

## MINUTES

### CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DUARTE SPECIAL MEETING – TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2003

CALL TO ORDER The City Council of the City of Duarte met in a special meeting at Beardslee School Cafeteria, 1212 E. Kellwil Way, Duarte, California. Mayor Chapjian called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

RECORDATION OF ATTENDANCE PRESENT: Chapjian, Fasana, Finlay, Paras, Reyes  
ABSENT: None

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG Mayor Chapjian led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA Finlay moved, Fasana seconded to adopt the Agenda, and carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Antonio Ogaz, Duarte Diversity Group, announced the Second Annual Multi-Cultural Festival on May 17 at Northview Park, and thanked event sponsors.

Nita Norgard, Friends of the Duarte Library, announced Cesar Chavez tribute on March 28, at 10:30 a.m., and library program “Duarte, One Town, One Book” from June 28-September 27.

Steve Hernandez, Duarte, stated his daughter is getting married, and invited Councilmembers to the reception.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS  
Beardslee Park Improvements Director of Community Development Ed Cox provided a staff report about the Beardslee Park Improvements, and described the two phases of the project.

Ed Vasquez, Duarte, inquired about the completion date and size of trees, and suggested the City Picnic be held at Beardslee Park, and rotated every other year. Cox stated Phase II would end in about mid-June, and there would be a variety of sizes and types of trees.

Home Rebate Grant Program Cox described the home rebate and the grant programs, including funding, what the programs cover, and income eligibility requirements, and responded to questions from the audience about the programs. Cox stated fliers are available, and invited those interested in the programs to call City Hall.

Mountain Avenue Park Cox provided a detailed report about the Mountain Avenue Park, and discussed acreage, property clearance, mature trees that have been saved, meetings with neighbors, amenities, use of CDBG funds, grant application, and architect, and answered questions from the audience pertaining to the construction of a block wall.

Duarte Skate Park City Manager Duff provided an update about the Duarte Skate Park, discussed involvement of skaters during the process, requests for proposals, design features, and location, and in response to questions from the audience, stated there will be City personnel and sheriff patrols occasionally, citations will be issued for improper equipment, the park will be open to all ages, it is for skaters and skateboarders, the School District’s partnership saved the City the cost of the land, and observation areas will be available.

Fasana stated the partnership with the School District is a continuing theme, it has helped us with the availability of the land for the skate park, the improvements to Beardslee Park, and the ongoing project for the new library.

Crime Statistics Director of Safety Coordination Don Anderson provided a staff report about crime statistics, discussed business and

residential burglaries, success of the Neighborhood Watch Program, prevention programs, programs to suppress gang activity, and probation deputies. In response to questions from the audience, Anderson stated witnesses are needed to come forward, encouraged residents to call the office to report graffiti, described a variety of youth prevention programs, stated monthly meetings are held with school administrators, noted the Neighborhood Watch newsletter has partnered with the Chamber paper and is now sent out quarterly, encouraged residents to become involved with Neighborhood Watch, and stated any group that would like to get involved constructively is welcome.

#### ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Lottie Walker, resident of the Heritage Park Apartments, stated there are a number of problems such as safety issues, carpeting, mildew, and appliances, stated management will not replace these items unless an apartment becomes empty, it is a senior citizen complex, they have tried to appeal to public resources through the government, there has been intimidation and excessive rents, and asked for direction on whom to contact. Mayor Chapjian stated he plans to meet with the group on Thursday night, and suggested City staff talk to management about the issues.

Mickey Oviatt, Duarte, stated Ms. Walker came to the Senior Center in the past and showed her pictures of mold and bad carpeting, and felt this should be seriously considered.

Steve Hernandez, Duarte, suggested the Neighborhood Watch and other items sent out be in Spanish, and with regard to the Mountain Avenue Park, stated one of the most respected people in the area is Lena, and asked if she could be honored with that park.

Margaret Viramontes, Duarte, stated Lena Valenzuela is in the hospital, she has had a stroke, she was a community advocate for many years, she did not want to be acknowledged, and feels the City Council should acknowledge her.

Henry Baltazar, Duarte, stated the City Council told contractors and business people who had to bring commercial vehicles home they would do something about the situation, he had to bring his dump truck home and received two tickets, stated the City of Duarte is a working-class city, and asked that it be addressed again. Mayor Chapjian stated a staff report could be provided at a later date.

Ed Vasquez, Duarte, discussed comments made by Mr. Fasana regarding demographics, felt it included racism, felt he was trying to instill fear and divide the community, stated he is elected to represent all people and should not fear the changing demographics, and stated if he is bothered that the demographics are changing, then maybe he should not seek re-election in November.

Fasana stated his comments were about the investigation into activities of Mr. Reyes brought by employees, there was no intent of making disparaging remarks toward anyone on a racial basis or trying to divide the community based on race, his comments were made about his concern about the behavior that was ongoing, it has nothing to do with color, it has to do with behavior directed toward staff and in letting contracts, he had concerns based upon the findings in the report and the connections in terms of the city of South Gate, his comments pertain to the direction of the City, issues of integrity, letting of contracts, and keeping professional staff here, and stated his intent is not to divide.

Antonio Ogaz, Duarte, stated he felt Mr. Fasana's comments were out of line and divisive, felt he was saying a so-called Latino majority that is about to take place will turn the

same way as South Gate and made comparisons, felt the real comparisons between the City of Duarte and the ex-recalled officials are the three Councilmembers who vote in concert with each other and control policy and programs, stated Mr. Duff is their ally, felt Mr. Fasana created an imaginary community to create fear and lead people in a direction which is divisive, and felt giving the City Manager a raise shows there is complicity there.

Fasana stated the report is available on the City's website and copies are at the library, a key difference is Mr. Duff has taken direction from the City Council, rather than the Council taking direction from the City Treasurer as in South Gate, under Mr. Duff's watch, the treasury of the City has grown to \$6 million dollars in reserves, under Mr. Robles' watch, the treasury dipped from \$13 million in reserves down to zero in less than two years, it had to do with favoritism and award of contracts, and stated the issues he raised were serious.

Mayor Chapjian stated the report was an independent investigation, and asked that all read it.

Brian Lister, Duarte, stated past and present Councilmembers have put the City in a very good financial position, the City is successful, there are many good services, and stated City staff deserves a hand.

Steve Hernandez, Duarte, stated all Councilmembers have talents, he does not think the problem should be brought to the staff level, they are victims, stated Mr. Fasana's comment bothered him, stated he does not want to be compared to another city, many people worked at making the City what it is today, stated Mr. Reyes is not completely innocent and without blame, he is under a huge amount of frustration, stated things in the past need to be put there, discussed a situation he experienced with Sgt. York, and stated it can be fixed by voting in new people.

Hal Firth, Duarte, stated he was troubled to hear comments by Mr. Ogaz and Mr. Vasquez, he is concerned about the constant stream of hatred, this was a wonderful opportunity to create outreach in this sector of the community, stated he hoped we could get back on track, and felt outreach should be to address needs of residents in the community.

Lino Paras, Duarte, stated he attends City Council meetings in other cities, he hopes there will be proper decorum and civility in Duarte, difference of opinion is part of politics, stated the report on Mr. Reyes is one of the best investments of the City, stated Mr. Reyes is not a saint, stated it is one person's opinion, and stated no one is absolutely clean.

City Councilmembers thanked community residents in attendance, City staff, Beardslee Principal Cecelia Milano, and the School District for their efforts in putting together this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Finlay moved, Paras seconded to adjourn the Special Meeting at 9:20 p.m., and carried unanimously.

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Mayor George Chapjian

ATTEST:

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City Clerk