

PVP Watch Newsletter – March 14, 2009

To Our Friends & Supporters:

The January 28th Newsletter contained the following message from Peninsula High School Principal Kelly Johnson: We are repeating this message as apparently the problem continues.

"Dear Parents; It has been brought to my attention that young men are walking door to door in the community representing themselves as Palos Verdes Peninsula High School football players and soliciting donations. We do not solicit door to door. They are not our students--in all probability, not high school students.

If you are approached, please politely decline without explanation and, after you close the door, immediately call the sheriff. It is sad that individuals would do this, and I want to do everything in our power to see that they end up exactly where they belong-which is jail."

Editor: telephone number for Lomita Sheriff is 310 539-1661

Peninsula High Drama Show

The award winning **Peninsula High Drama Department** presents ***Fiddler on the Roof***, starting on March 12 through March 22. This is a wonderful way to support our local students. Great entertainment at a reasonable price.

Fiddler on the Roof is a story about a man's struggles to upkeep his long held traditions amid adverse influences and circumstances. The story features a Jewish man, Tevye, in Tsarist Russia as he copes with his daughters' unconventional actions as they stray away from traditions, and Tsar's new law that orders the eviction of all Jews from his village.

Click [HERE](#) for more information

State Budget Troubles Hit Peninsula Schools

Looks like déjà vu 2003. The State is again in trouble and has cut approximately \$6 million dollars from PV Schools (PVPUSD) 2008 / 2009 & 2009 / 2010 budgets. On February 26th, the PVPUSD Board of Education issued lay-off notices to more than 130 teachers and/or clerical staff (total PVPUSD employees approximately 1100 credentialed & certified).

The PVPUSD has held Special Meetings and appears to have decided to put the issue before Peninsula residents. A final decision is planned for the March 23rd School Board meeting. Do taxpayers want to supplement PVPUSD funds with an additional Parcel Tax? Or do taxpayers accept the present situation which will result in painful belt-tightening, increased class sizes and the elimination of some programs. The Parcel Tax, if approved, would raise approximately \$3 million dollars per year and would solve about HALF of the of the State induces shortfall.

PVPUSD administration is reported to be seeking other options for making up the revenue shortfall as well including additional cuts.

Times are tough for everyone and PVP Watch believes that this problem does not reside with taxpayers alone. The community has in the past stepped up to save teacher jobs including the current parcel tax, and last year when the SAVE OUR TEACHERS NOW campaign raised \$1.3 million. Employees should now be willing to participate and offer solutions as well. One example is freezing all employees' paychecks which could save about \$1.2 million per year. It seems to us that automatic increases built into contracts in the past should not be considered untouchable at present. Layoffs generally hit younger teachers harder, and a pay freeze or cut for all seems to be more palatable than layoffs inasmuch as it keeps the teaching staff and programs intact.

The Parcel Tax issue will likely appear before the voters in June and PVP Watch will continue to report on this very serious matter. PVP Watch has posted several relevant PVPUSD findings at www.pvpwatch.com / PV Schools.

Seniors Parcel Tax Exemption

For those taking the PVPUSD Parcel Tax Senior Exemption, it is renewal time. Current form is posted at the PVPUSD web site as well as www.pvpwatch.com / PV Schools. Renewal forms must be received at PVPUSD offices no later than 4:00 PM on the last business day in May, 2009. PVP Watch does suggest that in view of current PVPUSD financial conditions that Peninsula senior residents give consideration to either not taking the exemption or making a contribution to the Palos Verdes Educational Foundation.

RPV – Affordable Housing

The March 3rd Council meeting item #8 Affordable Housing was recognized as contentious before the meeting began. For those who may be unaware, RPV is planning, in conjunction with AmCAL Multi-housing Inc. to build Affordable Housing units at the Northwest corner of Crenshaw and Crestridge. Some may have noticed the silhouette flags now in place there. Some 20 or so adjacent residents pleaded their case to no avail. It was clear for the onset that the Council had made their decision and could care less about residents objections. Final vote was about midnight. The commentary from Councilmen Long & Stern would have been amusing if not the subject so serious. Their primary thought seemed to be that they were sworn to uphold California law and therefore RPV had no alternatives because of time constraints.

It was discussed that RPV could give the funds back to LA County and end the project. Council rebuttal was that if that were to occur RPV could not control what LA County might do in order to have Affordable Housing in RPV. One must wonder if Council or Staff has ever had any

serious discussions with State / County officials responsible for public housing? Certainly Supervisor Don Knabe is a reasonable person and has in the past provided assistance to the Peninsula.

One of the concerns was that this was a poor location as residents would be unable to walk to stores, doctors etc. Some suggested Western Ave. as a better location. Level streets and an abundance of grocery stores, pharmacy's etc. One must question as to whether or not the Council / Staff ever sought alternatives? Did they ever seek the assistance of a qualified Commercial Real Estate Broker in seeking a suitable property for Affordable Housing in RPV?

There were claims that there are low income Peninsula residents that would welcome an Affordable Housing opportunity. So far it appears that this is more rhetoric than substantiated fact.

This item is on Tuesday's (March 17th) Council agenda presumably for a final decision. However, could be sent back to staff for more work. What is not yet clear is where the funds are coming from for this project.

RV Parking

The February 13th Newsletter contained a piece about RPV Council approving an ordinance prohibiting RV parking other than under certain conditions. We subsequently learned that we had "jumped the gun." Apparently what did happen was that the Council approved a draft ordinance, with some modifications, and directed Staff to finalize the ordinance.

However, what is really bizarre is the amount of time that the Council and Staff has spent on the issue of vehicle parking on RPV streets. The current saga concerning RV Parking seems to have begun about 1998. During these past eleven (11) years or so the Traffic Commission has held numerous hearings and prepared virtually endless reports that seemed to have gone nowhere. Periodically the Council "dusts off" and agendaizes the parking issue, talks about it and then sends the matter back to the staff for further work. The most recent occasion was at the November 6th, 2008 Council meeting. We have posted the Staff Report for that meeting at www.pvpwatch.com for those who are concerned about how the Council spends (wastes) taxpayer \$\$\$\$. We have to agree with Tom Long on this issue as "a solution looking for a problem."

RPV Salaries

At the March 3rd Council meeting City Manager Lehr's contract was proposed to be amended to provide a 9% increase. Salary is increased to \$177,670. In addition \$8,545 as an in lieu amount

for not subscribing to the RPV's medical plan. Also a monthly car allowance of \$600 making a total annual remuneration of \$193,415. We believe the compensation package was approved as proposed. We would hope that we will not be soon hearing about California's financial crisis negatively impacting RPV budgets. Is anyone concerned about an almost \$200,000 annual compensation for RPV's City Manager? We are presuming that City Manager Lehr declined RPV's medical plan as presumably her husband (& spouse) is provided medical coverage by his employer. Is it common practice at RPV City Hall to provide in lieu payments to employees if they do not use RPV's medical plan? Wondering if any of the Councilmen's employers provide in lieu payments if employees do not use that firm's medical plans? Do residents have opinions in this regard? Send comments to info@pvpwatch.com

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. 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