

Summary

PVP Watch endorses David Chura, Jessica Vlaco and Michele Carbone for Rancho Palos Verdes City Council.

PVP Watch interviewed the six candidates for Rancho Palos Verdes (RPV) city council, attended the three candidate forums and has made independent observations regarding this election. RPV is a unique city in that it faces the reality of a “forever landslide” that will present technical and financial challenges to the city into the unforeseeable future. Adequate leadership will require financial acumen for ongoing contract negotiations and keeping the city solvent. Technical knowledge is needed for innovative ideas to cope with our ongoing crisis. These skills will be critical as the city moves forward. Our new city council must bring these skills to RPV.

David Chura

Mr. Chura has lived in RPV for 27 years and has been actively involved with the city for years, including serving on the city’s Planning Commission for six years. Over this time, he has interfaced on a regular basis with city staff and discussed municipal issues with the city council, both informally and at council meetings. His commitment and dedication to RPV is notable.

During his career Mr. Chura worked for a major aerospace firm as well as being a chief technical officer (CTO) and chief executive officer (CEO) at successful startup companies.

Mr. Chura is the most technically adept candidate regarding the landslide. One example is his working with several hydrologists and an Artificial Intelligence (AI) driven geology company to assess the problem and determine data driven solutions.

His financial and technical expertise are what RPV needs at this time.

Jessica Vlaco

Ms. Vlaco was raised in Rancho Palos Verdes (RPV) and has lived in the Ladera Linda community for 30 years. She has served on the city Traffic Safety Committee, the Finance Advisory Committee, Charter City Exploratory Committee and is a graduate of the RPV Leadership Academy. Vlaco is a member of the Ladera Linda Homeowners Association and a board member of the RPV Council of Homeowners Association (CHOA). She has spoken at many city council meetings over the years on various issues.

Ms. Vlaco is currently the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at a major energy firm and has extensive experience in finance, accounting, strategic planning, human resources and risk management. She has a broad understanding of the banking, investment and real estate industries.

Ms. Vlaco lives in a neighborhood abutting the landslide area, sees its effects daily and is determined to bring new ideas and hopefully solutions to what she sees as the city’s major problem. Her knowledge of the city and her financial experience will serve the city well.

Michele Carbone

Ms. Carbone has lived in the Abalone Cove neighborhood of Rancho Palos Verdes (RPV) for 16 years. She is an active board member in the Abalone Cove Homeowners Association and has attended almost all of the city council meetings over the last four years either in person or virtually. Ms. Carbone has

spoken before the council on RPV's state mandated housing element and the importance of local control regarding housing and zoning.

Ms. Carbone holds a bachelor's degree in medical technology and two masters in administration/management and quality assurance. She is a regulatory and quality system expert with experience with data, budgets, project management, planning and fiscal responsibility. After years in the health care industry, Ms. Carbone now has her own business as a health care consultant. One of her skill sets is writing grants and finding funding sources where grant submission will find results.

Since 2021 Ms. Carbone has been actively involved with Our Neighborhood Voices, an organization working to restore local control and dismantle state legislation harming cities and their neighborhoods.

Ms. Carbone's neighborhood directly abuts the landslide which gives her a perspective that will be valuable on the council.

Ms. Carbone's business background, data driven practices and firsthand experience of RPV's major challenges will serve the city well.

PVP Watch feels RPV needs to form another Landslide Abatement District to encompass the entire Portuguese Bend Landslide area, since this will reduce the massive costs to the city considerably. Also, the city needs a geotechnical engineer to lead a Landslide Abatement Department (LAD). The city recently found money in the budget to hire a director of the newly created city Department of Public Safety and at this time a LAD director is at least as important. We feel that Mr. Chura, Ms. Vlaco and Ms. Carbone will take these suggestions seriously and hopefully bring them to fruition.

John Cruikshank

Mr. Cruikshank was recently a RPV city councilman for eight years. After being termed out he ran for Los Angeles County supervisor and lost. With the number of county supervisors increasing to nine from five in the future and the next election in two years Cruikshank might be tempted to run again before his council term would conclude. PVP Watch feels Cruikshank has had sufficient time on the council to implement any ideas and policies he might have had.

Matt Brach

Mr. Brach was asked to run for city council by Cruikshank. Mr. Brach was previously on the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District board and sat on the RPV Planning Commission.

Tina Funciello

Ms. Funciello was also encouraged to run for the council by Cruikshank. She has had minimal experience in municipal affairs.

PVP Watch's Opinion

The above three candidates are supported by the Long Point Development LLC which is Terranea's, political action committee (PAC). This PAC plans to spend more than \$304,000 on the three candidate's campaigns and is featuring ads promoting them in local media and on the Internet. To give this amount of money context, a recent review of RPV city hall records reflect total campaign contributions for all six candidates is \$18,079. If elected will these three recuse themselves from issues affecting Terranea that

come before the council? PVP Watch recognizes and appreciates the value Terranea brings to our community but finds it unfortunate the resort is spending this much money to affect our election. Hence, we recommends Mr. Chura, Ms. Vlaco and Ms. Carbone for RPV city council.