

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Special Meeting
5:00 P.M.

February 23, 2023
Council Chambers

5:00 P.M. - SPECIAL MEETING

Mayor Thorpe called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M., and City Clerk Householder called the roll.

Present: Council Members District 2 Barbanica, District 3 Ogorchock (via zoom), District 4 Wilson and Mayor Thorpe
Absent: Mayor Pro Tem (District 1) Torres-Walker

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Thorpe led the Pledge of Allegiance.

COUNCIL REGULAR AGENDA

1. HOMEKEY PROGRAM AND UNHOUSED STRATEGIES IN THE CITY OF ANTIOCH

Assistant City Manager Bayon Moore and Finance Director Merchant presented the staff report and Megan Kurteff-Schatz representing Focus Strategies presented the PowerPoint presentation dated February 23, 2023, recommending the City Council: a) Receive and discuss a presentation by Focus Strategies; b) Consider potential initiation of a second Homekey proposal solicitation process; and c) Make a motion determining the City's potential financial pledge and designating a source of City funds.

Andrew Becker stated Dignity Moves had indicated there were alternatives to the traditional RFP process and he expressed concern that the City had not responded.

Edgar Martinez expressed concern regarding the potential impacts to the City's General Fund and spoke in support of a regional approach to homelessness.

A speaker representing Dignity Moves stated there were opportunities to move forward with a Homekey Project outside the RFP method and offered to assist the City with expediting the process.

A speaker representing California Supportive Housing, expressed interest in working with the City on a project for Antioch.

In response to Councilmember Barbanica, Finance Director Merchant explained that based on General Fund Projections and the annual financial commitment for this project, she was unsure of where the City would get the funds unless they received grants or services were cut. She noted ARPA funding was available; however, that money needed to be obligated by December

31, 2024, spent by 2026, and it was not continued funding, so it would affect any program going forward.

Councilmember Barbanica stated he could not support the program since it would place the City in a position of deficit spending.

Mayor Thorpe responded that it was up to Council to determine budget priorities.

In response to Councilmember Wilson, Ms. Kurteff-Schatz reviewed project examples.

Councilmember Wilson stated she did not know if the City could afford a Homekey Project and spoke in support of a regional approach to homelessness.

Councilmember Ogorchock stated there may be an opportunity to partner with the County for a housing project for unhoused residents. She commented that she was not in support of moving forward with a Homekey project due to the budget impacts.

Leslie May discussed her efforts to work with City Manager Johnson to seek grant funding opportunities to purchase or build homeless projects.

Assistant City Manager Bayon Moore clarified if Council wanted to move forward, staff was asking for a pledge of a financial commitment.

Mayor Thorpe stated given the discussion this evening, there was no consensus to move forward with any of the options before Council. He reminded the public that City's were not normally task with these types of services; however, there had been a lack of support from the County to address these matters.

Councilmember Ogorchock stated she was interested in looking for other options and noted that hopefully the State would allocate funding to cities to address homelessness issues.

Councilmember Wilson supported looking at other options.

Mayor Thorpe stated Council may need to consider establishing a Standing Committee on Homelessness to focus on this topic.

2. DISCUSSION ITEM: POTENTIAL URGENCY ORDINANCE BANNING ALL NEW LIQUOR STORES IN THE CITY OF ANTIOCH

City Attorney Smith presented the staff report dated February 23, 2023, recommending the City Council provide direction whether staff should prepare an urgency ordinance prohibiting all new liquor stores in the City of Antioch.

Councilmember Wilson clarified that the prohibition would be on new liquor stores and would allow the Council to discuss public safety and public health as it related to oversaturation of these businesses.

Jim Lanter, Business Owner, stated he did not support a total prohibition on all liquor businesses. He agreed that there were some existing liquor stores that were a concern; however, others had improved their businesses. He stated he believed there was a policing issue in Antioch.

Johnny Walker requested that he be anonymous and asked that his real name not be used when Council addressed him. He announced he would file a lawsuit if his real name was used again.

Mayor Thorpe reminded the speaker to limit his comments to the agenda item.

Mr. Walker commented that he was allowed to remain anonymous because he feared retaliation and being addressed by his real name was a violation of the Brown Act. He opposed the urgency ordinance banning all new liquor stores.

Edgar Martinez suggested Council address concerns related to existing liquor stores. He questioned why the Antioch Police Department had not commented on a recent project approved by the Planning Commission. He stated he supported the urgency ordinance.

Andrew Becker expressed concern for neglected neighborhoods and noted the blame should not be placed on one type of business. He also expressed concern regarding liquor stores and cannabis businesses approved in other areas of the City. He noted it was the City's responsibility to police their community. He encouraged Council to uplift and support underserved communities.

Mayor Thorpe stated that the City needed to be thoughtful in where they placed liquor/convenience stores so they would not oversaturate communities. He noted he would support an urgency ordinance to allow the City to develop a policy.

Councilmember Barbanica supported a policy to outline where liquor stores could be located; however, he did not support a ban on any business that wanted to come into the City.

Mayor Thorpe explained the ban would be temporary until Council agreed on a policy.

Councilmember Ogorchock stated being thoughtful about location was important; however, she was concerned for a ban of all liquor businesses. She believed this was not an urgency item.

Councilmember Wilson supported the urgency ordinance so Council could have a discussion on policy.

There was no consensus to move forward with the preparation of an urgency ordinance banning all new liquor stores in the City of Antioch..

Councilmember Ogorchock stated this item could be brought back for discussion without the ordinance.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Councilmember Wilson, seconded by Councilmember Barbanica the City Council members present unanimously adjourned the meeting at 6:26 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Kitty Eiden

KITTY EIDEN, Minutes Clerk