



## EMPIRE MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

P.O. BOX 1841

Empire, CA 95319

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Members:

Christopher Nunes, Chair  
Dorothy Roberts, Secretary  
Fabian Tamayo, Vice-Chair  
Cheyenne Sanders, Member

### MINUTES

Wednesday, February 22, 2023 @ 6 PM

Empire Community Library, 98 I street, Empire, CA 95319 - Community Room

#### **Present (identified by a checked box):**

Christopher Nunes

Fabian Tamayo

Dorothy Roberts

Cheyenne Sanders

1. Call Meeting to Order – Meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Chair Nunes.
2. Pledge of Allegiance - Pledge of allegiance was recited by all in attendance. Community manager Erica Inacio offered interpretation for non-English speakers. Contracted interpreter was present.
3. Introduction and Roll Call – Chair Nunes welcomed the public and the members introduced themselves. Vice-Chair Tamayo had notified the MAC of his absence.
4. Approve Meeting Minutes from January 25, 2023. – A motion was made to approve the minutes. Moved Sanders, Seconded Roberts. Unanimously approved.
5. Public Comment\*

- Brandon Fernandez stated that the trains are disturbing some residents by not moving and laying on their horns at 5 AM for at least an hour, if not longer. Community manager Erica Inacio reminded the public that the trains are their own entity. Michelle Finch from Juan Alanis office stated that she would look into it because she believes there is an ordinance, as long as certain criteria is met.

Mr. Fernandez inquired about turning Empire into a golf cart community. Officer Moore, CHP stated that there is no way to make Empire a golf cart community due to risks of more accidents.

Mr. Fernandez also brought to attention how hectic school drop off/pick up is and the congestion that comes with it. Officer Moore reminded the community that they are short staffed and that they are trying their best to have a presence in and around these areas and have pulled over a few people on Church for speeding.

- Joan asked about the possibility of painting red curbs at G and 1st street in the northeast corner because of congestion and traffic concerns. Erica deferred to Brian England from Public Works, and he stated that they would have to take a survey on that area before turning them into red zones, to make sure that it does not add to the congestion that is already an issue.

- Stephanie Pino asked about a designated turn signal at Santa Fe and Yosemite to possibly reduce the number of accidents at that intersection and putting a turn signal at B and Yosemite. Erica Inacio reminded the community that the Department of Transportation is scheduled to attend the March meeting and will be providing an update on some projects coming to Empire that may address these concerns.
- April Towe brought to attention that North Abbie and South Abbie have some of the same addresses and are not clearly marked leaving many residents not receiving their mail. Brian from Public works has made notes on the subject and will follow up on making sure the Street signs are clear.
- Karen Miginues has stated that there is graffiti on North Abbie, as well as on B and 2nd. Erica reminded the community of the correct phone numbers to call and the power of reporting to the StanConnect app and if anyone has reported and has their ticket number, she would be more than happy to follow up with them after the meeting.
- Louis Frantz stated that the trash by the Santa Fe bridge needs to be picked up as it is piling up and said that it has been reported in the StanConnect app. Erica stated that it is most likely on the railroad's jurisdiction but will look into it and see if we can have County Public Works crew clean it up.
- Rafael Rodriguez made a point that Santa Fe gets cleaned in almost all areas except for the Empire portion. Community Manager Inacio let the community know that they do clean in cycles, and it will eventually come back around to Empires turn – referring to CalTrans and Railroad jurisdictions.
- Mr Frantz reminded the community that the StanConnect does work and encourages the community to use it.

## 6. Community Reports

### a. Public Safety

- i. Stanislaus County Sheriff's Office – none.
- ii. California Highway Patrol - Officer Moore reported

- 1 non-injury hit and run involving 3 vehicles, 3 motor homes that got a citation for blocking roadways, 4 reckless driving and no stolen vehicles, and recovered 2 stolen vehicles.

Staffing update: 1 transfer from San Andreas has started, 1 new academy graduate starts Thursday and 1 more is to start the following week.

He then addressed the mail that has been getting stolen in and around the area and shared that it would be best to get a locked mailbox, a P.O. Box, or cameras. Report any theft to the Sheriff's office.

Officer Moore informed the public that side shows are on the rise and if you are calling it in the easiest way to identify the drivers is by license plate numbers.

- iii. Stanislaus Consolidated Fire

- Captain Braid reported 53 calls with 90% of them being EMS calls, 3 fires and an RV fire. He also stated they were giving a grant to send 10 people to paramedic school starting in July.

b. Local Government

i. Board of Supervisors – Channce Condit

- Russel Fowler reported for Supervisor Channce Condit. Mr. Fowler thanked the community for bringing the Antonio's bar and grill sign to their attention and let the community know that the owners either have to get it in shape or demolish the building, and they decided to demolish and remove the sign.

ii. Chief Executive Office

- Erica Inacio, Community Manager, shared flyers for the town hall meeting regarding the fentanyl epidemic and encouraged the community to attend. The meeting will be held in English and in Spanish.
- Postcards were mailed out to the residents represented by the MAC in the Empire area. The cards provide information about the Empire MAC and the calendar for future meetings.
- Brian from Public Works clarified the installation of a new 3 way stop on E St and Brooklynn. There was a safety concern where individuals who could not see traffic around the curve and installed the Stop sign for public safety.

c. School District

- Claudia Manzo, Empire Elementary Principal thanked Channce Condit's Office for their diligence on the sign at Antonio's. She also thanked the library for allowing Empire Elementary to be a part of the take home library grant.
- Ms. Manzo informed the public about the food distribution on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of every month and reminded the community about the Fentanyl town hall meeting and encouraged the community to attend.

d. Library

- Diane Ramirez, Library Assistant, informed the public that they will be having a master gardner class the 1st Saturday of every month at 2:00pm. Diane also shared information on the In and Out cover to cover program where every 5 books read is a free cheeseburger from In and Out. This challenge runs from March 3rd - April 15th.

7. Informational Items

- a. StanRTA presented the new bus system overhaul including the new routes that will be running through the Empire area, running every hour instead of every two hours 7 days a week, new prices on bus passes with an all-day pass being \$2 and \$1 for seniors and those with disabilities. A new app that can be downloaded on your phone to track route times and the ability to pay for your passes right at your phone.

Children ages 0-18 and current MJC students can ride for free, and if qualified a new demand system that will pick you up at your door and take you anywhere in the system. The Medi van will take you to any medical facility for a day rate of 1\$0 each way, children are also able to take this service for free and anyone who would accompany any passenger will be charged \$5 dollars each way.

8. Action Items:

- a. Nominations and Appointment of Officers for 2023 - Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary – this item was held until the March meeting.

9. Council Comments & Recommendations for Future Agenda Items.

- Chair Nunes informed the community that Love Empire will be held April 29th where they have scheduled a community clean up at the Church of Christ and is also working with the school to start the garden project again this year.

Chair Nunes reminded everyone that these events are made to open the city and to encourage neighbors to help each other all year round, and to visit the website for the available projects. They are planning a pop-up event afterward with free tacos.

Chair Nunes also stated that National Night Out will be held in August this year and they will be sending out mail reminders.

- The MAC requested for the Bylaws reflecting proposed revisions to change the current membership from elected to appointed to be provided at the March meeting. For the benefit of the public, Erica shared the process in approving the bylaws and making the change.

10. Adjournment: 7:12 PM

Next Regular Meeting – March 22, 2023, at 6:00 PM.