

**CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH  
CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**January 15, 2025, 6:00 p.m.  
Council Chambers  
825 Imperial Beach Boulevard  
Imperial Beach, CA 91932**

Present: Mayor Aguirre, Mayor Pro Tem Seabury, Councilmember Fisher,  
Councilmember Leyba-Gonzalez, Councilmember McKay

Staff: City Manager Foltz, Chief Administrative Officer Cortez-Martinez, City  
Attorney Lyon, City Clerk Kelly, Fire Chief French, Marine Safety  
Captain Lindquist

**The City Council also sits as the Imperial Beach Planning Commission, Public Financing  
Authority, and Imperial Beach Redevelopment Agency Successor Agency.**

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Aguirre called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and she asked for a moment of silence to honor former Councilmember Jackie Palmer.

**2. ROLL CALL**

City Clerk Kelly took roll.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Fire Chief French led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. REIMBURSEMENT DISCLOSURES/REPORTS ON ASSIGNMENTS AND COMMITTEES**

Councilmember McKay

- Oath of Office Ceremony
- Metro Wastewater JPA Closed Session meeting
- SANDAG Board of Directors Meeting
- CalCities Regional Meeting
- Port of San Diego's Oath of Office Ceremony

Councilmember Leyba-Gonzalez

- Oath of Office Ceremony
- MTS Board of Directors meeting
- Announced the 5th Annual District 4 Community Cleanup is on February 22, 2025

Councilmember Fisher

- Thanked staff and the public for showing up at the Oath of Office Ceremony
- SANDAG Board of Directors meeting

Mayor Pro Tem Seabury

- She shared that there had been a kitchen fire and expressed gratitude for having a fire blanket; She urged everyone to have a fire blanket and fire extinguisher in their homes and reminded people to stay cautious while cooking and never leave the stove unattended.
- Port of San Diego's Oath of Office Ceremony

Mayor Aguirre

- She attended the Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce meeting to give a presentation on the sewage crisis
- Presented a proclamation to Debbie Espe, outgoing Chair of the South County Economic Development Council
- League of California Cities - San Diego Division meeting
- Port of San Diego's Oath of Office Ceremony
- City Selection Committee meeting

## 5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY STAFF

Chief French stressed the importance of fire prevention, urging homeowners to create fire-resistant zones by clearing debris and trimming bushes. He warned about dry conditions and the high risk of human-caused fires, such as discarded cigarette butts and malfunctioning equipment. He also mentioned efforts like the CERT program and pre-positioned strike teams to prevent fires in San Diego County.

Marine Safety Captain Lindquist showed a PowerPoint presentation on an emergency drill conducted with Harbor Police and the fire department to prepare for a potential pier fire. The drill focused on communication, response times, and staging. They worked together to test strategies, but no water was sprayed on the pier to avoid damage.

Mayor Pro Tem Seabury announced the Burn Institute will install free smoke alarms for seniors who are 62 years and older.

CAO Cortez-Martinez invited everyone to the State of the City Address that will be held on January 30, 2025.

City Manager Foltz announced the next regular City Council meeting will be on February 19, 2025.

## 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

A written comment was submitted by Mark Williams and it was provided as Last Minute Agenda Information.

Truth called for transparency in taxpayer-funded City Council trips, requesting detailed information on the trips. She also condemned negative comments made about her at a previous

meeting. She defended free speech and warned against limiting it. She also spoke about a woman buying crystals at a local shop for a friend who lost her home in the LA fires.

Bobby Douthit raised concerns about a potential domino effect stemming from the County of San Diego's Special Election, including the possibility of multiple costly elections in Imperial Beach. He urged the City Council to consider these implications and ensure the City is prepared for such situations.

Liisa Thomas expressed concerns about safety near the newly renovated soccer field on Encina Avenue. She said she was recently struck by a soccer ball, resulting in a sore neck. She also noted that her vehicles have been hit by soccer balls and suggested installing safety netting on the north side of the fields, like the existing netting on the east and south sides. Additionally, she proposed adding a stop sign at the end of Ken Blinsman Way to enhance safety.

## 7. PRESENTATIONS

### 7.a PRESENTATION BY SAN DIEGO REGIONAL FIRE FOUNDATION. (0390-84)

Fire Chief French introduced the item and announced that Joan Jones, Executive Director, and Frank Ault, Board Chair of the San Diego Regional Fire Foundation, were in attendance.

Frank Ault presented staff with commemorative plaques and a check.

## 8. CONSENT CALENDAR

**Motion by** Councilmember McKay

**Seconded by** Councilmember Fisher

To approve Consent Calendar Item Nos. 8.a through 8.f.

AYES (5): Mayor Aguirre, Mayor Pro Tem Seabury, Councilmember Fisher, and Councilmember Leyba-Gonzalez, Councilmember McKay

**Motion Carried (5 to 0)**

### 8.a APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES.

City Council approved the Regular Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2024.

### 8.b RATIFICATION OF WARRANT REGISTER FOR THE PERIOD FROM DECEMBER 7, 2024 TO JANUARY 3, 2025. (0300-25)

City Council ratified and filed the Warrant Register Report.

### 8.c RECEIVE TREASURER'S REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2024. (0300-90)

City Council received and filed the November 2024 Treasurer's Report.

### 8.d RESOLUTION 2025-001 CONTINUING THE PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY RELATING TO IMPACTS FROM CROSS-BORDER POLLUTION IN THE TIJUANA RIVER (0150-40 & 0210-26).

Adopted Resolution No. 2025-001 to maintain a state of local emergency related to the cross-border pollution impacts from the Tijuana River and authorize the City Manager,

Mayor, and Council members to work with local, State, Federal, and Mexican authorities to advance binational projects to improve conditions in the Tijuana River.

**8.e ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NUMBER 2025-002 ACCEPTING THE SAN DIEGO REGIONAL FIRE FOUNDATION GRANT ALLOCATION OF \$65,342 IN THE FORM OF REIMBURSEMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF SAFETY EQUIPMENT FOR FIREFIGHTERS AND LIFEGUARDS (0390-84).**

City Council adopted Resolution No. 2025-002 accepting the San Diego Regional Fire Foundation Grant allocation of \$65,342 in the form of reimbursement for the purchase of safety equipment for Firefighters and Lifeguards.

**8.f RESOLUTION NO. 2025-003 ADDING THE FY25 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVER ROOM HVAC PROJECT TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM; APPROPRIATE \$110,000 TO THE PROJECT BUDGET; AND AWARD A CONTRACT TO TRANE TECHNOLOGIES FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE PROJECT (0330-35).**

Adopted Resolution No. 2025-003 to: (1) add the FY25 Information Technology Server Room HVAC Project (F25102) to the Imperial Beach Capital Improvement Program; (2) authorize the appropriation of \$110,000 to the Project budget; and (3) award a Public Works contract for a not to exceed amount of \$110,000 to Trane Technologies to construct the Project.

**9. ORDINANCES/INTRODUCTION & FIRST READING**

**9.a CONSIDER REPORT FROM AD HOC AND CONSIDERATION TO ADOPT URGENCY/REGULAR ORDINANCES TO ENACT A LOCAL JUST CAUSE ORDINANCE FOR TERMINATION OF RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES. (0660-95)**

Mayor Aguirre announced revised Ordinance Nos. 2025-1252 and 2025-1253 were provided as Last Minute Agenda Information.

City Manager Foltz gave a PowerPoint presentation on the item.

Mayor Aguirre expressed gratitude to Councilmember Fisher for working on the ad hoc committee with her to develop a tenant protection ordinance. She thanked the public for their input and emphasized the importance of hearing all perspectives while trying to reach a balanced solution for the community.

Councilmember Fisher expressed gratitude for being able to participate in the ad hoc committee. He appreciated the varied perspectives shared during the public meetings, which helped the committee develop a balanced approach to protect tenants while also considering the concerns of landlords and property owners.

Written comments were submitted by Mark Williams, Sandra Brillhart, Dan Feder, John Nelson with Procopio, Cheryl Quinones, Melanie Woods with the California Apartment Association, Molly Kirkland with the Southern California Rental Housing Association and Jose Lopez with ACCE.

Jessie Schmitte, with Aliant San Diego, urged City Council to extend tenant protections to those currently facing eviction and to close the substantial remodel loophole.

John Hine was opposed to the ordinance as he believed it would negatively impact the local economy, landlords, real estate values, and discourage improvements to aging properties. He favored a balanced approach that considers the entire community's needs.

Tim Keeton noted that there are hundreds of cities in California that have not enacted just cause ordinances. He stressed that the ordinance would harm small, local property owners rather than large corporate landlords.

Jennifer Manterroso, with the Legal Aid Society, proposed several amendments to strengthen the ordinance.

Gilberto Vera, Deputy Director of the Legal Aid Society, supported the ordinance with amendments.

Anna Villadolid pleaded with City Council to protect tenants against unfair evictions.

Gerri Wood-Hermann requested a ban on substantial remodel evictions.

Truth expressed skepticism about the ordinance's timing, fairness, potential economic impact on property owners and the broader rental market, and political timing. She raised questions about research gaps.

Felicia House shared real life experience as a renter. She supported consideration of both property owners' and renters' interests.

Ricardo Puzon shared that he received an eviction notice despite being a long-term, loyal tenant with deep ties to the community.

Robert Lucas spoke in support for stopping no-fault evictions.

Councilmembers Seabury and Leyba-Gonzalez left Council Chambers at 7:20 p.m. and returned at 7:22 p.m.

Brenda Bautista said she is being evicted and said she felt abandoned by City Council. She was opposed to corporate landlords using the substantial remodel process to evict tenants, remodel and raise rent.

George Ching, representing the Pacific Southwest Association of Realtors, advocated against the ordinance, suggesting it may harm the very market it aims to regulate. He spoke about the need for more rental housing.

Molly Kirkland, with the Southern California Rental Housing Association, believed that sticking with a statewide standard is the best approach.

Martin Mattes acknowledged the challenges faced by both renters and property owners. He emphasized the need for understanding of each group's perspectives and challenges.

Melanie Woods, representing the California Apartment Association, opposed the ordinance. She said that there are balanced protections through the California Tenant Protection Act and that it is the most robust renter protection law in the nation.

Nacho Martinez spoke about property ownership as a path to economic stability, while acknowledging the challenges faced by renters. He spoke about empathy and balance between property owners' rights and tenants' needs.

Sheila Martinez spoke in support for a balanced, collaborative approach that prioritizes communication and mutual respect between property owners and tenants.

Nerea Urtasun supported comprehensive community engagement and cautioned that regulations could have unintended negative consequences for the local economy.

Juan Nevarez was opposed to the ordinance. He supported comprehensive tenant protections that addresses current eviction threats, with a focus on stopping exploitative practices by landlords seeking to maximize rental income.

Susan Vanderlinden expressed concern about increased homelessness and corporations taking over Imperial Beach.

Philip del Rio said that he cannot afford his rent and will be living out of his car by the end of the month. He wanted the loophole closed.

Iris Guevara spoke about needing a law that helps everybody and asked for a ban on no-fault evictions.

Luis Guillen spoke in opposition to being evicted due to remodeling.

Anthony Azul spoke in support of the ordinance and asked City Council to adopt the urgency ordinance.

Sandra del Rio spoke about her personal challenges and economic hardship. She was opposed to no-fault evictions for substantial remodels and said the owners are only doing cosmetic work.

Alysson Snow commented that tenants lack the legal resources to fight unfair evictions. She advocated for proactive intervention to prevent tenant displacement.

Daniel Loza asked for help in stopping evictions and in keeping people in their homes.

Nicole Le expressed frustration with the proposed law noting that it fails to protect tenants despite months of community advocacy.

Paulina Olvera Canez expressed disappointment with the proposed ordinance as it is inadequate and fails to provide protection against evictions.

Jose Lopez Eguino, Director of San Diego ACCE, was disappointed with the ordinance because it will not help tenants, and he called for a ban on remodeling evictions.

Rachel Orozco Ramirez asked City Council to close the loopholes.

Sara Gonzalez Quintero advocated for stronger tenant protections.

Miguel Lopez spoke against remodeling evictions and wanted protection for residents from displacement.

Veronica Hernandez asked City Council to fix the loopholes.

Juliana Hernandez complained about her struggles to keep up with high rent costs.

Patricia Mendoza shared her personal eviction experience and ongoing frustration with residents getting evicted. She demanded action to prevent evictions.

Jaime Hernandez shared his personal experience with a former landlord, describing how he was treated unfairly.

Rosie Covarrubias expressed concern about potentially having to move out because she may not be able to keep up with rising rent costs.

Mayor Aguirre called a recess at 8:42 p.m. and called the meeting back to order at 8:49 p.m. with all Councilmembers present.

Councilmember Leyba-Gonzalez thanked Mayor Aguirre and Councilmember Fisher for their proactive efforts as the ad hoc committee. He identified himself as a renter and empathized with tenants' struggles. He spoke in support of the ordinance.

Councilmember McKay expressed appreciation to the ad hoc committee and staff for their time and dedication to this matter. He announced that he will not support the emergency ordinance nor the standard ordinance. He advocated for state-level solutions rather than a local ordinance. He emphasized the importance of addressing tenant protections through the state legislative process.

Mayor Pro Tem Seabury commented on the financial burden faced by new property owners, who must not only update older properties but also pay higher property taxes based on elevated property values. She challenged ACCE's role, commenting that there is focus on creating an emotional impact rather than actively helping tenants find housing solutions. She agreed with Councilmember McKay's comments and expressed support for adhering to state laws.

Councilmember Fisher was disappointed with the lack of support by fellow councilmembers. He commented that the ad hoc committee worked hard to create a fair and balanced ordinance that considered both tenant and landlord concerns. It contains protections to support vulnerable residents, it was well thought out and based on community feedback. He also commented that it could help protect future tenants. He stressed the importance of representing the entire community and to continue seeking balanced solutions.

Mayor Aguirre expressed disappointment over the lack of City Council discussion and the rejection of the ordinance. She commented that the ordinance was legally sound and within the City's authority. She acknowledged that the ordinance may not help current residents facing eviction and emphasized that it could benefit future tenants. She praised

the efforts of Councilmembers Fisher and Leyba-Gonzalez for listening to the community and working toward a balanced solution. She suggested expanding eviction data collection to include both no-fault and at-fault cases to better inform future decisions.

Councilmember Fisher concurred with Mayor Aguirre's suggestion.

City Manager Foltz questioned if the additional month of relocation for elderly or disabled will be market rate or the current rate.

City Council discussion ensued.

Councilmember Fisher supported an additional month of relocation for disabled and elderly tenants at market rate.

Mayor Aguirre and Councilmember Leyba-Gonzalez concurred with Councilmember Fisher.

City Attorney Lyon announced the changes would be under section 9.90.060(A)(1) "Notice to City Required. The Owner shall provide written notice to the City of the At Fault Just Cause Termination of Tenancy no later than three (3) business days after the date the Owner provides the required notice to the Tenant. Such notice to City shall be provided on a form approved by the City, for such purpose, and in the manner specified in the attendant Administrative Regulations." Additionally, under section 9.90.060(B)(1)(c)(i), the Council option would be number 1 and part 2, related to the additional payment to elderly or disabled, would be stricken.

Discussion followed, with clarification that the City Council was considering the regular ordinance rather than the urgency ordinance.

City Clerk Kelly read the title of Ordinance No. 2025-1253 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING A JUST CAUSE FOR TERMINATION OF A RESIDENTIAL TENANCY ORDINANCE IN THE CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH WHICH AMENDS THE IMPERIAL BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADD CHAPTER 9.90.

**Motion by** Councilmember Leyba-Gonzalez

**Seconded by** Councilmember Fisher

To introduce Regular Ordinance No. 2025-1253 adopting a local just cause ordinance for termination of residential tenancies.

AYES (3): Mayor Aguirre, Councilmember Leyba-Gonzalez, Councilmember Fisher

NOES (2): Councilmember McKay, and Mayor Pro Tem Seabury

**Motion Carried (3 to 2)**

## 10. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.



**11. REPORTS**

**11.a PRESENTATION AND FINANCIAL REPORT BY THE IMPERIAL BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR THE 2024 MILITARY APPRECIATION VETERANS DAY EVENT. (1040-10)**

Martin Mattes gave a PowerPoint presentation on the item.

No public comments.

Councilmembers Leyba-Gonzalez and McKay thanked Martin Mattes for organizing the event.

Mayor Aguirre thanked Frank Martin of the Armed Services YMCA for providing the tents and expressed appreciation to Martin Mattes for organizing the event.

**11.b PRESENTATION AND FINANCIAL REPORT BY THE YE OLDE PLANK INN FOR THE 2024 WINTER COMES TO THE BEACH EVENT. (1040-10)**

Martin Mattes gave a PowerPoint presentation on the event.

No public comments.

Councilmember Leyba-Gonzalez spoke about his positive experience attending the event.

Mayor Aguirre thanked Martin Mattes for recruiting local bands and expressed appreciation for his efforts in helping local businesses thrive.

**12. I.B. REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY SUCCESSOR AGENCY REPORTS**

None.

**13. ITEMS PULLED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR**

None.

**14. CITY COUNCIL FUTURE AGENDA REQUESTS**

None.

**15. ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING**

Mayor Aguirre adjourned the Regular Meeting at 9:36 p.m.

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Jacqueline M. Kelly, MMC  
City Clerk

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Paloma Aguirre  
Mayor