

PVP Watch Newsletter – November 14, 2009

To Our Friends & Supporters

As most are likely aware, RPV lost one of its founders, John McTaggart on November 4th. Services were November 11th at St Johns Fischer church with a capacity gathering joining in a celebration of John's life and his endless contributions to the creation and betterment of life on the Peninsula. PVP Watch adds our appreciation of McTaggart's efforts and certainly supports all efforts to name a park or other suitable edifice in his memory.

Peninsula Elections

PVP Watch wishes to acknowledge the many fine candidates who competed in the three Peninsula forums, The Peninsula Library Board, The PVP Unified School Board and the RPV City Council.

What was disappointing was the lack of voter turnout / interest. Presuming all who voted cast a ballot for each open office (which is unlikely) results are the following:

Peninsula Library – Registration 45,140 – Voters 6,731 – 14.9%

PVP Unified Schools – Registration 40,876 – Voters 7,155 – 17.5%

RPV – Registration 27,022 – Voters 5,628 – 20.8%

An interesting fact is that approximately 50% voted by Absentee Ballot. Apparently the solution to voter apathy is getting more residents to file for Absentee Ballots.

PVP Unified Schools

Incumbents Barbara Lucky and Malcolm Sharp were easily returned to the PVP school board with each receiving over 20% of the votes cast. In third place (three open seats) was Anthony Collatos with Karen Hunter Bird behind by about 200 votes. Collatos as well as the two other candidates Royston & Matson were actively supported by the South Bay teachers union and Gabriella Holt's "Citizens for California Reform" receiving over \$4,100 each from the teachers union and over \$2,600 each from the "Citizens for California Reform" organization.

We believe that residents / taxpayers should be concerned about the union's efforts to influence elections. While all are aware of the national as well as California impacts of unions election impacting efforts, here we have it on the Peninsula. That hard working teachers would have their mandatory union dues / contributions used for electioneering should be an issue for teachers. Teaching is truly an honorable profession. However, teachers need to stand up and declare ENOUGH and those who wish to be recognized for their professionalism need to disassociate

themselves from the radical union activists. That newer teachers lose their jobs is not the fault of the school boards but the fault of the teachers union that continues "to be part of the problem rather than a partner in the solution." PVP Watch will continue to report on these concerns.

Peninsula Library

Elected were incumbent Connie Davenport and 1st time candidate Diane Robinson.

RPV

Two outstanding candidates, Anthony Missetich and Brian Campbell were elected to the RPV Council by overwhelming majorities. What the current council has apparently not accepted is that lack of votes for the council backed candidates was also a repudiation of the Council's actions over the past several years.

RPV Issues

Readers will recall that in the October 24th Newsletter we wrote of the likelihood that the RPV Council intended to replace Waste Management with another trash hauler with little or no public debate. Subsequently Tom Long responded that PVP Watch was wrong and misrepresenting the situation. Well... at the November 4th RPV Council meeting with little notice, they did exactly that, sprung their ill conceived new trash hauler plan. Since then RPV residents have received email messages from Doug Stern & Tom Long extolling the virtues of the new trash hauling contract and the millions of dollars residents will be saving. True to form, Stern & Long have misrepresented the matter. What they don't report is that the so called savings are achieved by cutting services. Now there are two trash pickups per week, the new plan has one pickup per week and no longer is there unlimited trash and green waste pickups. There will be additional charges for additional trash & green waste pickups. So much for their fictitious savings plan. By the way, the new service will be automated pickup and what happens when the truck cannot reach the trash bins because of parked cars or other obstructions? Will the drivers exit the trucks to position the bins? Probably not. In other cities the trucks go on by leaving the trash at the curb. Or, will residents be restricted from parking in front of their own homes? Is this what RPV residents want? This Council, without resident input, has screwed up a process that was serving residents well.

The agenda for the November 17th Council meeting has been posted on at www.pvpwatch.com / Current Issues. Clearly a last ditch effort by a lame duck Council to commit their successors to atrocious schemes.

Item #3 - \$240,000 for a backup generator at City Hall. Why does RPV need a \$240,000 backup generator at City Hall?

Item #5 – Grant Agreement with the California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) for purchase of the Upper Filiorum property. Included in the agreement with the California State Coastal Conservancy is the following:

2. *The City Council hereby acknowledges that it has or will have sufficient funds to complete the Project and to operate and maintain the Property.*

3. *The City Council hereby agrees to provide any funds beyond the Conservancy grant funds necessary to complete the Project.*

4. *The City Council hereby agrees to be bound by all terms and conditions of the grant agreement and any other agreement or instrument as may be required by the Conservancy and as may be necessary to fulfill the terms of the grant agreement and to complete the Project.*

The document seems clear; RPV is accepting an unfunded liability. RPV has already committed \$420,000 from capital reserves as well as \$230,000 from other funds towards the purchase. Funds that undoubtedly could have been better spent elsewhere. A problem being left for the new Council.

Item #10 - Approval of the already discussed misrepresented trash hauling contract.

Item #14 – Civic Center Master Plan. Spend untold funds, which the City does not have, to build a new City Hall while RPV has pressing potential residential / financial catastrophes at Tarapaca Canyon and the PV Drive South / Portuguese Bend Landslide as well as other infrastructure issues.

Item #15 – Increase Health Insurance Benefit payments for full time employees.

Item #16 - Establishing a Retirement Health Savings Plan. Currently unknown is the proposed scope & costs.

Item #17 – Updated agreement with the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy (PVPLC) for managing RPV's land preserves and likely other lands as well. The current relationship between RPV City Hall and the PVPLC does not serve the best interests of RPV residents and this MUST change. It has become obvious that the PVPLC does not have the capabilities to manage the nature preserve or any other lands in RPV. The City MUST assume management responsibilities for all public owned lands in RPV. PVP Watch will continue to report on this serious concern.

Item #18 – TOT Ballot Measure Process.

Mayor Clark apparently believes that the County did not comply with the Elections Code and that the County's failure to do so may have affected the outcome of Measure TOT which would have increased the City's Transient Occupancy Tax from 10% to 12%?

Apparently Clark cannot accept the fact that most RPV residents did not agree with his & the other Councilmen's desire for more money to spend on frivolous schemes.

To put "frosting on the cake" the RPV Council is going to consider suing Los Angeles County for supposedly failing to provide some sample ballot materials. Suing for what, to overturn the election results? The cost of the litigation and staff time will probably exceed the amount that the extra 2% TOT would even bring to the City next year if it had been passed. Here we go again, more frivolous legal expense.

Marymount

At the November 4th meeting the RPV Council again "kicked the can down the road" with their acceptance of the staff report concerning Marymount's intent to add four year Bachelor Degrees in several curriculums. The situation is beyond ridiculous with Marymount having to likely pay over \$100,000 for another EIR report. This is to determine the impacts of adding four year Bachelor Degrees in several curriculums while maintaining the same total enrollment cap on number of students. The usual assailants from the Concerned Citizens Coalition (Redfield / Karp) were there with their usual rhetoric. That the current RPV Council cannot make logical common sense decisions which is exactly why RPV residents elected two common sense advocates who will make logical decisions.

We have presented many of the issues currently on Tuesday's Council agenda so that PVP Watch Newsletter readers who most likely are not accessing Council agendas can see for themselves the scandalous plans that this Council wants to push thru in their last hours in office.

We urge all readers to read the agenda and make their views known to the RPV Council. If you cannot attend Tuesday's meeting to express your views, send comments to cc@rpv.com.

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