

# PVP Watch Newsletter – February 22, 2013

To Our Friends and Supporters

In this Newsletter:

- \* L. A. County Clean Water
- \* Rolling Hills – The Sleepy Village
- \* RPV – In Crisis... The Continuing Saga
- \* Mayor Luncheons
- \* PVP Unified
- \* California Issues

## **L. A. County Clean Water, Clean Beaches Measure**

Current status of the proposed **L. A. County Clean Water, Clean Beaches Measure** is that at the January 15<sup>th</sup> LA County Board of Supervisors meeting, the Board decided to defer a decision for at least 60 days, perhaps longer. The supervisors voted 3-2 to redraft the measure to include a sunset clause, a list of projects and the possibility of placing it on a general ballot before the entire electorate, instead of only sending property owners a mail-in ballot. Protest letters are important and we urge those that have not already done so, to send a protest letter to: The Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors, PO Box 86606, Los Angeles, CA 90086. Protest letters should be brief and to the point.

Those seeking further information can go to [www.lacountycleanwater.org](http://www.lacountycleanwater.org). Minimum annual tax is \$54 with large property owners, including schools, paying a much greater fee.

We urge ALL to pay attention to this matter. We continue to wonder.... Could this eliminate the RPV Storm Drain User Fee?

## **Rolling Hills**

The “sleepy village” where seldom does anything controversial occur, has two contentious issues on the March 5<sup>th</sup> ballot. One measure concerns current requirements that all new homes either build or have space for a horse stable and corral. The other matter is a proposed “view” ordinance. To top it off there are significant differences of opinions concerning these two measures by the Council candidates.

In addition to the differing of opinions concerning the two ballot measures, there is also a clashing as to whether or not the two measures should have been decided by the Council rather than going to a *vote of the people*. Although PVP Watch has in the past and will continue to support the Initiative process, there is a need to “get it right.” We have not read either of these measures and thus will not offer an opinion; however, hopefully the view ordinance does not resemble the RPV view ordinance which has proven to be contentious because it was poorly written.

### **RPV in Chaos.....The Continuing Saga**

Amazing how “Facts” change and some quickly forget campaign statements and promises. When then RPV Council candidate Susan Brooks met with PVP Watch on July 20th, 2011 pleading for our support, she then stated that;

- There was too much arrogance on the RPV Council.
- RPV staff had doubled in size and cost during past 10 years.
- RPV Staff was not instructed in RPV basics.
- RPV Council had too many attorneys.

Once elected, now 2013 Mayor, Susan Brooks has completely reversed herself on her campaign issues. Some say, “Well they all do it.” We take exception to that theory and believe that honorable people once elected strive to fulfill the promises and commitments made during the election campaign.

One of the stated principles of the current Council is to “*eliminate arrogance*” by treating ALL who appear before the Council with dignity and respect. Following is what happened to RPV resident Joe Locascio at the RPV Council meeting on January 29th. Mr. Locascio served on the RPV Traffic Commission for the past 2 years and as Chair for the past year and had applied for another term. Although it is the Council’s decision on all Commission / Committee appointments, the actions of the 2013 Mayor, Susan Brooks and past Mayor Misetich were certainly hypocritical in their attack on Mr. Locascio and not in compliance with the Council commitment to *treat everyone with dignity and respect.*

PVP Watch discussed the matter with Mr. Locascio and he reported that when the interview progressed to past Mayor Misetich who presented an opinion that Locascio, as Chair of the Traffic Commission, presumably had not treated the “public” with “dignity and respect” and Misetich further pronounced that he and then Council member Brooks had not been treated well when they (Misetich & Brooks) appeared before the Traffic Commission, as public citizens, to present their plan for revising the now much discussed “Rules and Procedures.” Locascio stated that he responded that Misetich and Brooks were NOT public citizens but were in fact two RPV Councilmembers who were meeting with all Commissions / Committees to explain and gather support for their proposed changes in the “Rules and

Procedures.” Locascio had previously attended other sessions concerning the Misetich / Brooks modification plan and made his well-founded objections clear that the proposed Brooks / Misetich plan for modifying the Councils “Rules and Procedures would weaken resident volunteers First Amendment and Constitutional Rights.

According to Locascio, when Misetich finished berating him, Brooks began her disgusting diatribe that consumed some 10 minutes making factual errors as well. An example was Brooks statement that the “Rules and Procedures” that Locascio (and others) had objected to was passed 5 / 0 by the Council. That statement was untrue and Brooks, according to Locascio, was chastised by Mayor Pro Tem Duhovic for making false statements. As PVP Watch supporters may recall, a group of RPV residents rewrote the proposed Brooks / Misetich “Rules and Procedures” which Councilmen Duhovic and Campbell supported and that version with some minor modifications by the City Attorney is what was finally approved. Locascio’s opinion is that Brooks obnoxious behavior was retaliation for Locascio’s opposition (many other RPV residents were opposed as well) to the Brooks / Misetich ill-conceived effort to revise RPV’s “Rules and Procedures” about a year ago. Mr. Locascio is a retired Air Force officer with 21 years of service in the US Air Force. Mr. Locascio further commented that he had studied the proposed “Rules and Procedures” matter and believed it his responsibility to ask tough questions of elected officials who were pursuing a direction that would weaken resident volunteers First Amendment and Constitutional Rights.

### Public Records Requests

The continuing saga of Public Records Requests (PRR) goes on with current Mayor Brooks and Council members Knight protesting that it costs too much time and expense. Mayor Brooks in her recent newsletter stated; “*As we enter this year, my goals as Mayor are to build on the three "T"s- TRUST, TRANSPARENCY and TEAMWORK. Simply put, the essence of good government is TRUST.*” How interesting....why should residents TRUST Susan Brooks? After all she has completely reversed herself from her stated campaign promises.

Furthermore, if there was openness and TRANSPARENCY at RPV City Hall there would not be so many Public Record Requests. As rebuttal to public comments concerning the lack of TRANSPARENCY regarding Public Record Requests concerning RPV employee payroll data, February 12<sup>th</sup> City Manager Lehr / Mayor Brooks posted (on February 12th) a Link to the State Controllers website that reportedly contained RPV salary data. Examination found that data was two years old and not pertinent. Should anyone want to look at the data the website is:

<http://www.publicpay.ca.gov/Reports/Cities/City.aspx?entityid=221&fiscalyear=2011>.

One would expect that City Manager Lehr / Mayor Brooks would have known that the data was not current and thus misrepresented the situation. TRANSPARENCY, don't think so. Former Mayor Dyda reported at the February 19<sup>th</sup> Council meeting during the public comments segment "*if there was more transparency, public record requests would significantly diminish if not end entirely.*"

[http://www.palosverdes.com/rpv/citycouncil/agenda\\_videos/display/index.cfm?id=253](http://www.palosverdes.com/rpv/citycouncil/agenda_videos/display/index.cfm?id=253) (go to 45:30 into the meeting video)

A new item is the Grand Gala event at Terranea for celebrating RPV's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Grand Gala event will be \$140 per person for a night of dinner and dancing. Spending at evening with undoubtedly many Introductions, Awards, Commendations, Plaques and Proclamations; WOW. Not reported is how many seats will be "complimentary?" Proposed date is early May but may change.

As reported in the last newsletter, one of the unreported items at RPV City Hall is the consultant's report for "Job Evaluation" analysis. As we understand the situation, the "scope" was to evaluate each job responsibility, match the job description for what the person was actually doing and determine the productivity of each person occupying each position. Does the person have the skills needed and assess the volume of work performed by this position. The consultant was engaged some months ago and there have been no reports that we are aware of. The only feedback we have heard is Mayor Brooks remarks that City Hall *is understaffed*. Hmmmmm.

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### **Mayor's Luncheons**

For those who may be unaware, the mayors of most Peninsula cities as well as the presidents of school board president and peninsula library board meet monthly and we presume (having not attended any of these gatherings) to discuss matters of common interest. While we are not opposed to these meetings, we question why they meet at the Depot restaurant in Torrance rather than "on the hill." The Depot is certainly a fine restaurant but there are fine restaurants on the Peninsula as well. The Peninsula Chamber of Commerce is promoting *shopping local* yet our "elected" go elsewhere. Just Wondering....

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### **Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified Schools**

It is that time of year for parents to begin thinking about the next school year, particularly if children will be beginning kindergarten or changing schools or entering High School.

For more information on the enrollment process for the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District, go to the PVPUSD website [www.pvpusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.pvpusd.k12.ca.us) (click on the Enrollment tab on the left side) for further information:

### **Seniors**

Seniors have until the end of May to file PVPUSD Parcel Tax exemption forms for FY 2013 / 2014. A renewal form is posted on the PVP Watch website [www.pvpwatch.com](http://www.pvpwatch.com). Go to the PVP Schools page. For those who are making their first application, go to [www.pvpusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.pvpusd.k12.ca.us) and click on the Parcel Tax tab on the left side of the home page.

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### **California Issues**

At a recent Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee hearing in Sacramento, University of California officials acknowledged that it will cost \$8 million in the coming year, growing to \$28 million in the future, to comply with AB 32, California's Global Warming Solutions Act. It was reported at the February 14th hearing, that the \$8 million new "cap and trade" requirement is equivalent to serving 800 additional students in the 2013-14 academic year. As the cost of compliance grows to \$28 million, it's enough to serve 2,800 students per year.

"Unfortunately, this is another negative economic consequence of AB 32. As legislative Democrats continue to pile on additional costs to our universities, the ultimate impact is on our students and their parents. It's bad enough that the Governor is using only half of the new tax revenues from Proposition 30 to support education. These cap and trade requirements are making things even worse for our students."

Now that the public service unions control Sacramento Democrats have a "Bullet Proof" majority, it is likely that there will be a substantial effort to chip away at "Prop 13" and benefits we derive from property curtailing tax increases. If readers do not currently subscribe to HJTA (Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association) newsletters, we urge you do so as we have found that to be the best conservative voice for representing taxpayers in Sacramento.

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### **Breaking News**

A developing issue in PVE is with a group of residents claiming that *"Last year the City of Palos Verdes Estates and the Palos Verdes Homeowners Association took the unprecedented step of CLANDESTINELY selling 1.7 acres of public parkland to a homeowner that had previously built extensive structures on that parkland adjacent to his home."* According to the PVE residents making the claim is that "Such a sale is in specific violation of Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions that have been in place since 1923 when the Deed of Trust was recorded."

For further information go to [www.pveopenspace.com](http://www.pveopenspace.com).

## **Responses to January 16th Newsletter**

Keep up the good work...

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\*Enjoy reading the PVP Watch Newsletter; it keeps me informed on what is going on in my neighborhood.

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\*Thank you for doing a great job. The following is a letter I wrote at your suggestion.

Editor: Subscriber sent letter to LA County objecting to proposed Storm Drain fee.

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\*I appreciate receiving your newsletter. I would like to congratulate the City of RPV for the construction of the dog park next to City Hall. The City did an excellent job of designing and installing the dog park and it is being enjoyed by many dogs and their owners. I am there almost every afternoon and there are usually anywhere from 5 to 20 dogs having a wonderful time. My concern is the City labeling the dog park as being a "temporary" dog park. The City has spent what appears to be a fair amount of money on the park, and the delighted users of the park all have expressed questions to me as to why this is being labeled as temporary. I would also wish that the local residents who were successful with their scare tactics in having a dog park eliminated from the proposed Grandview Park design would take the time to drop by the new dog park and see the reality of what goes on at a dog park. What you will see are people enjoying talking to each other while their dogs romp and play. There is very little noise, and the dog owners have been wonderful in handling their pets and cleaning up after them. I would hope that the City may reconsider the inclusion of a dog park in the proposed Grandview Park or Lower Hesse Park designs.

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### **PVP Watch – Newsletter List**

- A reminder to ALL PVP Watch supporters, should you change your e-mail address don't forget to advise PVP Watch of your new address. We suggest that pvpwatch.com be added to your computer address book to assure delivery of PVP Watch Newsletters.

### **PVP Watch – Contributions**

PVP Watch thanks the many subscribers who have contributed to PVP Watch. Those desiring to make a modest contribution, please send checks to PVP Watch PO Box 7000-22 Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274

### Subscribers

The PVP Watch e-mail list continues to grow. For those who wish their addresses removed, please send notice to [info@pvpwatch.com](mailto:info@pvpwatch.com). Those who have topics of community interest are encouraged to bring those issues to [info@pvpwatch.com](mailto:info@pvpwatch.com) as well.

The Editorial Committee