

Switzer, Donna

From: Dombo, Johanna
Sent: Monday, November 04, 2019 9:36 AM
To: Agenda Comment
Cc: Fikes, Cathy; CITY COUNCIL
Subject: FW: City Council, 11/4/19 Items 18, 19

AGENDA COMMENT

From: Galen Pickett <Galen.Pickett@csulb.edu>
Sent: Monday, November 04, 2019 8:58 AM
To: CITY COUNCIL <city.council@surfcity-hb.org>
Subject: City Council, 11/4/19 Items 18, 19

Honorable city council members:

I note with interest items 18 (19-1024) and 19 (19-1094) on the agenda for the upcoming Nov. 4, 2019 city council meeting. While independent and severable, the items are connected by the internal logic of our housing system and by the legal challenges facing the city. In my view, both items deserve broad-based council support. It is my contention that with these items the city is making important first steps toward rationalizing the various housing instabilities the region and state are experiencing. Additionally, it seems clear that we are rapidly approaching our last chance to take our first step.

Of the various lawsuits to which the city is a party, the suit brought by the state in Jan. 2019 and the Kennedy Commission suit spring from the issues items 18 and 19 address. These suits stem from the reduction of affordable housing in the housing element of the general plan, as you all are aware. The Jamboree development on Beach provides permanent supportive housing for seniors in danger of experiencing housing instability, and thus cuts directly at the underlying logic of both suits. Directing staff to create options for amendments to the housing element (and specifically the Beach-Edinger Corridor Specific Plan) for council consideration likewise is a step toward making both suits moot, with the added benefit of making the city eligible for state funding for the operation of facilities which would reduce the pressure the city faces from Judge Carter in the wake of the Boise decision.

In this light, taking action is the surest way to preserve the autonomy of our charter city and to conserve our ability to pursue an active legal strategy. The essence of political conservatism is to conserve the possibilities inherent in the future by acting in the present to hedge against the downside of inaction. The downside of inaction here is considerable: the financial pressure resulting from losing any one of these suits can squeeze out public safety spending, the inability of the city to enforce anti-camping and curfew laws would result in as few as a couple of weeks an economic catastrophe. Alternatively, taking the first steps outlined in items 18 and 19 preserves the autonomy of the city to maintain planning authority and gives direct evidence to all parties of our earnest intent to resolve the intertwined issues of homelessness, affordability, and quality of life.

With best wishes,

Prof. Galen T. Pickett
Dept. of Physics and Astronomy
CSU Long Beach
1250 Bellflower Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90840

SUPPLEMENTAL COMMUNICATION

Meeting Date: 11/04/19

Agenda Item No.: 18 (19-1024)

