



CITY OF MONTEBELLO
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2022 AT 5:00 P.M.

**CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1600 WEST BEVERLY BOULEVARD
MONTEBELLO, CALIFORNIA 90640**

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Cobos-Cawthorne called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Members present were Mayor Cobos-Cawthorne, Mayor Pro Tem Jimenez, Councilmember Torres, Councilmember Melendez, and Councilmember Peralta. City Clerk Jimenez and Treasurer Gutierrez were also present.

STAFF PRESENT – City Attorney Arnold Alvarez-Glasman, City Manager René Bobadilla, Assistant City Manager Arlene Salazar, Deputy City Clerk Alicia Fernandez, Assistant to Deputy City Clerk Kimberly Guillen.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

City Clerk's Office acknowledged two (2) public comments submitted to the City's public comment email address. Said comments are on file at the City Clerk's office.

CLOSED SESSION – 5:00 P.M.

Mayor Cobos-Cawthorne recessed into Closed Session at 5:14 p.m. to consider the following Closed Session Item:

- 1. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION**
Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2)
Threat of litigation – One matter related to the CVRA

- 2. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION**
Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2)
One matter

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Cobos-Cawthorne reconvened the meeting at 7:14 p.m. During Closed Session the City Council received a briefing on Items 1 and 2; no final action was taken and there was nothing further to report.

OPEN SESSION - NONE

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Melendez motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Jimenez. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 19, 2022 ARE HEREBY APPROVED AND ADOPTED ON THIS 23RD DAY OF FEBRUARY 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alicia Fernandez", is written over a horizontal line.

Alicia Fernandez, Deputy City Clerk

CLOSED SESSION COMMENTS

Angelina Padilla

From: Alberto Pimentel <pime512@usc.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 19, 2022 2:24 PM
To: comment, ccpublic
Subject: Special Meeting Public Comment (If Possible, Please Read Publicly)

Good evening,

My name is Dr. Alberto Pimentel Jr and I am submitting this public comment in support of a transition from an at-large election system to a district-based election system. I have spoken to a majority of the city council members to express my desire for the City of Montebello to adhere to the California Voting Rights Act and also, to prioritize the inclusion and representation of the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community in future elections. Recently, I authored an article titled, "Defining DEI in Montebello's Future Elections" in the Montebello Reporter. In this article, I addressed the transition to a district-based election system from a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion angle. I won't repeat the article's arguments in this public comment but I will use the remaining minutes to advocate for greater public outreach, specifically focused on the benefits of a district-based election system and also, increased efforts to engage the AAPI community.

The misinformation campaigns on popular social media pages have misrepresented the benefits of districting and have shown the prejudices held by some of our fellow residents. To combat this ill-informed propaganda, I believe the City of Montebello must commit itself to financially investing in educating residents about the CVRA and districting through additional public meetings, mailers, etc. In addition, the confidence and comfort of residents with this transition to a district-based election system is contingent on the messaging shared by our elected officials. Therefore, rather than attempting to discredit an attorney or arguing that we have sufficient diversity on council, a unified approach in support of districting is necessary.

In closing, the California Voting Rights Act is an extension of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965. We celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday a few days ago and as you may know, Dr. King was a strong advocate for the Voting Rights Act and on his birthday, it was comforting to see members of the city council share his beautiful and powerful words. That being said, please remember this, "a right delayed is a right denied".

Thank you.

Alberto Pimentel Jr, Ed.D, M.P.A, M.A
P: 323.309.3439
E: Albertopimenteljr@alumni.usc.edu
Instagram: @Soctalkwiththedoc

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Angelina Padilla

From: Montebello-Pico Rivera Democrats <mprdemocrats@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 19, 2022 2:31 PM
To: comment, ccpublic
Subject: Public Comment for the Special City Council Meeting from the MPR Democrats

On behalf of the Montebello-Pico Rivera Democrats, we present this public comment in full support of a district-based election system.

We strongly believe a district-based election system will create a pathway toward achieving inclusion and representation for Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) residents and the greater community overall in future local elections.

We strongly encourage the Montebello City Council to adhere to the laws established in the California Voting Rights Act and foster equal possibilities for all residents. We prompt the City of Montebello to commit itself to greater outreach efforts and further educate Montebello residents on the transition from the current at-large election to a district-based election system.

In speaking with several members of the City Council, we have heard their concerns and would like to offer our assistance in expanding outreach efforts. The outreach efforts are not the sole responsibility of the city's staff and council, therefore, we offer our support and availability in engaging the community and promoting civic interest in the matter of redistricting.

We call upon our elected council to stand up for equal access and opportunity for minority groups previously disenfranchised. We urge the council to approve and continue with the process for a district-based election system that supports diversity and inclusion for all.

Now is not the time to let outreach concerns limit future progress. An abstention or opposition to the item for a district-based election system is a huge step back in the progress of our City and a crutch to the growth of our community. Please do not stand in the way of progress but lead Montebello into a new era of opportunity.

-Montebello-Pico Rivera Democratic Club

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