



Minutes
Town of Atherton
CITY COUNCIL/ATHERTON CHANNEL DRAINAGE
DISTRICT
December 15, 2010
7:00 P.M.
Meeting Room
Council Chambers
94 Ashfield Road
Atherton, California

Mayor Dobbie called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL **Lewis, Dobbie, Widmer, McKeithen, Carlson**

PUBLIC COMMENT –

Jon Buckheit, Atherton resident, said individual citizens making donations to the Police Department is very bad governance because it creates the appearance of impropriety. Buckheit suggested that Council respectfully decline a donation specifically for the Police Department and request that the donation be submitted to Council to decide how to appropriate it within the Town.

REGULAR AGENDA

- 1. APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PRIVATE DONATION FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT**
Report: Police Chief Mike Guerra
Recommendation: Authorize the acceptance of a private donation designated for the Police Department in the amount of \$60,000 from Atherton residents Laura Arrillaga-Andreessen and Marc Andreessen. This donation is specifically designated for replacing the outdated computer system and equipment in the Marked Atherton police vehicles.

Chief of Police Guerra read a statement from Laura Arrillaga-Andreessen who said she and her husband chose to donate to the Police Department because they believe that making an investment in more advanced patrol car technology and computer systems is a high leverage way to increase safety standards for the men and women who make the community safe.

Mayor McKeithen raised the concern that this could create the perception that individuals who donate to Police do not have to obey the law. She added that she would much rather have the contribution donated to the Town's General Fund.

Council Member Carlson said he is gratified for the significant support from the residents for the Police Department and suggested sending a very nice letter of thanks to the Andreessen's.

Council Member Lewis said she does not agree that it creates the perception of an ulterior motive and added that everyone should be thankful for the volunteerism in the Town. Lewis concurred with Carlson and was grateful for the donation.

Vice Mayor Widmer said it is not unusual for people to donate and allocate it for a specific service.

Mayor Dobbie asked Guerra how the resident found out that the Police needed new computers.

Guerra said that Ms. Arrillaga-Andreessen came to the Department in late 2009 to introduce herself and then asked if the Department needs anything that they can not afford. Guerra said there were other options given to Ms. Arrillaga-Andreessen but this was chosen because it was a higher ticket item that the Town could not afford.

Mayor Dobbie said there were concerns raised from other residents who want to be sure that the Police treat every resident equally.

Council Member McKeithen said she did not want to attribute to the donor any evil or underhanded intent in giving this donation. She added that there could be perception but believes the donor probably has the best of intention.

MOTION by Dobbie, second by Carlson to authorize the acceptance of a private donation designated for the Police Department in the amount of \$60,000 from Atherton residents Laura Arrillaga-Andreessen and Marc Andreessen for replacing the outdated computer system and equipment in the Marked Atherton police vehicles and send a thank you letter to the donors. The motion passed.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

ADJOURN

MOTION by Widmer, second by Dobbie to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Dobbie adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa DellaSanta
Deputy City Clerk