



Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

The Observer

July 2023

Edition 2

Observer Reports from Around the County.

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You too can be an Observer.

Participate in democracy at any government meeting in Ventura County.
Please submit a brief report of your observations to lwvvc.info@gmail.com

Our League observes the VC Board of Supervisors' meetings on a regular basis. We can always use more volunteers. Please consider attending a meeting in your area. Each city has its own city council. You'll be pleased to learn what's going on in the county. City council members and supervisors will appreciate knowing that the League is interested. Contact [Carol Lindberg](#) for more information.

For a blue league t-shirt please contact [Karen Savitt](#).

For Observer Buttons, please contact [Carol Lindberg](#).

OBSERVER REPORTS



Observer Report #1

Ventura City Council

Monday, June 5th

San Buenaventura City Hall

Observers Reporting: Matty Park, Pat Butler

The Ventura City Council voted to prepare a resolution censuring Councilmember Mike Johnson and removing him from his committee positions for creating a hostile work environment.

Eight complaints were filed with Human Resources by two staff members. There was nothing illegal, nothing that happened behind closed doors, just things said on the dais as a Councilmember.

A third-party investigation was completed at a cost to the city of \$75,000. The investigation results agreed Mike Johnson acted unprofessionally on two occasions.

At the council meeting there were approximately 50 speakers on Mike's behalf. No one spoke for the resolution to censure him.

In the end the City Council decided to reprimand him, allow him to remain on his various committees and require that he apologize to the Staff. In addition, the entire City Council will take training on bullying and hostile work environment. It was required that the City of Ventura take some action against Mike because a formal complaint had been filed with HR.



Observer Report #2

Ventura County Board of Supervisors

Pay-to-Play Limits and Prohibitions

Discussion of the Levine Act

2023 Changes to Section 84308

Observer Reporting: Pat Butler

County Board of Supervisors

June 20, 2023, 11:30am-12:30pm

In 2022, the California Legislature passed SB 1439, a bill that amended Section 84308 of the Political Reform Act. The changes took effect on January 1, 2023. The amendments significantly broadened the scope of the statute. It applies to non-competitive bid items.

The Ventura County Board of Supervisors (BOS) heard a presentation by Jeffery Barnes, Legal Counsel. As of January 1, 2023, Section 84308 now operates differently in two keyways:

1. Section 84308 now applies to agencies whose members are directly elected by voters including local elected officials such as city councilmembers and county supervisors serving on their respective boards; and
2. Officials are prohibited from accepting, soliciting, or directing a contribution exceeding \$250 from a party or participant for 12 months before or after the final decision of a proceeding.



The burden is placed on the county supervisors and the donor to report contributions exceeding \$250 within a 12-month period of a proceeding regarding a "trade, land use licenses and permits and all other entitlements for use, all contracts (other than competitively bid, labor, or personal employment contracts), and all franchises".

Supervisors may "cure" an instance prior to a proceeding or in a proceeding by 1.) disclosing the contribution and returning funds more than \$250; 2.) Recusing BOS member from the proceeding' 3.) Refusing to accept contributions of more than \$250 for 12 months following the proceeding.

The Levine Act applies to;

1. Discretionary decisions to grant, deny, revoke, restrict, or modify "licenses, permits, or other entitlements for use."
2. The covered proceedings include, but are not limited to those regarding professional service and consulting, for goods, services, the Request for Proposal process, etc.

Each supervisor and each contributor are responsible to know when they must disclose contributions, recuse from the proceeding, and know when to decline a contribution.

Exceptions if contribution is returned:

1. Return 30 days prior to proceeding;
2. After the proceeding, return funds in excess of \$250 and disclose within 14 days.

Tiffany North, County Council, noted this law may be difficult to follow because BOS may not be familiar with who company officers are or who all the parties with a financial interest are. The FPPC has an aid and assistance phone line. Supervisors can get information regarding specific instances if needed.

The BOS voted unanimously to abide by the Levine Act.

BOB adjourned to Closed Session regarding litigations.



Observer Report #3

Ventura County Board of Supervisors

Tuesday, June 6, 2023

Observer Reporting: Sharon Crane

The County Opioid Abuse Suppression Taskforce (COAST) gave a presentation on the Multi-Agency Effort to Combat the Opioid Crisis in Ventura County. It was a full house with an overflow.

It was very encouraging to see how many agencies are involved with this issue – Behavioral Health, Public Health, Medical Examiner, Forensic Pathologist, Criminal Justice, District Attorney, Sheriff office and Police Officers and their Chiefs, Schools, Education personnel, Public Works and others. All of these agencies are working together on the Fentanyl crisis in Ventura County. The numbers are staggering, and it is the leading cause of death outranking heart attacks and cancer. They are using the tools of outreach, prevention, treatment and NARCAN (naloxone).

It was said that there are no longer recreational drugs as any drug can be laced with fentanyl and probably is in most cases. Fentanyl is produced in China and comes to US via Mexico. The Overdose Prevention program goal is to reduce overdoses by 50 % and reduce supply and demand. The COAST dashboard online has data of businesses, transportation, homelessness, schools and the community are all affected by this crisis.



The Board of Supervisors asked what they can do to be helpful and what is needed by the agencies. These are just some of their requests: NARCAN kits for all schools, public agencies etc.; need more scientists and equipment as testing is a year behind; education as a standard component for deterrence in schools, social and other media; harsher penalties for those selling it and someone dies, up to 2nd degree murder; speakers bureau as a team; treatment programs.

Ventura County is a leader in the state and maybe the country with their multifaceted and collaborative approach to this crisis. It was amazing to see the amount of interest and people attending and the variety of agencies who are all

working together. It was apparent that they all knew one another and had good working relationships.

Other items were:

A presentation Proclaiming June 6, 2023, as D-Day Remembrance Day in Ventura County. Two Veterans talked about their organization and work in the community and remembrance of World War II people they had known and stories they used to tell.

A presentation of a Proclamation Honoring and Recognizing the Month of June as LGBTQ Pride Month in Ventura County. Several people spoke on the appreciation of the recognition and acknowledgment of the LGBTQ+ community.

LEAGUE INFORMATION

[Join or Renew Form | MyLO \(lwv.org\)](https://my.lwv.org)

The dues rates for 2022-2023 are:

Individual Membership	\$75.00
Student Membership	\$25.00
Family Membership	\$125.00
Associate Membership	\$25.00



Join at: <https://my.lwv.org/california/ventura.county/join.league.or.renew.here>

OR make your check payable to LWVVC and send it to
P.O. Box 6786, Ventura, CA 93006

Membership Scholarships available with the approval of the Board of Directors.

Contributions Welcome

[Donate | MyLO \(lwv.org\)](https://my.lwv.org)

Tax deductible donations may be made to:

- General Fund
- Scholarship Fund
- Ann Gist Voter Education Fund
- Ann Gist Scholarship Fund

Please send checks to LWVVC, P.O. Box 6786, Ventura, CA 93006, or donate online [here](#). If you wish to donate in remembrance of someone, please include their name and a few lines about their life. Please specify the fund you want to support. Thank you.

Raise Awareness of the League

Wear a **LWVVC Shirt** to all our public functions. Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL. Donation of \$20.00 or more requested. For shirts, please contact [Karen Savitt](#).



Making Democracy Work...

Please join us!

Membership Form Available online.

Website: LwvVenturaCounty.org

Email: info@lwvVenturaCounty.org

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/LWVVenturaCounty>

Mailing Address: LWVVC, P.O. Box 6786, Ventura, CA 93006

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Find candidate funding and proposition information on:
<https://votersedge.org/ca>

The League of Women Voters of Ventura County is a 501 (c) 3 organization.

All contributions are tax deductible.

The League of Women Voters, a grassroots non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose candidates or political parties.
