

PORTOLA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING NO. 986, APRIL 8, 2020

MEETING HELD BY TELECONFERENCE ONLY

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Aalfs called the Town Council's Special meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Ms. Hanlon called the roll.

Present: Councilmembers Craig Hughes, John Richards, and Ann Wengert; Vice Mayor Maryann Derwin; Mayor Jeff Aalfs

Absent: None

Others: Jeremy Dennis, Town Manager
Cara Silver, Town Attorney
Sharon Hanlon, Town Clerk

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

- (1) **Approval of Minutes** – Town Council Special Meeting of March 17, 2020.
- (2) **Approval of Minutes** – Town Council Special Meeting of March 25, 2020.
- (3) **Approval of Warrant List** – April 8, 2020, in the amount of \$127,072.24.

Councilmember Wengert moved to approve the Consent Agenda after striking the reference to the Pledge of Allegiance in both sets of minutes. Seconded by Councilmember Hughes, the motion carried 5-0, by roll call vote.

REGULAR AGENDA

Mayor Aalfs adjusted the lineup of Agenda Items, with the permission of the Council.

- (5) **Report by Town Manager** – Farmer's Market Update

Nile Estep explained how they have adapted to the shelter in place environment. He expressed appreciation for the relationships with the Town and the customers. He said the number of vendors has remained constant. They hope to conduct more events, such as a dinner in the park, and add aspects such as food trucks and more seating to the market, which are obviously on hold for now. Mr. Estep appreciated the Town's support of the vendors during this time. He read a note from the Little Sky Bakery – "Having the Safe PV Market program has really helped our small business during this difficult time. It has let us continue to provide bread to our customers in Portola Valley in a safe manner and helps sustain our livelihood. Little Sky Bakery and our customers really appreciate the program and hope it can be extended as long as the market is not open." Mr. Estep said they have been trying to utilize all Farmer's Market vendors and they have been grateful for that opportunity. Mr. Estep said in the three weeks they've been operational, they have sold more than 1,500 bags and 300 pounds of grass-fed beef, 160 donation bags have been purchased by the community and they have received more than 70 positive thank you notes. He said they sell more bags every week, this week selling out 560 bags. He said they heard from a thankful self-isolating gentleman whose neighbor delivers his bag to him. They delivered a

bag to a very thankful and emotional woman who has no family, lives alone, and has been very afraid to go outside.

Town Manager Dennis thanked Nile and his team for stepping up and bringing the safe market idea, allowing the vendors to continue to work. He said the donation aspect of the program has been well received. The donated bags, which are purchased by residents, are donated to students in the school district who do not live in Portola Valley.

Mayor Aalfs said he has received a lot of positive feedback about the Farmer's Market and the donated bags. He thanked Mr. Estep and Town Manager Dennis and the staff for making this work. Mayor Aalfs invited questions from the Council.

Councilmember Hughes said Nile has done a great job in maintaining and enhancing the Farmer's Market. He said the safe program has been spectacularly successful. He said the Councilmembers have been trying to share this model with other cities and towns who are trying to continue with their Farmer's Markets.

Councilmember Wengert asked Mr. Estep how the vendors are doing. Mr. Estep said it varies among the vendors. He said the meat vendors are very busy with people stocking up. He said accessory vendors, such as cookies, etc., are struggling. He said some Farmer's Markets have opened up to purchase items individually from the vendors which does not help the accessory vendors. He said with this model, they use a little from every vendor and can share the purchasing power.

- (7) **Recommendation by Town Manager and Planning & Building Director** – Adoption of a Resolution to Ratify Ordinance No. 12 of the Woodside Fire Protection District
- (a) Adoption of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley to Ratify Ordinance No. 12 of the Woodside Fire Protection District (Resolution No. 2820-2020)

Town Manager Dennis presented the background and discussion items regarding the proposed resolution to ratify Ordinance 12 of the Woodside Fire Protection District, which adopts by reference the 2018 International Fire Code with the 2019 California amendments, as detailed in the staff report. Woodside Fire Marshal Don Bullard was present to answer any questions.

Mayor Aalfs invited questions from the Council.

Councilmember Hughes asked what is allowed in the new fire code in terms of grouping of buildings on a lot and proximity to setbacks if there are buildings on adjacent lots. His concern is that there are extensive details in the Town's code regarding setbacks and he wants to understand if the adoption of the new fire code would change that, potentially rendering properties or existing building envelopes effectively no longer buildable because of the fire code. Mr. Bullard said the Fire District can make recommendations based on what they know as far as proximity of buildings, but building proximities are the Town's building code issue, not a fire code issue. Councilmember Hughes described a hypothetical project with a new house with a detached carport 10 feet from the house. He asked if the Fire Department would write a comment similar to the one that came to the Stanford Wedge project, advising that structures should not be that close together. Mr. Bullard said there is nothing in the fire code that gives them the authority to make that call and it would be merely a recommendation to the homeowner based on the materials used. He said, for example, the recommendation is that fences should not be attached to a house and there should be a break in the fence to protect the structure. He said they do not have any authority regarding setbacks or the proximity of a carport to a house.

With no other questions from the Council, Mayor Aalfs invited public comment. Hearing none, Mayor Aalfs brought the item back to the Council for discussion.

The Councilmembers were supportive of the proposed ordinance.

Councilmember Richards moved to approve the Resolution to Ratify Ordinance No. 12 of the Woodside Fire Protection District. Seconded by Councilmember Hughes; the motion carried 5-0 by roll call vote.

(4) **Report by Town Manager** – Updates on COVID-19 and Town Response.

Town Manager Dennis highly recommended the various online resources and links found on smcgov.org, including San Mateo County Strong, which is funding San Mateo County small businesses, nonprofits, individuals and families.

Town Manager Dennis shared informational websites: www.smchealth.org for regularly updated County data regarding COVID-19; www.smco.community.zonehaven.com which shows the County's evacuation districts; and the Town's website at www.portolavalley.net/what-s-new/covid-19-updates.

Town Manager Dennis said communications is generally through the daily Mayor's message. He said staff has adjusted to working from home and, in some cases, have moved to regular work, especially in Planning and Building and the Public Works Department. He said the Planning team is working on permits already in-house; however, the Town is still not accepting new applications. He said 11 projects have requested and been granted continued construction due to life/safety issues, erosion control issues, etc. Town Manager Dennis said Public Works is working on regular right-of-way issues, vegetation management related to wildfire management, maintenance of facilities being used by residents such as the Town Center. He said they are seeing much better overall social distancing across the board. He said, unfortunately, they have had to take some measures such as removing basketball hoops and tennis court nets.

Town Manager Dennis said the Finance Committee has put together some initial figures to be discussed with the subcommittee. Some assumptions are that the Town may not see much in the way of sales tax for the rest of the fiscal year as well as planning and building related fees and permits, home sales, business license renewals, leasing income, rental income, sports leagues, etc. He said if all those assumptions occur, the high estimate would be a \$300,000 hit to the budget. He said, however, there will be opportunities within the budget to make up the shortfall within the general fund – such as salary savings for a position that has not been filled, more than anticipated in the ERAF (education fund), consultants that will not be used at this time, etc. He said there are also expenditures within the Capital Improvement Program that will be on hold for now, including the road project, storm drains, and pedestrian safety improvements.

Town Manager Dennis participated in a CalPERS call today and was pleasantly surprised that they are not taking as dramatic a hit as anticipated. Councilmember Hughes added that the portfolio is down approximately 4% as of the end of March. He said they discussed when the Towns may expect to see an impact from that in terms of how it affects the actuarial calculation for the top-up payments the Towns must make for their unfunded liability and they've come up with a formula where the shortfall that may come out from this will be passed on to the Towns two years from now (2022) and they have a long-term ramp period to smooth it in over time. He said Portola Valley is already healthily funded (approximately 95% range) compared to a lot of other towns against the CalPERS liability, so it will take a hit. He said the Town may lose 4% to 5%, which should be manageable. He said CalPERS is working hard to smooth that out as much as possible. He said he was pleasantly surprised at how well CalPERS has been managing the portfolio, particularly compared to 2007-2008 when they took a much bigger hit. He said the portfolio planning has been much improved to better handle situations just like this.

Town Manager Dennis said there have also been some emergency expenditures such as Windy Hill signage (\$2,000 a month per sign). He said he and Public Works Director Young are looking at replacing those signs with more locally placed signs in the Willowbrook area. He said the Town is contributing \$6,000 a week for Farmer's Market support. They have also made a number of purchases (i.e.,

computers, etc.) to support working from home. He said the Town is in good shape with a very healthy reserve. He said the Town is able to make the kinds of changes needed to keep it together. He said staff will make a presentation to the subcommittee for their feedback. He said Portola Valley is in an enviable position with other cities looking at enormous hits to their transient occupancy taxes, sales taxes, etc., and having to make decisions regarding personnel, which Portola Valley will not need to deal with.

Town Manager Dennis said reopening must be planned for because it is not as simple as unlocking the door and resuming business as usual. He said he anticipates a lot of energy pent up over time to rent the facilities, get back into planning and building activities, etc., and it will not be manageable if certain activities are not strategically phased in. He has been talking with colleagues in other cities to brainstorm creative ideas of phasing in services.

Town Manager Dennis said the Cultural Arts Committee is holding the first virtual Committee meeting tomorrow. He said other Committees are also looking to resume meetings.

Town Manager Dennis said the EOC remains open. He said if there are recovery dollars related to the FEMA aspect of this, the Town is eligible.

Town Manager Dennis said some signage has been installed at the turnouts on Upper Alpine to discourage parking. The barricades remain up on Willowbrook. He said he is not sure that they are still effective. He said traffic and parking has fallen considerably. He said Coal Mine Ridge is not a regional destination in the same way Windy Hill is and people seem to be adhering better to the five-mile radius restriction for exercise. Town Manager Dennis said they worked with Alpine Inn to put some parking restrictions in place because people were parking there to access the Arastradero Preserve, one day having 40 cars parked in that lot.

Town Manager Dennis said they plan to launch a virtual Parks and Recreation page very quickly, calling for all artists, musicians, and other content providers to be hosted on the site. They are also working to have a staff corner to provide virtual tours, music, mindfulness exercises, etc. They are looking for potential content from the school district, Palo Alto University, and the library.

Town Manager Dennis said Portola Valley is in 5th place for returns on the census in San Mateo County.

Mayor Aalfs invited questions from the Council.

Councilmember Hughes said the Town has reached out to all the businesses to advise about the options and benefits available on the Federal level. He asked Town Manager Dennis if he had heard any feedback on that and how the businesses are doing. Town Manager Dennis referred the question to Councilmember Wengert. Councilmember Wengert said there is a lot of frustration about the ability to get through to any lenders. She said the feedback she's received is that people are working very hard on it and are very aware of the options. She said the Town's website has been very helpful. She said it is, obviously, an incredibly backlogged system. She said Jackie Spier said there is likely to be another significant amount added to the CARE Act by the end of the week, much of it designated to the small business side. She said the goal is to facilitate that process as quickly as possible and a lot of the issues are resident with the commercial banks.

Councilmember Hughes said he has heard about the issues with applying for loans. He said most of the people he's been talking to are tech-savvy start-up companies that are aware of these opportunities and he wanted to make sure the Portola Valley businesses are aware of those options. Town Manager Dennis said he and Councilmember Wengert have been working on that and the information sent out has been well received.

Town Manager Dennis asked for feedback and direction from the Council regarding Willowbrook. He said he does not think the barricades need to be there right now. He said the new signage should be sufficient for regional traffic. He said the barricades can be used other places.

Councilmember Wengert asked if the thinking was to stop parking on all of Willowbrook. Town Manager Dennis said the order he issued currently does not allow parking on Willowbrook associated with Windy Hill, but they have not been able to logically mark the street. He said the signs are intended to help with regional traffic. He said people are not supposed to be getting to recreational areas by car and staff wants to support the shelter in place. He said he is not necessarily looking to keep everyone off of Willowbrook who is looking for a recreational opportunity, but he also does not think the barricades are particularly useful at this point and probably just pushing the problem down the street a little bit.

Councilmember Richards agreed with Town Manager Dennis. He said if it is expected that people will continue to park on Willowbrook to hike on the Coal Mine Ridge trail and the signs may make parking there ticketable; however, it will not possible to tell if people are going up to Windy Hill or onto Coal Mine Ridge. He agrees that the parking has shifted and reduced quite a bit, mostly by the signs saying Windy Hill is closed at the entries to Town. He said taking down the barricades makes sense.

Town Manager Dennis said the Town is in the position to allow the Farmer's Market to continue for three or four weeks under the current order, maybe longer. He said the cost is just over \$6,000 a week to support the infrastructure. He said the program has been very successful and he expects that to continue. He asked the Council for feedback considering the cost.

Mayor Aalfs said there are definitely people from outside of Town buying some of the Farmer's Market bags but people are very happy about this program. He said the feel-good factor for the community and the public relations is valuable. He was supportive of continuing the program.

Councilmember Hughes said the initial subsidy requested was higher with a lower price for the bag of groceries. He said they have set a reasonable price for the bags. He was supportive of keeping this going. He said people feel good about it and enjoy being able to support the Farmer's Market vendors. He said they are also using it as a mechanism with the donation bags to help feed people who might not otherwise be able to get food at this time. Councilmember Hughes asked if there might be room to increase the price per bag slightly, perhaps \$5, to reduce the amount the Town subsidizes.

Vice-Mayor Derwin agrees the bag price should be increased a bit to take some pressure off the Town. She said she did not think the residents would have difficulty spending another \$5 per bag. She said it is a very wonderful program and should continue.

Councilmember Richards asked if there was the capacity to increase the number of bags sold, since they're selling out. Town Manager Dennis said they can accommodate some increase in bags and a lot has to do with what the vendors can provide. He said Mr. Estep has not asked to provide more bags. Councilmember Richards supported continuing the program and also supported a small increase to the price of the bags.

Councilmember Wengert was supportive of continuing the program and also increasing the cost of the bags by \$5. Councilmember Wengert said it is clear the need for food is rising and will continue to rise. She suggested a donation could be considered to go to Second Harvest as people place their orders or as a separate thing. She said people in Town may be very generous in that regard if they were aware of how much that need is increasing. Mayor Aalfs supported this suggestion.

Town Manager Dennis said it was discussed at the Mayor's virtual coffee last week the opportunity for local restaurants to donate to local hospitals. He said he reached out to Stanford and they are not taking any donations because they are being overwhelmed, but that could change quickly. He said he will be happy to reach out to Second Harvest to ask about their capacity to take increased donations.

David Cardinal said he appreciated the Farmer's Market and supported the Town's contribution, but asked if the Town was doing the same for other local businesses that are suffering and that, to some extent, compete with the Farmer's Market. Mayor Aalfs said the Town has not been subsidizing local business but has been trying to encourage people to order locally. He said the Farmer's Market has been subsidized so that the vendors will still be around when the Farmer's Market is reopened. He said obviously they want the Town restaurants and Roberts to stay in business as well. Mr. Cardinal requested that the Council think about it. He said he is much more of a fan of the local businesses who are more a core than the Farmer's Market.

Councilmember Wengert said the Town has begun more outreach to some of the local merchants in a more direct way. She said two in the Jelich property complex have Go Fund Me campaigns. She said there are individual efforts in addition to the financing packages being pursued. She said one of the goals going forward is to be able to aggregate information about that and take in new ideas for supporting local businesses. Mr. Cardinal said he is not supportive of using taxpayer funds to subsidize one and not the other.

Town Manager Dennis pointed out that the Town financially supports the Farmer's Market anyway, outside of the COVID pandemic, at a different price point and different amount. Mr. Cardinal said he would rather his tax dollars go to support local businesses and then, when the local businesses are doing okay, put the leftovers into the Farmer's Market.

Councilmember Hughes suggested Town Manager Dennis work out with Mr. Estep if there is room for a per bag price increase or increasing the number of bags. He would support continuing to subsidize the Farmer's Market but would like to see it reduced, if possible, from the sale of the bags.

(6) **Recommendation by Town Attorney** - Consideration of Adoption of an Urgency Ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley Establishing a Moratorium on Evictions for Non-payment of Rent by Small Business Commercial Tenants Directly Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic (Ordinance No. ___)

Town Attorney Cara Silver explained that the County passed a commercial tenant eviction ordinance that applies only to unincorporated County businesses. Because of the many variables among the different cities in the County, they left the decision about adopting such an ordinance to the individual cities. She presented and explained the proposed urgency ordinance, as detailed in the staff report.

Councilmember Wengert said there is a shared community concern for all of the Town's small tenants. She said Portola Valley rents cannot be compared to Palo Alto rents, with PV serving a much smaller population, but the Town has many beloved small retail tenants. She said the Town was looking for ways to try to help these commercial tenants make it through this difficult time. She said the advice was that all landlords and tenants work on this together as a first step, discussing what can realistically be done to make it work. She said, from her conversations with the majority of the landlords in town, that dialogue has started and is well underway if not nearly complete. She said the landlords and tenants are all trying to permeate the CARE package and SBA loans.

Mayor Aalfs invited questions from the Council.

Councilmember Hughes asked if "local emergency" refers to the Town of Portola Valley, the State, or the Federal emergency. Town Attorney Silver said it is the Portola Valley declared emergency and the ordinance will be amended to clarify that.

Councilmember Hughes asked if the ordinance was legally allowed to disallow the collection of late fees, which could essentially invalidate portions of a landlord/tenant contract, which takes real value from the landlords. Town Attorney Silver said the proposed six-month deferral period is a policy decision. She said the City of San Mateo is also enforcing a six-month deferral. She said in the rental moratorium

ordinances, there was more diversity in terms of the deferral period with some cities adopting 90 days, some 120 days. She said, with respect to the late fees, across the board the ordinances have incorporated that waiver because if a tenant is struggling financially and having to pay at the end and then also having to pay late fees, it defeats the purpose of the ordinance. She said it is very unlikely that disallowing the late fees constitutes a taking, although someone could assert that. She said another claim that has been asserted is impairment of contract. Town Attorney Silver said the courts look at the entire context of the situation in which these ordinances are adopted and it is not thought likely the court would find the waiver of a late fee in this context to be a taking or impairment of contract.

Councilmember Hughes asked if any other towns or jurisdictions looked at the size of the landlord to define "small business." He said in Portola Valley all of the businesses are small and many landlords are small. He said while the businesses have a facility through the SBA payroll protection program for specifically covering their rent payments, landlords do not have any protection for whatever payments they have to make on money they've borrowed against their properties. He said his concern is that while the Town tries to protect retail businesses, the small landlords will not be able to afford to have all of their tenants not paying rent. That loss of cash flow means they will not be able to service their loans and they have no other facility to get money, unlike the retail businesses. He said he does not want to see businesses go under and also does not want to see landlords go under with banks owning all of the commercial properties in Portola Valley with all the tenants now having banks as their landlords.

Town Attorney Silver said one of the aspects incorporated into the ordinance in an attempt to address that issue is the inclusion, in Section 2G, a hardship waiver, designed for landlords where this is their only income-producing asset and their tenants asking for this relief would cause them financial hardship. She said there is an administrative review process in place for that circumstance.

Councilmember Wengert said she is also concerned about the issues raised by Councilmember Hughes. She said in advance of this meeting tonight, she tried to get a feel from the Town's largest landlords about how they were feeling about this. She said most of them were not concerned because they are far along in negotiations with their tenants relative to what they are going to provide for them. She said that may not be universal throughout Portola Valley, however, and she suggested that if there are those who have not been in active negotiations with their tenants to date, that they be given another week to do that to exhaust efforts to stay outside of a legislative solution like this.

Town Manager Dennis said there are a few resources available to landlords including the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program. He said several banks and credit unions have agreed to a 90-day forbearance of mortgage payments for smaller property owners impacted by COVID-19.

Town Attorney Silver said the Judicial Council's Emergency Rule #2 stays judicial foreclosures for both commercial and residential. Councilmember Hughes said that while this prevents foreclosures from moving forward now, those foreclosure actions can be filed once the courts open again.

Mayor Aalfs invited public comment.

Town Manager Dennis said approximately 15 emails were received from residents, all supportive of a commercial eviction moratorium.

Stanley Lo. Mr. Lo said that commercial businesses such as Hillsdale and Crystal Springs, which have been family owned for years and do not have mortgages, can replace their tenants in a manner of weeks. He said in Portola Valley, the tenants are very hard to replace, sometimes taking six months to a year to find a new tenant. He said the internet has caused the death of retail stores. He said it is very competitive for restaurants, chiropractor offices, etc. He said he works like partners and families with his tenants, most of whom have been with him more than 10 years. He said if the tenants don't do well, the landlord doesn't do well. He said the emergency ordinance doesn't really apply to Portola Valley because no landlords at this time would send eviction notices because they will not be able to replace their tenants for a long time.

He said he also has property on what used to be a hot area of Burlingame, but now has many vacant stores. He said he has borrowed almost \$5 million on his property but getting no return and will not be able to sell. He said it is a very difficult situation and they are on the front lines of the real estate market battlefield. He said the end result of this moratorium will be ruining a good relationship with his tenants telling him they will not pay him because they are protected by law. He said he doesn't want to argue with his tenants, subpoena their financial statements and bank accounts, etc. He said right now he is only getting 60% of his rents and he is trying to work it out with his tenants.

With no other public comments, Mayor Aalfs brought the item back to the Council for discussion.

Councilmember Wengert said it will be important for the Town to make sure that if the ordinance is not adopted, there is progress being made to ensure that all the local tenants have the ability to move forward and do the best they can in this environment, working together in a positive way with their landlords to solve this now. She would support not adopting the ordinance tonight and revisiting it in a week.

Mr. Cardinal said he's hearing Mr. Lo saying the ordinance is unnecessary because everything is fine and then says everything is not fine. Mr. Cardinal said there are very few retail spaces and fewer landlords. He said he loves the Town's businesses and would like to make sure the Town does whatever possible to make sure they stay in business.

Councilmember Hughes agreed with Councilmember Wengert's suggestion to push this off for a week because he is also concerned that the ordinance might halt the conversations and compromises between landlords and tenants. He is concerned that all tenants may stop paying their rents due to the ordinance instead of working out a compromise with their landlord. That situation could result in the banks becoming landlords and banks will be much less likely to have conversations and make compromises. He said the courts are closed and evictions cannot be filed right now anyway and he would prefer to give landlords and tenants the chance to work something out.

Councilmember Richards said it is clear that the broader interest of the community is to protect the small businesses as much as possible. He said he would be supportive of delaying a week, but he would probably want to have something in place as a backstop in the event that the talks between the landlords and tenants are not satisfactory.

Vice-Mayor Derwin said the interest is in making everyone as whole as possible, although there is clearly misery on all sides. She is supportive of waiting another week to see if landlords can work things out with tenants, and also agrees with Councilmember Richards to move forward with the ordinance if it is found that some of the Town's small businesses are not as protected as they should be.

Mayor Aalfs said two weeks ago when the County was putting together the eviction moratorium for residential properties, there was discussion about the issue that tenants can be protected from landlords but landlords cannot be protected from banks. He agreed that the preferred solution is landlords and tenants working it out themselves but the Town should also be prepared for worst case scenario. He would like to do whatever possible to protect the local small businesses.

Councilmember Hughes said the landlords are small businesses as well as the renters. The landlords live in Town, own the properties, and rent them out to single tenants. He asked why the Town would protect retail businesses at the expense of a different category of small business. He said the landlords of the retail businesses are a critical part of the infrastructure of the Town. He said the landlords do not have funding sources to go to for relief. He said perhaps within a week the SBA loans may start unblocking and people may be able to get those facilities. He said he fully appreciates wanting to protect the small businesses that are renting retail in town, but is much more concerned about the landlords, particularly considering the already difficult burden of trying to fill a commercial vacancy in Portola Valley.

Councilmember Wengert said she has talked to two of the major landlords in town who were incredibly positive, definitely optimistic about their ability to work closely with their tenants to try to solve this. She was supportive of waiting the extra week, confirming that the discussions have moved forward, that the tenants and landlords have worked things out. She said if that does not happen, then the ordinance is potentially a good backstop.

Vice-Mayor Derwin asked Councilmember Wengert if there were other landlords as worried about the proposed ordinance as Mr. Lo. Councilmember Wengert said she was not away of any. There is one landlord she has not yet spoken with and will reach out to them again. She said there are a fair amount of owner-occupied businesses in the Town's relatively small retail corridor.

Councilmember Hughes asked if there would be a special meeting held next week to consider this issue or if it should be pushed to the meeting scheduled for April 22.

Town Manager Dennis said there has been interest expressed in holding weekly meetings for a while, perhaps with not the regular agenda items, instead having COVID updates and opportunities for the Council to discuss pressing issues.

Councilmember Wengert agreed with having weekly Town Council meetings, particularly because there will be reopening discussions and planning to be done.

Councilmember Hughes moved to table voting on the proposed ordinance until next week. Seconded by Councilmember Wengert; the motion carried 5-0 by roll call vote.

(8) **Recommendation by Town Manager** – Recommendation of Proposed Public Comment Policy

Town Manager Dennis described the proposed public comment policy, the background and discussion items, as detailed in the staff report. Staff recommended the Town Council adopt the Public Comment Policy for Town Council meetings and amend the Decorum Policy.

Mayor Aalfs said things have been handled informally in Town but it is a good idea to have something like this in place for times when there needs to be a more formal process.

Mayor Aalfs invited questions from the Council.

Councilmember Hughes said #11 authorizes the Mayor or Presiding Officer to shorten speaking time to two minutes. He suggested that it be put into the policy that the time can be extended by unanimous consent of the Council.

Councilmember Wengert said in the last couple of years there has been some intimidation due to applause at meetings and some people interrupting and speaking from the audience without being called on. Town Manager Dennis said mention of applause and interruptions can be added to #2 under general rules. Councilmember Hughes said it needs to be made clear that applause that is intended to be supportive may be intimidating and damaging. Mayor Aalfs agreed that the reference to cheers and jeers could be more explicit.

Councilmember Hughes said his understanding is that speakers can be entirely anonymous under the Brown Act. Town Attorney Silver agreed. Councilmember Hughes said #3 should still have the request to provide name and address but add that name and address disclosure are not required.

Vice-Mayor Derwin said she thought Steve Tobin had a good explanation of why it is not helpful to clap at a meeting when they were serving on the Town-Owned Property Committee. Vice-Mayor Derwin will find that language and provide it to Town Manager Dennis.

Mayor Aalfs invited public comment. There was no public comment.

The Council directed staff to bring this issue back on the next Consent Agenda.

(9) **COUNCIL LIAISON COMMITTEE AND REGIONAL AGENCIES REPORTS**

Councilmember Wengert – Attended a remote Roundtable regional meeting today. She said the new portal will provide real-time data that was previously only available to Roundtable members on a monthly or every other month basis.

Councilmember Richards – None.

Councilmember Hughes – As previously reported, Councilmember Hughes attended the CalPERS meeting. He added that CalPERS has yet not accounted for the impact on their private equity investments. The 4% figure may rise a bit because of those impacts. He said during the call today with the elected officials and County Manager, Jackie Spiers reported that she is expecting that Congress will pass by unanimous consent another large amount of Federal money (trillions) with \$250 million to top up the PPP plan, \$100 million for hospitals, \$150 million for local governments, including those left out of the original projects.

Vice Mayor Derwin – None.

Mayor Aalfs – He and Town Manager Dennis were on a call this afternoon with two School Board members. He said it came up that parents of younger children are struggling with ways to have some contact outside of their homes. He would like to help people initiate more groups with common interests to get together, perhaps through things like Zoom.

(10) **TOWN MANAGER REPORT** – Town Manager Dennis reported that just prior to tonight's meeting, he listened to the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District Special Meeting on their Wildfire Vegetation Management Plan. He said while they have a great plan, they are not planning to do some of the work until winter 2021, including some of the work at Windy Hill. He said as staff moves more into their regular schedule, they are spending some time on policy work. He said Assistant to the Town Manager Brandi de Garmeaux and Administration and Operations Specialist Taylor Soleno are looking at ways to improve facility management and rentals, bringing it through the appropriate committees. He said the Town has seen an increase in trespassing into the creek at the Georgia Lane/Grove bridge, with a number of police reports of trespass signage damage, private webcams stolen, graffiti on rocks, etc. He said there has been some vegetation management work being done at Blue Oaks that is visible from the Ranch and caused some concern. The work is being guided by the Woodside Fire Protection District as part of the vegetation management plan for the Blue Oaks subdivision. Town Manager Dennis said Capt. Corpus is looking to do a virtual coffee, possibly on April 14.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

(11) **Town Council Digest** – March 27, 2020

None.

(12) **Town Council Digest** – April 2, 2020

None.

ADJOURNMENT [9:30 p.m.]

Mayor Aalfs adjourned the meeting.

Mayor

Town Clerk