

PVP Watch Newsletter – August 15, 2012

To Our Friends and Supporters

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California – Voter ID

Interesting..... The last / June 25th PVP Watch newsletter sought reader comments concerning Voter ID and whether or not having to present valid ID when voting was a good idea. A surprise was that only four persons responded and their comments are posted at Newsletter Responses. To add to the discussion, it was subsequently reported that California Assemblyman Mike Feuer, former Los Angeles Councilman and announced Los Angeles City Attorney candidate in 2013, has or will introduce legislation to allow same day voter registration and voting. Current law is that voter registration closes two weeks prior to a General Election.

Our observation is that same day registration / voting has been demonstrated as an opportunity for voter fraud and a tactic used by *Progressives* to manipulate elections. Some identify this as "Chicago Politics" but unfortunately *Progressives* are in more areas than Chicago. We see no reason to change from closing registration two weeks before an election and believe all would be better served if voter ID was required each and every time we entered a voter election booth.

We welcome reader comments and please send comments to info@pvpwatch.com

RPV in Crisis..... The Continuing Saga

As we have frequently commented, we have significant concern with the veracity of reports and other data that originate with RPV City Manager Lehr and her staff. The latest occurred during the City Manager Reports segment at the July 31st RPV Council meeting and concerned the changes in the employee retirement program in mid 2011. Prior to the 2011 change, RPV taxpayers paid the 6.5% employee portion of the retirement contribution to California State retirement program "CalPers." The change implemented in 2011 was for employees to assume this payment. HOWEVER, the Council gave each and every employee a 5% increase in salary with the employees, in reality, assuming only 1.5% (of each person's wages) of the retirement contribution. Ms. Lehr, during July 31st meeting reported that the 5% payment was a "one time payment" which is a misrepresentation of the true facts. The truth is that the 5% award given each employee in 2011 increased every employee's wage base 5% on a continuing (not one time) basis. Not discussed was that the 5% increase also spiked some pension amounts as well.

Ms. Lehr also commented that a projected \$90,000 was being saved this fiscal year by the pension contribution changes. Her logic was not clear but it seemed what she reported is that since 51 employees assumed 1.5% of the retirement contribution, that action is saving \$90,000. If that assumption is correct, our calculations are that average RPV wages approximate \$117,647 each. Hmmm!!

RPV – Terranea

Terri Haack, Terranea General Manager, recently announced that by the end of 2012, Terranea will have delivered approximately \$10,000,000 in TOT taxes to RPV. What a fantastic venue and addition to RPV and the surrounding South Bay community. And not one word from RPV City Hall on what a great treasure, both in the financial sense as well as community contribution and involvement that Terranea has become. Wondering... shouldn't such a significant milestone be reported by the City Manager?

RPV – Storm Drains

Some may have observed that the Council decided to forgo an increase in the Storm Drain User Fee / Tax for the next fiscal year. Although the amount was minimal, the decision was significant. RPV staff presented a cockamamie scheme that RPV is in dire straits and more

taxes and fees are needed. The fact that 80% of RPV residents must pay the Storm Drain User Fee / Tax is because 20% of RPV residents have storm drains provided by LA County.

June 2004 then RPV Public Works Director Dean Allison published a comprehensive report that identified the following:

- * RPV had 200 Metal and 117 Concrete Storm Drains.

- * RPV Metal Storm Drains

 - 91 Metal Drains needed linings (\$50K avg. cost each)

 - 47 Metal Drains were in good condition

 - 9 Metal Drains needed reconstruction

 - 53 Metal Drains needed reconstruction and lining.

- * RPV had 3 Concrete Storm Drains that needed reconstruction.

- * In addition the report identified 12 Priority I Projects, 21 Priority II projects and 25 Priority III projects.

- * There were 180 LA County owned Concrete Drains in RPV.

We question the current state of affairs concerning RPV storm drains because annual reports are cloudy and shaped to provide a conclusion that RPV is in a dire circumstance relative to storm drains which may not be the case. We commend those who serve on the "Water Quality Oversight Committee" recognizing that they are limited to the data provided by Staff. We urge the Council to empower the "Water Quality Oversight Committee" to make a full analysis, not limited to what Staff may present, and to present an inclusive report that summarizes in total what has been accomplished and what must be done to maintain RPV Storm Drains in the short term and beyond.

General Plan Update – Hazard Areas

Posted on the PVP Watch website at the bottom of the Current Issues page is a document titled "Zoning – Hazard Land Use Rev. Aug. 2012." We encourage all RPV residents to read this document as it impacts some 1040 residents in RPV. You may download a copy if you wish and all should ascertain whether or not their properties are included in this assessment. This matter is on the Planning Commission agenda for August 28th and all should be aware of what this is

about because if approved, as Staff recommends, more property rights will be lost by current and future RPV residents.

Staff Report Pg 4 - *Also, the original Zoning Code was adopted in 1975 to establish the limited uses and development permitted within the Open-Space Hazard (OH) zoning district. Per the Zoning Code (Chapter 17.32), the OH district "prevents unsafe development of hazardous areas that must be preserved or regulated for public health and safety purposes." The Code goes on to indicate that the OH districts are comprised of areas where the slope exceeds 35%, experiencing down slope movement, unstable for development, where grading of the land may endanger public health and safety due to erosion, the ocean bluff areas, and areas subject to flooding from storm water.*

It seems the problem is the same; extreme slopes (greater than 35%), presumably unstable for development and possibly public health and safety concerns. As we see it, the issue is whether or not to have public bureaucracy have mandated control (option 2) or the Planning Commission (7 fellow residents) (option 4) determine the appropriate land use on a case-by-case basis.

Staff favors Option 2 (which gives City Hall more power over taxpayers), Option 4 utilizes an existing MC (municipal code) Sec. 17.48.060 concerning Extreme Slopes (greater than 35%). This option also provides greater property rights option as time goes forward thus our logic for supporting Option 4 rather than the Staff desired Option 2. We urge that all RPV residents read the complete "draft" report posted at www.pvpwatch.com and make their preferences known to the RPV Planning Commission at "pc@rpv.com."

RPV in Chaos

Some issues that appear not to interest City Manager Lehr just seem to avoid resolution and just continue on particularly when it concerns RPV's "IT" vendor PV Net. That RPV *could* have significant legal liabilities does not seem to be of concern to City Hall. The most recent advisory sent to the RPV Council on July 2nd illuminated a number of insurance deficiencies by PV Net and several PV Net subcontractors; but no reply has yet been received. The situation is that PV Net engages several persons as subcontractors rather than as employees thus adding to the complexity of insurance requirements.

Mayor Misetich and City Attorney Lynch were made aware of this situation last February and we acknowledge that Ms. Lynch has pursued this problem but apparently has been unable to obtain conformance. We recognize that RPV Finance Director McLean and PV Net President Ted

Vegvari are *very good friends* which is apparently sufficient that PV Net does not have to follow rules required for others. We wonder if any of the current Council majority of Missetich, Brooks and Knight will ever shift positions and join with Councilmen Campbell and Duhovic in demanding transparency and accountability at RPV City Hall.

RPV - City Manager Authority

Presently RPV operates as a Council – Manager form of government with the Council's and the City Manager's responsibilities being defined in Municipal Code 2.04 and 2.08 respectively. As currently written, some perceive that the current codes give the City Manager too much authority and with the current Council majority tendency to abrogate its power, the people's interests are not being well protected. A change in City Government with a **well-written** Charter may be a viable solution going forward. PVP Watch will keep all informed of any progress that develops in this regard.

There has been dissatisfaction with some on the current Council and the term "recall" has surfaced. However, a recall is virtually an impossible task as it would take about 5,000 good signatures to call a special election and less of an effort would be required to collect signatures for a Charter City Initiative should the taxpayers decide to go in that direction.

All elected need to remember that they serve at the pleasure of the residents / voters.

RPV – Consultants in Action

Currently RPV has engaged two consulting firms;

- NexLevel is auditing RPV "IT" services and a report is anticipated in September.
 - Matrix Consulting was recently retained (July 17th) to make a "Performance Audit" to assess the City's staff workload, productivity and resources. The objective being to provide Council sufficient data to assess the adequacy and appropriateness of the City's staffing, policies, procedures, resources and productivity. We presume collected data will include assessment / audit of employee staffing including individual job duties, workload assessments, employee moral, pay scales etc. Presently unknown is to what extent will opinions be sought from civic leaders and other interested residents. \$50,000 is budgeted for this project.
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PVP Schools

Construction is underway for the new swimming pool at Peninsula High school. Our understanding is that approximately \$150,000 is needed and donations are being solicited.

Folks, this is a good cause as the pool is used by the community in addition to high school swim teams and contributions are tax deductible.

**Please send your tax-deductible
contributions payable to:
ABC Pool Project Capital Campaign
Nancy Scott 19 Aurora Drive
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274
info@newpeninsulapool.org**

A recent note from the Howard Jarvis Taxpayer Association - July 20, 2012

A California transportation agency recently proposed what could become the most unpopular tax of all time: A tax for simply driving your car.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission of San Francisco is behind the idea and has said that the tax would work by installing [GPS](#) units into cars to track the miles that they travel. The vehicle owners would then be charged accordingly, with low-income drivers exempted.

The hope is that a VMT (vehicle miles traveled) tax would cut down on pollution and [traffic](#) congestion, while raising funds for things like road construction and surface [repair](#).

Randy Rentschler, spokesman for the MTC, said that the group knew the proposal could be a longshot and could take a long time to implement. Theoretically, it could take up to a decade before the plan would be rolled out in full force. "I don't want to say it's pie in the sky. A VMT charge is really an option for the future to be looked at and considered," he said.

Given the very low popularity gas taxes have been met with in the past, the proposed driving tax seems like a very bold move. Consumers hate frequently being reminded of taxes when they gas up, but this VMT charge would take that to a whole new level.

California residents are sure to watch this one closely.

Newsletter Responses

Responses to June 25th 2012 Newsletter

Voter ID

- I find it ludicrous that this is even up for debate! How else are we to determine voter fraud? Anyone who is interested in eliminating fraud and having an HONEST election would be more than willing to show ID. As for those who oppose showing ID, what is their agenda? Seems obvious to me.

- Very definitely we should show ID

- But of course voters should show ID before voting in any election. There is just no reason for not showing ID. Yes Yes Yes - I promote ID verification for any voting, city, state, or national.

- I am in favor of a voter showing an ID every time when voting.

Subscriber comments are welcomed, please send comments to info@pvpwatch.com

We have been reminded that not ALL subscribers are aware of the PVP Watch website; **www.pvpwatch.com**. Lots of good info posted there.

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 thanks the many subscribers who have contributed to PVP Watch. Those desiring to make a modest contribution, please send checks to PVP Watch PO Box 7000-22 Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274

Subscribers

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