compensation Appeals Board Case No. ADJ14892898

Bradley W. Mack v. City of Vernon

Workers Compensation Nos. 22025752 and 22025753

Workers Compensation Appeals Board Case Nos. ADJ15693842 and
ADJ15693843

RECONVENE

At 9:33 a.m., Mayor Merlo adjourned the Closed Session and reconvened the regular meeting.

CLOSED SESSION REPORT

City Attorney Moussa reported that Council met in Closed Session, discussed the items on the agenda, and took no reportable action.

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION

Mayor Pro Tem Ybarra moved, and Council Member Lopez seconded a motion to approve the Consent Calendar. The question was called and the motion carried unanimously.

The Consent Calendar consisted of the following items:

1. **Meeting Minutes**
Recommendation: Approve the February 4, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes.
2. **Claims Against the City**
Recommendation: Receive and file the claims submitted by Manuel Cortez and Melvin Humphries.
3. **Operating Account Warrant Register No.144**
Recommendation: Approve Operating Account Warrant Register No. 144, for the period of January 5, 2025 through January 18, 2025, totaling \$7,884,924.77 and consisting of ratification of electronic payments totaling \$7,455,315.50 and ratification of the issuance of early checks totaling \$429,609.27.
4. **Operating Account Warrant Register No. 145**
Recommendation: Approve Operating Account Warrant Register No. 145, for the period of January 19, 2025 through February 1, 2025, totaling \$10,833,537.33 and consisting of ratification of electronic payments totaling \$10,189,904.48 and ratification of the issuance of early checks totaling \$643,632.85.
5. **Fire Department Activity Report**
Recommendation: Receive and file the December 2024 Fire Department Activity Report.
6. **Police Department Activity Report**
Recommendation: Receive and file the December 2024 Police Department Activity Report.
7. **Public Works Department Monthly Report**
Recommendation: Receive and file the January 2025 Building Report.
8. **City of Vernon 2025-2026 Legislative and Regulatory Platform**
Recommendation: Approve and adopt the City of Vernon 2025-2026 Legislative and Regulatory Platform.
9. **Vernon CommUNITY Fund Grant Committee Legislative Representative Seat Appointment**
Recommendation: Appoint Sebastian Lozano to serve on the Vernon CommUNITY Fund Grant Committee to fill one unscheduled vacancy for the Legislative Representative seat with a term ending June 30, 2026.
10. **Report on Five Year Agreement Approved by the City Administrator**
Recommendation: Receive and file the report on award of Five-Year Contract (Spectrum Enterprise Service Agreement) to Charter Communications, LLC (Spectrum) for DOJ PAC-50 Network Connection in an amount not-to-exceed

\$29,429.40 as approved by the City Administrator pursuant to Vernon Municipal Code (VMC) Sections 3.32.220(B) and 3.32.110 (B)(3).

11. New and Revised Personnel Policies and Revised Administrative Manual Policy

Recommendation: A. Adopt revised Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual Policy I - 8 Employee Separation Policy (revised); B. Adopt a revised Administrative Policy Manual Policy Section 1.1 Miscellaneous Taxation on City Vehicles Used by City Employees (revised); and C. Authorize the City Administrator and Director of Human Resources to execute and distribute the Policies.

12. Services Agreement with Pacific Advanced Civil Engineering, Inc.

Recommendation: A. Approve and authorize the City Administrator to execute the Services Agreement with Pacific Advanced Civil Engineering, Inc., in substantially the same form as submitted, for the assessment of source water quality and the design of treatment facilities, in an amount not-to-exceed \$716,040 for a three-year term; and B. Authorize a contingency amount of ten percent (10%) or \$71,604 in the event of unforeseen expenses and/or project changes and grant authority to the City Administrator to approve and execute amendments up to the contingency amount, if necessary.

13. Change Order No. 15 to the Consulting Services Agreement (CS-0099) with CNS Engineers, Inc. (CNS) for the Atlantic Boulevard Bridge Rehabilitation and Widening Project

Recommendation: A. Find that approval of the proposed change order is within the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines; and B. Approve and authorize the City Administrator to execute Agreement Change Order No. 15, in substantially the same form as submitted, for the Atlantic Boulevard Bridge Rehabilitation and Widening Project, Federal Project No. DBPL02-5139(010), Contract No. CS-0099 with CNS, extending the agreement for an additional year to December 31, 2025 and authorizing CNS to provide additional support and coordination services required to complete the design phase of the project for the additional cost of \$140,579.50, with a Change Order effective date of December 31, 2024.

14. Notice of Completion for Citywide Striping and Pavement Markings, Contract No. 20250017

Recommendation: A. Find that the proposed action is categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities), part (a) (existing highways and streets), because the project consists of the maintenance, repair or minor alteration of existing streets and involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use; B. Accept the work of WGJ Enterprises Inc., dba PCI as related to City Contract No. 20250017; and C. Authorize the Director of Public Works to execute and submit the Notice of Completion for the project to the Los Angeles County Recorder's Office.

15. Purchase of Electric Vehicle for Police Department

Recommendation: A. Approve and authorize issuance of a Purchase Order to Tesla, Inc. for the purchase of a new Model Y vehicle for a total amount not-to-exceed \$56,378; and B. Authorize a contingency amount of ten (10%) percent or \$5,638, for pricing fluctuations and grant authority to the City Administrator to issue a Change Order for an amount up to the contingency amount, if necessary.

16. Amendment No. 2 to the License and Software Services Agreement with Power Settlements Consulting and Software, LLC, a Wholly Owned Subsidiary of YES Energy LLC

Recommendation: A. Pursuant to Vernon Municipal Code Sections 3.32.220 (B) and 3.32.110 (B)(3), find that it is commercially unreasonable to rebid the contract for settlement software due to the substantial financial and operational commitment required from the City, as well as the considerable learning curve associated with frequent changes in selecting licensing and software services from a new vendor; B. Approve and authorize the City Administrator to execute Amendment No. 2 to the License and Software Service Agreement with Power Settlements Consulting and Software, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of YES Energy LLC, in substantially the same form as submitted, for license and software services, for a total amount not-to-exceed \$303,440, for a three-year term; and C. Authorize a contingency amount of ten percent (10%) or \$30,344 for unforeseen fluctuations in the Consumer Price Index, and grant authority to the City Administrator to take such actions, as necessary.

17. Renewable Portfolio Standard Procurement Plan and Enforcement Program

Recommendation: A. Approve and adopt the updated Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) Procurement Plan and Enforcement Program; and B. Repeal Resolution No. 2012-02.

NEW BUSINESS

18. Appointment of Brian Saeki to Serve as City Administrator

Interim Human Resources Director Grizzelle presented the staff report.

MOTION

Council Member Rivera moved, and Council Member Lopez seconded a motion to Adopt Resolution No. 2025-004 appointing Brian Saeki to serve as the City Administrator of the City of Vernon, with revised effective start date of February 27, 2025, and approving and authorizing the execution of a related at-will employment agreement, and repealing Resolution No. 2025-001. The question was called and the motion carried unanimously.

19. New City of Vernon Logo and Tagline

Deputy City Administrator Kimmey presented the staff report, and consultant Jaclyn Walian, Project Manager from MIG, Inc., provided a PowerPoint presentation.

MOTION

Council Member Lopez moved, and Mayor Merlo seconded a motion to approve and authorize the use of the proposed City of Vernon Logo and Tagline on City collateral, clothing, vehicles, and signage designed for identification, communication, promotion, and marketing, and to visually represent the City's unique brand among existing Vernon stakeholders, prospective residents and businesses, policy makers, and surrounding communities. The question was called and the motion carried unanimously.

20. Fiscal Year 2024-25 Mid-Year Financial Update

Interim Finance Director Decavalles-Hughes presented the staff report and consultant Tony Thrasher from Willdan provided a PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Larios left the meeting at 10:03 a.m.

MOTION

Council Member Rivera moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Ybarra seconded a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-005 authorizing and approving mid-year budget appropriations and amending the Annual Operating and Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-25. The question was called and the motion carried 4-0, Council Member Larios absent.

ORAL REPORT

14. City Administrator Reports on Activities and Other Announcements

City Administrator Saeki thanked the City Council for the opportunity to move the City's projects forward. He recognized Daniel Calleros for being an incredible resource and recognized Gigi Decavalles-Hughes for doing an outstanding job with the City's finances. He noted that March 4, 2025 would be the last day at the City for both Daniel Calleros and Gigi Decavalles-Hughes.

City Administrator Saeki announced that the February 2025 Resident Newsletter was distributed to Vernon households the previous Thursday and noted that the recent edition covered Vernon's upcoming municipal election, Vernon's assistance during the recent wildfires, LAUSD resources for students and families, and the Vernon CommUNITY Fund Scholarship application period. He stated that an electronic copy of the February newsletter was available online (along with past editions).

City Administrator Saeki invited Council to save the date for the City's annual spring outreach event scheduled for Thursday, April 3, at 5:00pm. He acknowledged that planning was underway – and that more detailed information would be shared with the community soon.

15. Council Reports on Activities (including AB 1234), Announcements, or Directives to Staff

Mayor Merlo read and presented a Certificate of Appreciation to outgoing Interim City Administrator Daniel Calleros in recognition for his service to the City and community.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Merlo adjourned the meeting at 10:21 a.m.

JUDITH MERLO, Mayor

ATTEST:

YONNIE PARKER, Deputy City Clerk
(seal)