

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
EL MONTE CITY COUNCIL CONCURRENT SPECIAL MEETING
OF MARCH 8, 2021

MEETING JOINTLY AND REGULARLY WITH THE EL MONTE HOUSING AUTHORITY; EL MONTE PUBLIC FINANCING AUTHORITY; EL MONTE PARKING AUTHORITY; EL MONTE WATER AUTHORITY; SUCCESSOR AGENCY TO THE FORMER EL MONTE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY; HOUSING SUCCESSOR AGENCY; AND, FROM TIME TO TIME, SUCH OTHER BODIES OF THE CITY WHOSE MEMBERSHIP IS COMPOSED EXCLUSIVELY OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CITY COUNCIL

1. CALL TO ORDER: **5:33 p.m.**

2. ROLL CALL FOR CITY COUNCIL AND AUTHORITY BODIES:

Jessica Ancona, Mayor/Chair – **present**
Victoria Martinez Muela, Mayor Pro Tem/Authority Member – **present**
Martin R. Herrera, Councilmember/Authority Member – **present**
Dr. Maria Morales, Councilmember/Authority Member – **present**
Alma D. Puente, Councilmember/Authority Member – **present**

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

m) Dr. Morales
s) Councilmember Puente **5-0**

4. INVOCATION: **Mayor Pro Tem Martinez Muela**

5. FLAG SALUTE: **Chief of Police, David Reynoso**

6. SPECIAL MEETING PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING AGENDIZED MATTERS ONLY:

As provided under Government Code Section 54954.3, this time has been set aside for persons in the audience to provide comment or make inquiries on matters appearing on this Special Meeting agenda only. Although no person is required to provide their name and address as a condition to attending a meeting, persons who wish to address the body are asked to state their name and address. Each speaker will be limited to three (3) continuous minutes. Speakers may not lend any portion of their speaking time to other persons or borrow additional time from other persons. All comments or queries presented by a speaker shall be addressed to the body as a whole and not to any specific member thereof. No questions shall be posed to any member of the body except through the presiding official of the meeting, members of the body are under no obligation to respond to questions posed by speakers but may provide brief clarifying responses to any comment made or questions posed. The body may not engage in any

City Council Concurrent Special Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2021

sort of prolonged discussion or deliberation with any speaker or group of speakers on matters that are not listed on this Special Meeting agenda.

Enforcement of Decorum: The Chief of Police of the City of El Monte, or such member, or members of the Police Department as the Chief of Police may designate, shall serve as the Sergeant-at-Arms of the meeting. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall carry out all orders and instructions given by the presiding official for the purpose of maintaining order and decorum at the meeting. While members of the public are free to level criticism of policies and the action(s) or proposed action(s) of the body or its members, members of the public may not engage in behavior that is disruptive to the orderly conduct of the proceedings, including, but not limited to, conduct that prevents other members of the public from being heard when it is their opportunity to speak or which prevents members of the audience from hearing or seeing the proceedings.

Members of the public may not threaten any person with physical harm or act in a manner that may reasonably be interpreted as an imminent threat of physical harm. All persons attending the meeting must adhere to policies barring harassment based upon a person's race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, medical condition, marital status, gender, sexual orientation or age.

Mayor Ancona invited members of the public to address the City Council on Closed Session Items 7.1.

Mayor Ancona and the City Council recessed into Closed Session at approximately 9:45 p.m. Mayor Ancona and the City Council reconvened from Closed Session at approximately 10:09 p.m.

Assistant City Attorney Richard Padilla reported out of Closed Session with respect to Item 7.1.

7. CLOSED SESSION:

7.1 Closed Session Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2) and 5495.69(e)(1) – Conference with Legal Counsel Regarding Anticipated Litigation – One (1) Matter.

General update provided but no final action taken.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

8.1 A Public Hearing to Consider and Approve an Uncodified Urgency Ordinance Establishing Labor Standards and Requirements for “Hero” Pay for Front-Line Retail Establishment Employees in the City of El Monte for One Hundred Twenty Days; or, in the Alternative, Approving the Same Ordinance for First Reading as a Regular City Council Ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION OF BUSINESS ITEM UNDER CONSIDERATION:

City Council Concurrent Special Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2021

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Open public hearing;
2. Receive presentation from staff;
3. Pose questions to staff;
4. Allow members of the public to offer comment;
5. Pose follow-up questions to staff;
6. Conduct additional deliberation, if needed;
7. Adopt an uncodified urgency ordinance to establish a labor standards and requirements for "Hero" Pay for front-line retail establishment employees in the City of El Monte for hundred twenty days.

Total Cost: N/A

Account No: N/A

Is the cost of this item budgeted? N/A

Ordinance No. 2997

m) Mayor Ancona

s) Mayor Pro Tem Martinez Muela

Open P.H.

5-0

Frank Torres – Calling in support of this Ordinance the essential workers have been the ones who have kept the Country going during this pandemic.

Ken Rausch – The El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce would like to address the uncodified urgency ordinance establishing the labor standards requirements for Hero Pay for frontline retail establishment employees in the City of El Monte. Our concern is the untimely notification to the affected businesses and as a result of this we visited 12 retail establishments today and hand delivered copies of the special meeting of the 12 establishments not one knew about tonight's public hearing. This untimely notification will prevent affected retail establishments from voicing their concern. We respectfully request that this first reading be postponed so that the necessary time be given to the respected affected businesses to respond.

Frank Ramos – In support of the Hero pay ordinance.

Edith Gonzalez – Calling on behalf of Supervisor Hilda Solis in support of the Hero Pay Ordinance.

Allan Catanyag – We the frontliner in our way need your help to pass a bill that will benefit our grocery workers in this Covid-19 pandemic as we served the people of El Monte at this time. We all know how hard this days for each and everybody, most of us coping that happened to us and we know how hard this now that we experienced the sickness and even loss of our love one of this pandemic. May we have your helping hand by approving this bill that in your table right now for the benefit of our hundreds of our grocery workers that having problems in their finances. Thank you and the ball is in your hands.

Terrance Bacon – I am a pharmacy technician. I've been working in el monte for 10 years I truly believe hero pay for us would be amazing. We all have worked very during these pandemic times with no rewards for putting our lives on the line. These companies

City Council Concurrent Special Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2021

have not missed a beat because of the workers. In fact they have made major profits over the time. I think it's only fair to share it with the workers who drive the businesses. We are counting on the city to do what's right! Fight for the workers. Please pass hero pay. We all deserve it for the continuous hard work we do! We ask you to support the workers of this community and pass the ordinance for hero! Thanks you for your time.

Peggy Macias – Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you again about the impact Hero Pay would have on my coworkers and I. We have been out in the stores for this whole pandemic not knowing whether we would be infected. When it first hit, there wasn't a whole lot of good information on how to keep safe. Despite this, my coworkers and I still went to work, day in and day out. Some were infected and others were lucky enough not to get the Covid. I saw my coworkers come together as one and fight the "Covid fight". Along with health care workers, we knew the public needed our help. In order to stay home, they needed food, toilet paper, cleaning supplies, etc.... And we were there for them. That is why this Hero Pay is so important to us. Along with the health care workers, we are true "Heroes". We ask you to support and pass an urgency ordinance for Hero Pay. Thank you again for your time. Be safe/

Antonio Franco – Hello I've been working as a pharmacy technician for almost three years during the covid outbreak we had a lot of people who were sick and needed their meds and might have had covid. We were essential without us working and giving people their medications a lot of people would have gotten more sick. Our company made billions in profits and would not increase our pay we deserve that pay. We need to hold them responsible and we aren't the only ones working during those times a lot of grocery employees got covid because they had to work to provide for their family. During this difficult time it has been hard to keep myself off debt my mom lost her job and I need this hero pay to support my family. Please pass hero pay not just for our families but for everyone working. We as a city are asking you to pass this bill most of us live in the poverty level please help support those who need it.

Vanessa Rodriguez – Hello my name is Vanessa and I reside in the City of El Monte I work in CVS pharmacy located in South El Monte I been working in pharmacy for almost 6 years now and I've seen first-hand the impact that covid-19 has had in our community we've been working hard for our patients to stay on their medications working sometimes 12 hours shifts to keep up with the high demand of prescription we are the preferred pharmacy from Greater El Monte hospital, helping patients positive for covid-19 I just would like emphasize how important it is to keep our community in a healthy path to recovery from this pandemic. Please help us too to continue working for our community with a rewarding pay.

Ashley Ponce-Gonzalez – I am a pharmacy technician. I have been working El Monte since I have turned 18 years old. I honestly believe hero pay would be a great help for those who work in the community of El Monte. All of us have work endlessly/ nonstop during this pandemic. I'm hoping the city fight for what's right and give the hard workers what they deserve instead of the business who have profit so much from this pandemic. Please support us. Thank you.

Timothy James - Councilmembers, please accept the attached letters and documents regarding the grocery pay ordinance. Please contact me directly to discuss. Thank you for your consideration.

City Council Concurrent Special Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2021

Linna Ly - I have been in pharmacy for over 11 years, 3 of which I have been a pharmacist. Never have I had the need for my technicians so much as during this pandemic. Covid is a life threatening, novel virus and we still don't know what the long term effects are from it are. I do truly believe that pharmacy technicians should be given "Hero" pay because they have been at the front line, since the beginning. For those who say, they are just doing their job in helping people who are ill, that is wrong to think. Yes, they seen ill people every day but this is a pandemic. They could have called out daily instead of risking their lives (along with the lives of their families or anyone they live/come in contact with) every time they came to work. But they did not call out. They stepped up and went above and beyond. They helped with COVID testing. They even stepped up and got certified to administer the COVID vaccine. I leave you with one last comment, if pharmacy technicians are not your front line workers, are not your heroes, do you think the patients would have received their medications in a timely manner?

Carlos Viramontes – I represent the Latino Food Industry Association, a non-profit organization established in 2015 to represent the interests of the greater Latino community by focusing on the food industry. Our mission is to promote, educate and advocate on behalf of the Latino food industry. This includes farm workers, food manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, vendors, restaurants and retailers. We have approximately 1500 members, most of whom are independently owned establishments. Not all are Latino-owned, but all serve Latino consumers. We are the only such organization established to look after the interests of this segment. Today, I would like to speak to you about the proposed "Premium Pay" for grocery workers. There was a study done by the Brookings Institute that has been used to mischaracterize the profitability of the retail grocery business. It focused on the 13 largest retailers in the country, where it alleged that retailers had raked in billions in extra profits due to the panic shopping at the beginning of the pandemic. I want to stress that none of the so-called facts applied to our members stores, who are for the most part independently owned and operated, and whose profit margins remain in the 1.5% range, as it has been. Some made less money in 2020 than in 2019. In many cases, these independently owned grocery stores filled the void left by those corporate-owned grocery chains who were unwilling or unable to adapt themselves to our growing communities' food needs. This caused food deserts in many urban areas in Southern California. Many of our members risked everything to convert those empty buildings into marketplaces where our communities could buy fresh produce, cuts of fresh meat, and the leading domestic and international brands of merchandise that they prefer. They hire from, and are active in the communities they serve, and are responsive to the many requests they receive from non-profits community-based organizations. They support scholarship programs, local schools, public parks, and countless other community-friendly causes. They were proactive in providing protective personal equipment to their employees, and were the first to install shields at their cash registers, and to employ the CDC guidelines to protect both employees and shoppers. Many have unilaterally established their own versions of hazard pay to their frontline employees. In addition, many have subsidized their grocery store workers by giving them as much as 20% discounts on their groceries, something none of the national chains offer. In short, we stand against forcing additional premium pay penalty on our member retailers, when so many other frontline employees from other industries are not included in this ordinance, including city and state frontline employees. They simply cannot afford to absorb this additional pay without passing it along to consumers, which brings us back full-circle to the fact that we also represent the greater interests of Latino consumers who would have to pay for the increased premium pay.

City Council Concurrent Special Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2021

Cinthia Ramirez – Just want say, that our valuable and essential grocery store employees are important front line workers that deserve and should have the HERO PAY raise. They have been in the front line risking a lot this past year to help families put food on their tables. It would be greatly appreciated by many people in the community if these heroes get what they deserve for all their hard work.

m) Dr. Morales

s) Councilmember Puente

4-1 (Mayor Pro Tem Martinez Muela No)

**To approve the Ordinance as is
Subject to clerical corrections.**

9. ADJOURNMENT: Adjourn the meeting at 11:39 p.m.

The next Regular Meeting of the City Council will be held on **March 16, 2021** at 6:00 p.m. This Agenda will be posted on the City's website, www.ci.el-monte.ca.us, and physically posted no less than 72 hours prior to the start of the subject regular meeting. Although it is the City's practice and desire to electronically post a copy of this Agenda along with supporting material as part of its website posting, the size or formatting of certain supporting materials may render their website posting infeasible. Nevertheless, all supporting materials related to any item on this Agenda, that is made available to the members of the council may be inspected by members of the public at the City Clerk's Office located at 11333 Valley Boulevard, El Monte, Monday through Thursday, 7:00 am – 5:30 pm. For more information, please call the City Clerk's Office at 626-580-2016.

All public meetings and events sponsored or conducted by the City of El Monte are held in sites accessible to persons with disabilities. Requests for accommodations may be made by calling the office of the City Clerk at (626) 580-2016 at least three (3) working days prior to the event, if possible. This Agenda and copies of documents distributed at the meeting are available in alternative formats upon request.

Catherine A. Eredia, City Clerk
City of El Monte

APPROVED:

Jessica Ancona, Mayor
City of El Monte