



Item:	B-1
Minutes for:	01/28/21s
Adopted:	04/21/21

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Madera City Council

**January 28, 2021
5:30 p.m.**

**Council Chambers
City Hall**

This meeting was conducted pursuant to the provisions of the Governor’s Executive Order which suspends certain requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act. The City Council meeting was live streamed on the City’s website at www.madera.gov/live. Members of the public were able to participate in the meeting remotely through an electronic meeting in the following ways; via phone by dialing (669) 900-6833 enter ID: 959 8565 7674# followed by *9 on their phone to speak. Comments were also accepted via email at citycouncilpubliccomment@madera.gov or by regular mail at 205 W. 4th Street, Madera, CA 93637.

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Santos Garcia
Mayor Pro Tem Artemio Villegas, District 6
Councilmember Cece Gallegos, District 1
Councilmember Jose Rodriguez, District 2
Councilmember Steve Montes, District 3
Councilmember Anita Evans, District 4

Absent: District 5 is currently vacant.

Others present were City Manager Arnoldo Rodriguez, City Clerk Alicia Gonzales, City Attorney Hilda Cantu Montoy, Information Services Manager Mark Souders, Planning Manager Gary Conte, Chief of Police Dino Lawson, and Communication Specialist Joseph Carrello.

INVOCATION: Councilmember Evans

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Planning Manager Gary Conte

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

ON MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER GALLEGOS, THE AGENDA WAS APPROVED BY A 6/0 VOTE. NOES: NONE. ABSENT: DISTRICT 5 IS CURRENTLY VACANT. ABSTAIN: NONE.

THE MOTION PASSED WITH THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

**YES: 6 – COUNCILMEMBER GALLEGOS
COUNCILMEMBER RODRIGUEZ
COUNCILMEMBER MONTES
COUNCILMEMBER EVANS
MAYOR PRO TEM VILLEGAS
MAYOR GARCIA**

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Members of the public shall have an opportunity to address the City Council regarding matters on this Agenda at the time the agenda item is called. Speakers should limit their comments to three (3) minutes.

Per City Attorney Hilda Cantu Montoy, in Special Meetings, the item(s) are heard first and then the public comment for the item.

The Public Comments below were submitted and/or called in after Item A-1 was discussed.

Ramon Lopez-Maciell submitted his support for Elsa Mejia as Councilmember for District 5. He appealed to Mayor Garcia and Councilmembers to exercise their diplomatic skills, reach a consensus, and appoint one of the three (3) candidates today. He asked that they not punish District 5 with a year without representation. He asked that they not create divisions in their relatively small City. He asked that they use the \$20,000 cost of an election for a more beneficial project in the City.

Brenda Lopez submitted that she was confused, discouraged, and embarrassed after watching the January 25th meeting. It did not seem like Council was prioritizing what is best for Madera. She does not think it is ok to say no to Ms. Mejia just because she does not have children or is not friends with a councilmember. She asked that they no call for a special election as their neighborhoods deserve funds to fix City issues instead of a special election in the middle of a pandemic.

Johanna Torres submitted her support for Elsa Mejia as Councilmember for District 5. She hoped Council keeps the best interest of Madera in mind. It is not about whether councilmembers have personal relationships with Matilda Villafan, and, in fact, that is a very dangerous way of thinking. District 5 has been the most neglected and it is the district that Ms. Mejia has been volunteering and encouraging civic engagement for many years, not just recently. Ms. Mejia has devoted her professional growth to service and brought that to their City and the District that needed it most. She stated that Ms. Mejia's and Ms. Villafan's resumes speak for themselves.

Patsy Mejia urged Council to compromise and make an appointment for District 5 and lamented that Council cannot compromise and would rather leave District 5 unrepresented for almost a year. She stated that is Mayor Garcia truly cares for District 5 as he has said multiple times before, then he would not allow District 5 to have no representation for so long and learn to compromise with his colleagues. She asked that he be the leader that the City and especially District 5 need. She asked that Mayor Garcia not leave his constituents unrepresented.

Noe Hernandez submitted that Council considering a special election during a world-wide pandemic will not only cost the City unnecessary fees to a poor community but will also put their health in danger. He urged Councilmembers to appoint Elsa Mejia since her obvious experience is much needed.

Patsy Mejia urged Council to appoint Elsa Mejia as Councilmember for District 5. She stated that Councilmember Evans mentioned that Ms. Elsa Mejia not having children was a reason for her non-support. That is a poor excuse, because bearing children is not a qualifier, reason, or appropriate to oppose her appointment. She stated that Ms. Elsa Mejia's experience, qualifications, and professionalism speak for themselves. Mayor Garcia's length of knowing someone should not be a qualifier as that seems extremely unfair and extremely inappropriate.

Mohammad Latif stated his support for Matilda Villafan as Councilmember for District 5 and not spending \$20,000 for a Special Election.

Diana (no last name mentioned) stated her support for Matilda Villafan as Councilmember for District 5. She stated she has worked with Ms. Villafan on several programs and services supporting their community.

A. PETITIONS, BIDS, RESOLUTIONS, ORDINANCES, AND AGREEMENTS:

A-1 Filling of Councilmember Vacancy in City Council District 5

Recommendation: This recommendation is based on City Council (Council) direction at the Special Meeting of January 25, 2021, and a request from Mayor Garcia to add further discussion and consideration of an appointment to this Special Meeting agenda.

The recommendation is that the Council fill the vacancy by appointment or special election. Council may:

- (i) Select an applicant by motion and adopt the resolution making the appointment OR
- (ii) Adopt the Resolution calling for the Holding of a Special Municipal Election for the Election of Vacancy in City Council District 5 (Report by Alicia Gonzales)

Public Comment was heard after Councilmember discussion. Public Comment is show above in the Public Comment section.

ON MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER EVANS AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER GALLEGOS, ITEM A-1(ii) WAS APPROVED BY A 6/0 VOTE. NOES: NONE. ABSENT: DISTRICT 5 IS CURRENTLY VACANT. ABSTAIN: NONE.

THE MOTION PASSED WITH THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

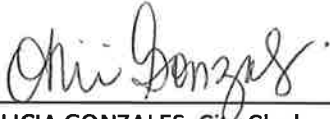
**YES: 6 – COUNCILMEMBER GALLEGOS
COUNCILMEMBER RODRIGUEZ
COUNCILMEMBER MONTES
COUNCILMEMBER EVANS
MAYOR PRO TEM VILLEGAS
MAYOR GARCIA**

RES 21-25 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MADERA, CALIFORNIA, CALLING FOR THE HOLDING OF A SPECIAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2021, FOR THE ELECTION OF VACANCY IN CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 p.m. Next regular meeting February 3, 2021.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE VISION MADERA 2025 PLAN

Approval of the minutes is not addressed in the vision or action plans; the requested action is also not in conflict with any of the actions or goals contained in that plan.



ALICIA GONZALES, City Clerk



SANTOS GARCIA, Mayor



MINUTES PREPARED BY
ZELDA LEON, Deputy City Clerk

