

City Council

Mayor Jill McLewis

Vice Mayor Sandra Maurer

Councilmember Phill Carter

Councilmember Neysa Hinton

Councilmember Stephen Zollman

**Sebastopol Commons Committee**

Councilmember Stephen Zollman – Chair

RM Horrell – Vice Chair

SEBASTOPOL COMMONS: BUILDING THE COMMONS COMMITTEE**TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2026****3:00 pm****DRAFT MEETING MINUTES****(ABBREVIATED)****In Person Location:** 1:00: Sebastopol City Hall, City Hall Conference Room, 7120 Bodega Avenue**Remote Teleconference Participation:** 12125 Ramsey Road, Sebastopol**CALL TO ORDER:** *Councilmember Zollman called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm***ROLL CALL:****Attendees:** **Committee:** *Councilmember Stephen Zollman, Councilmember Phill Carter, RM Horrell, Kent Jenkins, Mary Lou Schmidt, Deb Hoadley, RM Horrell, Naomi Hupert. Remote: Fred Engbarth***Absent:** *Sarah Glade Gurney***City Staff:** *Mary Gourley, Oriana Hart, Elissa Overton***LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** The City of Sebastopol acknowledges that we live and work within the unceded ancestral homelands of the Southern Pomo and the Coast Miwok people. We pay our respect to the past, present, and future generations of these peoples, including the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.**AGENDA:****Public Outreach:**

1. Future open houses
 - a. Schedule open house for September 10, 2026
Motion for approval, Naomi. Second, RM, Yay: 8, Nay: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1
2. Planning details
3. Presentation

Adjournment:

4. Meeting will be adjourned to the next committee meeting: September 8, 2026, 1:00 pm

Future Meetings:

1. Next Meeting Date: September 08, 2026 at 1:00 pm
2. Meeting Agenda items for September 08, 2026 (the committee process is to approve the agenda items for the next Committee meeting)
3. Request for Future Agenda items (this is an opportunity for members to make requests for topics/agenda items/information for next meeting)

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

- Meeting adjourned at: 2:03 pm

INFORMATION ONLY

- A list of resources in the drop box for this Committee can be found at the link below:
<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/jukixk5i0u6qc6m6aopqm/AGhv7odAoAxq1fG9gtrU4?rlkey=kh83eobwmz20x0q915zpmrlfk&st=1i2plhoj&dl=0>

- Brown Act: <https://www.cacities.org/uploadedfiles/leagueinternet/0d/0dd433d2-29c5-410c-af4f-418e247e7af3.pdf>
- Public Document Access: <https://www.cityofsebastopol.gov/boards-commissions-committees/>

Submitted by: Elissa Overton, City Staff Member

ATTACHED:

Attachment A – AI recap of meeting minutes

ATTACHMENT A

THE FOLLOWING DATA IS GENERATED BY AI AND CONTAINS INACCURATE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE. PLEASE LISTEN TO THE AUDIO RECORDING FOR CLARIFICATION AND FURTHER DETAILS.

Summary

The meeting focused on planning public outreach and another open house regarding options for city facilities, with a particular emphasis on the O'Reilly building. Members discussed concerns about a recent event organized by Phill Carter at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, which some felt resembled a city-sanctioned meeting and raised Brown Act issues. The group debated the best location and timing for the next open house to ensure broader community participation, ultimately deciding on September 10th at 5:30 pm at O'Reilly, with a presentation similar to the previous one but with clearer messaging about the process and options. There was discussion about the perception of the last open house as a "sell job" for O'Reilly and the need to present all options, including the cost of doing nothing, more neutrally. Members also addressed the need for better communication about the decision-making process leading up to the City Council meeting on September 15th, emphasizing that no final recommendation had been formally voted on by the committee. The conversation ended with a motion to hold the open house as planned and a reminder to keep future discussions focused on the agenda.

Collaboration

- Phill attend the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church meeting on Friday, August 30th, and clearly state at the beginning that he is speaking as Phill Carter, not on behalf of the committee.
- Staff: Arrange for the September 10th open house at O'Reilly, starting at 5:00 PM for tours and 5:30 PM for the presentation, ensuring public comment is included on the agenda.
- Staff: Find and redistribute the Senior Center's letter of support to all committee members by the end of the day.
- Committee Members: Type and submit their thoughts on the options to be included in the staff report for the September 15th City Council meeting.
- Committee Members: Reframe the presentation for the September 10th open house to clearly present the three options (including the cost of doing nothing) and emphasize that no final decision has been made.
- Concept for building structures, space allocations should be included in Staff Report.
- Staff: Resend Stephen comment letter from Senior Center.

Community Outreach Event Discussion

The meeting focused on discussing concerns about a community outreach event organized by Phill Carter at the Episcopal Church, which some council members felt was misleadingly similar to previous city-sanctioned events. The discussion revealed confusion about the purpose of the current meeting, with some participants believing it was meant to plan a full-body open house event, while others were unaware of the Episcopal Church event. The group clarified that while individual council members can speak to the community, a full council meeting requires a quorum and proper advertising, and they discussed the possibility of having additional council members attend the Episcopal Church event to avoid creating the appearance of an official council meeting.

Community Meeting Planning Discussion

The group discussed plans for an upcoming community meeting about an open house forum, with debate over whether to hold it at O'Reilly or another venue. Fred suggested that St. Stephen's Episcopal Church should have been clearer in their flyer about hosting the event, while Mary raised concerns about including committee members beyond the Finance Committee. The group agreed to schedule the meeting for September 10th at 5:00 PM at

O'Reilly, with Phill clarifying he would attend as an individual council member rather than representing the committee. They also discussed the need to include public comment time and ensure proper recording for the standing committee meeting.

O'Reilly Space Open House Planning

The committee discussed plans for an open house event on September 10th at 5:30 PM to allow the public to see the O'Reilly space and make an informed decision about the proposed facility. They agreed to present the same agenda as the previous meeting, including public comment, and emphasized that this was a concept presentation rather than a final decision. The group also discussed the need to clarify that the September 15th City Council meeting would not be a final vote but rather a discussion of options, with the committee making a formal recommendation at the end of the process.