

Switzer, Donna

From: Fikes, Cathy
Sent: Tuesday, January 17, 2023 9:36 AM
To: Agenda Alerts
Subject: FW: NO vote on Councilmember Item #24 at the 1-17-23 council meeting

From: Dan Jamieson <danjamieson4@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2023 12:00 PM
To: CITY COUNCIL <city.council@surfcity-hb.org>
Subject: NO vote on Councilmember Item #24 at the 1-17-23 council meeting

**SUPPLEMENTAL
COMMUNICATION**

Meeting Date: 1/17/23

Agenda Item No.: 24(23-051)

Dear HB Councilmembers:

I urge a NO vote on Councilmember Item #24 at the 1-17-23 council meeting.

The item would implement a "managed hiring" process for vacant city staff positions. The reason given is that new council members need to get up to speed on staffing levels and costs. The item also states that there is a "sincere concern about the financial health of the city after the past couple of years of high spending by the previous City Council [and] the current deepening recession," and that the new council should have an opportunity to make informed decisions about staffing in the upcoming 23/24 budget.

It is unclear what a "managed hiring" process is or why it is needed. My understanding is that city management and the council already manage hiring, normally through a thoughtful budget process. Changes are made as conditions warrant. So it appears that the city uses a type of "managed hiring" process already. Perhaps the proposed item intends for the council to micromanage this process, but again, that is unclear.

The item also fails to substantiate any financial concerns with the city budget. According to the city's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report Year Ending 2022, Huntington Beach is "experiencing sustained increases to its major revenue sources," with the highest property, sales and transient-occupancy tax revenues in 10 years (or more). The 22/23 budget is balanced. Spending did increase 25.3% from 21/22, but a "significant portion of the increase is due to added investment in essential infrastructure and equipment and the restoration of COVID-19 temporary cost saving measures, as well as use of the City's ARPA funds totaling \$29.6 million for public safety personnel costs," the report says.

Meanwhile, the overall economy, as reflected in the city budget, is doing well. The latest report from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis on Dec. 22, 2022, estimates that GDP grew 3.2% in the third quarter of 2022 vs. 2Q22. Meanwhile, unemployment just hit record lows in the U.S. and in California. (See <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2022/10/21/california-matches-record-low-unemployment-rate/>).

This "managed hiring" item is not needed. A better approach would be for the new council members to, first, get up to speed on the city's finances and staffing. Then, if adjustments are needed, make them in a considered and transparent manner during the city's next budget cycle, at which time the new council--like all others before them--will have an opportunity to make informed decisions about staffing in the upcoming budget.

Sincerely,

Dan Jamieson

Huntington Beach