

PVP Watch Update – October 28th, 2011

ELECTION TIME ON THE PENINSULA

Vote November 8th

Election Day is fast approaching and all campaigns are in "high gear." That this election is a "defining occasion" is not a *revelation but it is true*. RPV residents will define how City Hall will operate for some years ahead. We have the end of the era of Tom Long, Doug Stern and Steve Wolowicz and RPV will decide whether to sever their influence or continue it in some manner?

Under usual circumstances RPV residents would be thanking Tom Long, Doug Stern and Steve Wolowicz for their years of service on the RPV Council. However, the past years have been divisive and there has been much contention on significant issues. This past March there was the special election for the Council sponsored Measure C changing RPV from a General Law city to a Charter City form of government which the voters soundly defeated by a three to one majority. Then the Annenberg project at Lower Point Vicente fiasco. Unknown is the amount of RPV resources consumed by this ill-advised project that was driven by Tom Long and Doug Stern. Then Tom Long as Mayor appearing at the Coordinating Council on September 22nd deriding RPV residents for rejecting the Council's proposals. These are but a few examples.

PVP Watch believes the three **BEST** candidates for the RPV Council who will make decisions "on the merits" are:

* **Jerry Duhovic** / www.jerryduhovic.com

* **Dora de la Rosa** / www.doradelarosa.com

* **Susan Brooks** / www.susanbrooks2011.com

Because they are: **Highly Competent, Extremely Knowledgeable, Have Diverse Professional Backgrounds, Absence of Special Interest Affiliations, and Most Important, a Common-Sense Capability for Ethical Discussions. All are Fiscal Conservatives.**

Jerry, Dora and Susan are NOT beholden, in any manner, to the three outgoing Council members while Emehiser and Knight are endorsed and supported by Tom Long, Doug Stern

and Steve Wolowicz. The next Council will have to make a number of decisions concerning past actions by Tom Long, Doug Stern and Steve Wolowicz. Who will be more objective and unbiased in those decisions? Those who were supported by Long, Stern and Wolowicz or those that who are not beholden to the outgoing councilmen?

Candidates Emenhiser and Knight have made their tenure on the Planning Commission as a building block for a Council position. A recent contentious situation was a home at 6530 La Garita / #ZON2010-00331 wherein the homeowner was seeking approval for a 2nd story addition.

A recap of the Planning Commission vote on this project:

*"At the April 26, 2011 Planning Commission meeting, the Planning Commission closed the public hearing and voted on the merits of the project. The Planning Commission denied the project 4-1-1 (with Chairman Tomblin dissenting, Commissioner Gerstner abstaining and Commissioner **Knight absent**) and directed Staff to return to the May 10, 2011 Planning Commission meeting with the appropriate resolution. At the May 10, 2011 Planning Commission meeting, the Planning Commission adopted P.C. Resolution No. 2011-21 voting 2-0-2 (with Commissioners Gerstner and **Knight abstaining**, and Commissioners **Emenhiser**, Leon and Lewis **absent**)."*

The Planning Commission denial was appealed and heard by the Council on October 18th. Fortunately, the Council, with Doug Stern leading the way, saw thru the "view" smokescreen and reversed the Planning Commission denial.

At Issue; reported that Emenhiser voted No on April 26th and did not attend the May 10th meeting. Why did Knight abstain from the May 10th vote? Does it have any relevance that the next-door neighbor has a Knight yard sign? That the Council upheld an appeal of a Planning Commission decision wherein both Emenhiser and Knight either abstained, or voted NO is significant. Wonder how they would have voted had they been seated at the Council dais?

Other Endorsements for Dave Emenhiser;

LA County Firefighters Association

League of Conservation Voters / www.lalcv.org

Other Endorsements for Jim Knight

LA County Firefighters Association

Sierra Club

In regards to the two other candidates:

Ken Dyda; as we have previously observed "*We wish to thank Mr. Dyda for his many years of serving RPV but believe his skills can be better utilized as a "senior advisor" to the Council and other projects as they may develop.*" than as an elected Council member.

Eric Alegria; The Alegria's moved to RPV March, 2011 and shortly thereafter Eric made his intentions known to be a RPV Council candidate. We believe this brief tenure is not adequate for someone to seek an elective office. Alegria is also endorsed by Tom Long. We would hope that he will volunteer for citizens committees that will enable him to learn more about the many issues confronting RPV residents.

PVP Schools / PVPUSD Board of Education - Two Seats - PVP Watch Suggested Candidates

Larry Vanden Bos / larryvandenbosforschoolboard2011.com

Erin LaMonte / www.electerinlamonte.com

Measure M continues to be debated, particularly regarding the lack of a sunset clause. Not having a Sunset Clause may be a good thing because not having one will likely make the Parcel tax and PVPUSD expenditures a discussion topic for forthcoming elections.

An Update on PV Drive East Traffic Citations

From Barbara Hartl

Hi all -

I wanted to update that the second person to use the merits of our petition in fighting his citation has had it dismissed. This looks promising for the future.

RPV is going to be conducting another traffic survey soon (which is why there is no traffic enforcement at the moment - guidelines state that they must suspend enforcement for about 4 weeks prior to a survey). HOWEVER they have not agreed to perform an unbiased one (meaning they will be furnishing the surveyor this current bogus survey upon which to base the new one). Therefore, we need to make sure people spread the word on how to fight these citations. The City will eventually have to come around if the citations are getting dismissed.

Please let people know they can get the entire packet (for free) to fight their citations by writing to Barbara Hartl / bhartl@cox.net

RPV – Employee Union

A recent announcement; the RPV staff, some 40 or so "non-management" employees, have decided to form an *association* for developing a contractual relationship with RPV City Hall. It is the employees' right to do so and the Council accepted the announcement and appointed a *management interface* at the October 18th Council meeting. While some perceive that Council candidates' campaign statements are the reason employees decided to go in this direction, the more likely answer is failed RPV management, including the outgoing Council majority. It is doubtful that this was some "spur of the moment" decision but likely contemplated for some time by City Hall employees. The recent pension reform decisions awarded the senior employees who will be retiring in the next few years while the benefits to younger employees are not as significant.

Some opine that employees' decision to create a union was caused by a breakdown in communications at City Hall, which it may be. Council members Long, Stern and Wolowicz have had a philosophy of *paying well* (some believe excessively) to "keep the union away." Well, ... that strategy has failed as RPV employees have decided to have union representation. The good news is that there can be benefits to the taxpayers as work related issues including salaries, sick days, vacations etc. will now have to be "negotiated" and will be open for public scrutiny.

RPV – Salaries and Pension Reform

PVP Watch has posted comments concerning RPV employee pensions in the past several newsletters and we don't mean to keep beating the same old drum but public employee salaries and pensions are a contentious matter at both the state and local levels.

We posted the September 29th meeting wherein the RPV Council took a step forward by deciding to implement a different pension for new employees. This was a good start. However, the Council's decision to give each employee a 5% raise to offset the loss of the 6-1/2% payroll contribution remains controversial and unquestionably will come back to the new Council for further analysis and discussion.

A not yet discussed item is the salaries of the senior people and their probable pensions. Presently RPV has fourteen (14) positions with annual salaries (top of range) that exceed \$100,000 annually. Eleven (11) of those positions have a salary range top exceeding \$132,000 annually. Using a \$132,000 annual salary as an example, an existing employee pension with 25 years will approximate an initial \$82,500 annual pension. Adding CalPers 3% annual COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) within a few years pension will be exceeding \$90,000 annually and a few years later \$100,000 and ever increasing thereafter. The unfunded liabilities of these overly generous pensions are unknown and, as the public becomes aware, are rebelling. The RPV salary chart is posted at www.pvpwatch.com. Go to the Current Issues page.

City Hall staff seems to perceive themselves as "us against them" and are reportedly refusing to provide data requested by some Councilmen and candidates. Senior staff might want to rethink their situation as a new Council can easily decide to eliminate positions as the taxpayers are not sympathetic to the generous pay and benefits now enjoyed by staff. Senior staff should be considering being a part of the solution rather than being the problem.

RPV – PVPLC (Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy)

A new management contract between RPV and the PVPLC is on the November 1st Council agenda. If approved, this is but another "lame duck" maneuver by Tom Long, Doug Stern and Steve Wolowicz to award their land conservancy friends. It is another gratuitous deal with limited public discussion or analysis. Initial reading finds that the contract is poorly crafted and does not protect taxpayer interests. PVP Watch will monitor this situation and report accordingly.

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

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

The Editorial Committee