

PVP Watch Newsletter – October 20, 2009

To Our Friends & Supporters:

This is but another reminder; November 3rd is Election Day. Objectively, everyone receiving this Newsletter will vote as well as accept the challenge of assuring that at least five (5) friends / neighbors cast their respective ballots.

PVPUSD Press Release

PVPUSD Receives High Credit Rating. Go to - <http://tinyurl.com/yheafjs> for more information. Kudos to the current Board of Education and District staff.

PVP School Board Election

PVP Watch believes the current PVPUSD Board Members Barbara Lucky & Malcolm Sharp are the two best qualified candidates and supports their re-election for another term.

There are four other candidates for the remaining open seat. Anthony Collatos, Gregory Royston, Heather Haddon Matson and Karen Bird. Although Collatos, Royston and Matson have stated that they would accept teachers union support if offered, an interesting development is that the teachers union, at least not publicly, has yet to endorse any of the three candidates that sought union endorsement. Karen Bird and the two incumbents had previously stated they *would not* accept teacher's union support.

PVP Watch believes there is opportunity for conflict of interest when school board members accept teacher's union financial support. More about these candidates can be found at:

<http://www.smartvoter.org/2009/11/03/ca/la/race/01487000/>

To add to the unfolding drama, Craig Huey publisher of www.electionforum.org published a PVP school board recommendation on October 10th supporting the candidates seeking union endorsement. Huey's newsletter is posted at www.pvpwatch.com / PVP Schools page and is identified as Snider - Oct. 2009.

An interesting point is that retired PVPUSD teacher and current Board member Ginny Snider is the recipient and she subsequently forwards the Election Forum piece "PV School Board election - Surprise Ahead" to a seemingly teachers union friend:

"Good morning, Juli,

Here is what we have been waiting for. . .please pass on to as many voters as you can. If you send this to your parents from your personal email, that would be great! Also, the teachers could do the same. Every vote will count in this election! If the teachers care at all about their future in this District, they will need to get involved in this election.

Ginny

PVP Watch would welcome reader's opinions of school board members who are elected to represent residents / taxpayers of conspiring with the teachers union in an effort to elect union supported school board candidates. Is this the way the process should work?

Mr. Huey, along with others, was strongly against Measure V which recently increased the PVPUSD Parcel Tax. While PVP Watch would be the last in disagreeing with residents / taxpayers right to dissent, we believe it important to check facts, strive to be accurate and attempt to maintain respectable dialogue. For those who state that PVPUSD could have solved the recent financial crisis caused by the California Legislature by better budgeting, are absurd and have not taken the time to understand the issues. Clearly, the PVPUSD budget solution was either eliminating more teachers or again raising the Parcel Tax as the teachers union decided not to participate. No one enjoyed increasing the Parcel Tax but the taxpayers decided their preference.

One circumstance bothering many taxpayers is that the teachers union failed to make any concessions. The taxpayers bore the increased Parcel Tax while the administration and clerical employees absorbed personnel cuts, furlough days and no salary increases. An attempt to change the discourse by Board Member Snider raised the issue of board members accepting PVPUSD supported / provided medical insurance. As we understand the situation, California law allows board members this privilege and we believe it is a common practice in many other jurisdictions including RPV for elected officials to accept this option. PVPUSD reportedly pays a maximum of \$750 per month per Board Member with the insured paying that which exceeds \$750. What is interesting is while Board Member Snider (and teachers union) made much ado over the other board member medical benefits, Snider has been receiving \$898.08 per month from PVPUSD as reimbursement for the like deduction from her teachers' pension. Apparently, what is *good for the goose is not always good for the gander* as Snider accepts her "in lieu" reimbursement while criticizing others for accepting legal medical benefits.

It is well documented that nationally as well as in California the teachers union is the greatest obstacle to improving education. While we agree that there are many fine teachers at PVPUSD, the union focus's on increasing top pay and protecting those who do not "measure up" is counterproductive to increasing academic quality. PVP Watch agrees that some teachers are outstanding performers and should be receiving *performance based* salary incentive pay. We believe it is past time to recognize the top performing teachers and ask the new PVPUSD Trustees to make *performance based* salary incentive pay a condition of the 2010 teacher's union contract renewal. Who agrees with us? Send your comments to – info@pvpwatch.com.

Elections In General

It has been reported to PVP Watch that the election campaign season antics are alive and well. Candidate's signs being removed from private property and replaced with favored candidates. It has also been reported that several candidates have repeatedly violated PTA privacy rules by using school directories for their election campaigns.

PVP Watch urges all candidates to know the rules regarding campaign signs and respect the public by fair campaigning.

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 welcomes modest contributions and appreciates the many contributions received. Those desiring to contribute, please send checks to PVP Watch PO Box 7000-22, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274. We thank those who have contributed for helping to promote PVP Watch.

Subscribers

The PVP Watch e-mail list continues to grow. For those who wish their addresses removed, please send notice to info@pvpwatch.com.

PVP Watch strives to bring current issues to www.pvpwatch.com. Those who have topics of community interest are encouraged to bring those issues to PVP Watch.

The Editorial Committee