

**Rancho Cucamonga Fire Protection District, Public Financing Authority Boards,
City Council and Successor Agency**

League of Women Voters of the Claremont Area Observer Report

By Observer Carol Kusleika

May 11, 2017 YE Council Meeting Report

The purpose of the city council is to make decisions for the general welfare of the community.

Council leadership:

Mayor: L. Dennis Michael is a retired Fire Chief, a civic leader who received recognition for his service, and a prior council member who was elected Mayor in 2010;

Mayor Pro Tem: Lynne B. Kennedy is a retired educator with a PhD from Claremont Graduate University, a business owner, active in the community, who was appointed to the council in 2014, then won a council seat in the 2016 election with the greatest number of votes.

Council members are:

William Alexander, a retired Fire Captain (Ontario), an RC civic leader, a former council member and Mayor who was elected to RC council again in 2014; **Diane Williams**, a community leader, former business owner, an advocate for preserving local history, an enthusiastic supporter of "Friends of the Library" who was elected to the council several times with the latest in 2014; **Sam Spagnolo**, a retired Fire Captain, a recognized and awarded civic leader, a prior council member who was elected as Mayor Pro Tem in 2012, and elected again to the council in 2016 with the second highest number of votes.

Regular Meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers. Public attendance is good depending on the issues. The Council Chambers are excellent with large screens and a great sound system.

Attendance: I attended a majority of the council meetings this year from June 2016 through May 2017. Mayor Michael was present for the majority of meetings.

Accomplishments This Year:

A resolution was passed to consolidate the November 8, 2016 General Election with the General Municipal Election for the election of certain officers.

The **Animal Care and Adoption Center** remodeling is close to completion.

The **Los Amigos Park** was completed.

The city has developed **Business Emergency Resiliency Training** which will enable local businesses to have a better recovery after a disaster through a series of training courses in such areas as basic first aid, fire suppression, and search and rescue techniques.

The **Public Safety Video Network (PSVN)** and the **Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR)** are being expanded, with "pan, tilt, zoom", to Victoria Gardens. The eventual goal is to expand it to all public areas such as parks and schools throughout the city. They are valuable tools to solve serious crimes.

Chaffey College was recognized as one of the **Top Ten Community Colleges** in the nation by the **Aspen Institute's College of Excellence Program**.

Library:

A capital fund raising campaign was approved for the Biane Public Library 2nd floor, Phase II Project. Extra funding was received from the California State Library system along with a state grant to help with funding the cost of high speed internet access to the cenic/calren network for the RC Public Libraries. Also, Friends of the Library donated \$150,000 to the library which directly supports the Adult Literacy Program and the Children's Summer Reading Program.

Human Needs:

The RC Professional Firefighters Assoc., through a fundraiser, gave a \$30,000 donation towards the “Hot Meals for Seniors Program” which has lost grant funding.

The city and **Healthy RC (a City-community partnership since 2008)**, through a proclamation, declared Rancho Cucamonga a **compassionate community** to encourage transparency, kindness, engagement, inclusiveness, and action.

The city continues its commitment to **Healthy RC** and to bring public awareness to areas of health such as mental health, organ and blood donation, pediatric stroke awareness, and child abuse to name a few. The city adopted the **Healthy RC Evaluation Plan as a Roadmap** to promote good health, equity, and sustainable change in the community.

Recognition is frequently given to individuals, and businesses for their outstanding achievements, successes, and contributions to the city of Rancho Cucamonga.

Land Use:

A proposed **General Plan Amendment** was approved to change land use designations of multiple parcels within the city- mainly along Foothill Blvd.at various intersections- from general commercial, industrial, or office to **Mixed Use Development**.

The **RC Family Sports Center Replacement Project** at **Foothill and Arrow** with the new name of “**RC Sports Center**” has begun construction.

The Regional All-Risk Training Center construction project was approved with ground breaking in January 2017 on the Jersey Fire Station property.

Construction has begun on the new **Stater Bros Store** as the anchor store in the future Day Creek Marketplace Shopping Center.

Housing:

Ordinances were passed to enable the conversion of **Empire Lakes** from a private golf course to a **160 acre proposed mixed use, high density residential/commercial development**.

Through building, development, and zoning changes the proposed development of a **190-unit, multi-family residential development with 3,246 square feet of commercial space or live/work units** was approved; a time extension was approved for the eventual development of **358 single-family lots on approximately 150 acres of land**; an Ordinance was approved that will allow the development of a **24,641 square foot, 60-unit senior apartment complex on 2.25 acres of land**. The **2016 CA Green Building Standards** were incorporated into the 2016 Building Codes that will require, among other things, vehicle charging stations, and roofs designed for solar panel weight.

Natural Resources and Sustainability

Expanded the **PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy)** financing programs to help finance renewable energy, water efficiency, seismic strengthening improvements, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Authorization given to the City Manager to sign Contract No.16-DSR-12648 and Amended and Restated Implementation Agreement No.95-PAO-1016 between the City of Rancho Cucamonga, the US Dept. of Interior-Bureau of Reclamation, and the US Dept. of Energy’s Western Area Power Administration for **3 megawatts of electric service from the Boulder Canyon Project as a schedule D contractor** that will replace natural gas plants and provide power that is low cost, clean, and carbon free for 500 homes (15%-16% of power).

Solar RC Expansion Project will expand to the Libraries, City Hall, Red Hill, the RC Sports Center, and the All-Risk Training Center.

The city and its residents were recognized by the **Cucamonga Valley Water District** for its water conservation.

Under consideration is a “**Sustainable Community Action Plan**” to reduce greenhouse gases throughout the city through community engagement.

Election Results

Lynne Kennedy (24,577 votes), and Sam Spagnolo (22,273 votes) were re-elected to the City Council for terms of 4 years. Ms. Kennedy became Mayor Pro-Tem.

Measure Q passed requiring that city council members be elected by the voters in 4 council districts with the Mayor at-large beginning 2018 and 2020.

Measure H passed for \$58 million in school bond revenue for the Alta Loma School District.

State of the City Address: Mayor Michael described the vision for the city of Rancho Cucamonga as a hospitality and entertainment destination due to its close proximity to the Ontario Airport and construction underway for the addition of two new hotels. One is on the SE corner of Haven and Sixth, a four story, 126 room Residence Inn, and the other is a 4 story, 105 room Fairfield Inn and Suites west of the Pittsburgh Ave. and Mission Vista Dr. intersection.

Council Discussions and Current Issues:

It must be mentioned that Danielle Boldt, Chief of Police, gave thorough, detailed reports to the city council on the items below and their impact on law enforcement and the community. The reports were impressive.

The statewide passage of the **Adult Use of Marijuana Act (Prop 64)** required the urgent passage of an ordinance to restrict the sale and purchase of butane used for honey oil extraction from marijuana to 1,200 ml (4 canisters) of high grade butane. Also, an urgent ordinance was passed to prohibit all commercial cannabis use in the city (in public places) and to limit *outdoor* marijuana cultivation on private residences and *private indoor* cultivation to 6 plants.

Thoroughbred Holiday Lights which has become a public nuisance to residents and law enforcement during the holiday season resulted in the adoption of an Ordinance to allow the temporary closure of streets to pedestrian traffic and restricted to *vehicles only with no stopping* in portions of the Holiday Light section of the city from 4PM-11PM, Dec. 14 – Dec. 24.

What issues brought out the public?

Curtis Pitts, **CW Feed Owner**, along with many of his supporters, accused the Fire Marshall of unnecessary harassment of his business but was rebutted by City Attorney James Markman who stated the valid fire violations.

The **animal shelter's** conditions were a continuous source of complaints from animal rights activists and their belief in a "no kill" shelter. The remodeled animal shelter may reduce the complaints.

The **Thoroughbred Holiday Lights Display** is another source of complaints from the residents due to heavy vehicle and pedestrian traffic, vendors, air pollution, noise, trampled yards, and trash to name a few concerns.

Prop 64 for the **Adult Use of Marijuana** was another issue of concern for residents.

The school bonds brought out one resident against and two in support of the bonds.

A concerned citizen complained about the conditions of the equestrian center and her disapproval of the council for approving high density housing.

Observations:

Rancho Cucamonga is a fast growing city. According to the mid-year budget update report, the housing market is thriving with demand outpacing the supply. A single family home in the mid-range is priced at \$450,000. This means that the building of high density housing will most likely be a necessity into the future. There is still considerable vacant commercial building space which is predicted to be resolved with the increase in population. However, as the population increases, its impact on the quality of life of Rancho Cucamonga's residents is impossible to predict.

Did I need to alert the League President?

One lady continues to pray at the council meetings which she is allowed to do under her allotted time during Public Communications. It is harmless and her intentions are sincere.

Assessment:

- a. The council meetings are very democratic. Anyone who wants to address the city council may do so. The city council members are transparent and express their thoughts openly about an issue. This was especially true concerning Prop 64 (Adult Use of Marijuana) and the Thoroughbred Holiday Lights issues.
- b. The council asks good questions if additional information is needed depending on the issue.
- c. The council meetings are always professional. The council members are respectful to the residents of the city and to each other.
- d. RC follows good government standards. The council members are sincere and listen intently to complaints or suggestions from the residents. They appear to this observer to have the city's best interests at heart.