



**CITY OF LATHROP
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2021, 6:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
390 Towne Centre Drive, Lathrop, CA 95330**

MINUTES

IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING THIS MEETING & COVID-19

On March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency in California as a result of the threat of COVID-19. On March 12, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-25-20, which allowed Council Meetings to be conducted telephonically. On March 17, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20, which allowed the public to participate in any meeting of the City Council by electronic means. This meeting was is conducted utilizing teleconferencing and electronic means consistent with State of California Executive Order N-29-20, dated March 17, 2020, regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. PRELIMINARY

1.1 CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Dhaliwal called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

1.2 ROLL CALL Present: Mayor Dhaliwal; Vice Mayor Torres-O’Callaghan; Councilmembers: Diallo and Lazard.

Absent: Councilmember Akinjo (absent at roll call only)

*Councilmember Akinjo arrived after roll call, at 6:03 p.m.

1.3 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Vice Mayor Torres-O’Callaghan led the pledge of allegiance.

2. CONSENT ITEMS

On a motion by Vice Mayor Torres-O’Callaghan, second by Councilmember Diallo, the City Council approved the Consent Calendar, by the following roll call vote, unless otherwise indicated:

Ayes: Akinjo, Diallo, Lazard, Torres-O’Callaghan, and Dhaliwal
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

2.1 WAIVING OF READING OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Waived the reading in full of ordinances and resolutions on agenda and adopted by reading of title only, unless otherwise requested by the Mayor or a Councilmember.

2.2 APPROVE LATHROP CONSOLIDATED TREATMENT FACILITY SURFACE WATER DISCHARGE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT WW 20-17

Adopted **Resolution 21-4851** approving the Lathrop Consolidated Treatment Facility Surface Water Discharge Capital Improvement Project (CIP) WW 20-17.

3. SCHEDULED ITEMS

3.1 APPROVE THE CREATION OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT GG 21-11 - CREATE THE LATHROP POLICE DEPARTMENT, IMPLEMENT THE TRANSITION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES FROM THE COUNTY TO THE CITY AND AUTHORIZE THE RELATED BUDGET AMENDMENT

Finance and Administrative Services Director Cari James and Deputy Finance Director Thomas Hedegard provided the presentation. A question and answer period ensued throughout the presentation.

Ashley Bounds (WebEx speaker) expressed various concerns related to the San Joaquin Sheriff's agreement with the City, related to startup costs previously spend for San Joaquin Officers and unpaid overhead charges, and spoke in support of continuing the law enforcement agreement with the San Joaquin Sheriff's Office. Bennie Gatto (in person speaker) spoke in support of the proposed item and supported creating a Lathrop Police Department. Tosh Ishihara (in person speaker) spoke in support of the proposed item, citing escalating costs and not being able to retain officers rotated out of Lathrop back to County. Jack Varella (in person speaker) expressed various concerns, requested that the matter be put to a vote of the people, spoke in support of continuing the law enforcement agreement with the San Joaquin Sheriff's Office, and opposed the item as proposed. Christina Laughlin (in person speaker) expressed various concerns related to timing of the project, career opportunities for future officers, and requested that the City Council put the matter on hold and schedule future public discussions. Mark Elliott (in person speaker) commented on and expressed gratitude for the previously expressed support from Sheriff Pat Withrow and District 3 Board Supervisor Tom Patti regarding Lathrop transitioning into their own Police Department, spoke in support of the item as proposed and having local control over law enforcement services. Steve Dresser (in person speaker) expressed various concerns and echoed similar sentiments related to the previously expressed support from Sheriff Pat Withrow and District 3 Board Supervisor Tom Patti regarding Lathrop transitioning into their own Police Department, commented on prior Council discussions on the matter and spoke in support of the item. Amy Vaughn (in person speaker) commented on prior Council discussions on the matter, commented on service recently received by the Sheriff's Office, spoke in support of the item and having local control over law enforcement services.

District 3 Board Supervisor Tom Patti (in person speaker) commented on various matters, reiterated prior expressed support to the Lathrop community, spoke in support of a hybrid transition model with San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, commented on fees discussed during the presentation, expressed appreciation to Lathrop staff, and cautioned against a swift change in law enforcement services. Reverend Lu Davis (WebEx speaker; due to audio difficulties City Clerk Teresa Vargas called the resident at his request) commented on various matters, including potential cost savings associated with forming an in-house Police Department, expressed appreciation to Sheriff staff for their work in the Lathrop community, and spoke in support of the item citing potential cost savings. Rosita Jennings (WebEx speaker, due to technical difficulties the speaker requested that her comments be read by City Clerk Teresa Vargas) expressed various concerns regarding hiring a Police Chief that exhibits emotional intelligence, inclusiveness and diversity awareness, process to ensure selection of good candidates and retention measures for future officers. Lathrop Police Chief Ryan Biedermann (in person speaker) commented on serving the Lathrop Community for 14 years, commented on his relationship with management staff, lack of communication regarding the proposed matter, and service levels provided by the Sheriff Officers. San Joaquin County Sheriff Pat Withrow (in person speaker) expressed various concerns, expressed support in doing what was best for Lathrop citizens, complimented services provided by Chief Biedermann and his staff, commented on lack of communication regarding the city's intent to transition into its own department, commented on the County's high retirement pension costs and prior startup costs previously paid by the city.

The question and answer period continued by the Council. Councilmember Akinjo requested remarks from City Manager Stephen Salvatore on the matters discussed and his on-the-job motivation. City Manager Stephen Salvatore responded, citing his 13 year tenure with the city, being able to work on high-level development projects within the city, and competent city staff working together to achieve sustainability and fiscal health. Councilmember Diallo requested additional information regarding the data gathered for the presentation and consultant resources used, expressed concern with Sheriff Withrow not being involved in the transition discussions. Mayor Dhaliwal responded and commented on his discussions with Sheriff Withrow. City Manager Stephen Salvatore commented on the live feed provided by Sheriff Withrow on social media, and on other matters pertaining to the law enforcement agreement between the City and the Sheriff's Office. Mayor Dhaliwal stated that the first step in the process prior to having additional in-depth discussions on the transition process, was to consider the vote of the Council whether to move forward or not on creating an in-house police department. The question and answer period continued. Ashley Bounds (WebEx speaker) requested to speak again, requested that Council take additional time to consider additional information prior to the voting on the matter. The question and answer period continued. Councilmember Lazard requested clarification on statements made by Sheriff Withrow related to funds owed to the County.

City Attorney Salvador Navarrete responded to the matter, cited overhead charges/costs in dispute were withheld subject to Government Code 51350.

On a motion by Councilmember Akinjo, second by Councilmember Lazard, the City Council adopted **Resolution 21-4852** approving the creation of Capital Improvement Project GG 21-11, creating the Lathrop Police Department, implementing the transition of law enforcement services and authorizing the related budget amendment.

Ayes: Akinjo, Lazard, Torres-O'Callaghan, and Dhaliwal
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: *Diallo

**Councilmember Diallo abstained on Item 3.1, citing insufficient information. The City of Lathrop City Council Handbook of Rules and Procedures, page 13, Chapter IV, Section B(5) applies to abstentions without identified legal disqualifications.*

Prior to adjournment of the meeting Mayor Dhaliwal announced memorial donation received from Kim and Judith Pratt, in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100), in memory of former Senior Advisory Commissioner and Lathrop Resident Anna Dimas. Mayor Dhaliwal also announced the untimely passing of Charles Scott Edwards, eldest son of Lathrop Residents and Community Volunteers Chad and Tamara Edwards.

4. **ADJOURNMENT** – There being no further business, Mayor Dhaliwal adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m. in memory of Charles Scott Edwards.



Teresa Vargas, CMC
City Clerk

This meeting was called by a majority of the City Council per Government Code Section 54956.5. Members of the public interested in addressing the City Council during this Special Meeting may address the item(s), which have been described in the notice of this Special Meeting in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.3(a).