



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Date: 12/9/2020

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Closed Session Location: Teleconference

Special Meeting Location: Joinwebinar.com – ID# 967-438-987

Closed Session (Teleconference)

A. Call To Order

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 4:26 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Carlton, Mueller, Nash, Taylor

Recused: Combs

Staff: City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson, Interim City Attorney Cara Silver

C. Closed Session

- C1. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation: Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to § 54956.9(b) Number of cases – 1

No reportable actions.

Mayor Taylor adjourned the special meeting at 4:46 p.m.

Special Session ([Joinwebinar.com](https://www.joinwebinar.com) – ID# 967-438-987)

D. Call To Order

Vice Mayor Combs called the meeting to order at 4:58 p.m.

E. Roll Call

Present: Carlton, Combs, Mueller, Nash

Absent: Taylor

Staff: City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson, Interim City Attorney Cara Silver, City Clerk Judi Herren

F. Regular Business

- F1. City Council direction on holiday tree lighting

[Web form public comment received on item F1](#) (Attachment).

City Councilmember Mueller introduced the item.

The City Council discussed mental health impacts to the holiday tree lighting and the encouragement to support the Downtown businesses by increasing pedestrian traffic. The City Council directed staff to publicize the lighting of holiday trees.

ACTION: Motion and second (Mueller/ Carlton), to approve the city manager to enter into an agreement for \$40,000 to light the trees at Fremont Park and the Onetta Harris Community Center and notify the public of the tree lighting, passed 3-1-1 (Nash dissenting and Taylor absent).

G. Adjournment

Vice Mayor Combs adjourned the meeting at 5:28 p.m.

Judi A. Herren, City Clerk

These minutes were approved at the City Council meeting of January 12, 2021.

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS, COVID-19, EMERGENCY ADVISORY NOTICE

On March 19, 2020, the Governor ordered a statewide stay-at-home order calling on all individuals living in the State of California to stay at home or at their place of residence to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Additionally, the Governor has temporarily suspended certain requirements of the Brown Act. For the duration of the shelter in place order, the following public meeting protocols will apply.

Teleconference meeting: All members of the City Council, city staff, applicants, and members of the public will be participating by teleconference. To promote social distancing while allowing essential governmental functions to continue, the Governor has temporarily waived portions of the open meetings act and rules pertaining to teleconference meetings. This meeting is conducted in compliance with the Governor Executive Order N-25-20 issued March 12, 2020, and supplemental Executive Order N-29-20 issued March 17, 2020.

- How to participate in the meeting
 - Submit a written comment online:
menlopark.org/publiccommentDecember9*
 - Record a comment or request a call-back when an agenda topic is under consideration:
Dial 650-474-5071*
 - Access the special meeting real-time online at:
joinwebinar.com – Special Meeting ID 967-438-987
 - Access the regular meeting real-time via telephone (listen only mode) at:
(415) 655-0052
Special Meeting ID 586-785-188 (# – no audio pin)
*Written and recorded public comments and call-back requests are accepted up to 1-hour before the meeting start time. Written and recorded messages are provided to the City Council at the appropriate time in their meeting. Recorded messages may be transcribed using a voice-to-text tool.
- Watch special meeting:
 - Cable television subscriber in Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, Atherton, and Palo Alto:
Channel 26
 - Online:
menlopark.org/streaming

Note: City Council closed sessions are not broadcast online or on television and public participation is limited to the beginning of closed session.

Subject to Change: Given the current public health emergency and the rapidly evolving federal, state, county and local orders, the format of this meeting may be altered or the meeting may be canceled. You may check on the status of the meeting by visiting the City's website www.menlopark.org. The instructions for logging on to the webinar and/or the access code is subject to change. If you have difficulty accessing the webinar, please check the latest online edition of the posted agenda for updated information (menlopark.org/agenda).

According to City Council policy, all regular meetings of the City Council are to end by midnight unless there is a super majority vote taken by 11:00 p.m. to extend the meeting and identify the items to be considered after 11:00 p.m.

Agenda item F1
Anonymous Resident

Dear Sir or Madam,

Usually Menlo Park's Christmas Tree Lighting at Fremont Park takes place in the first week of December. As this did not happen until now, and I cannot find any information about the celebration, I assume there will be no Christmas Tree this year.

It cannot be that the virus takes away our Christmas joy. I understand and accept that there will be no official celebration (gatherings with singers, switching on lights by our mayor), still there should be some Christmas decoration, a decorated tree on the ground or decoration on other trees which do not cause energy costs. If the reason are costs, then maybe a patron can be found who will be able to cover costs.

Please, we have to keep our tradition, we have to show that Christmas is alive, we still have to spread joy, happiness and hope.

Thank you very much for considering this situation.

Best regards,

Menlo Park Resident
(No more details due
to privacy concerns ;-)

Agenda item F1 Anonymous Resident

Please light the tree!!

Agenda item F1
Linda Hubbard Resident

The holiday tree at Fremont Park is needed this year more than ever. Please vote to light the tree and bring added cheer to downtown Menlo Park.