

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE MONTCLAIR  
CITY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2019, AT  
5:31 P.M. IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 5111 BENITO  
STREET, MONTCLAIR, CALIFORNIA

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Dutrey called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Dutrey; Mayor Pro Tem Raft; Council Members Ruh and Johnson

City Manager Starr; City Attorney Robbins; City Clerk Phillips

Mayor Dutrey requested the City Clerk call for roll of applicants and announce the order in which applicants shall be interviewed.

City Clerk Phillips stated **Mr. David W. Schroeder** withdrew his application to be considered for appointment. She took roll call of the following applicants as follows:

Present: Sousan D. Elias, Benjamin Lopez, Rosa Rangel, Donald R. Alexander, George RJ Tellez, Bruce E. Culp (via teleconference), Corysa Martinez, Juliet Orozco, Virginia "Ginger" Eaton

Absent: Anna Marie Salaiz, Edgar Gallegos (arrived at 5:37 p.m.)

City Clerk Phillips noted the order of interviews shall be as follows:

- |                        |                             |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Sousan D. Elias     | 7. Edgar Gallegos           |
| 2. Benjamin Lopez      | 8. Bruce E. Culp            |
| 3. Rosa Rangel         | 9. Corysa Martinez          |
| 4. Anna Marie Salaiz   | 10. Juliet Orozco           |
| 5. Donald R. Alexander | 11. Virginia "Ginger" Eaton |
| 6. George RJ Tellez    |                             |

The City Council discussed and concurred that those candidates who are absent shall be interviewed if they show up before the conclusion of the meeting.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT — None**

**IV. INTERVIEW COUNCIL APPLICANTS**

Mayor Dutrey asked his Council colleagues to provide questions they wish to be asked of all interviewees, if any.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft stated she would like to know the candidates' positions on the legalization of marijuana in the City, and whether they support efforts to bring the Gold Line to Montclair.

Council Member Ruh requested candidates state whether they are in favor of addressing the low- and moderate-income housing shortage before allowing the development of less affordable housing and luxury condos.

Mayor Dutrey stated he would like all applicants to state whether, if appointed to fill the vacancy, they would run for the seat in the next General Municipal Election in 2020.

No additional interview questions were put forward by the City Council.

Mayor Dutrey announced each of the applicants would have five minutes to present an opening statement, and then may be asked to answer questions by any or all members of the City Council in addition to the interview question put forward by Council Members.

1. **Ms. Sousan Elias** stated she supports the legalization of cannabis and bringing the Gold Line to Montclair. She noted she is a business owner of the first microbrewery to open in Montclair, of which there are now three. She noted she has been through the process of starting a business in Montclair including interacting with the City Council and Planning Commission. She noted she works part time as a court reporter. She noted in memory of the late Council Member Trisha Martinez, the City Council should consider appointing someone who has no direct involvement with the City.

Council Member Ruh asked if **Ms. Elias** is okay with cannabis being sold 100 feet away from homes and 600 feet away from schools.

**Ms. Elias** stated she does not see an issue with that.

Council Member Ruh asked how she would like to see affordable housing addressed in the City.

**Ms. Elias** stated she is aware of the need for affordable housing but is not sure what can be done. She noted her observation that it is becoming more expensive to rent in the City than to own a home.

Mayor Dutrey asked if she would run for the seat, should she be appointed.

**Ms. Elias** stated she would run for election.

2. **Mr. Benjamin Lopez** stated he is endorsed by both the **Montclair Fire Fighters'** and **Police Officers' Associations**. He noted he is knowledgeable in local politics and governments, and has good working relationships with many elected officials. He stated he supports the Gold Line and would like to help get funding. He advised he is no longer against the idea of bonding pension debt, and stated he would also advocate for annexing more unincorporated territory into the City for the property tax benefits. He noted he was the runner-up in the last few elections, and stated he appreciates the Council's consideration.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft asked for his positions on cannabis and the Gold Line.

**Mr. Lopez** stated he personally voted against Proposition 64; however, he is not against the City having a well-regulated cannabis market. He emphasized he does not support a proliferation of "pot shops" throughout the community. He noted he is in support of taxing the industry, but not over-taxing it, which seems to be the trend. He added he is in full support of the Gold Line.

Council Member Ruh asked if **Mr. Lopez** would support cannabis stores operating near schools.

**Mr. Lopez** stated Montclair is a small town so he is unsure how to address the close proximity to schools and homes regardless of the location. He stated he would not be in favor of having shops operating near schools.

In response to Council Member Ruh's affordable housing question, **Mr. Lopez** stated he commends the City on its recent efforts to address housing in the community. He noted 60 percent of the community are renters, and the median income is \$60,000. He stated he is not against building more housing, and is willing to listen to the residents and the development community.

3. **Ms. Rosa Rangel** stated she came to Montclair from Mexico when she was 29 years old, and learned English as a second language. She applied for citizenship with a desire to vote and have her voice heard in government. She raised her family in the City and ran her own business here as well. For 34 years she has volunteered in various ways throughout the community, including for the Chamber of Commerce, at church, for nonprofits, and for her children's school. She would like to see more innovation to keep businesses in the City, continue community programs, and do more for the residents.

**Ms. Rangel** stated she feels strict regulations are necessary for cannabis legalization, noting one person's rights end where another person's begin. She stated she is fully in support of the Gold Line reaching Montclair.

Council Member Ruh asked if **Ms. Rangel** supports the 100 and 600 foot setbacks for cannabis sales from homes and schools, and asked her to state her position on affordable housing.

**Ms. Rangel** stated she is opposed to cannabis businesses near schools. She stated she feels rental prices are becoming too expensive, and home ownership is a way to control rental increases.

Mayor Dutrey asked **Ms. Rangel** how long she has been serving on the Community Activities Commission.

**Ms. Rangel** stated it has been a little over one year since her appointment.

Mayor Dutrey asked if **Ms. Rangel** would run for election if she is appointed.

**Ms. Rangel** stated she would.

4. **Ms. Anna Marie Salaiz** was not present at the meeting.
5. **Mr. Donald R. Alexander** stated he is very excited for the development happening in the community. He called himself a candidate for the people, noting he has a vast working background including working in construction, as a cashier at **CVS**, a teacher, and an Assistant Principal, as well as doing sales for his family-founded trucking company. He added he has fond memories growing up in Montclair and going to the Montclair Senior Center with his grandfather. He stated he is very excited to bring his visions and goals to the City Council, and that he is agreeable and easy to work with. He stated he is supportive of our local police and fire departments, repaving of City streets, and developing North Montclair including fulfilling the vision of bringing Gold Line light rail service to the Montclair Transcenter. He stated he does not support the recreational use of cannabis, but feels he needs to have an open mind to it now that it is legal in the state. He noted the legal dispensaries in Los Angeles appear to be bringing crime into the neighborhoods.

Council Member Ruh asked if **Mr. Alexander** supports the standard setback requirements for cannabis shops from homes and schools.

**Mr. Alexander** stated he does not and feels they should be greater.

Council Member Ruh asked **Mr. Alexander** to state his position on affordable housing.

**Mr. Alexander** stated he feels the problem is that there are not enough well-paying jobs in the area to support the cost of housing.

Mayor Dutrey asked if **Mr. Alexander** would run for office in an election if appointed.

**Mr. Alexander** stated he would.

6. **Mr. George RJ Tellez** stated he would like the opportunity to serve on the City Council to make a difference in his community. He stated he can relate to the community, bring success to the City, build on programs, and address transit to build a better Montclair. He stated he supports the operation of cannabis businesses, noting his mother has cancer and relies upon medical cannabis, which has helped her immensely. He stated if he is appointed, he will run and is not just here to serve for a year.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft asked if he supports efforts to bring the Gold Line to Montclair.

**Mr. Tellez** stated he does, and that transportation is an important priority to him in general because Montclair is the gateway to the Inland Empire.

Council Member Ruh asked if **Mr. Tellez** supports the currently allowed 100- and 600-foot setbacks for cannabis businesses to operate near schools at homes.

**Mr. Tellez** stated he feels those are adequate standards.

Council Member Ruh asked if **Mr. Tellez** supports the building of more affordable housing in the community.

**Mr. Tellez** stated he does support affordable housing.

Council Member Johnson pointed out **Mr. Tellez's** service on the Community Action Committee (now called the Community Activities Commission) from 2004 to 2012 in his application. She asked why he stopped serving.

**Mr. Tellez** stated his first daughter was born at the end of his final term and he decided not to re-apply and instead focus on his family. He added the Veteran's Memorial Wall was his recommendation.

Council Member Johnson requested **Mr. Tellez** explain the answer he provided to question number six in the application recommending the use of shared living spaces to address the affordable housing issue.

**Mr. Tellez** stated he was referring to a communal housing concept that is successful in many areas, which he feels could be a creative way to address providing affordable housing.

Mayor Dutrey asked **Mr. Tellez** if he would run in the election if appointed, and why.

**Mr. Tellez** stated he was inspired by his mentor to apply, and that he intends to run for election whether or not he is appointed.

At 6:31 p.m., Mayor Dutrey called for a short recess.

At 6:37 p.m., Mayor Dutrey called the meeting to order with all four members of the City Council in attendance.

7. **Mr. Edgar Gallegos** stated he has lived in the City for 3 years in the southern area around Holt Boulevard. He noted he feels there has been a lack of new development and services in his neighborhood. He noted that he feels the City should not lose sight of its past with all the changes occurring at the mall, like **Sears** going out of business. He stated he understands the requirements to build affordable housing is mandated by the state, but also that Montclair does not have an abundance of undeveloped land available. He stated the land we do have needs to be used wisely.

**Mr. Gallegos** stated he is supportive of recreational cannabis in general, but does not feel it has a place in this City. He noted it may bring more crime with it.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft asked **Mr. Gallegos** to explain his comment from his application that the Gold Line is not essential to the success of Montclair.

**Mr. Gallegos** said he feels the Gold Line would be beneficial for the community, but that it is not the reason people come here.

Council Member Ruh asked if **Mr. Gallegos** supports the setbacks for homes and schools in the City's proposed commercial cannabis regulations.

**Mr. Gallegos** stated he does not feel 100 feet is adequate distance from homes, noting it is only the width of two single family homes.

Council Member Ruh asked how he proposes addressing the affordable housing shortage.

**Mr. Gallegos** stated the City could look at areas that could be used for multi-use housing, work with developers to make affordable housing projects viable, and deter developers simply looking for investment properties.

Mayor Dutrey asked if **Mr. Gallegos** would run for Council in the next election if he is appointed.

**Mr. Gallegos** stated he would run.

8. **Mr. Bruce Culp** stated he moved to Montclair six years ago on the promise and hope of the Gold Line coming to the City. He stated he is in a unique position to provide a voice to north Montclair residents. He stated he is an advocate for local businesses, frequently attends and speaks at City Council and Planning Commission meetings, and is very supportive of the City's senior and youth programs like the senior lunch program, Meals and Wheels, and Online to College.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft asked for **Mr. Culp's** position on legalizing commercial cannabis in the City.

**Mr. Culp** stated he does not support illegally run dispensaries with gang affiliations, but feels the City could provide a legal framework that would provide safe and legal access to its residents. He noted he does feel that the City's ordinance should include greater setbacks from schools than the minimum requirement.

Council Member Ruh asked for **Mr. Culp's** position on affordable housing.

**Mr. Culp** stated he feels the implementation of affordable housing will be a difficult issue to address, but suggested allowing more granny flats and garage conversions, providing a down payment assistance loan program, and not allowing single family homes to be built on huge lots.

Mayor Dutrey asked if **Mr. Culp** would run in the 2020 November election.

**Mr. Culp** stated he would not run for election if he is appointed, but would run in the following election for a full term.

Mayor Dutrey asked why **Mr. Culp** has never applied for the Planning Commission.

**Mr. Culp** stated he was not interested in being on the Planning Commission but was encouraged by his neighbors and City employees to apply for this appointment. He noted many have taken notice of his attention to the issues and added he has even spoken at **SBCTA** meetings on behalf of his community.

9. **Ms. Corysa Martinez** stated she loves the City of Montclair and would be honored to work beside the City Council, City Manager, and City Attorney. She noted she grew up in Montclair, walked precincts during elections, and volunteered for City programs while attending **Montclair High School**. She stated ever since she was young she wanted to be on the City Council, joking she thinks it's how her mother got the idea to run. At **Mt. San Antonio College**, she was the student club liaison for the Interclub Council. She studied Anthropology with a focus on gender, ethnicity, and politics at the **University of La Verne**, and then went to **USC School of Law**. After graduating she opened her own law firm in Upland. She noted she and her fiancé welcomed their first child this year and she is very family-oriented, noting she can bring the perspective of young, new families starting their lives in the City of Montclair. She enjoys Montclair for the benefits it offers including safety, transportation, and air quality. She noted she supports the Gold Line, which she understands is important to the City's future plans and budget.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft asked if **Ms. Martinez** supports the legal sale of cannabis in the City.

**Ms. Martinez** noted although she has a teenage sister and a seven-month-old, she feels the way to combat illegal activities is with regulations.

Council Member Ruh asked when **Ms. Martinez** changed her last name to Martinez.

**Ms. Martinez** stated she changed her name before she opened her law firm, Martinez Law.

Council Member Ruh asked how she feels about affordable housing.

**Ms. Martinez** stated that she believes the City is responding appropriately by planning for transit district housing with smaller living spaces, whether owned or rented.

At 7:14 p.m., Council Member Ruh left the meeting.

Mayor Dutrey asked if **Ms. Martinez** would run in the election, should she be appointed.

**Ms. Martinez** stated she would run, but she would work hard to earn every vote she gets.

10. **Ms. Juliet Orozco** stated she has been a resident for 18 years, has been married for 35 years with four sons and a twelve-year-old granddaughter. She noted she moved to Montclair for the activities and fell in love with the City and now, she has a career and has gone back to school for her Ph. D. She noted she has run for election twice and is grateful for this opportunity to apply. She stated her profession is managing the Payroll and Benefits Department for the **Ontario-Montclair School District**.

At 7:17 p.m., Council Member Ruh returned.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft asked if **Ms. Orozco** would support the sale of cannabis in the City.

**Ms. Orozco** stated she does not personally like cannabis or the idea of it being legal, but because it is now legal in the state, she feels the City should make sure it can benefit the residents. She noted she would prefer the businesses be restricted to the south area of Montclair, and that generated revenues could support fire and police services in that area.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft asked if Ms. Orozco supports the Gold Line.

**Ms. Orozco** stated she supports the Gold Line because effective public transportation brings people, people shop, and shopping brings tax revenue.

Council Member Ruh asked if she supports the City's proposed school and residential setbacks for cannabis shops.

**Ms. Orozco** stated she does not agree with those limits, but also stated she does not support bars and liquor stores being that close either.

Council Member Ruh asked Ms. Orozco's position on affordable housing.

**Ms. Orozco** stated it should be made easier to build with lower development fees, and noted there are several vacant properties in the City that could be used for housing. She stated the City has rent control for mobile home parks, and she feels that should be extended to other areas.

Mayor Dutrey asked if **Ms. Orozco** would run in the election, should she be appointed.

**Ms. Orozco** stated she would run, even if she is not appointed, noting third time's the charm.

Mayor Dutrey asked why **Ms. Orozco** has not run for any openings on the Planning or Community Activities Commissions.

**Ms. Orozco** stated she has been taking care of her sick brother for the past couple years and has not been able to spare the time.

11. **Mrs. Ginger Eaton** stated she and her family moved to Montclair in 1965 and raised her children here. She noted she worked as a grant for **Chaffey College**, was a member of the **Montclair Community Collaborative** when it founded the Online to College (now Montclair to College) Program. She noted there are many important issues

facing the City on the horizon like homelessness, addressing the housing shortage, and regulating cannabis.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft asked how **Mrs. Eaton** feels about the City's proposed response to cannabis legalization in the state.

**Mrs. Eaton** stated she feels the City's proposed ordinance is well-researched, and that the only way to control it is to regulate it.

Mayor Pro Tem Raft asked Mrs. Eaton to discuss her position on the Gold Line.

Mrs. Eaton stated Montclair is the gateway to the east and the west, with an intermodal transportation hub, and she feels the **San Bernardino County Transportation Authority** needs to be held to their commitment to support the Gold Line.

Council Member Ruh asked whether **Mrs. Eaton** supports the proposed setbacks in the City's proposed cannabis regulations.

**Mrs. Eaton** stated she is aware those are minimums and it is up to the City to decide where the licensed businesses will be located. She stated she trusts the City to make those decisions wisely.

Council Member Ruh asked how **Mrs. Eaton** would respond to the housing crisis.

**Mrs. Eaton** stated the City needs to find a way to bring rents down and make home ownership more affordable in the City. She stated there are many nonprofits that specialize in affordable housing, which she knows many projects in the City have utilized.

Council Member Johnson referred to **Mrs. Eaton's** answer to question nine, where she identified street parking as her number one issue. She asked how she proposes this problem be addressed.

**Mrs. Eaton** stated it is a horrible problem that has no clear answer, but she believes that as a Council of five, solutions can be discussed.

Mayor Dutrey asked if **Mrs. Eaton** would run for election, should she be appointed.

**Mrs. Eaton** stated she is undecided on that.

At 7:43 p.m., Mayor Dutrey called for a short recess.

At 7:48 p.m., Mayor Dutrey called the meeting back to order with all four members of the City Council in attendance.

Mayor Dutrey asked if **Anna Marie Salaiz** is present. After confirming her absence, he thanked all applicants present for completing their applications and participating in this process. He noted five of the current applicants had applied for the vacancy in January, and seven are new applicants.

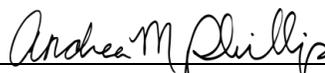
**V. CONSIDER MAKING AN APPOINTMENT TO FILL THE VACANCY ON THE CITY COUNCIL FOR A TERM ENDING IN DECEMBER 2020**

Mayor Dutrey made the motion to adjourn to Monday, November 18, 2019, at 5:45 p.m. before the regular meeting to make an appointment and, if no appointment is made by 6:30 p.m. at that meeting, to again adjourn the meeting to the following evening on Tuesday, November 20, 2019. Council Member Ruh seconded the motion. With no opposition, the motion carried 4-0.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:53 p.m., Mayor Dutrey adjourned the City Council to a special meeting on Monday, November 18, 2019, at 5:45 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Submitted for City Council approval,



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Andrea M. Phillips  
City Clerk