



# City Council Special Meeting

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## MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BRIGHTON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON AUGUST 9, 2018

### 1. Call to Order

Mayor Muzzin called the Special Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Adding items 1a and 2a.

#### 1a. Pledge of Allegiance

### 2. Roll Call

Present were Mayor Muzzin, Councilmembers: Bohn, Emaus, Gardner, Pettengill, Pipoly, and Tobbe. Staff: City Manager Nate Geinzer, City Clerk Tara Brown, Finance Director Gretchen Gomolka, DPW Director Marcel Goch, Chief of Police Rob Bradford, and Attorney Paul Burns. There were twenty-one persons in the audience.

#### 2a. Consider Approval of the Agenda

**Motion** by Councilmember Emaus, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Pipoly, to approve the agenda as amended, adding item 1a and 2a. **The motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor Muzzin informed all who were present that this special meeting was called to discuss the Headlee Override results and next steps as the deadline to submit a ballot proposal for the November General Election is August 14, 2018.

### 3. Call to the Public

Mayor Muzzin opened the Call to Public at 7:02 p.m.

Bob Pettengill stated that he was a yes vote even though he was not entirely happy with the ballot proposal. Mr. Pettengill said that he preferred something less than 20 mills. He mentioned that property values are coming back. He would also like to see quarterly reports within the proposal if Council wishes to place the proposal on the November ballot. Mr. Pettengill also stated the ballot proposal lost by a narrow margin which indicated that it could pass with a small tweak.

Dale Borst stated that the election was a fair election, he did not see no signs but he did see plenty of yes signs throughout town. He asked that Council honor the vote.

Mayor Muzzin read the Brighton City Council Meeting Rules of Procedure after an audience member's request.

Susan Bakhaus stated that she started the no vote campaign with three other women. She stated that she went to neighborhoods and spoke to residents. She indicated that she felt her vote would be disrespected if Council puts the ballot proposal on November General election.

Randall Bair stated that he voted no. He said he lives on a minimum social security amount and that is it. He wants money to be spent on something that lasts.

Lynn Rosen stated that she is a realtor and recent potential buyers were concerned over the possibility of a Headlee Override proposal. She also felt it would be disrespectful if Council did not honor the vote and put the ballot proposal on the November ballot.

Jordan Genso stated he voted yes. He said there is a problem that he wants to see it solved. He asked residents to vote on a best solution, Council put forth their best solution. He further asked that if someone else had a better solution, to put it on the ballot, to bring it to council. He asked that residents to be involved and go to City Council meetings to be a part of the solution.

Bill McCririe voted no and will vote no again. He stated that the condition of the roads is a result of decades of poor planning and decades of poor budgeting. He asked that Council not put the ballot proposal back on the ballot.

Lynn Hawkins stated that she knows Council worked hard on the ballot proposal and planning, but years of eternity in the original ballot language was far too long so Council listened and lowered the years to ten. She stated that the City should live within their budget. She stated that she wants more choices than just one ballot proposal scenario.

Pat Cole stated that the will of the people have spoken and City Council should honor the no vote. She reminded Council that some Council seats will be up for re-election on the November 2019 ballot. Ms. Cole stated that she is on a fixed income and would not be able to afford the tax increase.

Bob Knight stated that he voted no. He asked Council to explain what has been done to establish savings for the road.

Mayor Pro Tem Pipoly read letters from three residents, as follows:

Michael Monroe asked about the tax revenue from the senior care facilities, CW Interiors, and new TG Fluids Factory. Mr. Monroe wrote that the ballot proposal was too aggressive, he asked Council to go for a lower millage rate.

Rich Adams asked that Council spread the tax hit over years.

Jerry and Chuck Thomas strongly supported infrastructure.

Mayor Muzzin closed the call to public at 8:38 p.m.

#### **4. Discussion of Headlee Override Election Results and Next Steps**

Manager Geinzer clarified that bid project amounts that have been talked about are false, most of the bids were from utilities that are paid directly from the utilities fund and streets projects. The ballot proposal has been talked about since December 2017 and was unanimously adopted by City Council to be put it on the ballot. Staff and Council tried to put a best option for the City's need on the ballot. He stated that August 14 at 4:00 p.m. is the deadline for ballot proposals for the November General

Election. Mayor Pro Tem Pipoly stated that he does not feel it is disrespectful to talk about options before the deadline. He believes it is being responsible to look at options.

Councilmember Emaus stated that there is a 2.5-million-dollar problem and it is not going to go away. Mr. Emaus reminded all that 2.5 million dollars is 31% of the budget. He asked, should Council cut 31% of all services? City residents have long said they do not want to pay for parking or for City events but Emaus asks what can be cut—there is no fat to cut. He asked if police should be cut? Should DPW not plow unless there is more than six inches of snow? He further stated that the City is stuck with a 31% cut to find a solution. Mr. Emaus does not want the full Headlee back on the ballot as is. He would like staff to find what can be cut and ask for a smaller Headlee proposal. He reminded residents that the 2.5 million dollars is to maintain the current roads, not to improve the roads. He also said that he does not want to pay interest with a bond, he would like a compromise.

Councilmember Gardner stated that she supports Councilmember Emaus and would like to see a compromise, she recommended one million dollars in cuts.

Councilmember Tobbe stated that the problem with the road is real. He would like to find a solution. The margins are similar to 2013 and would like to find a solution. He stated that he is on City Council to respect the people and the votes, but would like to solve the problems.

Councilmember Pettengill agreed with fellow Councilmembers but favored taking a step back to talk during the September/October retreat. Ms. Pettengill would like to see a lower Headlee Override millage ballot proposal.

Councilmember Bohn stated that the problem is not going to fix itself. He stated that he was a proponent of bringing the proposal to the people to vote. He said he does respect the vote. Mr. Bohn said that his priorities are public safety, police, and a clerk to run elections. He would like to go back to voters, but not in November. He stated that most no votes are from his own neighborhood—condo owners who have private roads. He would like to take a step back before going to the voters.

Mayor Pro Tem Pipoly reminded all that costs were shaved off the budget in 2005 and later, there is no more to cut without it affecting services.

Mayor Muzzin stated that during the cost cutting times, employees took furlough days, vacancies in positions were not filled.

Councilmember Gardner would like to talk more about the budget and next steps during the next retreat.

Councilmember Emaus would like to discuss a comprehensive plan.

Councilmember Tobbe would like to hear more about Charter language amendments.

Manager Geinzer noted that in an effort to solidify voter trust a local municipality asked voters to amend the City Charter along with asking for a streets and related infrastructure ballot special dedicated millage.

Councilmember Emaus stated that the scenario Manager Geinzer mentioned was designed to address the trust issues.

#### **5. Consider Headlee Override Ballot Language for the November 6, 2018 General Election**

No motion was made and there was no further discussion.

#### **6. Call to the Public**

Mayor Muzzin opened the Call to Public at 8:19 p.m.

Bob Pettengill believed it was a wise decision to not put a ballot proposal on for November because there is no time to discuss the wording. He stated that voters said no to 4.3466 mills, they did not say no to 2.5 mills or other variations. Mr. Pettengill stated that Bill McCririe is asking Council to do their job, but then saying do not do your job if it includes asking for taxes. Mr. Pettengill stated that it cannot be both ways. He asked that residents not be so critical, be part of the solution and attend meetings.

Susan Bakhaus thanked Council for listening to voters and not putting the proposal on the November 6, 2018 General Election ballot. She asked that a citizen's advisory committee be created to formulate ideas for funding the roads.

Dale Borst said it was wise to not go for a ballot proposal in November. He also stated his support for a citizen's committee. He thanked Council for holding off on the ballot proposal.

Pat Cole thanked Council for honoring the will of the people and honoring the vote. She stated that City Charter is outdated and would like the City to form a committee to bring the Charter into the present. The Charter is sixty years old.

John Conley stated that his family has called Brighton home since 1835. He appreciates the police officer presence in the City. He also stated that a citizen's committee is not a bad thing. He asks that residents and Council find a happy middle ground.

Lynn Hawkins asked if the City's millage rate was ever 20 mills and why the word *restore* was used in the proposal.

Randall Bair stated that his family has been in Brighton since 1940s and said that Brighton is no longer the town he remembers. He would like it to go back to a "one red light hick town."

Mayor Muzzin closed the call to public at 8:38 p.m.

Manager Geinzer clarified that the millage cap was set around 1956 at the time the City Charter was adopted.

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**7. Adjournment**

**Motion** by Councilmember Tobbe, seconded by Councilmember Emaus, to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 p.m. **The motion carried unanimously.**

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Tara Brown, City Clerk

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James Muzzin, Mayor