

MINUTES

City of Lakewood
Measure L Citizens Oversight Committee
March 13, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Chair Crystal Jones-Duncan at 6:00 p.m. in the Executive Board Room at The Centre 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

PRESENT: Crystal Jones-Duncan, Chair, City Council Appointee, Seniors
Joy Janes, Soroptimist International of Lakewood/Long Beach
Ahmed Rafi, City Council Appointee, Neighborhood Watch
Hendrick Robertson, City Council Appointee, At-Large
Catherine Tolentino, City Council Appointee, Business Community
Valerie Youell, City Council Appointee, Youth
Cassandra Chase, Chair, City Council Audit Committee (Via zoom)
David Arellano, City Council Audit Committee

ABSENT: Deena Henry, Greater Lakewood Chamber of Commerce

ALSO PRESENT: Paolo Beltran, Deputy City Manager
Anne Rodriguez, Asst. Director of Finance and Administrative Services
Dario Simoes, City Engineer, Public Works
Kevin Yamakawa, Principal Civil Engineer, Public Works
Ruby Picon, Management Analyst, Administration/Public Safety
Ryan Martin, Intern, City Manager's Office
Veronica Copeland, Special Events Assistant

I. Welcome and Introductions of Committee Members

Chair Crystal Jones-Duncan requested members and staff to provide self-introductions for new members and staff present.

II. Approval of Minutes from September 17, 2024 Meeting

This item has been tabled to the next committee meeting.

III. Review of Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the Year Ended on June 30, 2024 and Mid-Cycle Budget Update

Assistant Director Rodriguez displayed slides showing the city's general fund budget with FY 24-25 and FY 25-26 budgets. She explained where general fund revenues come from for each of the two new fiscal year budgets, and provided a breakdown of departmental expenditures. She concluded her report by stating that the city continues to be well-positioned financially, is able to maintain programs and services, sets aside funds for needed infrastructure improvements, and includes budget surpluses anticipated as part of long-term stabilization strategy.

IV. Status of Capital Improvement Projects Funded by Measure L

Public Works Principal Civil Engineer, Kevin Yamakawa, provided a report, supported with slides, updating the committee on Capital Improvement projects. An explanation of annual projects included ADA improvements, fire and security, painting, roof, fence, hardscape, playgrounds, and other maintenance.

Information was provided on recent ADA improvements to the locker rooms at Mayfair Swim Pavilion at Mayfair Park. Current designs for ADA parking permits at Boyar Park and Biscailuz Park are being drafted which include updates to the hardscape to improve access into the park.

Camera upgrades have been made, specifically streetlight and surveillance around facilities that are equipped with higher quality cameras to zoom in to read license plates and deter people committing nefarious acts. A security assessment of City Hall aimed at addressing enhancing the protection of the staff. Current jobs include adding key card fob access to doors and fortifying counters to give a sense of security.

Concrete at parks is being repaired due to cracking to avoid trip hazards as needed. Hardscape at The Centre and Rynerson Park have recently been completed, upcoming repairs are expected at Palms and Biscailuz Park. A lot of the Lakewood parks have been transitioned to a flexible rubber material as a safety and accessibility enhancement. Annual maintenance and repairs are scheduled.

Facility improvements are included on a list of necessary repairs and are addressed by order of priority. Recently a slab replacement at Mayfair as well as an extensive pool filtration system at Mayfair pool were completed. The next project is the replacement of the bleachers at Mayfair Park at baseball diamond #1 due to rust and corrosion. Same for the fences near the pool.

The last phase of City Hall construction and renovation is beginning in the Administration Department. Part of the funds for the City Hall project are being paid for through grants received for incorporating ADA improvements into the remodel project. Expected completion is June 2025.

A design is currently underway in the very early stages for renovations to the Council Chambers. Improvements to AV, seating and accessibility are the top priorities for this project.

Assistant Director of Public Works, Dario Simoes went on to provide information on the necessary infrastructure repairs needed at various city facilities, parks and city yards. He explained that Measure L funds were not enough to fund the \$15.5M needed for all the repairs, so the city will secure a loan to save money in the long run, due to increasing prices. Staff is also working to secure grants to help with this funding and Measure L helps the city leverage to get matching funds.

Member Rafi asked out the inclusion of solar panels on city facilities. Mr. Simoes provided that solar technology is rapidly evolving but that the weight of the panels is expected to decrease in the future. In preparation, as roofs of facilities are replaced or upgraded they are being made “solar ready” so the possibility to have solar panels installed is easier to consider.

Palms Park Community Center will receive a full overhaul, including HVAC systems, fire protection updates, lighting and exterior. Funding will be partially made by Measure L, but also through funding from Congressman Garcia's office. This building is not currently sprinklered so the fire authority demanded that this remodel include

V. Public Safety Updates

Deputy City Manager Beltran provided information on homelessness services. The city continues to use the Bell shelter with a total of 15 beds, an increase of 8 beds, as directed by the council. Individuals are showing positive response and using the resources our Homeless Services Liaison and Deputies are offering. The full service facility is run by the Salvation Army and has job resources, on-site medical staff and resources for veterans. They have a small dog park and kennel for those who have pets.

For this year's budget adjustment, two part time homeless liaison positions were added. They will have a similar look to PSOs but focus on homeless services allowing for quicker response and overall presence. The city is looking to contract for companies to handle encampment clean up to avoid pulling city staff from other jobs causing other city services to suffer. Another consideration is the type of things necessary to clean up, like waste, clothes and possibly hazardous materials. These companies should be equipped to handle these materials safely.

The Community Prosecutor the city had been using has retired, leaving the need for a replacement.

Southwest Patrol continues to be visual and is now operating five cars.

VI. Public Comment

There were no members of the public present to comment.

VII. Committee Member Comments

Member Rafi commented that he would like to see rubberized/padded sidewalks in Lakewood parks.

VIII. Adjournment

Chairperson Jones-Duncan adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Veronica Copeland
Special Events Assistant