



# **City Council Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, January 26, 2023**

**1:30 PM**

**Hybrid Meeting - Council Chambers and Virtually -**

**<https://sanjoseca.zoom.us/j/88957084529>**

## **Special Meeting on Filling Vacancies in Council District 10**

MATT MAHAN, MAYOR  
ROSEMARY KAMEI, DISTRICT 1  
SERGIO JIMENEZ, DISTRICT 2  
OMAR TORRES, DISTRICT 3  
DAVID COHEN, DISTRICT 4  
PETER ORTIZ, DISTRICT 5  
DEV DAVIS, DISTRICT 6  
BIEN DOAN, DISTRICT 7  
VACANT, DISTRICT 8  
PAM FOLEY, DISTRICT 9  
VACANT, DISTRICT 10

**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING ON FILLING VACANCIES IN COUNCIL DISTRICT 10  
JANUARY 26, 2023**

**COVID-19 NOTICE**

*Consistent with AB 361 and City of San José Resolution Nos. 80628, 80659, 80685, 80724, 80758, 80809, and 80853, Councilmembers may be teleconferencing from remote locations.*

The Special Council meeting was teleconferenced from remote locations and in Council Chambers and convened at 1:30 p.m. Interpretation in Spanish and Vietnamese was provided to the public.

Present: Council Members - All Present (in Council Chambers)

Absent: Council Members - All Present.

**SPECIAL MEETING**

1. **23-046**      **Special Meeting on Filling Vacancies in Council Districts. (City Clerk)**
  - a) Interview candidates for the interim appointment to City Council District 10.
  - b) Consideration of appointment of candidate to a term to begin immediately and end when a candidate has been duly elected in the next regularly scheduled election and the results of the election have been officially certified.

**Motion:** Councilmember David Cohen moved, with Councilmember Dev Davis seconding, his memorandum dated January 25, 2023 recommending to: Accept the revised supplemental memorandum from the City Clerk (dated January 23) with the following clarifications and revisions: (1) Each applicant will be interviewed by council in the random alphabet order laid out by the City Clerk in the Memorandum of January 13. (2) Each applicant will provide an opening Accept the revised supplemental memorandum from the City Clerk (dated January 23) with the following clarifications and revisions: 1) The applicants will be seated together in the box in Council chambers for the interview in the order laid out by the City Clerk in the Memorandum of January 13. 2) Each applicant will provide an opening statement of up to three (3) minutes. 3) After the opening statement, each Councilmember and the Mayor will have the opportunity to ask the applicants one question. Each applicant will have two (2) minutes to answer the question. The order of answering will rotate so that each question has a different candidate going first. 4) After all councilmembers have asked their questions, the Mayor will open public comment. 5) After public comment, each Councilmember will have the opportunity ask a single follow-up question. This questioning will be performed in the same format as in the first round, but the answers will be limited to one (1) minute. 6) Discussion and voting will proceed as in the Clerk's memo, with the clarification that after the councilmembers vote for up to three candidates, the top three (3) vote getters will move on to be considered for the next round of voting. In the event of a tie, four (4) candidates may be moved on to the next round. 7) Appoint an applicant for to a term to begin January 30, 2023.

Councilmember Omar Torres made a friendly amendment, requesting the addition of a 1-minute Closing Statement following initial Council Questions. The friendly amendment was accepted.

**Action:** On a call for the question, the motion carried unanimously, with the Council moving Councilmember David Cohen's January 25, 2023 memorandum, including a 1-minute Closing Statement following initial Council Questions. (9-0.)

Mayor Mahan opened the floor for 3-minute Candidate statements, followed by 2-minute Council questions by District in numerical order.

The Candidates were interviewed in the following order:

1. Ron Del Pozzo
2. Arjun Batra
3. George Casey
4. Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo
5. Dennis Hawkins
6. J. David Heindel

The following questions were asked of each candidate in numerical order by District:

### **District 1**

Vice Mayor, Rosemary Kamei asked the following question of all six candidates:

There are many decisions that you will make regarding land use. How will you balance the need for more affordable housing, emergency interim housing, higher densities, and have them adjacent to uses such as single-family homes in D10?

## **District 2**

Councilmember Sergio Jimenez asked the following question of all six candidates:

There will be decisions that need to be made that will be perceived to be negative for your District and some members of the community, as you all know, will be vocal. However, it can also be true that such decisions can be good for the broader city-wide community. How will you navigate this space?

## **District 3**

Councilmember Omar Torres asked the following question of all six candidates:

We have high vacancy rates in our most critical departments like Fire, Planning, Building & Code, and Police. How would you beef up our staffing?

## **District 4**

Councilmember David Cohen asked the following question of all six candidates:

This city has been on the forefront of leading on environmental issues and being an environmental leader. I want to hear about your priorities when it comes to the environment, and what your thoughts are about how we might be moving towards carbon neutrality and what we need to do as a city.

## **District 5**

Councilmember Peter Ortiz asked the following question of all six candidates:

Each one of our districts have levels of diversity, both economically and culturally. D10 has some of the wealthiest neighborhoods in our city. It also has working class communities such as the Hoffman Via Monte neighborhood, a neighborhood that has been plagued with crime, absentee landlords, blight, and gang activity. Given some communities can generally be more vocal when it comes to reaching out to City Council or city government than others, how or what is your plan to make sure that neighborhoods, like Hoffman Via Monte, have equitable access to services as well as your support as Councilmember?

## **District 6**

Council Member Dev Davis asked the following question of all six candidates:

Every office has competing priorities, and you will be able to build a team to help you. With those competing priorities, I would like to know how will you organize your office and staff to best serve your residents whilst still managing the city-wide policy issues that arise weekly? And how do you describe your management style?

## **District 7**

Councilmember Bien Doan asked the following question of all six candidates:

Mental health and drug addiction services are the responsibility of the county. But our city has done a great job filling the gap. How will you as a councilmember work with the County and what plans do you have to improve the County services to help our neighbors in need?

## **District 8**

Vacant.

## **District 9**

Councilmember Pam Foley asked the following question of all six candidates:

Due to the state of the economy, it appears we may need to make some difficult decisions with respect to our budget. Some programs may be preserved, and others may need to be reduced. Which service areas do you think should be protected, and which areas do you feel should be reduced?

## **District 10**

Vacant.

## **Mayor**

Mayor Mahan asked the following question of all six candidates:

If you could prioritize one measurable goal for our city government to achieve this year, what would the goal be? Be as specific as you can, and what is one program or one policy you would like to prioritize to achieve it?

Mayor Mahan opened the floor for 1-minute Candidate Closing statements, in numerical order.

Mayor Mahan opened the floor for public comment.

# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **In Person Speakers:**

1. Victoria Martin, Brian Wheatley, Dr. Eleanor Catillo Sumi, Jason Gurahoo, Shawn Gerth, Lilian Koenig, and Evelyn L. Omarah spoke in support of candidate Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo.
2. Betsy Hammer Carr and Cheryl L. offered their support of the election process to fill Districts 8 and 10 to ensure both districts have a voice and representation.
3. Corina Del Pozzo, Ray Davilla, and Sajid Khan spoke in support of Candidate Ron Del Pozzo.
4. Krista Delatorre (IFPTE Local 21 Employees) and Bob Emmet urged that Council to select a Candidates that is ready to get to work, know the issues in those districts, and understand policies including homelessness and housing.

**Zoom Speakers:**

1. Sally Peterson, Paul Soto, Martha O Connell, Gopal Krishnan, Vinod Thukral, Surinder Batra, Carolyn Bauer, Caller with Number Ending in #6470, Sushil Patel, Sandeep, Neelam Thaku, and Narender spoke in support of candidate Arjun Batra.
2. Sandra, David Noel, Rich Crowley, and David Osugi spoke in support of candidate J. David Heindel.
3. Julie Jennings spoke in support of candidate Dennis Hawkins.
4. Blair Beekman addressed candidates' answers and questions provided by council.
5. Mike Sodergren, Jenny Higgins, and Eva Terrazas spoke in support of candidate Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo.
6. Janet Williams spoke in support of candidate J. David Heindel and Dennis Hawkins.
7. Greg Saldivar and Michael Quinlivan spoke in support of Candidate Ron Del Pozzo.
8. Oscar Quitoz-Medrano spoke on the need for the Council and candidate to prioritize affordable housing.
9. Jill Borders expressed a desire for an election. They also spoke on being unable to support a single candidate based on the information shared in questions and responses from the process.
10. Tami S spoke in opposition of candidate Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo.
11. Fred Bree and Brian Gordon expressed desire for a fair election and offered criticisms of the appointment process.

Action: Upon motion by Councilmember Dev Davis, seconded by Councilmember Pam Foley and carried unanimously, the motion to vote for up to three candidates, and the candidates with the most votes to move forward in the process before the next round of questioning passed. (9-0.)

The vote was as followed:

Ron Del Pozzo: 1

Arjun Batra: 5

George Casey: 6

Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo: 6

Dennis Hawkins: 4

J. David Heindel: 2

The top three Candidates were: Arjun Batra, George Casey, and Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo.

Mayor Mahan opened the floor for 1-minute Council questions by District in numerical order.

**District 1**

Vice Mayor, Rosemary Kamei asked the following question of all three candidates:

Community Safety is critically important. How would you measure success on achieving increased pedestrian and traffic safety and reduce street-level crime?

**District 2**

Councilmember Sergio Jimenez asked the following question of all three candidates:

Can you share your thoughts about the soon-to-be-open City of San Jose RV Safe Parking site at the VTA Santa Teresa Light Rail Station?

#### **District 4**

Councilmember David Cohen asked the following question of all three candidates:  
Can you describe what you might be interested in as far as city policy committees and work going forward?

#### **District 5**

Councilmember Peter Ortiz asked the following question of all three candidates:  
Our public school system has been ultimately defunded by the passing of Prop 13. This impacts some of our most at-risk communities and youth. With many districts struggling to provide services, what role do you see the city playing when it comes to supplementing services from our school districts?

#### **District 7**

Councilmember Bien Doan asked the following question of all three candidates:  
As a councilmember you will need to reach a compromise at some point to move legislation forward. Are you prepared to make compromises with your colleagues even when you don't morally feel it is correct or agree? Please give me a quick example of a time you had to make this compromise.

#### **District 8**

Vacant.

#### **District 9**

Councilmember Pam Foley asked the following question to all three candidates:  
As part of the RHNA Goals, those are the goals set for housing by the state of California, we are required to build a certain number of new homes in the City of San Jose. How do you propose we reach our RHNA Housing Goals while balancing the concerns of your community members?

#### **District 10**

Vacant.

#### **Mayor**

Mayor Mahan asked the following question to all three candidates:  
I'm curious what you will do to ensure that you are receiving input from the broadest swath of constituents in District 10 as possible, and what steps you'll take to make yourself accountable to them over time?

The Council proceeded to vote for a single candidate.

The vote was as followed:  
Arjun Batra: 4  
George Casey: 2  
Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo: 3

The Council then voted amongst the top two candidates.

The vote was as followed:

Arjun Batra: 6

Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo: 3

After tallying the votes, it was concluded that Arjun Batra was chosen to fill the vacancy for the interim appointment to City Council District 10.

Mayor Mahan congratulated Arjun Batra.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Mahan adjourned the Special Meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Minutes Recorded, Prepared and Respectfully Submitted by,



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Toni J. Taber,  
CMC City Clerk