

**CITY OF LAGUNA WOODS, CALIFORNIA**  
**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**May 19, 2010**  
**2:00 P.M.**

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Robbins called the Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Laguna Woods to order at 2:00 p.m.

**II. FLAG SALUTE**

Councilmember Rhodes led the flag salute.

**III. ROLL CALL**

COUNCILMEMBERS:   PRESENT:   Conners, Rhodes, Hack, Robbins  
                          ABSENT:   Ring

STAFF PRESENT:       City Manager Keane; Assistant City Manager Reilly; Deputy City Clerk Trippy; City Attorney McEwen

**IV. PRESENTATIONS**

4.1   2-1-1 Orange County Program/Health and Social Services Resource: Steve Lemler

Steve Lemler from 2-1-1 Orange County discussed the role of 2-1-1 and the services that are available through it. 2-1-1 is a non-emergency health and social services resource. During disasters, 2-1-1 helps field non-emergency calls that would otherwise go to 9-1-1.

Councilmember Conners asked if 2-1-1's services could be expanded to include OCTA information on transportation scheduling and availability.

Mr. Lemler responded that there are insufficient resources to expand services at this time.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack noted that 5-1-1 is coming to Orange County and will be a resource for transportation information.

Mayor Robbins thanked Mr. Lemler for his presentation.

City Manager Keane requested a copy of 2-1-1's public service announcement to play on Channel 31 and indicated that a link to 2-1-1 will be added to the City's website.

**V. CITY PROCLAMATIONS**

Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Hack, seconded by Councilmember Rhodes, and carried unanimously

to approve City Proclamations 5.1-5.4, entitled:

5.1 Emergency Medical Services Week, May 16-23, 2010

Division Chief Mike Boyle accepted the proclamation on behalf of the Orange County Fire Authority's Emergency Medical Team.

5.2 Building and Safety Month, May 2010

5.3 National Military Appreciation Month, May 2010

5.4 Older Americans Month, May 2010

**VI. CONSENT CALENDAR**

Moved by Councilmember Conners, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Hack, and carried unanimously to approve Consent Calendar Items 6.1-6.5.

6.1 City Council Minutes

Approved the minutes from the April 9, 2010 special meeting and the April 21, 2010 regular meeting.

6.2 Approved the reading by title of all ordinances and resolutions. Said ordinances and resolutions that appear on the public agenda shall be determined to have been read by title only and further reading waived.

6.3 Treasurer's Report

Received and filed the April 2010 monthly and FY 2009-10 third quarter (January – March) Treasurer's Reports.

6.4 Warrant Register

Approved the May 19, 2010 Warrant Register in the amount of \$524,884.53.

6.5 2009 General Plan Annual Update

Approved the 2009 General Plan Annual Update.

**VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

7.1 Laguna Woods Village Golf Starter Building

City Manager Keane advised that the applicant had requested the public hearing be continued until June 16, 2010 and staff concurred with the request.

The public hearing was opened.

Moved by Councilmember Conners, seconded by Councilmember Rhodes, and carried unanimously to continue the public hearing for the Laguna Woods Village Golf Starter Building to the regular City Council meeting on June 16, 2010.

Kathryn Freshley, resident, expressed her opposition to conditions 27 and 35 in the proposed conditional use permit (CUP-603).

City Manager Keane noted that because Ms. Freshley made her comments after the close of public comments and the City Council's vote to continue the hearing, her comments cannot be included in the official record regarding the project.

## **VIII. CITY COUNCIL**

### **8.1 Advisory Committee Appointments**

Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Hack, seconded by Councilmember Conners, and carried unanimously to ratify Councilmember Rhodes' proposed nominations as follows: Pat Feeney to the Land Use & Design Review Committee and Shirley Greenes to the Community Services Committee.

### **8.2 Councilmember Ethics Training**

City Manager Keane explained that ethics training for City Councilmembers is required every two years. She recommended that the two-hour training be scheduled for June 2, 2010 at the end of the adjourned regular meeting. The training would not be televised. Councilmember Conners and Councilmember Rhodes recently completed ethics training and would not be required to participate.

The City Council concurred with the City Manager's recommendation.

## **IX. CITY MANAGER**

### **9.1 Taxi Voucher Program**

City Manager Keane provided an update on the City's Fiscal Year 2010-11 budget. She does not view the Governor's May Revise as having a major impact on the City and noted that the information provided to the City Council at the last meeting remains the best available. Decisions regarding the taxi voucher program will impact the budget.

Assistant City Manager Reilly summarized the agenda report and responded to questions clarifying portions of the presentation.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack asked Assistant City Manager Reilly to explain taxi bucks.

Assistant City Manager Reilly stated that taxi bucks are general destination taxi vouchers, of \$1 or \$5. Residents can currently purchase a book of \$100 in taxi bucks for \$40. Taxi bucks must be used in order to receive discounted taxi fares.

City Manager Keane stated that staff is proposing that only airport vouchers can be used as payment for trips to John Wayne Airport. Taxi bucks would no longer be accepted.

Councilmember Connors commented that the City must reduce the subsidy for vouchers to John Wayne Airport, in order to continue to afford to be able to offer the service.

City Manager Keane concurred with Councilmember Connors and further explained that the Orange County Transportation Authority has established goals for the grant program that is used to fund a portion of the taxi voucher program. The vouchers for John Wayne Airport are allowed by the grant but do not meet the established goals. Staff feels that changes to the program can be focused on the airport vouchers.

Councilmember Rhodes speculated that the decline in trips to the airport and the Irvine Transportation Center may be because residents are using general destination vouchers, instead of the specific destination vouchers. Prohibiting the use of general destination vouchers to the airport may cause the number of airports trips to increase.

City Manager Keane stated that staff has looked into that possibility and found that the majority of the residents who only use the taxi voucher program for airport trips don't want to buy taxi bucks because they do not want to deal with unused vouchers.

Assistant City Manager Reilly noted that staff's analysis shows that taxi bucks were used for the airport 16 times in March 2010 and 68 times in April 2010.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack predicted that the City would see a decline in the number of airport trips because the subsidy would not be as significant as other vouchers. He emphasized that the purpose of the program relates to senior mobility and that in light of the City's current financial situation, reductions need to be made.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack expressed support for increasing the cost of airport vouchers to \$22 and opposition to increasing the cost of non-emergency medical vouchers. He believes that the latter is where the most need is among residents.

City Manager Keane suggested that increasing the minimum age for airport vouchers and limiting the number of airport trips per year would make it possible to not make changes to the non-emergency medical vouchers. She agreed that the amount paid by the City for non-emergency medical trips varies and is higher than for other vouchers.

Councilmember Connors asked if it would make more sense to charge for non-emergency medical vouchers by destination, rather than mileage.

City Manager Keane expressed concern with actions that would make the program more complicated for residents.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack expressed concern with actions that may intrude on privacy.

City Manager Keane noted that staff needs to know that residents are going for a medical appointment, the name of the doctor, and the doctor's address. Staff schedules the trips

and, unlike taxi bucks, residents only pay for the specific vouchers that they need. There is a limit of four trips per month, however staff enforce a maximum of 48 per year in an attempt to be fair and flexible to residents with more appointments in a given timeframe.

City Manager Keane announced that exceptions can be made to residents with a disability and who no longer drive.

Assistant City Manager Reilly noted that the Community Services Committee made a recommendation to stop providing refunds except for deaths or people who move out of the City. He explained that staff feel that the recommendation does not comport with the City's customer service orientation.

City Manager Keane added that residents who are trying the program for the first time should not be penalized if they discover that it does not work for them.

Councilmember Connors expressed concern that making vouchers and taxi bucks non-refundable may create a secondary exchange market.

City Manager Keane responded that such activity is a risk for the grant funding.

Councilmember Connors asked if residents are required to show identification when they use taxi vouchers or taxi bucks.

City Manager Keane responded affirmatively.

Assistant City Manager Reilly stated that if the City Council chooses to not increase fees for the non-emergency medical vouchers, the need for General Fund support for the program could range from \$65,000-\$75,000, depending on what other changes are made.

City Manager Keane stated that if the City Council approves the staff recommendation and budgets \$65,000 from the General Fund, no changes would have to be made to the non-emergency medical vouchers.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack spoke in support of the taxi voucher program. He is comfortable increasing the minimum age for the airport vouchers to 70 and the cost to \$22. He noted that 70 was once the minimum age for the airport vouchers.

Councilmember Connors asked if a public hearing is required.

City Manager Keane responded that a public hearing is not required, but action by the City Council is. She summarized Mayor Pro Tem Hack's suggestion to approve the staff recommendation excluding any changes to the non-emergency medical vouchers.

Delsie Zuzak, resident, thanked the City Council for acknowledging handicapped people under the age of 70. She feels that increasing age limits is discrimination and that an individual's physical limitations can exist regardless of age.

Ruth May, resident, discussed a recent trip that she took from the Irvine Transportation

Center without using the taxi voucher program.

Councilmember Rhodes stated that he does not view an increase of \$1 for non-emergency medical vouchers as significant. He expressed concern with increasing the minimum age for airport vouchers and noted that he would be willing to increase the price to \$22. He suggested that the City Council consider making changes at mid-year.

City Manager Keane stated that changes could not be made at mid-year because vouchers are purchased for specific periods of time. The program needs to be at least annual.

Councilmember Connors discussed the necessity of making changes to the program and noted that any change is going to impact somebody. She also emphasized the importance of making exceptions to the age limit as previously discussed by City Manager Keane.

City Manager Keane clarified that use of the term “handicap” as it relates to the program means residents who qualify for either the Orange County Transportation Authority’s ACCESS Program or Laguna Woods Village’s lift bus.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack clarified that the proposal is only to increase the age for airport vouchers, which is not a core part of grant that helps fund the taxi voucher program. He noted that the City Council has an obligation to make reductions during “lean times.”

Councilmember Connors asked what would happen if the airport subsidy is reduced, the fare to the airport is increased higher than \$22, and the minimum age remains at 60.

City Manager Keane stated that because of the timeline for ordering new taxi vouchers, the City Council needs to take action today. She suggested that the City Council could authorize a one-year program and staff could gather additional statistics during that time.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack expressed support for a two year program in light of the fact that the City is also negotiating a contract for taxi service and requesting rate stability.

City Manager Keane explained that the City Council could authorize a one year program and still enter into a two year contract for taxi service.

Rochelle Nemirow, resident and President of the Vision Impaired Club of Laguna Woods Village, expressed support for the program. Ms. Nemirow stated that she was initially opposed to providing refunds, but has since reconsidered and is now suggesting that a 50% refund be offered. She also suggested that information be mailed to every residence in the City explaining the changes, in a minimum of 18 point font.

City Manager Keane thanked Ms. Nemirow for her comments and explained that the City mails a letter to all of the participants in the taxi voucher program. She explained that special destination vouchers can only be exchanged and that if the cost has increased, the resident would be required to pay the difference. Taxi bucks can be refunded for cash. She expressed concern there may be a problem with the Orange County Transportation Authority if refunds are not offered.

Councilmember Connors asked what the minimum cost is to purchase taxi bucks.

City Manager Keane stated that one book worth \$100 currently costs \$40.

Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Hack, seconded by Councilmember Connors, and carried unanimously to approve the following changes to the taxi voucher program:

1. Airport/Fashion Island/South Coast Plaza/OC Performing Arts Center Voucher:

Price increase from \$16 to \$22

Minimum age increase from 60 to 70\* years old

No more than four round-trips per year, per address

Vouchers are not refundable

\*City Manager is authorized to grant exceptions for residents who do not drive or are disabled.

2. Irvine Transportation Center Vouchers:

Price increase from \$4 to \$6

Minimum age stays at 60

No restriction on the number of trips per year

Vouchers are not refundable

3. General Taxi Travel Vouchers (taxi buck booklets):

Price increase from \$40 to \$50 for a \$100 worth of trips

Minimum age stays at 60

No restriction on the number of books per year

Taxi bucks cannot be used for airport travel

Refunds for unused taxi bucks available at end of the program cycle (June 30, 2011)

4. Non-Emergency Medical Vouchers:

No changes to current fares or program eligibility

Assistant City Manager Reilly stated that one of the key elements of the service provided by California Yellow Cab is that they can pick-up residents from John Wayne Airport.

William Gray, from A White and Yellow Cab Inc., offered the City a 20% subsidy for taxi services. He asked for an opportunity for other vendors to bid on the program or for the City Council to allow multiple vendors to provide services, based on their specialty.

City Manager Keane asked if A White and Yellow Cab Inc. can provide service from the airport.

Mr. Gray stated that they are only able to drop-off at the airport.

City Manager Keane stated that there is insufficient time to rebid the contract. Staff looked at similar transportation programs, including Age Well, which runs a large non-emergency medical transportation program. They have been through a bid process and

decided to stay with the same taxi company that the City is using. If the City Council approves a one year contract, it could be rebid during that time.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack supported a one year contract and using that time to rebid and gather additional statistics as previously suggested by Councilmember Conners.

City Manager Keane stated that changing vendors would require rebidding the contract.

Councilmember Conners suggested that staff look into the benefits, if any, of allowing taxi services to be provided by more than one vendor.

City Manager Keane reiterated concerns with actions that would complicate the program. Staff feel that it is important to have a single vendor in order to minimize confusion.

Mayor Pro Tem Hack discussed the need for transparency for program users.

Mr. Gray asked for confirmation that taxi bucks will no longer be used for trips to the airport. He suggested that the City consider allowing potential vendors to propose their own program based on market experience.

City Manager Keane responded affirmatively regarding the use of taxi bucks.

Moved by Mayor Pro Tem Hack, seconded by Councilmember Rhodes, and carried unanimously to approve a contract extension with Cabco Yellow, Inc. (California Yellow Cab) for taxi voucher service for one year through June 30, 2011 under the same conditions, and authorize the City Manager to execute the extension, subject to approval as to form by the City Attorney.

**X. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT – None**

**XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**11.1 Transportation Corridor Agencies (Mayor Pro Tem Hack)**

Mayor Pro Tem Hack announced that the Agency applied for and was recently granted a seat on the Southern California Association of Government's Regional Council.

**11.2 Orange County Library Board (Mayor Robbins)**

Mayor Robbins discussed the Fiscal Year 2010-11 budget that was recently approved by the Orange County Library Board. The ad hoc Allocation Formula Task Force will meet on May 20, 2010. He does not foresee changes being made to the City's hours of service.

**11.3 Orange County Fire Authority (Councilmember Rhodes)**

Councilmember Rhodes announced that the next meeting is scheduled for May 27, 2010.



11.4 Southern California Water Committee (Mayor Pro Tem Hack)

Mayor Pro Tem Hack discussed a recent study conducted by the University of Maryland concerning delta smelt and reasons for the decline in their population.

11.5 Coastal Greenbelt Authority (Councilmember Conners)

Councilmember Conners stated that there was no meeting this month.

11.6 Laguna Canyon Foundation (Councilmember Rhodes)

Councilmember Rhodes noted that the Laguna Canyon Foundation is in the process of hiring a consultant to assist with reorganization and restructuring. They also hope to hire an Executive Director in the coming month. He discussed senior programs, a celebration in honor of outgoing President Michael Pinto, hiking trails, and volunteer opportunities.

11.7 Vector Control District Board (Board Member Bouer)

Board Member Bouer announced that there are no severe vector problems in the City. He discussed management changes at the Vector Control District and ongoing discussions regarding the possible privatization of rat control. He expressed his personal opinion that outsourcing would be a mistake given that private companies must generate a profit. He believes that the District is competently providing rat control services.

## **XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

David Talcott, resident, expressed his opposition to condition 35 in the proposed conditional use permit for Laguna Woods Village's golf starter building project. He noted that the dedication of land would affect the association fees for almost all of the City's residents.

## **XIII. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

13.1 Reports on Meetings Attended (Government Code §53232.3)

- A. O.C. Division, League of California Cities, May 13, 2010 (Rhodes)
- B. O.C. Water Summit, May 13, 2010 (Rhodes, Hack)

13.2 Other Comments and Announcements

Councilmember Conners reported on the most recent meeting of the Orange County Waste Management Commission. She discussed budget issues, rebranding, a partnership with the Apartment Association of Orange County, and pending legislation concerning recycling by commercial businesses.

## **XIV. CLOSED SESSION**

None.

## **XV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m. The next adjourned meeting will be at 2:00 p.m. on June 2, 2010 at the Laguna Woods City Hall, 24264 El Toro Road, Laguna Woods, California.

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YOLIE TRIPPY, Deputy City Clerk

Adopted: June 16, 2010

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MILT ROBBINS, Mayor