

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- My understanding is the traditional flags would be only on loan to the Boy Scouts because we bought them, we own them, and we store them at the Corp Yard.
- If the Historical Society wants some flags, could they have first dibs?
- We have to determine if it's a loan or a gift to them.
- I don't know if they're community grant applicants.
- Maybe somebody wants to answer that question?
- I'll leave it up to you all.
- My purpose is to get the flag and the banners out and about so they're not just rolled up and getting mildew or something.
- We also may need to identify somebody who could want to inquire about other nonprofits who might be interested.
- That's another line item.
- I'm wondering if somebody's interested in that volunteer work.
- I don't know how recyclable these are, and that would be an expense to the City to take dates off, to do something else, the colors, can the design of it be accommodated to some other purpose.
- I don't know that part.
- Maybe the Locals That Make a Difference committee will figure that out for us.
- I don't want to volunteer people for jobs.
- These are the discussion points we need resolved.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- First of all, let's just deal with the flag issue.
- I'm thinking what we need to do is the City retains the flags.
- The City stores the flags at a Corp Yard or wherever the City determines is appropriate.
- The city will have the appropriate department, which I suspect is Public Works, coordinate with the Boy Scouts on August 26th to put them up every year and that our City Clerk maintains that in our City calendar.
- That's what I'm proposing.
- Does that seem like a viable idea?
- I'm asking staff if that's a viable idea.
- First, is it viable?
- Secondly, I'll ask if all of my colleagues are on board with that idea.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- Yes, Mayor Glass, I happen to know that Dennis Thomas from the Boy Scouts stores all their flags and has plenty of space at a trailer right there by the Corp Yard.
- I've seen them load them up.
- I've borrowed them from them.
- They have it all organized.
- Their space is dry, and that space has been allocated to them.
- That's the answer to that.
- They took those helpful pictures.

The Council was in consensus to retain the flags.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- Second would be if the Historical Society might need to borrow some of them for their opening celebration of their exhibit, which hopefully now will be able to be actually exhibited and open sometime soon, I think that we should make those available to the Historical Society to borrow the flags should they want them for that opening.
- Does that seem like a reasonable thing to do?
- Talking about flags right now for them to borrow them should they need any portion of them for their opening.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- I have a comment, having borrowed flags from the Boy Scouts, they are very careful about those flags, I know that we own the flags.
- This would need to be coordinated through Superintendent Del Prete, and it would have to be subject to the Boy Scouts.
- I propose it be subject to whatever supervision and check in and check out that is agreeable for the Boy Scouts, because it is the same storage container, and having been the one person from whom one of those darn flags was stolen and I had to create a new one to replace it and deal with the guilt of it, yes, I would be in support of that, but I would suggest that it have to be coordinated with Mr. Thomas and the Boy Scout leadership.

The Council was in consensus.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- Now let's get to the banners.
- For the banners, I tend to think that the City probably would like to retain a few of them, a small quantity of them for historic purposes.
- I like the idea of donating them to the Historical Society, frankly, because this is a historical thing.
- They are our organization in town that deals with all things historic.
- They are our historic things.
- That's what they do.
- I kind of like the idea of donating them to them should they want to accept them.
- That's what I tend to think, and I think maybe Councilmember Slayter said that as well.
- I'm kind of hearing some of the rest of you thinking about opening it up to other people.
- I'm just throwing out other ideas.
- More comments?
- What should we do about the banners?

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- I proposed to give them first dibs, because I'm not sure they want each and every one of them.
- The other part of that suggestion was if there's somebody who wanted to go around the community and ask if some other group was interested in the remaining flags and banners.
- A person needs to take on the responsibility.
- I don't want to do that necessarily, but Councilmember Rich proposed it, I think, or Councilmember Hinton.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- Maybe give them first dibs and see if we can spread them around to more places.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- We're presenting to the Historical Society that they have first dibs on however many they want, but the City will retain a couple of them for historical purposes.
- Maybe we keep them in City Hall or something.
- Does that sound like a good plan?
- The historical society can let us know how many they want.
- Does that make sense?

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- Yes, I'm happy to be the contact person for the Historical Society and work with them on however many banners they want and work with Superintendent Del Prete, and my plan would be at the service organizations next meeting to ask that group if they are interested in any of the banners.
- I would bet that the Historical Society would probably want a maximum of 20.
- Maybe we want 5 to be held by the City.
- That leaves some for others to be claimed if they want to.
- In the meantime, what I say to the Historical Society is that there's a lot of support if they could come up with something cool to do with all these where they wouldn't be sitting in the dust, I would be in support of that.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- Councilmember Rich, I would love to work with you since I brought Ms. Pitman and Ms. Ramondo into this long conversation that has gotten really complicated.
- You have access to the service clubs.
- I have access to the nonprofits.
- Maybe we could both ask the groups.
- We have a CBO meeting coming up tomorrow.
- We might ask around.
- First dibs to Ms. Pitman and Ms. Ramondo for their display, give them some time to do something, or just take the remainder for us to divide, or if you're willing to work together.
- With the rest being stored at City Hall.

The Council was in consensus.

No Formal Vote/Council Consensus.

- City retains flags.
- City stores flags at Corp Yard.
- City will have Public Works coordinate with Boy Scouts on Aug 26th to put them up every year.
- City Clerk maintains that in City Calendar.
- Flags to be made available to the historical society to borrow for the opening and subject to supervision and check in/out with Boy Scouts.

City Council Action:

Minute Order Number: 2021-056

Mayor Glass called for a break at 8:35 pm and reconvened the meeting at

7. Discussion and Consideration of Sponsorship of the "Bite-Sized" Gravenstein Apple Fair 2021 at Ragle Ranch Park on Saturday, August 14, one day only; and Traffic Control at the Intersection of

Covert Lane and Ragle Road by the Sebastopol Police Department. (Requestor: Vice Mayor Gurney)

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- By way of a very brief introduction, I sustained the Apple Fair in 2019 in August and I so loved the event.
- It was like a country apple version of Peacetown with lovely handmade items for sale and a lot of local people.
- I thought, how come the City couldn't sponsor this?
- Last year, about this time I put in a request for a sponsorship that was taken off the agenda because COVID hit.
- Literally, that was the meeting when we all went into COVID land, so I'm kind of reupping the idea now with a year of COVID behind us.
- We have an event that historically has brought about 15,000 people to a two-day event outdoors at Ragle Park with all kinds of fun for everybody.
- Last year they did a very clever pivot and did the grab and go.
- I just love that idea.
- It was the parking lot drive-through at the Community Center.
- It kept the apples and apple history alive as a commodity in our community.
- This year, the Director, who's here this evening, has organized with other reduced crew and reduced sponsorship a one-day event that's going to be similar in nature to the old style, but it's going to be executed under COVID standards.
- The staff report indicates that there are two options for people participating.
- They can park and walk up or pull in and shop and pick up their apples.
- Other people, by reservation, can come in for a 90-minute period of time and sit down and enjoy the food they buy, the drinks they buy, music, and do a little bit of their shopping.
- That will be socially distanced with masks and future protocols being observed.
- The event's gone from two-days to the one-day, only on Saturday.
- I also checked last year with our Acting Chief DeVore, and he was supportive and willing to provide police control of the one main intersection into the park that's at Ragle and Covert Lane.
- Unfortunately, my COVID brain remembered, and over the weekend Carmen Snyder and I were connecting with Chief Kilgore about his point of view of police support and he graciously confirmed with us today that he would be willing to offer one-day with two officers to do police control at that intersection and include it within his overtime budget for next fiscal year.
- It's important the note that they've done everything they can to get through COVID and survive.
- The staff report details information that Ms. Snyder gave me, they are very up front about their downsizing to get through.
- They're struggling with membership, putting off the membership drive, and are just reinitiating it now.
- Sponsors are being heavily hit by COVID, that's where my request for sponsorship comes in.
- I would be very grateful if, in addition to the police support that's been confirmed through the Chief, that we would allow them to use our City logo as a sponsor and that we could provide a small financial sponsorship to them.
- Ms. Snyder provided us a \$5,000 sponsorship, which I think would be generous.
- It's a little higher than I anticipated so I asked her to give us a second level, and she's given the details on a \$3,000 sponsorship.
- Perhaps the Council would like to negotiate that through our discussion this evening.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- I think it's really important for us to support an event because we've missed the Apple Blossom Festival now, the parade, and that two-day weekend event that celebrates our apple heritage.
- It's important that we have some events continue, and this is the one that comes up at harvest time as a celebration of the Gravenstein apple.
- That's why I would like us to be as generous as we can in terms of our identification with this event.
- If I may through the Mayor, I'd like to invite Ms. Snyder, Executive Director, to add any comments or tell the story in her own words of a need and interest in the City's support.

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- Thank you so much for having me tonight.
- Farm Trails was found in the 1973, and that very year, the founders of Farm Trails created the Gravenstein Apple Fair as the fundraising profit.
- The old apple show used to take place downtown.
- I'm sure y'all are familiar, that ended in World War II.
- It was brought back by Farm Trails.
- It's been at Ragle Park for many years.
- There's a sweet deal with Farm Trails where the members and board help clear the park and establish the park, and we have been there since 1979, I believe.
- I don't know how familiar y'all are with kind of the more recent history of Farm Trails, but when I took over as Executive Director in the fall of 2012, we had a disastrous apple fair that almost broke the bank.
- We had to reimagine how we did the apple fair.
- A lot of people didn't know it was connected to Farm Trails.
- I worked really hard to get kind of some of the old-timers, who had aged out, to come back to the apple fair team, for secession purposes, to train a new generation on how to do the fair and retain the things that are so lovely about the fair and also to connect the dots between Farm Trails and the apple fair.
- Because it was just astonishing to me that most people that I talked to had no idea it was through Farm Trails.
- We have the farm stage, the do-it-yourself arena.
- The Gravenstein apple is always the star of the show, and I think it does a lot to celebrate all of our local agriculture here and rural heritage.
- Farm Trails was able to stabilize.
- We had a lot of really wonderful apple fairs.
- We had established enough financial stability and security that we didn't have to blow it out of the park every year with the apple fair.
- It never occurred to us that there would not be an apple fair because, until this year, we weren't in fire season, it was the dry season.
- When we were not able to produce the apple fair this year, Farm Trails took a huge hit financially, and as soon as we realized we were not able to produce it the staff cut back to 50%.
- We cut all possible costs that we could.
- I wouldn't say we went into a hibernation mode.
- We went into more like everything down to our core mission.
- We put some things on the back burner that were not really core to our mission.
- What we decided to do, as Vice Chair Gurney mentioned, was produce a grab and go event that was more of a place holder for the apple fair and a bit of seasonal continuity.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- We did sell over 8,000 pounds of apples.
- It was amazing.
- We filled up all the slots, we serviced 600 cars.
- Because it was a drive-through event, we were the pass through for the money, but we were just taking a very small portion of the sales because we wanted the farmers to get paid and the vendors to get paid.
- It was not ultimately a fundraiser for us.
- It was more of a community benefit, and we understood that going into it, and that was okay with us.
- It takes resources to produce it, and we're still at 50% time with our staff.
- We again pivoted and created this idea of the bite sized apple fair.
- I'm excited about it because people really appreciated the drive-through option.
- Just the tiny little bit of connection, and they appreciated that they could pop their trunks and have zero contact and get their products.
- I know how eager people are to be outside and to connect.
- To be back in the park, which is so magical.
- The concept is a little bit TBD, because of course it depends on what the County and State guidance will allow.
- There will be a drive-up portion where you can get your products.
- Then a fenced, ticketed portion, so we can raise some much-needed funds as well.
- The apple fair, it will be more expensive to produce that.
- That means having the straw bales.
- We're not doing it overnight, largely because we don't think we can risk having the security cost.
- Which is maybe \$5,000 to \$6,000.
- It's going to be a bare bones budget, but we still want to give people some of the flavor of the apple fair in a way that is comfortable, the way they will feel safe and comfortable.
- That's probably reserved seating, and the maximum capacity will be whatever is permissible.
- I think the only other thing I'll say is, again, the apple fair does fund all of the operations for Farm Trails throughout the year.
- It does bring a lot of people to Sebastopol.
- It celebrates this beautiful park and this really lovely community.
- We use local school groups, we pay them stipends to pay for the parking, which we'll do this year for sure.
- We use all local service providers, Ron Blair does our signs.
- I have information about signs, by the way, if y'all want to chat me on that later, for the banners.
- We use local vendors.
- It not only benefits Farm Trails, but different food businesses and farmers and local crafters and entertainers.
- I'm happy to answer any questions.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- You said this is a community benefit event, and there's probably a question in Councilmembers' minds, why didn't you apply for a community grant?
- I wanted to let everyone know, we went through that question ourselves.
- Farm Trails doesn't qualify as the right number of 501 "C,". We are a 6.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- I don't know the particulars, but we did review the application and made the decision that that wasn't a possible avenue to get a grant from the City there.
- That is one of the reasons we're appealing now for help, in addition to keeping this continuity of our identification with our agricultural history in play.

Mayor Glass asked for questions.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- Actually, as a point of information, I'm going to ask City staff about this.
- As I recall, actually, our community grant process does allow for C-6's, because we have received, or we have given grants to the Chamber of Commerce which to my understanding is a C-6.
- I see my fellow budget buddy is nodding.
- Perhaps we do not make that clear enough on the application form.
- We may need to improve that in the future so that other applicants understand that.

Councilmember Hinton commented as follows:

- Serving on the Sonoma County Fair Board, this is a big point of discussion about what is going to come, et cetera.
- Do you have any sense about how many, with this new outline that you're guessing at now, I understand you're guessing, how many people might be able to attend and are you at the break-even point versus sponsorships?
- I assume you're going to go for more sponsorships to try to offset the break-even point.
- Maybe you can address how many people you think might be able to attend in the best-case scenario, I know everybody is watching Disneyland, is what I'm hearing, but obviously we're not Disneyland.
- We're trying not to be.
- I'm just talking fair stuff, I'm just curious.
- For me personally, I'm like, sign me up.
- You might be sold out for how many people want to come to the fair and socially distance.
- In your format, I'm wondering what the numbers would be based on the proposal in our staff report.

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- Last year we serviced 600 vehicles.
- We sold out of time slots for that.
- We maxed out, and we were conservative in estimating how many vehicles can drive through the Sebastopol Community Center parking lot in an hour.
- I would anticipate that in terms of the drive-through portion, that we would have, I would say at least 1,000 vehicles, probably more.
- For the ticketed portion, the way that I'm looking at it, and I've had conversations with Bert at the park, and I have an upcoming meeting to talk to public health about what they think is possible.
- We're looking at it at a minimum the way that we look at the pumpkin patches and Christmas tree farms.
- I was on calls with our Farm Trails producers who had pumpkin patches and Christmas tree farms.
- We were thinking about it sort of like an outdoor dining or outdoor agricultural experience, in terms of capacity.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- If you can be seated at a picnic table that is at least six feet from another picnic table, the capacity is really dependent on the agricultural settings on the acreage.
- People per acreage, a lot different than an indoor setting, obviously.
- My feeling is that at a minimum, even with the smaller footprint at the park, we would have 200 proceeding.
- This is a very big, like, ballpark answer.
- I would say between 200 to 500 per seating.

Councilmember Hinton commented as follows:

- How much do you envision the tickets being?
- Since it's likely to sell out, will you release it locally first?

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- Yes, to releasing it locally first and giving a local preference, for sure.
- The tickets, we haven't determined the pricing yet because we have been doing these really intensive cost-benefit analyses and different projections.
- The initial concept is to try to have a ticket that perhaps is \$10, and you bring our own picnic blanket.
- Then there could be a straw bale seating cluster, and again, it's going to be tricky to figure out how we get people to do this with technology.
- It's a whole new ballpark of how to manage it, or a new challenge for us.
- There could be straw bale cluster seating that is perhaps \$15 per person.
- For reserved picnic tables, we might charge a premium price, maybe not per person, but they'll seat a table of eight.
- One person in the group pays for the picnic table.
- That has not all been hammered out.
- It's still just kind of a concept.
- That was the initial thought.
- Depending on the number that we can allow in, we would see how many food vendors we would need to have there.
- We make a very small commission on those sales, so really where we would make money is if we're allowed to serve beer, wine, and cider.
- Yes, a local preference.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- Love the Gravenstein Apple Fair.
- I'm impressed with your proactive approach to keeping it going, one way or another.
- I have a question about the sponsorship request, and I have a couple of questions, some of them might be answered by you, and some may be answered by Director Kwong.
- Please share with us what your other efforts have been so far to develop some sponsorships, what you've done, what you expect to do, what your total sponsorship amount is that you're hoping to pull together and how that compares to sponsorships that you might have pursued in the future.
- What I'm looking for is what efforts are you already doing to pull in those sponsors who have been there for you in the past, and what is your final sponsorship plan?

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- We have one sponsor who has already come onboard at the same rate as previous years, so that is fabulous.
- We're really grateful for that.
- They participated in the grab and go all weekend this past year.
- For instance, the Farm Bureau, who has sponsored us ever since I took over in 2013, cut their sponsorship in half.
- It used to be \$5,000, and they cut it to \$2,500.
- Last year they had already cut a check for us, and they said can you please return it.
- I know from many, many ag boards and organizations and ag meetings that we're in just about the pandemic and now the vaccine rollout, their resources are very, very tapped this year.
- We're in conversation, but I'm not expecting our usual sponsorship from them, either.
- Same with American Ag Credit.
- I suspect they will come on at some amount.
- We're seeing all of our sponsorships down thus far.
- I'm going to keep trying and I'm in conversation with Oliver's, they also did not sponsor last year.
- I think that I'll have a better chance of getting sponsorships for this than the grab and go because there will be an actual presence.
- We had tons of tents last year, and there was drive-through visibility.
- This year people will be physically on the grounds.
- Besides on all of our flyers and marketing collateral, the website, the banners, and onsite recognition, it's much more valuable.
- Also, I think that there will be much more buzz around this because it will be an actual opportunity to get outside and have just a little piece of what the fair is like.
- Depending on how things unfold, my entertainment chair yesterday emailed me, he said I'm getting really hopeful.
- I think we might try to have a backup plan to scale up the apple fair.
- I just said, certainly we will ramp up to whatever is permissible in terms of a one-day event.
- We might have a select number of craft vendors there if people are allowed to be circulating.
- It is my strong feeling, if it's permissible, even if a lot of our county is vaccinated, I think the public will not feel comfortable this early being in proximity.
- It's going to take a while to unwind that.
- I just want to be really realistic about that.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- I'm going to just ask you the bottom line question.
- There is a process for requesting grant money.
- We've heard that it was available to support the apple fair.
- You're coming before us with a plea.
- What I really want to know, as a Councilmember here, recognizing that we do have a process that was available, and recognizing that there are many others in this community, if we were going to go out and say, hey, we got \$5,000 or \$3,000 or \$1,000 available, there would be others who would apply and plead their case.
- I'm asking you what happens?
- Give us the plea.
- If you said, well, our sponsorships generally were this amount of money, and this year it's going to be this amount of money, in order to cover our baseline costs, we need this amount of money.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- Give us the bottom line dollars pitch that would persuade me as a City Council member in a world of limited money that we should say yes to you here.

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- Our sponsorships are typically around \$80,000.
- This year, we're around \$12,500.
- Additionally we used to get T.O.T. reimbursements from the County, as much as \$59,000 a year for advertising reimbursements.
- That fund has completely disappeared.
- In fact, the seed money from that founded Farm Trails.
- We've relied on that for many years.
- That has gone away.
- We decided in the crunch of the pandemic, when we were expecting to be able to hold the 2020 Apple Fair, we just had no sense in the very beginning about how long this was going to last.
- We were right at our membership drive.
- We decided not to pursue members.
- We lost a lot of membership money.
- We were able to bring in \$14,000 this year. It's typically \$25,000 to \$30,000.
- Basically, Farm Trails is going to be out of money in December of 2021.
- If we don't net, and that's with us working, we have two staff members who have been at half pay, not necessarily working only half-time.
- That is without some massive fund-raising efforts on top of netting at least \$30,000 at the bite size apple fair.

Councilmember Rich commented so what you're telling us is that unless you net \$30,000 at the bite size apple fair, Farm Trails will be closing up shop by December of 2021?

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- I'm not saying we'll be closing up shop.
- I'm saying that the projections are that we run out of cash on hand at that point.
- That's important information.

Councilmember Rich questioned what is your budget for doing this event?

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- Well, it's still a very big question mark right now.
- It's so dependent on scale.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- I do have additional questions regarding where this money would come from, out of our budget.
- I have asked Director Kwong those questions.
- I'd be happy to have her share the information with us now, Mayor, if you want to do that.
- Director Kwong, please share with us the information about where this money would come from in our budget.

Director Kwong commented as follows:

- If the Council was to fund this project, I have a question before I can answer that.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- Are we committing to fund this year to the apple fair or because the event is not until next fiscal year?
- I was not clear on if we make a commitment now, is the fund leaving the City in the next fiscal year for this event, or is the fund leaving the City now so that they can have it in their coffer, so they can gear up for the event?
- If the fund is leaving now in this fiscal year, in the City Council budget, there is a line item for other community support and there's adequate funds in that line item to support this program.

Councilmember Slayter commented as follows:

- Question either for the Chief or for Director Kwong.
- I'm curious on what the in kind request for traffic control, it states two officers for two days.
- That would be proposed to be absorbed with the previously very short notice withdrawal of the request.
- As mayor then, I remember exactly how that went down, timewise.
- That was a weird deal.
- That is stated here in this particular write-up.
- I'm curious what the cost to the City of that is.

Chief Kilgore commented as follows:

- I did confirm, this would be a one-day event, not a two-day event.
- 9:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., an eight-hour day.
- Pay at the overtime rate for two officers, depending on if we have an officer or sergeant working that, we're looking at a cost of approximately \$1,000 to \$1,500.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- I want to answer Councilmember Rich's question.
- Ms. Snyder gave the pitch from her organizational point of view, but as the sponsoring Councilmember, I would just love to keep the apple industry going in some kind of showy way, instead of having the whole history go quiet for too long a time.
- I would just love to breathe some life into it with some dollars if we can get this on the ground at the park.
- I think it's really important for us to have the history of the heritage, to acknowledge it, and to have some kind of fun in our future, in case we can go outside and have fun.

Mayor Glass questioned are you getting any support out of the County?

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- As of yet, we are not.
- Except, we usually we pay the county 10% of the admissions for the use of the park and they are looking at giving us a special waiver this year so that we maybe pay a very small, fixed fee.
- That could be a possible, it's not technically a grant, I guess it's a waiver.
- A grant in-kind, basically.

Mayor Glass opened for public comment. There was no public comment.

Council Deliberations:

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- I just want to echo my agreement with vice mayor gurney that I want to keep the notion of apples and the apple fair and this being an apple area, and our connection with apples alive.
- I think that is an important thing.
- I'm feeling prone to figuring out if there is some level of sponsorship here.
- Certainly, the in-kind for our police support of this event.
- I would like us to think of this as maybe the opening salvo to us thinking about how we are going to support our community as it re-opens and re-launches a lot of the events that A) serve our community, and B) make us a destination.
- In some respects, I was thinking, oh, should we include this as something that is on our community calendar, like, could we do a little bit of an in-kind and ask that we promote this event on our City website and Facebook page, and do some marketing for getting people to visit Sebastopol.
- This is our calendar of events that are happening in Sebastopol.
- Maybe community events that would attract visitors although it sounds like you're expecting to get enough visitors without going nuts and trying to promote things in the Bay Area or whatever.
- At least getting people over the Laguna from Santa Rosa or bring them up Gravenstein Highway and people from nearby cities.
- I think this is not just an isolated thing.
- As the budget subcommittee is going to be thinking about how we're going to expend funds, we need to think about what we are going to do to promote our town with particularly identifiable events that are going to make people want to continue to support our community.
- It's bigger than just Farm Trails.
- It's bigger than the Gravenstein Apple Fair.
- It's, how do we keep putting our attractiveness as a rural food producing local economy, so that people come here, across the Laguna, not just to go to the apple fair, but maybe they stop downtown and they go and buy a dress.
- Or maybe they eat lunch at the fair, but then they want to stay for dinner at one of our restaurants.
- Those things, what are we going to do, what are we as a Council going to do to help us re-launch our economy?
- This is the first thing we're being asked about.
- I'm prone to wanting to support it.
- I think we also need to be thinking of it in a bigger picture of, what are we going to do to help ourselves re-launch?
- This is our first event of the re-launch.
- It's still going to be kind of in a quasi-COVID time.
- We're in a transition mode right now.
- I totally get what Ms. Snyder is saying.
- How many people are we going to have?
- How much will you be open?
- How many tickets will you sell?
- I deal with this problem every day.
- How much can we re-open the Art Center, how many people can we have in our building?
- It's a moving target all the time.
- It's what all the nonprofits are dealing with.
- You have to plan six months in advance, but you don't know what the parameters are going to be.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- What are we going to do to support this really very identified with Sebastopol event, to keep it alive, and know that the parameters of making it happen are kind of a moving target.
- It's that way for most of our nonprofits.
- Anyway, I just wanted to frame this up as I'd like to support this event.
- We need to, as a Council, be thinking about what are we going to do to help us transition back to an open town.

Councilmember Slayter commented as follows:

- I agree with everything you just said about strategizing for a re-opening, positioning ourselves properly, all those kind of buzzword terminologies.
- The extremely close location in the county that this annual event has to the city is not lost on me.
- I am an annual attendee at this event.
- Family comes from far away to go to this thing.
- The fact that we can walk there is great.
- All of those being said, I am not in favor of this right now.
- I may be in favor of it at the time of the Community Benefit Grants.
- I think that that is the proper time to take this up.
- These kinds of sponsorships come to us fairly frequently.
- I would say, a couple, maybe three times a year, we have a fairly lengthy discussion about a community benefit program that is off cycle.
- I understand that that is the way sometimes these things go.
- Like, bike to work day.
- There is example "a," it was an off-cycle sponsorship that the Council discussed at some great length and decided to support.
- In this particular instance, I really feel like we need to wait and consider this in concert with all of the other community benefit grant requests that we will be considering at budget time.

Councilmember Hinton commented as follows:

- If there was an urgent matter to support this tonight, when the festival is in August, I mean, our tradition is that when Director Kwong started talking about pulling money, that money is generally allocated when the event is in the right fiscal year.
- This event is in August.
- Our fiscal year starts July 1st.
- We're gearing up to go through our community grant process.
- I don't think there's any problem moving this in to that process, which is later this month, next week, I think.
- When the budget subcommittee holds a public meeting with all the nonprofits that will request money and support from the City.
- I love the Gravenstein Apple Fair.
- I think it's super that they're rebranding the mini bite, it's really cool.
- Hopefully, because it does sit out in the county, they are going to get some County support also.
- Not just our City.
- I think that's where it belongs.
- AI would like to move this agenda item over there so that it can have fair consideration with all of our nonprofits at the same time.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

Mayor Glass questioned since a formal community grant application has not been made, would there be a process to include them in our community grant process, or can we just consider the sponsorship? Can we consider the sponsorship within the bounds of our budget process?

City staff commented as follows:

- Like you have discussed, we have done sponsorships in the past which fall outside of the community benefit grant.
- I'm wondering if the budget subcommittee would like to have some discussion about routine sponsorships, like setting aside Council initiative funds, doing something similar to that.
- Instead of bringing it through the community benefit grant process at this juncture.
- I believe if we re-open it, we would want to be fair and re-open the entire process.

Councilmember Hinton commented as follows:

- I'm not advocating re-opening it.
- But we bring forth to the Council all of our recommendations like this and possibly the bike to work, we're looking at the whole budget picture, not just one-offs.
- I think it would probably be a benefit.
- Whatever we call it, we don't have to call it a community grant.
- We can call it other sponsorships under the same heading.
- We would be aware of this, of bike to work, and whatever else staff would be able to tell us what we've done last year.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- I just would like to ask a couple of questions and comments before I move to calling on my colleagues.
- Ms. Snyder, for planning purposes, I'm guessing, this is a lead in question, I'm guessing that you probably need to know something about the commitment of the City for policing services in particular, because it does seem like in planning the event, I'm guessing you need to have that nailed. That you need to know about that.
- Can you live with not knowing until probably early June, how the City is committing to you?
- I mean, sooner, of course, with events is always better.

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- I think we've all gotten so nimble, and things have been changing so quickly, I think we're in a very adaptive mode.
- I think mid-to-late July would be tricky, just in terms of commitments and logistics.
- That is a huge piece, the traffic.
- Not just for the benefit of the attendees, but also the neighbors and the whole city.
- June would be fine.
- If there is any commitment of funding, the payment doesn't have to be immediate.
- We just need to be able to budget for it.
- If I could I just make a quick comment about the community benefit grant?
- I didn't miss the grant.
- It was on my calendar, I was very aware of it.
- It wasn't that I didn't want to apply or was trying to bypass that system.
- I've been applying for every single grant that we're eligible for.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- The other piece besides the "C" status is policy number 88, section 5 which says that funds will not be allocated to organizations conducting a fundraising event or activity.
- We identified the apple fair as our primary annual fundraiser.
- That is what gave us pause, the C-3, and the benefit grant could not go to a fundraiser.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- It seems like we're going to need to re-visit the language on our application and take a look at what our policies really are.
- Thank you for the feedback on that.
- I'm glad to know that you can live with a later decision, deadline.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- I agree with Councilmember Slayter and Councilmember Hinton's opinions regarding the funding.
- Perhaps for slightly different reasons.
- I don't think it would be appropriate to make a funding decision tonight.
- Part of it is that I'm on the service organizations group with commission, and I can tell you that there are a couple of very wonderful organizations in town that are just desperate for help with fundraising, because they've been unable to do their events.
- I think we need to keep in mind, this is a bigger issue.
- The question that Vice Mayor Gurney and Ms. Snyder have brought before us is something that we need to discuss further, in my opinion.
- However, I don't think that designating limited funds right now, tonight, without some more open process is an appropriate decision making effort for us.
- Despite the fact that I, too, absolutely adore the apple fair, and I'm desperate for it to be the real thing.
- The only suggestion I may make is that I personally would in fact, and maybe this isn't appropriate procedurally, I would be comfortable making the traffic decision tonight.
- I defer to the budget subcommittee on that.
- That is the piece I would be willing to support tonight.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- I think we're in an interesting situation.
- For me, it's unfair to delay this decision and put this iconic event sort of, like, towards the end of the shelf, maybe falling off the shelf because we can't commit.
- This was publicly noted, a completely transparent item.
- It was even on last year.
- It's not as if this was new.
- If this was an error, Ms. Snyder and I should have been told last year that we belonged in community grants.
- However, nobody ever suggested that that was the place.
- I think it would be unfair to re-open the community grants now because we would have to re-open it for everybody.
- I think it would be unfair to just consider this as kind of a snuck in community grant, too.
- As I look at it, it's really a public item.
- The issue that we're looking at is sponsorship.
- It's not just helping out somebody who needs a little seed money for something.

- This is an event that we're really closely identified with.
- It's a significant event.
- It's an event we want to put our logo, name, and our stamp on.
- I was amazed to realize our name and logo wasn't there.
- Just like we like our logo being other places where we've adopted their name.
- We call ourselves peace town.
- The home of the Gravenstein apple is also something we're identified with.
- If we delay tonight, the money will come in July.
- That means we lose publicity and identification with this event for March, April, May, and June.
- I think it's a tremendous loss to the City and to our community.
- We should hold this, own this, and cherish this.
- We should take all those seats so we can celebrate ourselves.
- I think our problem tonight is that we don't have a policy as to how to address a sponsorship request.
- We don't have guidelines for that, and we don't have a procedure for that application process.
- Bike to work day, why is it any fairer to allow bike to work day to be sponsored and use our logo, yet it's not fair because of this one, just because of the timing.
- This timing was obvious last year, it's obvious this year.
- Bike to work day is always a day in May.
- They moved their event to September, and we pivoted with them.
- I think we should just pivot now, and I think we should support them.
- I don't know who will come up with this idea for the recommendations for sponsorship, and I'm not sure that that is a budget subcommittee issue because it doesn't just involve money.
- It can be anywhere from \$500 to \$50,000.
- We need to figure that out.
- Maybe that needs to be an agenda item.
- Last point, it's a little grander, which is where the Mayor started out in her thinking.
- We need to figure out how to ignite our economy as we get going.
- This is one way to do that.
- This is one way to claim that we are not coming back, we're not re-opening, we're being who we are, and we're doing it with all the protocols and safety measures and reconvening appropriately that we can do in a celebratory way.
- We also need to figure out in a workshop I guess with commissions, how do we take the next step after that?
- Instead of everything being kind of as it comes in, where we have to do this, is this a good decision to do now or later?
- We just have guidelines and we can follow our own adopted processes and know what our goals are and test those applications or ideas against our goals.
- I think this one really fits in.
- I would ask you to reconsider your no votes and delay votes.
- Time is of the essence.
- Ms. Snyder has demonstrated that she and her limited people who are in great measure volunteers, are being generous with their time, and they're trying to put together the most responsible event that they can.
- I can't think of anything more we would want to support.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- If there was some mini Apple Blossom Festival, I think we would have the same emotion that I have now.
- We need to be Sebastopol, and we need to do this.
- That's where I stand.
- I would ask you to reconsider saying no at this time, and considering not just the police support, which isn't a problem for next year's budget, according to our Chief, but also the use of the logo and some stipend, grant, whatever we want to call it.
- Director Kwong has already told us it's there, so I think we should spend it.
- We should do it.
- We should put our foot down and say, we're going to be back.
- We're going to be Gravenstein apple country one more fall.
- That's where I am.

Councilmember Hinton commented as follows:

- My first question to Ms. Snyder is, and again, it just comes from fairness to all.
- Luckily, we still have reserves in the bank right now.
- We're going into a new budget.
- Chances are that those reserves are coming down.
- While the money sits there, we're spending it.
- Ms. Snyder, we're going to have our final, I think our budget discussion, our first one on June 5th, and probably we'll be wrapping up the budget by mid-June.
- What sponsorship opportunities might we miss out on if we don't commit until then to the apple fair?
- Is there any advance promotion that you'll be doing that our logo would be a part of?
- If yes, what would that be?
- What might we miss out on as a sponsor of this year?

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- That is always the benefit of coming on sooner than later, the long lead publicity.
- As soon as you come on, we place you on our website
- It's the articles, the flyers, and similarly with the ticket sales, that will be likely through Eventbrite.
- We're really good about recognizing our sponsors.
- The visibility gets even more expanded, because there is just not as many sponsors in a lean year.

Councilmember Hinton questioned if we approve this tonight, does that make us a sponsor, and you're eligible for additional sponsorship?

Ms. Snyder commented as follows:

- We also recognize our in-kind sponsors and the way we do it is a sizing thing.
- It could get bigger down the road.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- I have a possible compromise idea here.
- Having spoken to Director Kwong about an item that was mentioned in the staff report, she shared with me that the bike to work amount that has been set aside, that hasn't yet been spent is \$2,000.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- That's a sponsorship for an event.
- We also know the community grant guidelines, and I confirmed it in this budget volume, specifically says not for events.
- What I also know from Director Kwong, that there is some remaining money for shuttle fare in the line item that hasn't been and probably will not likely be spent.
- What about considering allocating \$2,000 as sponsorship to this event that has been proposed to us tonight.
- Looking at, I don't know if we can tonight, but looking at putting together a fund since what we want to do is encourage events, think about the marketing piece that has been mentioned here by many, many people.
- Maybe we should be looking at taking some of that money that is sitting in that line item and considering it as an amount that could be used to sponsor events during the remainder of this budget cycle.
- There is \$17,000, as Director Kwong was telling me, in there for shuttle fare.
- Maybe it's not the time, maybe it's too complicated.
- I can see supporting this since bike to work got supported, \$2,000 for an event.
- Events aren't within the community grant guidelines.
- \$2,000 to this event, and I would also support the police allocation of police time, because honestly, that's a part of any Apple Blossom Festival, or whatever, we get our police involved.
- Trying to propose a supportive compromise.
- I still have hesitation about the money allocation, but I wanted to put that out there.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- Can I ask you a question, you just said the \$17,000 number.
- Where is that?

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- We should probably get the bottom line from Director Kwong on the line item which was other community expenses which had a total of \$31,000, but Director Kwong would be the best source of information about the status, the balance of that account.

Director Kwong commented as follows:

- This fund is under other community support in the Council budget.
- In Council budget, you have the City Council initiative grant, each Councilmember has, I believe, \$500.
- There's other community support, with bike to work day, public arts support.
- There's some funding set aside for library signage.
- Then there's the shuttle fare, there was a bus line that came into the city.
- Since COVID, there has not be any invoicing from the County.
- It's been quite some time that I haven't seen any billing from the County for that service.
- Looking at the Council budget, under other community support, there's adequate funding if you will when this item came up and that was where I thought it could come from.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- Clarification on the shuttle fare, public transit has been free all during COVID, until February 1st.
- That means our local shuttle was free, and all public transit was free.
- Sonoma County Transit.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- Our commitment was to make up the fare, the City subsidized the fare based on historical records.
- We have much of this year, all the way to February 1st, having no fare.
- That is \$17,000, correct, Director Kwong?

Director Kwong stated that is correct.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- What was explained to was that in that budget originally was \$17,000 for shuttle fare.
- \$2,000 for bike to work day. Which just hasn't yet occurred.
- \$10,000 for library signage
- \$2,000 for public art, and \$31,000.
- \$2,000 has been spent on the public art.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- My hand was up for some other reason, but I can answer the question about the library signage.
- Remember back when we did the project, this was during the days with Robert Jacob, during his term, 2012 to 2016.
- We re-landscaped, and we did a whole thematic re-do.
- Parts of that program was to install signage that explains the significance of each area.
- For instance, the area in front of the big wall that faces south, all of those are historic plants.
- That's why we were looking at the public art installation, they're plants that Luther Burbank bio-designed.
- It looks like from this fund, we have a considerable amount of money.
- The point I would make now is that if we gave \$2,000 to bike to work day, \$2,000 to this event.
- I would suggest that many more people in our community identify with Gravenstein apples, would enjoy an outdoor picnic, live music, would go to the park and get on their bike and ride around that morning on bike to work day.
- There are significantly less than the thousands of people that Ms. Snyder is mentioning that would participate.
- I think \$2,000 is a minimum.
- I appreciate Councilmember Rich's suggestion that we can get something done.
- If \$2,000 gets our logo used, and we can commit that, we assist them, and the Police Department helps them on the day of.
- I could be satisfied with that.
- I'm disappointed because I don't see this event at all equating with bike to work day in terms of sponsorship dollars.
- We need to handle that separately.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- My comment is that I would prefer to at least one of the proposals here was for \$3,000.
- I would prefer to make it \$3,000, since I know we have this \$17,000 we haven't expended.
- But it's \$17,000 we haven't expended, but we have a budget that is massively in the negative.
- Saying we haven't spent the money is like saying, oh, we lost a little bit less money, but I'm still fine with it, we don't have to tweak the budget at all.
- I do think it's really important to be promoting this event.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- I do think that it's very difficult to run something like this without knowing significantly ahead of time how much you have to work with.
- I would propose that we do \$3,000 and our police support.

MOTION:

Vice Mayor Gurney moved and Mayor Glass seconded the motion to approve Sponsorship (\$3,000) of the "Bite-Sized" Gravenstein Apple Fair 2021 at Ragle Ranch Park on Saturday, August 14, one day only; and Traffic Control at the Intersection of Covert Lane and Ragle Road by the Sebastopol Police Department

Discussion:

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- I've explained what my parameters are.
- I'm willing to support traffic control, plus \$2,000 in event sponsorship, which was done for bike to work day in the past.
- Despite the passionate appeal, and despite the value of the event, that's already pushing it beyond what I was originally comfortable with.
- I would actually like to hear from Councilmember Slayter if he's willing to share his thoughts at this point on whether he's swayed or if he still feels that's a mistake.
- That's important to me.

Councilmember Slayter commented as follows:

- I realize the difficulty, that we don't have direction.
- We don't have anything written down that we can point to and say, these are our rules.
- I think that's really unfortunate.
- The agenda setting committee may see a late-night missive regarding that.
- There's that.
- Honestly, I'm just not comfortable with these kinds of one-off requests.
- I realize that this is a signature for the City of Sebastopol.
- Even though it's technically not in, but nobody knows that, only us.
- I was thinking the same thing.
- Can we split the difference?
- Support the traffic control as an in-kind donation, it appears that's relatively simple to absorb into the police budget which is a very large percentage of our annual budget.
- It doesn't create that much of a ripple as a line item.
- That's still where I am.

AMENDED MOTION:

Vice Mayor Gurney amended the motion and Mayor Glass seconded the amended motion to approve Sponsorship of the "Bite-Sized" Gravenstein Apple Fair 2021 at Ragle Ranch Park on Saturday, August 14, one day only; and Traffic Control at the Intersection of Covert Lane and Ragle Road by the Sebastopol Police Department

\$2,000 Sponsorship
Police Support In Kind Donation/Traffic Support

Discussion:

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

Councilmember Hinton commented as follows:

- I just want to clarify this.
- Our pattern generally is once we support an event, we tend to support it again and again, which is a good thing.
- If we pass this tonight, then this will be supporting a next fiscal year event because we want to get in on early advertising.
- I just want to make sure, I'm wondering when they're going to come again, right?
- That just dawned on me.
- We're supporting an event next year, but we're taking it out of this year's funding.
- There's no request for them to ask at this point for a 2022 sponsorship.
- Which going to Councilmember Slayter's one-off comment, I think it's fair to raise that right now.
- I want to make sure what we're approving here, and are we going to be in the same boat next year?

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- Yes, we're going to be in the same boat.
- That's why I said, and Councilmember Slayter repeated, we need to figure out our policy about sponsorships so we don't have this happening again and again.
- The agenda review committee can talk about it.
- I've already written it down, and Councilmember Slayter will send a late-night missive about it.
- Maybe he will make a request under his name, however he wants to do it.
- You're exactly right, Councilmember Hinton.
- It's not just about events.
- We sponsor other events.
- It's just the timing and our fiscal budget for this.
- There is an argument to say get on early.
- I feel like by just supporting police, we are getting on early.
- It's maybe just not as big of a logo.
- Maybe it makes sense to take it out of next year's fiscal budget.
- I'd like to make a comment.
- I am in agreement that this one, two kind of thing is really dysfunctional.
- It doesn't work to be in the middle of a budget year, and then go, oh, no, let's put this round peg in the square hole and move this particular line item because we didn't need that money.
- That's not really how we want to be doing things.
- We've now recognized that we have a hole and a deficiency in a way with our policies.
- We haven't ever really defined how we deal with sponsorships.
- We need to look at that.
- We have community grants, which honestly, we give community grants to the Apple Blossom Fair, which, by the way, is an event.
- The Mr. Music, Peacetown event.
- We have not been very consistent.
- This is something we need to discuss and figure out, policy-wise.
- This is not the time to do it.
- Here is something that is before us right now.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- I think we just need to bite the bullet, move forward with the first and the second, and then agenda review will do something tomorrow to get this agendized and look at how We support events.
- We'll work on getting that on the agenda.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- Councilmember Slayter Is absolutely right.
- The one-off approach is wrong.
- If there were a way in this meeting to have a commitment to support other events in sponsorship, then I would be okay supporting this effort.
- I understand that there isn't at this point.
- There isn't a way to look at this money and assess it in this particular context and go, oh, yeah, we can set aside \$15,000 from that line item for sponsorships for other organizations.
- From purposes of integrity and honesty and respecting the other groups in whom I believe and are equally valuable, I can't support a sponsorship, unfortunately, of this particular event. I can certainly support the allocation of police services.
- That's the hard decision.

Mayor Glass called for a roll call vote. City staff conducted a roll call vote.

VOTE:

Ayes: Councilmember Hinton, Vice Mayor Gurney and Mayor Glass

Noes: Councilmember Rich and Councilmember Slayter

Absent: None

Abstain: None

City Council Action: Approve Sponsorship of the "Bite-Sized" Gravenstein Apple Fair 2021 at Ragle Ranch Park on Saturday, August 14, one day only; and Traffic Control at the Intersection of Covert Lane and Ragle Road by the Sebastopol Police Department

- **\$2000 Sponsorship**
- **Police Support In Kind Donation/Traffic Support**

Minute Order Number: 2021-057

8. Consideration of Planning Commission Formation (Responsible Department: Planning)

Planning Director Svanstrom presented the agenda item recommending the City Council Consider Planning Commission Formation and provide direction to staff.

Chair Fernandez commented as follows:

- The only other thing I would add would be the discussion on, for example, a commissioner moving out of the area.
- If they're within city limits, and they're taking that spot, what would happen when they move out?
- It could be left to Council interpretation, or it could be more narrowly defined.
- My concern would be if it wasn't clearly defined, and one person was allowed to continue, and maybe they're more liked than somebody else, and if somebody else does it, that could send a bad signal.
- That would be something for you guys to consider.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

Mayor Glass asked for questions.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- I'm wondering about the three seats that are up to two business owners and only one non-citizen, non-resident.
- Theoretically we can have all seven commissioners be residents if that was the applicant pool.
- There's no assignment to the seat, it's just a possibility of appointment.

Director Svanstrom commented as follows:

- We're recommending that it continue to be the current way, we have two business owners, but one lives in town.
- We have one business owner who lives outside of city limits and one member who lives outside of city limits.
- Right now, our ordinance, technically, Council controls it.
- Under the code, we could have six business owners who don't live in the city and a non-resident in the zip code area.
- When the Council asked us to review, we said this doesn't really make sense.
- Many communities allow the business owners to be a qualification.
- The other communities that do allow one non-resident, it's in a specific area.
- It's a two-mile radius, in a buffer around the town.
- The city allows one.

Vice Mayor Gurney questioned they do not allow business owners.

Director Svanstrom commented nobody else in the county allows non-resident business owners.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- These are the maximum seats, but no seat is assigned.
- It's a minimum of four residents.
- That would be the only minimum requirement.
- You can't be more than that.
- We don't have to do this.
- Because we have this issue, the applicant pool doesn't always meet the requirements of the Design Review Board.
- We need to lead on flexibility.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- I'm sure the Planning Commission spent a whole bunch of time addressing all these questions.
- I had a couple of questions.
- One is, there's a mention in the report of just kind of almost an off-hand comment about absentee business owners that while absentee business owners would be eligible, they likely would not be selected for appointment by the Council.
- That raised the question of, if we don't want absentee business owners, whatever they are, shouldn't we be specifying that since we're making these other changes?
- That was one question.
- What is your perspective on that?

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- Secondly, what is your perspective on the comment that Chair Fernandez had on disqualification if a person moves out, is no longer meeting the qualifications that got them on to the Planning Commission?
- I had a third one.
- Actually, the first one, please answer the first one, which is why not, should we be defining something about absentee business owners?

Director Svanstrom commented as follows:

- I put that in the report – technically they could apply to be on our Planning Commission. However, obviously, you're not going to select somebody who isn't involved in the community .
- You have a really good application that talks about their involvement in the community, and it will be clear through the process itself if someone is in town and whether they are committed to the town or not.

Councilmember Rich questioned what about Chair Fernandez's suggestion that we specify the consequences of an individual moving out of the area, no longer qualified.

Director Svanstrom commented as follows:

- The Commission discussed this and they were happy for Council to decide how to do it.
- There are two options.
- One is if someone does something, and they move out of town and they're a business owner, if one of the out of town slots is available, if someone moves out of town, whether a resident or a business owner, would Council want to review that?
- It could be done in two ways.
- They would need to just leave the Commission and reopen that.
- Or it could come to Council as just a regular agenda item to review, does that fit with whatever the Commission is dealing with at that time?
- Chair Fernandez did express concerns, as to whether that would seem fair to applicants.
- That's something we can make a determination on.
- It should be specified about how it should be handled.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- In regard to setting the geographic parameter.
- You laid out various options.
- One was a buffer around the city limits, such as the two-mile requirement.
- There's no explanation as to why that might not be a good option.
- Your other options, you explained what were the concerns about it.
- Was there a specific concern, or does that seem like a viable option?

Director Svanstrom commented as follows:

- I think the buffer, the way the Commission discussed it, and please chime in as well, it was a discussion to pick the center of town, and do a radius from there out.
- We have a little bit of a weird outline to the city boundaries.
- With three miles, you start getting into different territory, somebody will identify more with other places.
- Thinking about it became more complex.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- We discussed the three miles first, then looked at what it encompasses, rather than the way around.
- Three miles was arbitrarily picked - two miles may work.
- After we looked at the area, we realized some of it may be, we don't want Santa Rosa being part of that.

Mayor Glass opened for public comment. There was none.

Council Deliberations:

Councilmember Slayter commented as follows:

- We keep hearing requests to reduce the size of the Planning Commission.
- We see a dearth of applicants for Planning Commission.
- I think I have not been in favor of reducing the size of the Planning Commission but I'm beginning to see the value in it.
- I think that the quality of the deliberations would not go down.
- I don't know that they would get any better.
- I'm not sure that additional public would attend just simply because the number of Planning Commissioners has been reduced.
- If that happens, that's great.
- I think reducing the size of the Commission now down to seven, by the elimination of the alternate, is something that I can support at this point.
- There appeared to be a fairly large amount of lobbying going on for appointing the current alternate into the vacant seat.
- That seems like a different conversation than this one.
- I'll leave that kind of an unanswered question.
- Which leads to the second one about reducing down to five.
- I think I'm in support of that at this point.
- That seems like it would produce a more lithe and manageable Planning Commission.
- And it would start to mirror what other communities have on their commissions as far as size.
- The third is amending the Municipal Code to allow for up to two business owners who do not reside in the city limits.
- I think for me, the important thing is that a majority of the Planning Commissioners reside in the city.
- If we have one business owner and one resident who is not a business owner, who are outside city limits, that allows for that.
- That is if the body reduces to five.
- If it remains at seven, I think it's four, and we'll look at other breakdowns for that.
- Even two seats in a body of five feels generous to me if somebody is an active business owner and I think that is an interesting question.
- What if the CEO of Safeway applied?
- Can we say no?
- Yes, we can say no.
- It's a curious question.
- I think there needs to be some sort of bounds put on, or a definition of what a business owner in Sebastopol means.
- Maybe a non-franchise.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- Vice Mayor Gurney knows exactly what I'm going to say about the geography.
- How about we use the City water storage site on Pleasant Hill as the center of a circle.
- That's as arbitrary as any other point.
- Something that extends outward, some unknown distance of space, kind of feels right to me.
- It also may exclude some areas.
- I'm not sure what that should look like, as far as a boundary.
- I continue to think that 95472 is much too large.
- I looked at the school district maps and those are even more problematic.
- Those are my initial thoughts.

Councilmember Hinton commented as follows:

- I'm for reducing the size down to five.
- It always felt strange to me, five members on the City Council, and the Planning Commission was seven members plus an alternate.
- I think if they're asking for us to reduce it, then I think they know best.
- They attend more meetings than I do, for sure.
- I like the idea of just having it kind of happen over time.
- Naturally, as people leave the Commission.
- Certainly not wanting to kick somebody off.
- Then the two members, I agree with Councilmember Slayter as well on it should be the majority are from inside the city limits.
- That would mean in a five-member Planning Commission, three would have to be from inside city limits and we would have a little more room in a seven-member Planning Commission.
- I thought about the geography today.
- Very similar to how I think about our conflict rules, which we experienced earlier tonight, we have a 500-foot conflict rule.
- I think we need to pick a distance from the city lines.
- City lines are city lines.
- I didn't draw them.
- I know it's kind of weird.
- There's one when you walk behind Pacific Market, one street.
- A bunch of streets are inside, then all of a sudden, you're outside, then you're back inside.
- I think that's what we have to live with.
- Anything within 500 feet or 1,000 feet seems appropriate to me.
- It would be easy to figure out because we'd be able to measure it.
- Maybe now is not the time to talk about the alternate rolling in but I guess I generally would be in favor of that since she's not asking to extend her term.
- She's been an active member of the Planning Commission.
- Her colleagues seem to be in favor of that.
- I weigh to what our Planning Commissioners have already spent a long time updating us on.
- Those would be my initial thoughts.

Vice Mayor Gurney commented as follows:

- I want to start by thanking the Planning Commission for experiencing this situation with an alternate.

- They've lived with it for a long time. We're getting some feedback based on what they've lived through.
- I'm grateful that they're willing to evaluate it and recommend with such clarity after hours of conversation.
- I'm fine with deleting the alternate seat.
- Their experience tells us it's been difficult.
- I'm not sure if the difficulty is with numbers or how the alternate seat has been filled and lived.
- My understanding is, they come in when somebody is absent, so you don't get a body with a plus one who is fully there, fully participating.
- In any event, I think they've demonstrated to us the concept that has been tried out is unworkable and not helpful to them.
- I'm willing to just go down to seven.
- I'm not willing to automatically seat an alternate, because we have a former process for filling real seats.
- I would rather pursue that interview process.
- Our alternate could apply and be interviewed, and perhaps nobody else would apply.
- I think we need to treat our public consistently.
- When we have a vacancy, we have a vacancy.
- I'm fine with leaving the Commission as a seven-member body.
- In part because it's such a great opportunity for a community member to participate in governance, land use, the open space decisions are really important, too. The parks decisions.
- Our problem is, historically, we've never had money.
- We always have some development, and we seem to roll from one big controversy to the next incoming controversy.
- When we look at a three-person majority, potentially deciding a land use issue, I just don't think that's enough citizen participation.
- Especially if the three-person majority might exclude members of our business community, it might exclude members of our community who live within 500 or 1,000 feet or some blown-up extension of our city.
- I find that is really important, too, because Planning Commissioners are not responsible to the electorate.
- They're not even responsible one-on-one to a Councilmember.
- I can't see that we would empower few people that greatly.
- That's why I like staying at seven.
- I would direct the Planning Commission to put further thought into that.
- I'm comfortable with a four-member majority being residents.
- I think historically, if we track all the appointments, residents have always outnumbered businesspeople.
- Or people who live outside of the city limits, if we include the community member who could live outside.
- I mentioned my problem with restricting seats.
- As long as we have flexibility and they're not assigned, I trust this Council, and any future Council to make the appointments wisely.
- I don't think we need to worry about these theoretical possibilities like the owner of CVS to apply to sit on the Planning Commission.
- Even if somebody did, I would trust the decision makers to handle that circumstance.

City Council Meeting Minutes of March 16, 2021

- I think the honest part of this is trying to figure out the geography and I'm not sure that 95472 is workable.
- I'm kind of leaning towards Councilmember Hinton and Councilmember Slayter's suggestion, bulging out the city a little bit, some distance.
- I just want to mention, and Councilmember Slayter knows this, the water tank on Pleasant Hill is not the center of the city.
- I thought Councilmember Slayter was going to say, look at the geographic center of town.
- That's literally the geographic center of town.
- If we were to go from a radius from there that was a little bigger than the one-mile radius that includes almost all of town on the map that was circulated, that I circulated, the walk to it map.
- Maybe we can just draw that bigger, or maybe we just bulge out.
- Either way, I think we can come up with some practical solution.
- It would just be great that it would be clear.
- I think we can benefit from defining with examples perhaps the indicia of community-mindedness.
- I trust the decision of future Council to be able to handle that.
- If it would help other people to define that, I think we could work on that, too.
- That's where I am right now in the discussion.

Councilmember Rich commented as follows:

- Looking at the recommendations, just to make this brief here, I'm in agreement with all of the Planning Commission's suggestions.
- The one that I would vary on is having heard Vice Mayor Gurney's comments, in regard to reducing the size of the Commission to five members, I would ask that to the extent that the Planning Commission continues to feel that's a good idea, our direction to them should be to consider as Vice Mayor Gurney suggested what the implications are for the vote balance.
- For instance, if you think about the potential extreme, if you have five, and we continue to have two business owners and two non-city people, you could actually have the majority being non-residents.
- Maybe that's not going to happen, because they would re-define it to require that a majority of the five still be residents. It affects the math.
- I would want a recommendation about whether they had thought through the applications and still want it to be reduced to five.
- In the absence of that, I would stick with seven.
- In terms of moving the alternate in, I understand to become a regular member, I understand Vice Mayor Gurney's concerns.
- I hear a lot of strong support from this particular Planning Commission.
- I would support that decision.
- In terms of the geographic boundary, I'm in agreement with the prior comments that we look at the existing city limits and create some sort of buffer around those city limits, between the amount that Councilmember Hinton was suggesting and the two-mile amount that Cloverdale proposes.

Mayor Glass commented as follows:

- I'm in agreement we should delete the alternate.
- I tend to think that after deleting the alternate, I would tend to think we should leave it at the seven members and see how that goes.

- What I'm understanding is, first of all, the complexity of having the alternate, that makes for longer meetings, more complex decision making process, et cetera.
- If we go down to seven, all the time members, I think that would be a good idea.
- Revisit moving it down to five after we see how the seven works when we're not in alternate universe.
- If that does speed up the process, make it less confusing, et cetera.
- I want there always to be a majority that lives in the city limits.
- No matter what, I want flexibility, but always make sure that we have a majority that lives in the city limits.
- Which always is going to mean if we leave it at seven, that would be four people.
- In terms of the geography, I would advocate for doing "X" number of miles from the city limits, going in a Northerly, Westerly, or Southerly direction.
- Make the Laguna our boundary with the exception of the part of the city limits that falls into that area.
- If we make it a boundary, like, you do the radius thing, our city and our community is pretty much based on what is West of Laguna.
- If we say we're going to make it two miles outside of the city limits, but two of those miles could be going towards Santa Rosa, then you're going to really a different community.
- That's the Santa Rosa universe.
- We're the Sebastopol universe.
- I would suggest that we go perhaps two miles outside of our city limits, except for on the other side of the Laguna.
- Just keep the city limits, on the other side, make it the Laguna, make it the city limits.
- I think we should stick with the process of, we eliminate the alternate, and open up the position because that's our existing process.

The Council was in consensus to eliminate the alternate position.

Chair Fernandez commented as follows:

- Regarding the majority I felt it should be five of the seven. Commission felt four.
- If the agreement is to at some point reduce it to five, it should be revisited.
- Maybe it should be only one outside.
- Maybe at that point it makes sense to have an alternate.
- The idea of the alternate was to make sure we had a quorum. That hasn't been any issue.
- I've always thought that an alternate, when they're filling the position, that they moved it in to fill a position of a Planning Commissioner if they don't show up to the meeting.
- Was the idea if somebody leaves, now you have an alternate that understands the Commission, and they can step in.
- The current Commissioner has been outstanding as far as attendance. She's taken on a lot of projects as well. I know that she would not apply if you opened it up for the public because she doesn't want to fulfill that entire term. She wants to finish her term.
- I don't think there was any mention of if a person moves outside of the area.
- Maybe that is something the Council might want to discuss at a later time.
- Going from the seven to the five, I've been on the Commission with seven, it's worked out fine.
- I know what that is like. I think five would work. On the other hand, it's kind of nice to be able to speak to more than one person and to have committees of three people.

