

**MINUTES
VERNON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 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
Jesus Rivera, Council Member
Crystal Larios, Council Member (left the meeting at 10:07 a.m.)

STAFF PRESENT:

Brian Saeki, City Administrator
Zaynah Moussa, City Attorney
Yonnie Parker, Deputy City Clerk
Joaquin Leon, Deputy City Treasurer
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

Council Member Lopez moved and Council Member Larios seconded a motion to approve the agenda. The question was called and the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Employee Service Pin Awards

Interim Human Resources Director Grizzelle announced the January and February 2025 Employee Service Pin Award recipients, and City Council recognized Police Dispatcher, Belinda Arellano, and Police Officer, Teresa Flores.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Pro Tem Ybarra announced a conflict of interest with respect to Consent Calendar Item number 10, that her family owns a personal residential property within 1,000 feet of the proposed development which could be materially impacted by City Council's decision and would recuse from voting on Item number 10.

Council Member Larios moved and Council Member Rivera seconded a motion to approve the Consent Calendar. The question was called and the motion carried unanimously for Items 2-9 and 11, and 4-0 for Item 10, Mayor Pro Tem Ybarra abstaining.

The Consent Calendar consisted of the following items:

2. Meeting Minutes

Recommendation: Approve the March 4, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes.

3. Claim Against the City

Recommendation: Receive and file the claim submitted by Jodi Ichiyama.

4. Operating Account Warrant Register

Recommendation: Approve Operating Account Warrant Register No. 146, for the period of February 2, 2025 through February 15, 2025, totaling \$7,918,625.83 and consisting of ratification of electronic payments totaling \$7,190,696.17 and ratification of the issuance of early checks totaling \$727,929.66.

5. Fire Department Activity Report

Recommendation: Receive and file the January 2025 Fire Department Activity Report.

6. Police Department Activity Report - January 2025

Recommendation: Receive and file the January 2025 Police Department Activity Report.

7. Support Agreement Purchase Order with AT&T for VESTA 9-1-1 System Maintenance and Additional Funds for AT&T Network Services

Recommendation: A. Approve and authorize issuance of a Purchase Order to AT&T for an amount not-to-exceed \$44,020.67, for a one-year term extension of the Support Agreement for the VESTA 9-1-1 system from April 16, 2025 to April 15, 2026 and; B. Approve supplemental funds in the amount of \$176,000 for Contract No. 20230186 with AT&T for anticipated invoice payments for various telecommunications and network services through the termination of the Contract on January 16, 2026.

8. **Managed Print Services with MRC Smart Technology Solutions and Xerox**
Recommendation: A. Approve and authorize the City Administrator to execute a Services Agreement with MRC Smart Technology Solutions, in substantially the same form as submitted, for a three-year term in an amount not-to-exceed \$206,360 (\$68,786.67 per year) for Managed Print Services (MPS) with an effective date of April 1, 2025; and B. Approve and authorize the City Administrator to execute a related Lease Agreement with Xerox, in substantially the same form as submitted, for a three-year term in an amount not-to-exceed \$83,640 (\$27,880 per year) for MPS with an effective date of April 1, 2025.
9. **Services Agreement with Keenan & Associates**
Recommendation: Approve and authorize the City Administrator to execute a Professional Services Agreement with Keenan & Associates, in substantially the same form as submitted, to provide Health Benefits Brokerage and Consulting Services, effective April 1, 2025, through March 31, 2028, for a total amount not-to-exceed \$150,500, for a three-year term.
10. **4419 Pacific Boulevard Plan Check and Inspection Fee Waiver**
Recommendation: A. Find that granting a fee waiver for building plan check and inspection for the construction of the first private housing in Vernon to be built in 40 years provides a substantial benefit to the public because it will start the implementation of Mixed-Use Zoning along Santa Fe Avenue; and B. Waive the Building Plan Check and Inspection fees for the construction of an apartment building at 4419 Pacific Boulevard.
11. **Amendment No. 3 to Services Agreement with Interwest Consulting Group, Inc., Contract No. CS-1442**
Recommendation: Approve and authorize the City Administrator to execute Amendment No. 3 to the Services Agreement with Interwest Consulting Group, Inc., in substantially the same form as submitted, for on-call building plan checks and inspection services provided for a total amount not-to-exceed \$148,429.10 (increasing the total contract cost to \$998,429.10).

NEW BUSINESS

12. City Hall Plaza Design

Public Works Director Wall presented the staff report. Consultants Ryan Skolny and Greg Denson with Architerra Design Group provided Council with project information and accompanying PowerPoint presentation.

Public Works Director Wall answered questions from Council on drought-resistant plants, space for event slides, eating and seating, monuments, speaker sound system, funding, and trees.

MOTION

Council Member Rivera moved and Council Member Larios seconded a motion to receive and file the presentation and feedback on the City Hall Plaza Design. The question was called and the motion carried unanimously

ORAL REPORT

14. City Administrator Reports on Activities and Other Announcements

City Administrator Saeki announced:

- National Natural Gas Day on March 18, 2025, acknowledged the Vernon Public Utilities gas division employees who work hard, day in and out, to ensure that homes and businesses in Vernon have safe, reliable, and affordable natural gas service, and thanked VPU for delivering natural gas to the community;
- Metro's Community Meeting on the Link Union Station (US) Project scheduled for Wednesday, March 26 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Trattoria 25 on Santa Fe Avenue for Vernon property owners, businesses and residents. Attendees will learn more about the Project's process, including the Malabar Yard railroad improvements proposed for Vernon. The meeting will include a brief presentation at 5:45 p.m., followed by an Open House where participants can view display boards and talk directly with Link US team members; and
- Reminded everyone that Vernon CommUNITY Fund scholarship applications are due by 5:00pm on Thursday, March 27. Requested that everyone please spread the word about the scholarships to high school seniors residing or attending school in the Vernon Area that plan to attend trade school, community college or university after graduation. More information can be found at cityofvernon.org/communityfund.

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

None.

RECESS

At 9:32 a.m., Mayor Merlo recessed the meeting to Closed Session.

CLOSED SESSION

15. Public Employment

Government Code Section 54957
Title: Finance Director

16. Conference With Labor Negotiators

Government Code Section 54957.6

Agency Designated Representative: Brian Saeki, City Administrator

Employee Organizations:
Teamsters Local 911,
IBEW Local 47,

Vernon Police Management Association, and
Vernon Police Officers' Benefit Association

Unrepresented Employees:
Confidential, Management, and Executive classifications

Council Member Larios left the meeting at 10:07 a.m.

17. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation

Initiation of Litigation
Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(4)
Number of potential cases: 1

RECONVENE

At 10:34 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.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Merlo adjourned the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

JUDITH MERLO, Mayor

ATTEST:

YONNIE PARKER, Deputy City Clerk
(seal)