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Photo: Luke Thomas




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# Local Activists Join In the Fun as Interim Mayor Lee Opens West Portal Office

Interim Mayor Ed Lee, seeking election as Mayor, opened his West Portal HQ. Assisted by speakers such as SF Fire Chief Joanne Hayes-White, and Lee's wife Anita, the candidate kicked off the campaign in front of a crowd of over 100 citizens, many waving "Mayor Ed Lee - Gets it done" signs and placards.

Several of the signs in the crowd were held by supporters of Golden Gate Park, urging the Mayor to clean up the "Wreck r Parks" department, in a protest of the current policies from the Rec and Park hierarchy. The Mayor failed to address the protesters.

Interim Mayor Ed Lee spoke to well-wishers at the opening of his campaign headquarters on West Portal Avenue as Free Park advocates peacefully protest—in true San Francisco fashion.

Interim Mayor Ed Lee spoke to well-wishers at the opening of his campaign headquarters on West Portal Avenue as Free Park advocates peacefully protest—in true San Francisco fashion.

Mayor's Race

## RANKED CHOICE VOTING TESTED

### RCV WILL BE USED IN THE MAYOR'S RACE FOR THE FIRST TIME

#### We Asked Some of the Candidates What They Think

**By George Wooding**

**Jeff Adachi, Public Defender:** RCV is confusing to most voters, who may think that the best way to get their candidate elected is to vote for them three times. The winner in this race may very well be the second place vote getter who receives the most second and third place votes from voters who have voted for other candidates who are eliminated. The message I have been putting out is that if I am not your number one choice, then please vote for me as your second or third place choice.

**John Avalos, Supervisor :** "We're all tired of politics as usual. RCV and public financing give grassroots voters a real choice in this election. I have enough faith in the voters in this City to believe that they will vote for me for first, second and third under the RCV process precisely because I have talked about real issues and real ideas."

**David Chiu, Supervisor:**

RCV allows voters to rank their 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choice candidates. Through this system, candidates strive to get as many first choice votes as possible. But as the lowest scoring candidates drop off the bottom, votes are distributed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> choice of each voter. The RCV system encourages positive campaigns and allows for candidates to take their message to the most diverse set of San Franciscans.

#### Bevan Dufty, Former Supervisor:

**Submitted by Alex Tourk, Campaign Manager:** RCV has created an entirely new dynamic to electoral politics. While securing the #1 votes is vital to get into the final rounds, the ability to garner 2nd and 3rd place votes is key as votes are transferred as candidates are unable to move into each subsequent round.

The key in a large field of 11 substantial candidates is turnout. The candidate who can energize their base and turn them out will be the likely winner as there are various constituencies in San Francisco who are fractured with a crowded field.

**Tony Hall, Former Supervisor:** The people of San Francisco need to be educated about RCV. I am asking to be your first-choice vote — if not your first-choice vote, your second or third-choice vote.

RCV may be the citizens' best opportunity to implement the real reform that City Hall needs. Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

#### Dennis Herrera, City Attorney:

On balance, I prefer the traditional runoff system for citywide elections. But, like most San Franciscans (and perhaps more than most San Franciscans, admittedly) I'm keeping an open mind to see how RCV works in the current election. This competitive mayoral election is likely to have a decisive influence

Cont. p. 6

## Ranked-Choice Voting: Turning Losers Into Winners

**By George Wooding**

**After nine years, most San Francisco voters still do not understand Ranked Choice Voting (RCV).**

In 2002, San Francisco voters passed Proposition A, a charter amendment that requires the City to use ranked choice voting to eliminate run-off elections that San Francisco had traditionally used for electing the Mayor, City Attorney, District Attorney, Public Defender, Sheriff, Assessor-Recorder, Treasurer, and Board of Supervisors.

Supporters of RCV felt it would save the City money by disposing of "costly" run-off elections with notoriously low voter turn-out in December. Former City Controller Ed Harrington predicted at the time San Francisco would save \$1.6 million annually by using RCV. Only then-City Supervisor Leland Yee voted against placing the RCV system on the ballot.

The big selling points for the RCV system at the time were that it 1) Created diversity, 2) Fostered conformity, and 3) Was less expensive than run-off elections.

This is what RCV is supposed to do: Each voter is allowed to cast a first-, second-, and third-choice vote among candidates running for office. The votes would be counted in rounds. If one candidate received more than 50% of the first-choice votes in the first round, then that candidate would be elected.

If no candidate received more than 50% of the first-choice votes, the candidate who received the fewest first-choice votes would be eliminated. All the voters whose first-choice candidate was eliminated would have their second-choice vote transferred to their second-choice candidate. As each candidate with the "fewest votes" is eliminated, their votes are to be redistributed among the remaining candidates — until one candidate receives more than 50% of the vote. The first candidate to receive more than 50% of the vote ends up winning the convoluted process. The entire RCV process is explained at [sfgov.org/election](http://sfgov.org/election).

This is how political losers can easily become elected winners.

RCV election rules that San Francisco voters need to understand: 1) If you select the same candidate three times, only the first-choice vote will count; 2) Always use all three of your votes; 3) If you only vote one time and your candidate is eliminated, your vote is eliminated; 4) If you vote more than three times, none of your ballot counts; and 5) Your second-choice vote will be counted only if your first-choice candidate has been eliminated — and your third-choice vote will be counted only if BOTH your first- and second-choice candidates have been eliminated.

More confusing: The 50% vote majority that a candidate needs to win an election will NOT be 50% of the total votes cast in the election. For example, if a total of 100,000 first-, second-, and third-place votes were cast for ten candidates, the vote total will shrink after each candidate is eliminated. After the

Cont. p. 6



Leadership Needed at Lake Merced



By Jonathan Farrell

With a governing document called a Memorandum of Understanding from 1950 that is in need of revision, the future of San Francisco's Lake Merced is in need of not only maintenance — it needs leadership.

On September 9 the members of the Park, Recreation and Open Space Advisory Committee (PROSAC) met at City Hall to discuss the need for better care for Lake Merced. Part of the conflict is the coordinating of recreational, leasing and vendor oversight that San Francisco's Recreation & Parks Department has had in caring for the Lake, along with the stewardship that the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission must maintain. Many in the local community see this relationship as “business as usual.”

Dozens gathered for a community meeting at the Lake Merced Harding Park earlier this summer on July 19 — many expressed skepticism that the continued arrangement with SF Rec. & Parks would be beneficial to the Lake's overall

maintenance. The members at the PROSAC meeting on Sept. 9 echoed much the same. They too were dissatisfied with the draft of the Memorandum of Understanding, which has yet to be officially revised and updated.

“This draft is a bit antidotal, permissive, and rather toothless,” as far as Rec. & Parks Dept. is concerned, said one PROSAC committee member. Others chimed in agreement that the MOU had no teeth. As it is now, the Rec. & Parks Dept. manages all the vendor and rental spots along the Lake. That includes fishing, boating, as well as food sales, etc.

Residents complain that care for the Lake's recreational facilities have been in decline for years. The members of the PROSAC meeting for that Tuesday evening expressed similar doubts about the competency of the Rec. & Park Dept. to continue in the management role of the Lake's facilities and overall care.

The SF PUC has absolute authority over the Lake, tending to its environmental aspects such as water levels, toxicity reports, etc. Yet, the SF PUC continues this long-term relationship with SF Rec. &

Park. Some ask why and what for?

Long-time community advocate for the lake Jerry Cadagan (see page 1) has been very outspoken about Lake Merced's decline over the years. He was among the first to form a group over 15 years ago, seeking to improve the care of the 300 to 600 acre watershed. He is disappointed that not much has changed for the Lake. Cadagan was not able to attend the PROSAC meeting (yes, that is the acronym for the advisory committee and sounds like the drug).

Fortunately for Lake Merced and SF PUC, Steve Ritchie, who serves as Assistant General Manager of Water Enterprises for the SF PUC is respected and well-liked. Much of the lack of care, according to Rec. & Parks Dept., is the dwindling City budget, which when stretched to meet all the needs of every park and open space in San Francisco is very thin. Some at the PROSAC meeting on Sept. 9 said that Ritchie should petition to find another entity outside San Francisco to manage the Lake's recreational and food venues.

Ritchie would only say that in terms of a revised MOU, “the SF PUC will be

firm with Rec. & Parks when needed.” Still, many were not convinced. In observing some of the details of this meeting a bit further, as well as the earlier meeting in July, the on-going complexity of this unique situation becomes clear. Lake Merced is open to the public. It is utilized by all the schools in the area. Rowing clubs and others depend upon the lake. A gun club has been at the lake for more than 75 years and has a lease with the City. Since 2004, Harding Park Golf Course at Lake Merced has upgraded to PGA status. Investment for that was considerable.

The fine details and specifics are not simple ones, which, as this reporter sees them, go beyond the rebuilding of a boathouse or the management of venues and vendors. The future environmental life of a natural resource hangs in the balance as various stakeholders claim their special interests over the Lake.

When time for public comment was permitted, people like Dick Morton spoke, saying that with the SF PUC's help, water levels at the lake have been restored. Morton commended the work. But he said that the “SF PUC should have, and exercise, full

Cont. p. 9



Former PROSAC member Nancy Wuerfel



Asst. Gen. Manager, Steve Ritchie, addresses the skeptical PROSAC Board and interested residents.

October 2011

Westside Observer



Murphy Windmill Gets a Cap

By Jonathan Farrell

Crowds gathered on Sept. 12 as the Murphy Windmill, now restored, got its cap placed on top with the help of a gigantic crane.

The dome-like roof was designed in Holland by Lukas Verbij and constructed separately. The “cap” is made of metal and is the part of the windmill where the “sails” or vanes are attached, allowing them to turn. The “cap” by itself weighs 64 tons and had to be lifted by professional crane with crews assisting.

The ceremony, scheduled for 11 AM that Monday, got a late start. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, which winds through Golden Gate Park and ends at the Great Highway where the century-old windmill is located, was closed to cars. The intersection of Lincoln Way and La Playa adjacent to MLK Drive was blocked off until Noon. SFPD's Mounted Police unit was present, along with dozens of on-lookers all eager to watch the “cap” be set in place. Cheers and applause went out as the crane started up and slowly lifted the cap-dome in place.

San Francisco Recreation & Parks General Manager Phil Ginsburg was pleased with the turn out of people as the fog gradually cleared and sunshine eventually broke through, making the occasion a memorable event. “Murphy Windmill and the Queen Wilhelmina Windmill were instrumental in building the park at a time when there was nothing (out here) but sand,” he said.

The placing of the “cap” atop the traditional tower windmill is the completion of Phase II for the Murphy Windmill restoration project. Phase III - which Ginsburg said anticipates reaching completion hopefully by the end of the year, would have the pump and motor mechanisms in place, making Murphy Windmill fully functional.

Ginsburg congratulated everyone involved in the project, like project manager Dan Mauer, designer Lukas Verbij and all the various work crews such as Roebuck Construction. He especially thanked the many groups such as the Dutch community and foundations that helped raise money to fund the restoration. Restoration of the windmill has been over a decade in the making and required the cooperation of many dedicated people.

Bart van Bolhuis, Consul General

of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and staff were present at the ceremony. Bolhuis was pleased and said that the “Windmill is beautiful and the Consulate of the Netherlands and I are very grateful.”

Standing at 95 feet tall (which is about a six story-level building) the Windmills of Golden Gate Park are often referred to in Holland as “the San Francisco Giants.” While on the surface the Murphy Windmill is of a traditional design, Verbij later said at a gathering at the Dutch Consulate's home that the engineering was far more complex.

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, use of iron and steel mechanisms was advancing, surpassing what had been up until that time the traditional windmill craftsmanship of Holland and the rest of Europe.

Local resident Gary Fisher was among those gathered that Monday. “This is really cool,” he said. “The windmill tells the story of how Golden Gate Park got here. Every great city has something like this,” he said.

Richmond District residents Maurice Molyneaux and Richard Boswell agreed, as they told this reporter they had been watching the restoration work take shape over the last several months. “Seeing it rebuilt step by step, the scaffolding, the decks, then the shingles,” said Molyneaux.

Murphy Windmill, completed in 1905, obsoleted into ruin along with the Queen Wilhelmina Windmill after decades of service pumping millions of gallons of water throughout Golden Gate Park, allowing it to grow and thrive. Ginsburg and others are hoping that the windmill's original function can be restored to promote ecologically sound energy and water management.

Jonathan Farrell is a free-lance San Francisco reporter. Feedback: jonathan@westsideobserver.com

October 15 Set for NERT Drill

By Joe Humphreys

October and April are San Francisco's earthquake months. Of course, we don't know in what month the next one will come, but the last three major quakes to hit the Bay area were in April of 1906 and October of 1868 and 1889. So October is a good time to remember that we live with earthquakes and need to prepare for them. After the 1989 quake, the San Francisco Fire Department realized that preparation for the next earthquake (or

other catastrophic event) has to include the training of citizen volunteers. Thus was born San Francisco's Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT).

Since 1989, the SF Fire Department has trained thousands of NERT volunteers to assist in the response by knowing how to provide basic assistance to themselves, their families, and their neighborhoods when the next major disaster strikes our city. To maintain their readiness, NERT members participate in city-wide drills each April and October. This month, on October 15, neighborhood NERT teams will set up staging areas at several locations throughout the city and conduct a drill to practice and sharpen the skills they learned when they originally took their NERT training. Several NERT teams in the Sunset area will be conducting a drill at the Sunset Square playground (27th and Vicente) from 8:30 AM to 1 PM on that day. Participating teams include: Clarendon Heights-Forrest Knolls-Midtown Terrace-Twin Peaks, Ingleside Terraces, Inner Sunset, Laguna Honda, Mt. Davidson-Miraloma Park, San Francisco State University, Sunset-Parkside, St. Francis Woods, and West Portal-Inner Parkside. All NERT volunteers are invited and urged to participate in this drill.



Page 3

COMMUNITY

RUMINATIONS FROM A FORMER SUPERVISOR By Quentin Kopp

BALLOT RECOMMENDATIONS: NOVEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>

Flinley Peter Dunn, who died in 1936, was one of America's most conspicuous political commentators and cartoonists. Utilizing “Mr. Dooley's Opinions” as his device, Dunn rendered Mr. Dooley, a mythical Irish immigrant expressing his observations on New York City and State politics but also on humankind in general. Among “Mr. Dooley's Opinions,” bowdlerized for this column, was, “A man that'd expect to train lobsters to fly in a year is called a ‘loonetic’ but a man who thinks men can be turned into angels by an election is called a reformer and remains at large.”

It seems apt to provide for the first time in over a decade a public recitation of my views and recommendations concerning the November 8, 2011 Municipal Election, which features concentrated competition for Mayor, District Attorney and Sheriff, plus eight ballot measures. Two of the measures involve general obligation bonds in the total amount of \$779,000,000, three constitute Charter amendments, two con-



Photo: Luke Thomas/foxyjournal.com

as the elected City Attorney for nearly 10 years. He knows right from wrong; he knows, for example, the Central Subway project is one of the most disreputable wastes of taxpayer monies, local, state and federal, in recent history and he has so stated with clarity and vigor, even in the face of mob opprobrium contrived by the afore-said Pak and her associates. Moreover, in June 2012, San Francisco voters

The campaign for mayor features an incumbent, whose narrow selection by the Board of Supervisors in the first week of January was conditioned upon him not seeking election to the office on November 8<sup>th</sup>. The appointment resulted from an inside City Hall scheme by former Mayor Willie Brown and Chinese Chamber of Commerce Executive Director and chief intimidator Rose Pak, who thereafter organized an ersatz citizen supplication for the servile appointee to seek election to San Francisco's most significant public office in the face of prior promises not to run.”

stitute ordinances, and one represents a declaration of policy.

The campaign for mayor features an incumbent, whose narrow selection by the Board of Supervisors in the first week of January was conditioned upon him not seeking election to the office on November 8<sup>th</sup>. The appointment resulted from an inside City Hall scheme by former Mayor Willie Brown and Chinese Chamber of Commerce Executive Director and chief intimidator Rose Pak, who thereafter organized an ersatz citizen supplication for the servile appointee to seek election to San Francisco's most significant public office in the face of prior promises not to run. In some part, because of the assumption that the election would not feature an incumbent Mayor, fifteen other San Franciscans effected in early August their candidacies. After reviewing the history, qualifications and utterances of 11 of such candidates, I've decided carefully to endorse two, based primarily on their city government experience, their intellectual and financial honesty, and their statements of intent respecting policies.

Due to ranked choice voting, I'm able to, and do, strongly recommend for your consideration Public Defender Jeff Adachi and City Attorney Dennis Herrera for Mayor.

Dennis Herrera possesses almost a generation of experience in city government and the myriad of issues that confront a San Francisco mayor. He has served as a Deputy City Attorney and thereafter, with an interval of legal private practice,

will finally be given the opportunity to abolish the monopoly in garbage collection, transportation and recycling with a qualified citizen initiative, of which I am a part, to require competitive bidding for such now-monopolized service, plus a first time ever payment of an annual franchise fee to San Francisco's general fund. While prevented by the San Francisco Charter from publicly supporting or opposing any ballot measure, City Attorney Herrera states publicly he will vote for that initiative next June. (Incidentally, candidates Adachi, John Avalos, Tony Hall, Joanne Rees and Phil Ting have stated publicly their support of such initiative, while candidates David Chiu, Bevan Dufty and appointed Mayor Lee have publicly declared opposition to competitive bidding. It was Lee, in his 2001 role as Director of Public Works, who granted the monopoly NorCal Waste a 44% rate increase after his own staff had recommended a maximum 20% rate increase. It's estimated such action has cost San Francisco ratepayers approximately \$850,000,000 or \$85,000,000 annually over the past 10 years! Herrera's public policy positions tell me he is a man of rectitude, not weakness or vainness, like our last mayor.

So is Jeff Adachi. He possesses a generation in city service, first as a Deputy Public Defender with a reputation for consummate preparedness, then for almost this past decade as the elected Public Defender. Both last year and this year he has led the struggle to qualify an initiative

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More information about the NERT program, including schedules for upcoming free NERT training classes, are available on the NERT website: <http://www.sf-fire.org/index.aspx?page=859>  
Joe Humphreys, NERT volunteer: joehum@gmail.com



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## Bond Funds Forever — for Whatever

By Steve Lawrence

*Sophisticated voters know that bond funds are not necessarily spent as campaign literature promises. Laguna Honda Hospital is Exhibit A.*

*Once bureaucrats acquire bond funds, they may change course and spend pretty much as they please. Bond funds become spending money.*

Voters are being told that \$248 million will be spent paving city streets. Maybe. But it is very possible that a fair portion will be spent building bike lanes, handicap ramps, and mini-parks, or on traffic calming, islands, planting trees, or studying whatever consultants can dream up.

Because of the looseness with which bond funds are spent, lobbying drives bond fund spending. For example, nine years ago voters passed a bond measure funding improvements to the Hetchy water system. The proposal was to make the Hetchy water system seismically sound, drought-resistant, and provide about 20% more water — enough water to serve through 2030.

up to creating a movement and then sticking with it for years.

On the other hand, greens do their lobbying through non-profits. Non-profits hire professional advocates. Careers are dedicated to the cause. Advocates join and dominate citizen advisory committees. They attend and speak up at commission meetings. They get commissioners appointed. Fierce commitment and end-

**I**t is a mistake to imagine that groups such as the Chamber of Commerce or SPUR will follow-up to protect the interests of the citizen and ratepayer. Such blue-ribbon groups supported the bond measure, and then dropped the matter, moving right on to the next cause.



*It is the rare citizen watchdog that is up to creating a movement and then sticking with it for years."*

Since then, the now \$4.6 billion program has dropped the goal of providing sufficient water through 2030. Environmentalists objected.

The greens also grabbed lots of the bond money for their preferred purposes. A \$12 million program EIR, not a part of the original program, was their opening act. A project was devised to spend \$20 million on "watersheds," parts of which are not even upstream from reservoirs. Another project was created to protect "habitat"; weed-like, that habitat project has grown to \$89 million. Your water bill is rising much faster than the oceans; some of that rise flows from incessant and successful lobbying.

There is no good way to add up green spending. For example, greens got small dams removed from Alameda Creek. This seemed innocuous. But with dams gone it turned out that certain protected fish might reach further upstream to the site of a major project. Now those fish need to be accommodated by that project. The cost of accommodating the fish is beyond knowing, but is large.

As one who has followed the program, now called Water System Improvement Program, from its inception, I can assure the reader that hundreds of millions of dollars of spending, and delay time, has resulted from green lobbying.

It is a mistake to imagine that groups such as the Chamber of Commerce or SPUR will follow-up to protect the interests of the citizen and ratepayer. Such blue-ribbon groups supported the bond measure, and then dropped the matter, moving right on to the next cause.

It is the rare citizen watchdog that is

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## TRICKLE UP ECONOMICS

It's all a dance, really. A Democratic president summons the gumption to call for higher taxes on the rich and Republicans cry like third graders having their ice cream taken away and given to the neighbor's dog. Invoking the hoariest of chestnuts; that oldie but goodie; as predictable as mushy green grapes in a fruit salad: The Class War Boogie.

For some reason, it's always a war with these guys. The War on Christmas. Culture Wars. War on Terror. The Crusades. Then they accuse Democrats of being emotionally unequipped for battle. Well, which is it? You can't have it both ways. Actually, you can. It just makes choosing which one to cruelly abandon to the wolves of winter that much more difficult. Or not.

When taxes are raised on the rich, that's class warfare, but when subsidies are handed out to giant corporations who siphon jobs offshore so that rich people can have more money, that's Trickle-Down Economics. What Barack should do is rename his efforts to balance the playing field, "Trickle-Up Economics." That would at least confuse them. Although after watching the last couple of debates, confusion does not seem to be in short supply.

We're not even allowed to call them rich anymore. They're "job creators" now. And yes, jobs are being created. In Mexico. And Vietnam. And China. The American Dream is alive and well, just not here. It's our own damn fault, really. American workers have ruined everything with their irrational demands for safe working conditions and a living wage. Who do we think we are? Stockholders?

Republicans have been as strident as a looped siren in a stainless steel silo in their opposition to a specific Obama proposal called the Buffett Rule, which calls for billionaires like Warren Buffett to pay the same tax rate as their secretaries. The GOP prefers the Jimmy Buffett Rule, which postulates that anybody worried about next month's rent money—start drinking Margaritas until they pass out.

You know what, they're right. It is a class war. The rich started it and their side is winning. They've bombed the middle class into submission burying jobs and pensions, playing chicken at the precipice with default to protect their precious aristocracy from paying one puny penny more in taxes. Cheap. Cheap. Cheap.

40% of all income gains in the last decade have trickled up to the wealthiest 1%. The richest 400 families in this country control more money than the bottom 150 million people put together. We're moving from Depression levels of income inequality into French Revolution territory. Isn't that Madame LaFarge over there in the corner knitting?

What is it with the rich? How much money do they need? How many cars can one person drive? How many beluga caviar cream cheese canapés can they consume at a single cocktail party? How many silk pajamas with platinum threads can you spill your Dom Perignon White Gold Mimosa on at a time? Okay, three. That's what Hilda is for. One of the things.

And these are the people complaining about a class war? You want rules, how bout the Rolex Tourbillon Rule? Mandating that any job creator wearing a watch worth more than a house who ever mentions class warfare, gets a hose shoved down his throat and goose liver pumped in until pate leaks from their ears. Less war-like. More food-fighty.

*The New York Times says Emmy-nominated comedian and writer Will Durst "is quite possibly the best political satirist working in the country today." Check out the website: willdurst.com to find out more about upcoming stand-up performances or to buy his book, "The All American Sport of Bipartisan Bashing."*

Best of the Net

## A Dirty Fight Over Clean Elections

By Larry Bush

**Supervisor Sean Elsbernd, frustrated over his proposal to gut a key provision of San Francisco's public finance program, turned to bitter sarcasm, accusing his colleagues of "dereliction of duty" at last week's Board meeting, setting the stage for this week's make-or-break vote.**

Elsbernd's loss of control showed the frayed nerves of the newly moderate Board majority unable to corral an eight-vote supermajority as they sweep aside reforms passed when the Board was less influenced by downtown priorities. Forced to either lose on his proposal entirely or delay another week in hopes of convincing one board member to join him, Elsbernd resorted to inflated claims

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## "Pension Reform" Ballot Measures Omit Salary Reform

By Patrick Monette-Shaw

The organizations attacking City employee pensions — the Chamber of Commerce, BOMA, and SPUR, among others — are the same guys who routinely attack City services, or alternatively keep trying to privatize City parks and other local government services.

San Francisco's dueling measures appear to have turned several of our local politicians into embarrassing panders sucking up to billionaires — billionaires Warren Hellman, George Hume, Michael Moritz, and perhaps Larry Ellison — who claim they're concerned about the loss of public services.

But ostrich-like, they ignore ever-increasing management salaries, additional long-term debt voters have no control over affecting the City's credit rating, and the City's extraordinarily thin cash reserves — the real reasons basic services go unfunded, or are cut from the City budget. Even Moody's downgrade of SFs credit worthiness understood this.

Jeff Adachi and Interim Mayor Ed Lee

raises for safety employees and the 11,897 employees earning over \$90,000 in salaries.

San Francisco's employee retirement system is healthy, solvent, well-managed, and performing well. It earned a 12.55% investment return last year — \$1.65 billion — not the 7.75% annual return Jeff Adachi's and Mayor Ed Lee's flawed proposals are based on. Our retirement system's portfolio is a model for other municipalities.

Billionaires helped Mayor Lee's Prop. C cap "safety" pensions at \$183,750 and cap "miscellaneous" pensions at \$208,230. The billionaires also helped Adachi's Prop. D cap pensions at \$140,000, even though Adachi initially claimed in last February's Observer newspaper that his measure would cap pensions at \$90,000.

**... the unfunded salary increases affect escalating management pensions ... which aren't addressed in either pension ballot measure. ... Neither measure reigns in top management salaries, which the billionaires ignore. Salary reform — the key to curtail-ing excessive pensions for managers — must come first!**



aren't telling San Francisco voters their dueling "pension reform" measures protect top earners while punishing over half of all City employees.

The big lie from City Hall is the claim that the City's 27,000 employees average \$93,000 in salaries, driving up pensions. That's simply untrue, on both counts. There were 36,644 City employees in 2010, including full- and part-time employees, not 27,000; the City Controller converts over 10,000 part-time employees into "full-time equivalents," fudging the denominator.

The average salary for all 36,644 employees is \$63,000, not \$93,000, but there are some caveats in the averages. Of the 36,644 City employees in calendar year 2010, 18,972 (52%) earned less than \$70,000, representing \$665.7 million (25.6%) of payroll. Their average total salaries were just \$35,091. In stark contrast, the 11,838 employees (32.3%) earning over \$90,000 gobbled fully \$1.47 billion (56.5%) of payroll. Their average total salaries were \$123,874!

Skyrocketing management salaries since 2003 inflate management pensions. These inverted ratios disproportionately penalize 52% of lower-paid employees. In 2003, there were 2,918 City employees earning over \$90,000 in total pay, costing \$314 million. In 2010, the City's 11,838 employees earning over \$90,000 is an increase of 8,920 such highly-paid employees, a staggering 305.7 percent change since calendar year 2003!

Clearly, the unfunded salary increases affect escalating management pensions — largely driven by overly-generous top salaries — which aren't addressed in either pension ballot measure, or discussed by City officials. Neither measure reigns in top management salaries, which the billionaires ignore. Salary reform — the key to curtailing excessive pensions for managers — must come first!"Safety" (police, firefighters) employees recently struck another pension reform deal until 2015, announced only after Interim Mayor Lee officially entered the mayor's race. The Board of Supervisors unanimously passed on September 13 the contract Mayor Ed Lee negotiated that will exempt police and firefighters if Adachi's Prop. D passes.

According to both Jeff Adachi and the Employee Retirement System, safety employees contribute 17% of money to the pension fund, but draw 36% of pension payouts. Non-safety "miscellaneous" employees contribute the balance, subsidizing generous "safety" pensions, an inequity unaddressed by either Prop.

"Miscellaneous" employees are not only subsidizing pensions of safety employees, they're also subsidizing pay

The San Francisco Labor Council joined forces with San Francisco's Chamber of Commerce, calling Prop. C a "spirit of shared sacrifice" ironically misnamed the "Fairness Float," since it's wholly unfair. Those at the lowest end of City salaries can least afford a 6% pension contribution increase on top of the 7.5% they are already paying, nor can City retirees afford health care increases.

Prop. C's proposed pension increases discriminate against the City's lower-paid current employees, requiring a flat 10% pension contribution for those earning \$50,000 to \$100,000, rather than using a sliding scale. For instance, the 3,579 employees who earned between \$50,000 and \$60,000 will pay the same 10% pension contribution as the 2,333 employees who earned between \$90,000 and \$100,000.

Prop D uses a sliding scale, but employees earning below \$70,000 may pay up to 13% of their salaries towards pensions, while those earning \$100,000 to \$200,000 pay only 15.5%. Adachi's sliding scale has five \$10,000 ranges for those earning \$50,000 to \$100,000, each \$10,000-step increasing an additional half a percent, but only three \$50,000 ranges for those earning over \$100,000.

Fixed-income retirees will also see their health care costs soar, and will lose their supplemental COLA, which retirees (but not current City employees) are only paid when retirement fund investments yield a surplus.

Similarly, while the City's pension system data shows 1,218 retirees (6.1%) earned pensions more than \$100,000, 41% (8,143 retirees) earned pensions less than \$25,000, 32% (6,369 retirees) earned pensions less than \$20,000, and 22.5% (4,480 retirees) — nearly one quarter — earned pensions less than \$15,000.

Service pensions average \$79,347 for firefighters; \$70,932 for police officers; and \$27,623 for "miscellaneous" employees (inflated by \$100,000+ salaries of "some miscellaneous" staff).

Employees earning \$60,000 with 13 years of service at age 62 earn small \$18,000 pensions. Highly-paid managers and safety employees earning over \$100,000 continue collecting six-figure pensions. The "shared sacrifice" is a myth.

Voters have an ethical obligation, and the right, to reject both measures. Billionaires who bill themselves as champions of City services have no guarantee services will be improved from pension reform, Monette-Shaw is an open-government accountability advocate, a member of California's First Amendment Coalition, a write-in candidate for Mayor, and a city employee. Feedback: monette-shaw@westsideobserver.com.

## Prop D: The Better Solution to Pension Reform

By Jeff Adachi

Prop D, the pension reform measure I am sponsoring, endeavors to tackle the pension problem — arguably the most pressing problem relative to the City's future financial health. Prop D doesn't claim to be a panacea for all the City's financial problems. It is a first, important step, on the road to significantly improving the City's financial outlook.

**We should also dispel the notion that an employee increasing his or her own pension contribution is an attack on, or scapegoating, public employees. These contributions are intended to fund employees' own retirement — much the way those in the private sector fund their own retirement through 401(k)s and the like. Moreover, the City's pension fund is anywhere between \$2.5 billion and \$7.0 billion underfunded, depending on the pension fund investment rate of return assumption. Simply put, this means the City does not currently have the money to pay out its pension obligations in full to its retirees and current employees through the end of their retirement."**



We are beyond arguing whether it is a good idea for City employees to increase their pension contributions, but rather, how best to do so. Pension reform has become self-evident. The Mayor, all eleven members of the Board of Supervisors, and the leaders of every major City employee union believe City employees need to increase their pension contributions, and the "City Family" pension reform measure, Prop C, requires some additional contributions. My Prop D also requires additional contributions, but saves more money for the City than Prop C does.

We should also dispel the notion that an employee increasing his or her own pension contribution is an attack on, or scapegoating, public employees. These contributions are intended to fund employees' own retirement — much the way those in the private sector fund their own retirement through 401(k)s and the like. Moreover, the City's pension fund is anywhere between \$2.5 billion and \$7.0 billion underfunded, depending on the pension fund investment rate of return assumption. Simply put, this means the City does not currently have the money to pay out its pension obligations in full to its retirees and current employees through the end of their retirement. Joshua Rauh, a professor at Northwestern University, projects that the City pension fund will run out of money in the year 2032. By contributing more to their pension fund now, City employees are shoring up the integrity of the pension system to help ensure that they will receive the retirement benefits they are expecting. Prop D is a rescue attempt on the City pension system. When you move to rescue a drowning swimmer, does he accuse you of attacking him?

Pension reform cannot unfairly punish the City's low-paid workers and must also address high-paid employee pensions

which are taxing the pension system to the detriment of low-paid workers. Prop D does both and that is why it is a superior reform to the "City Family"-sponsored Prop C.

First, Prop D exempts all City employees making less than \$50,000 per year and this would automatically exempt over 37% of the City's workforce. Second, Prop D sets employee contribution rates on a sliding scale: the more wages you earn the higher a percentage of your wages you pay in a pension contribution. Prop D requires a contribution up to 18.5% of wages for a \$200,000 earner, and Prop D contributions are capped at 15.5%. Comparatively, Prop C caps all employees at 13.5% - a threshold that is far too low. Prop D also caps the pensions of all new hires at \$140,000 while Prop D still allows for pensionable income of \$190,000.

For these reasons, Prop D generates \$1.7 billion in general fund savings in the first ten years and \$400 million more than Prop C, according to the Controller. Prop D will generate far more than this \$400 million in savings if the pension fund returns do not meet the Controller's lofty projections of 7.75% on average each year. After the first ten years, Prop D will generate comparatively even more general fund savings than Prop C when the \$140,000 cap kicks in and the referenced pension reform exemptions Mayor Lee gave police and fire in a backroom deal expire.

The good news here is that we all seem to agree that the City is on a path that is unsustainable, and major financial reforms are required to protect the City's pension system and the critical City services delivered to residents. In the area of pension reform, Proposition D is the best option on the table for the voters of San Francisco.

Jeff Adachi is the Public Defender of San Francisco and the proponent of Prop D

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# SF PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION SHIRKS ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AT LAKE MERCED

By Jerry Cadagan

For years there has been media coverage of various problems and issues at Lake Merced, including the water level crisis of the 80s and 90's, the disrepair of docks, piers and buildings, the departure in 1999 of the last fishing concession, and the recent failed effort to find someone to invest millions of dollars in the Boathouse building and operate a "destination" restaurant. But despite considerable publicity over the years, the public is generally unfamiliar with the ownership and management arrangements (and problems) at the lake.

The Lake Merced Tract (the lake and surrounding land) is owned by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC), having been acquired from the Spring Valley Water Company in 1930. In 1950 SFPUC made a serious mistake by passing a resolution conferring upon the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department (RPD) the right to occupy the tract "for park and recreational purposes" and to "grant concessions or leases...for the use and patronage of the public." That was the extent of the detail about what RPD's actual responsibilities and duties would be. There was no detailed memorandum of agreement or understanding between the two agencies.

The joint management arrangement simply has not worked. When the water level crisis became severe, the two agencies did virtually nothing. Aggressive



Exhausted rowers return from the lake over patched-up piers and landings

the lake. There are significant problems with that line of reasoning. First, RPD has done nothing at the lake of late that would be thought of as enhancing recreation. What it has not done is the only thing that has been needed since 1999 — replacing the essential fishing concession which rented boats and sold fishing licenses, tackle, bait and snacks at the lake. Second, the other recreational activities at the lake are well-handled by participants and volunteers. The crew, sailing and Dragon Boat programs are supported by local high schools, the Dolphin Club and other organizations that provide the needed supervision, coaching and equipment. For SFPUC to suggest that it doesn't have the skill and expertise to oversee recreational matters at the lake is disingenuous. Surely an organization currently involved in administering billions of dollars of con-

*Mayor Candidates on Rank Choice Voting (Cont. from p. 6)*  
on how San Franciscans view ranked-choice voting going forward. As a voter-approved scheme, the decision about whether to continue with it or not belongs, ultimately, to them.

I'll concede that there are pluses and minuses to RCV, and that it does encourage some coalition building. Unfortunately, it has also discouraged many candidates from staking out tough stands on issues, or moving beyond empty platitudes to address the serious challenges San Francisco faces.

### Ed Lee, Interim Mayor:

San Francisco voters approved ranked-choice voting and now have the opportunity to use it to choose their Mayor in November. Some voters have expressed confusion about this system of voting, and I am concerned when any voting method is not clearly understandable to voters. The Department of Elections implemented a citywide education campaign to help voters learn about ranked-choice voting in various languages. I recommended further outreach with a clear message: Selecting additional candidates allows voters another choice if their first/second candidate does not have enough votes to win the election.

### Joanna Rees, Businesswoman:

Whether as their first, second, or third choice, it is clear that the city is looking for innovative leadership that's rooted in the neighborhoods, and a change from politics as usual inside city hall. RCV gives more voters more opportunities to express that preference.

### Leland Yee, State Senator:

While I have not always felt Ranked Choice Voting is the best way to conduct elections, it is the system San Francisco voters approved and thus I will work to ensure as many 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice votes as possible. I believe our campaign has done the best job to reach all San Franciscans, and therefore we are well positioned to win in November.



people of San Francisco

### Ranked Choice Voting (Cont. from p. 1)

first five candidates are eliminated, hypothetically 10,000 first-place votes are now gone. To win the election, a candidate will now need to win 50% of the remaining 90,000 votes.

As the RCV process continues with the elimination of more candidates and the further elimination of first-, second-, and third-place votes, the winning candidate will need 50% of a smaller and smaller pool of votes.

Unlike the RCV system, in the election run-off system a candidate actually won an election with a majority of first-place votes. San Francisco voters could only vote one time, as there were no second- and third-place votes. If no candidate running for an office received over 50% of the vote, a run-off election was held in December. The candidate who received the most run-off votes won the election. This majority-rule voting system was formerly commonly called "representative democracy."

Times have changed. San Francisco's new RCV system allows a candidate with far fewer first-place votes to win an election. Contrary to the election run-off system, the RCV system rewards the candidate who is least objectionable to voters — not always the candidate most liked. Candidates who receive the most first-place votes in the first round often no longer win elections. Some refer to this new system as "settling for the lowest common denominator."

### What happened?

In November 2000, San Francisco voters approved Proposition O, the Fair Elections Ordinance, by 52%. Among other things, Proposition O allowed partial public funding for Board of Supervisor candidates. If a candidate qualified for, and accepted, public funds, they had to stay in the race to the end, or had to pay back public funding they had received. The availability and acceptance of public funding means that larger numbers of candidates now run for elected political office. If several viable candidates run, a single candidate will seldom receive over 50% of the vote during the first round of RCV.

If one candidate does not win an election with 50% of first-place votes, the RCV's lowest common denominator system favors the candidate who can "race to the bottom" faster than their competitors.

For example, newly-elected District 10 Supervisor Malia Cohen won by receiving only 11.7% of first-place votes cast in her district. After 19 rounds of ballot counting, she finally received 51% of the remaining votes by tallying 2,878 total votes. Less than 50% of District 10 voters even voted for Cohen. Cohen won

Cont. p. 7

### Kopp (Cont. from p. 7)

Charter Amendment to reform the city employee retirement system, which drains our general fund because of imprudent changes during the stock market and real estate glory days of 2000-2008. As with the nonsensical Central Subway project, the San Francisco Grand Jury first alerted taxpayers in a June 2010 report entitled "Pension Tsunami."

This fiscal year, July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012, taxpayers will contribute approximately \$422,000,000 to the pension fund, increasing by fiscal year 2014-15 to nearly \$800,000,000, which constitutes about 31% of the City's payroll costs! Pension payments to city employees vary from a few hundred dollars per month to as much as \$22,600 a month (\$271,200 annually) and over 600 retired city employees receive more than \$108,000 per year in pension payment as of July 2010. Jeff Adachi's last initiative received 43% approval from voters in 2010, despite expenditure of more than \$3,000,000 by its opponents. His current pension reform plan is another voter-initiative (Proposition D). Even the City Controller, part of the City Hall "family" (don't you love that repulsive phrase, which really means your pockets are about to be picked) concluded in a June 19, 2011 report that Jeff Adachi's Proposition D will save as much as \$1,600,000,000 over the next 10 years. Adachi also declares unreservedly his support for ending the garbage conglomerate's monopoly and introducing competitive bidding for such \$250,000,000 per year contract. (San Francisco is the only jurisdiction of 79 in California surveyed for the Department of Environment which does not require competitive bidding for garbage collection, or a franchise fee by the successful bidder.) Adachi is principled, brave and extraordinarily well-informed. That's why he earns my vote.

Six aspirants have filed for the District Attorney's office, including another unqualified appointed incumbent, who was only admitted to practice law in California two years ago and has never tried an actual case, civil or criminal, in a courtroom. The appointed incumbent wouldn't know a municipal corruption case if his life depended on it. I recommend unequivocally your vote for Bill Fazio, who is past-President of the Lakeshore Acres Improvement Club, and served for 15 years as a Deputy District Attorney trying the most serious and violent felonies in San Francisco Superior Court. He has practiced trial criminal defense law for the past 10 years. He is the only candidate with actual trial experience of such magnitude. There are two others with some trial experience, including one who may have violated the California Election Code by promising not to run if the incumbent appointed her his Chief Deputy District Attorney. (The complicit former District Attorney and now Attorney General Kamala Harris unsurprisingly refuses to act.) Bill Fazio possesses the experience to advise trial deputies in their trial problems and formulate trial strategy with them. He possesses also the requisite experience to establish training and teaching of new and inexperienced deputies in the District Attorney's office. The appointed incumbent can't do that; he's never tried a case and wouldn't know what to do. In my strong opinion, there is only one person to vote for as District Attorney and that is our neighbor, Bill Fazio.

I also recommend Paul Miyamoto for Sheriff. Why? Because he, of all candidates, is the only person with demonstrable experience in the responsibilities of the Sheriff's office. A Richmond District native, graduate of Lowell High School and the University of California at Davis, Paul has served in the Sheriff's Department for 20 years, promoted by Sheriff Mike Hennessey presently to Captain of the Department, supervising the City Jail, probably the most demanding position in the entire department. For what it is worth, he is the endorsed candidate of the Deputy Sheriffs Association, composed of men and women who have observed his performance through 20 years of development from a rookie Deputy Sheriff to Department Captain.

I urge a vote against Propositions A and B. Proposition A is a \$531,000,000 General Obligation bond issue. With interest payments to the bondholders, it will exceed \$1,000,000,000 in eventual taxpayer costs. It includes paying \$1,500,000 for "Outreach and Communication" with citizens "affected by the work to be performed in this issue." That means \$1,500,000 to fancy public relations hacks of the sort that "took" the California High-Speed Rail Authority for \$3,000,000 in slightly more than one year. School district projects invariably exceed cost representations to the public. That's happened three times in the last several years. Why reward misrepresentations again. Vote No on A.

Proposition B was brilliantly dissected in this journal last month by George Wooding, immediate ex-President of the West of Twin Peaks Central Council. It's a \$248,000,000 General Obligation bond issue, *not for new structures*, but for repaving streets and eliminating potholes. Money for those purposes is transmitted to San Francisco every year from the proceeds of our gasoline taxes in the State Highway fund. Instead of using such gas tax revenue for maintenance and repair, our City Hall wastrels have spent it on items such as over \$500,000 for a ramp in the Board of Supervisors chambers, planting trees, graffiti abatement and other non-road purposes. If the Mayor and Board of Supervisors had practiced fiscal responsibility, our remittances from the State Highway Fund would have been used for everyday maintenance. General Obligation bonds represent borrowing. Proper governmental administration means borrowing only for capital improvements, not for everyday expenses. It is intellectually dishonest to borrow money in the amount of \$248,000,000, plus another \$200,000,000 or more in interest payments, to perform everyday maintenance tasks. Vote against Proposition B.

I have already explained why we should vote for Proposition D, and inferentially against Proposition C. Proposition C, promulgated by city employee labor unions, including the police and firefighter unions, with the appointed mayor and supervisors, misleads voters into believing the city's pension system will be righted from potential insolvency by its approval. Vote for D; Vote against C.

Vote against Proposition E, a deceitful measure by the Board of Supervisors to enable the board, by majority vote, to amend or substantially repeal initiatives formulated and approved by voters. Proposition E very simply enables the voters' will to be undone by the Board of Supervisors. Can you imagine? An example of that can be adduced from Proposition F, a Board of Supervisors attempt to change the campaign consultant ordinance. I'm voting against Proposition F and I'm also voting against Proposition G, which effectively raises by ½ cent the sales tax in San Francisco, only because the Governor and Legislature, in enacting the Budget Act of 2011-2012, authorized local governments, if they so desire, to ask voters to replace sales tax revenue eliminated in the State Budget Act.

Finally, I do intend to vote yes on Proposition H, which declares the San Francisco Unified School District should follow once again a policy of assigning children to our public schools based upon their neighborhood residency. From over 92,000 students in San Francisco public schools in June 1970, the school district has but 51,000 pupils, a decline attributable initially and principally to forcing children to attend schools, by busing and other means, outside their neighborhood. Board of Education and school district bureaucrats never learn. Thus, Proposition H furnishes the means again to reiterate the virtue of neighborhood schools.

Quentin Kopp is a former Supervisor, State Senator and Judge. Feedback: editor@westsideobserver.com

### Ranked Choice Voting (Cont. from p. 6)

running for Mayor: Jeff Adachi, Michela Alioto-Pier, Cesar Ascarrunz, John Avalos, Terry Baum, David Chiu, Paul Currier, Bevan Dufty, Tony Hall, Dennis Herrera, Emil Lawrence, Ed Lee, Wilma Pang, Joanna Rees, Phil Ting, and Leland Yee.

In Oakland's first ever RCV contest for mayor, candidate Don Perata received 35% of first-place votes, while Jean Quan received 24% of first-place votes, in a ten-



*The current RCV race for Mayor may well cost citizens between \$8.5 million and \$11.0 million, and some of the votes for less-popular candidates may end-up costing taxpayers over \$100 per vote."* George Wooding

candidate field. Quan teamed with third-place candidate Rebecca Kaplan to wage an "anybody but Perata" campaign with their respective supporters. With seven candidates eliminated, Quan had 31% of the vote and Perata had 40% of the vote. When Kaplan was eliminated, over 75% of her 20,000 votes went to Jean Quan, and Quan won the Oakland Mayoral election.

This November's Mayoral race is San Francisco's first RCV election for mayor and the specter of the Don Perata / Jean Quan Mayoral race hangs heavily over a crowded field.

San Francisco's mayoral race is heading for a perfect storm of "consensus building, mediocrity, and horse trading." A recent poll of 700 likely voters conducted by the Beneson Strategy Group and commissioned by interim mayor Ed Lee shows that Lee will receive only 31% of the first place votes. This is bad news as Lee's first-place vote count may actually be under 30%.

After watching what happened to Don Perata with 35% of the actual first-place votes, you know that selected candidates must be considering an "Anybody But Ed Lee" option.

Feedback: wooding@westsideobserver.com



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MONEY MATTERS • By Brandon Miller and Joanne Jordan

### Raising a Bundle for Your Bundle of Joy

You're longing to be a parent. You fuss over every baby you see on the street. You can't stop scrolling through the Baby CZ and Svan of Sweden websites. And in your mind, you've already turned the spare bedroom into a nursery decorated in a gorgeous shade of earthy chocolate with light turquoise accents.

If you're choosing the adoption or surrogacy route, you might find the costs a bit sobering. Adoption expenses average \$40,000<sup>1</sup> and can be much more, depending on the agency you use. A quick survey of surrogacy agencies shows an average cost of \$60,000, though it can be as high as \$150,000.

What's all that money for? If you're adopting, you'll probably pay fees for applying, counseling, background and home checks and finalizing the papers. For surrogacy, you'll have to pay the agency, surrogate mother and lawyers their share, and you may be on the hook for medical expenses and even maternity clothes. And if all this is taking place internationally, figure on travel expenses, visas and perhaps gifts (a.k.a. bribes) for local officials.

Now that you have an idea of what you're in for—at least financially—how can you make your dream of parenthood a reality? Here are some suggestions you might consider:

- Save it or borrow it. Obviously if you have the money already in your savings, you're in good shape. But if your savings won't go far enough, you have several options. If you own your home, you can apply for a home equity loan. You also might be able to borrow against your 401(k) or pension plan to drum up the cash. Just remember to pay back the amount you borrow as soon as possible so your retirement doesn't suffer. While taking a cash advance on a credit card may be tempting, do your best to avoid this unless you're confident you can pay it back relatively quickly. Otherwise, the high interest rates work against you.

And check with the agency you're working with—some offer adoption grants or low-cost loans to adoptive parents.

- Get someone else to help pay. Your boss and even Uncle Sam may be willing to lessen your burden. Many companies offer adoption and surrogacy benefits as part of their employee compensation plan. These benefits take many forms including lump sum payments, reimbursement for certain fees or expenses, or financial assistance at an attractive interest rate. At the very least, you may be entitled to parental leave, which can keep you from using your vacation and sick time or taking a leave of absence.

Check with your human resources department to see if any benefits are available to you.

If you adopt your child, the IRS offers tax credits for some qualified expenses to help offset the financial hit you'll be taking. You may be eligible for up to \$13,170 in refundable tax credits. What this means is that you'll get the cash back for qualifying expenses, minus any taxes owed. So you'll have to have the cash up front, but may receive a hefty check after you file your tax returns. Some states, including California, also offer adoption tax credits, though these are usually for children who were part of the state's public agency. (Note that adopting from a public agency may be a less-expensive alternative, which means you'll have to raise less money.)

Unfortunately, no such federal or state tax credits exist for surrogacy.

- Be creative. If your savings and what you can borrow from traditional sources still isn't letting you clear the financial hurdle, look for some alternative sources. Perhaps you can work overtime, get a part-time job or even enter a different line of work that pays better. Maybe it's time to sell your share of the ski condo in Tahoe or something else of value with which you're willing to part. If you have a rich uncle or daddy or some other loved one who might provide a short-term loan, that's a great option too. You might also find some helpful suggestions online for how others have handled their adoption and surrogacy expenses.

#### Long-term Planning for a Lifetime Commitment

Of course, your initial costs are just the start of what you'll be paying and paying and paying once the child joins your family. A financial planner can help you look at and prepare for the realities of your new situation, such as a drop in income if you or a partner stop working to take care of the child. With a professional's help, you can create a solid financial plan that accounts for these inevitable expenses so your life goals stay on track and your child can have the future you envision.

Brandon Miller, CFP and Joanne Jordan, CFP are financial consultants at Jordan Miller & Associates, A Private Wealth Advisory Practice of Ameriprise Financial Inc. in San Francisco. For more information, please visit [jordanmilleradvisors.com](http://jordanmilleradvisors.com).

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



### Revenue Bond Oversight

#### An Alternative View

By Brian Browne

Readers may remember the September WSO article “Dracula Guards the Blood Bank” catalyzed a meeting (9/20/11) with the City Controller, Benjamin Rosenfield, and a group of activists (Joan Girardot, Nancy Wuferfel, Philip Ward, Esq. and the author). The main topic was to question the legality of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Revenue Bond Oversight Committee (RBOC) and the Controller. This MOU makes the Controller the sole source vendor for RBOC contracts. This inside-dependent relationship is in direct contradiction to what was intended in creating an independent RBOC (2002 Proposition P) with a mandate to use outside-independent consultants and, if necessary (under certain mandated conditions), halt the issuance of revenue bonds.

The Controller said he agreed to this MOU as a result of the RBOC chair approaching him and requesting such services. In my September article I mention how this approach was done off-camera and at the cost of using the University of California as an independent, qualified, and outside consultant. In the face of legal arguments by the participants that this type MOU was not intended in 2002 Proposition P, the Controller agreed to seek another legal opinion from the City Attorney. This legal opinion, when presented, will be reviewed by independent attorneys and interested ratepayers/citizens.

Meanwhile, the failure to implement Proposition P as intended has surfaced in the mayoral debates. Tony Hall, who regards Proposition P as his jewel in the crown of his many legislative endeavors as a supervisor, has expressed publicly that the RBOC has been hijacked by both the Controller and SFPUC. He believes that this takeover has robbed the voters and markets of real oversight. He has expressed the opinion that this matter is so serious as to be considered corruption, and if elected he will take immediate corrective measures.

Meanwhile the City Attorney and other members of this committee push on with proposed legislation and lobby efforts to extend this debacle past its sunset of 1/1/13. We do need oversight, but not from a group that have habitually ignored the mandates of the enabling legislation.

The RBOC and the SFPUC are reacting superficially to criticism of their codependency. The RBOC did hire (negotiating initially off-camera and in secret)

Cont. p. 12

WEST OF TWIN PEAKS CENTRAL COUNCIL By Mitch Bull



President Matt Chamberlain and the WOTPCC had been on Summer recess, but that doesn't mean they were on vacation...in fact, they have been very busy putting the finishing touches on the WOTPCC organized and sponsored “San Francisco Mayoral debate,” featuring many of the candidates for the upcoming Mayoral election in November. The debate was held on October 1<sup>st</sup> as we were going to press, and we will have coverage of the event in the next issue of the Observer.

New-President Chamberlain convened the first meeting of the new WOTPCC year on September 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM in the Forest Hills Clubhouse. With approximately 30 attendees the meeting was primarily a planning meeting, with most of the discussion centering around the planning process of where the WOTPCC organization wants to go this year and what issues are important to the organization, which comprises the 19 neighborhood groups that make up the West of Twin Peaks Central Council.

The Council President called for the formation of two “very temporary” committees; 1) A committee to discuss and map out the goals and objectives of the WOTPCC for 2011-12; and 2) A committee to update and revise the by-laws of the organization. Interested parties should contact the secretary, Blue Mudbhary to sign up for the commits or to get more information. Two committees (Planning and Land Use; Bylaws Review and Update) are currently lacking committee chairs. Volunteers are needed.

On behalf of the Council, Dave Bisho presented outgoing President George Wooding with a plaque thanking him for his dedication and contributions made to the benefit of the WOTPCC while serving as President of the Council.

Short reports were presented by Wooding (Open Space and Public Health), Avrum Shepard (Transportation), and Carolyn Squeri (Finance). Other topics included a short discussion on the process and premise of “Ranked Choice Voting”; the WOTPCC sponsored Mayoral Forum; an upcoming art event on West Portal Avenue where “Dance Meets MUNI” entitled Trolley Dances; and the imminent vote by the Board of Supervisors to complete the

creation of a Community Benefit District (CBD) on West Portal Avenue. A motion was made to write a letter supporting the creation of the district, but failed on a full vote by an 8-5 margin with 1 abstention. The West Portal Merchants Association is also split about the concept of the CBD. While most of the merchants agree with the concept, many are not supporting the specific process and format of the CBD that is currently being proposed.

Following presentations by representatives of the San Francisco Unified School District (speaking about the upcoming Bond Initiative for school retrofitting) and City Code Enforcement, the business meeting was adjourned.

The WOTPCC will next meet on October 24<sup>th</sup> at the Forest Hills Clubhouse, at 7:30 PM.

#### Leadership Needed (Cont. from p. 2)

control over the Lake.” Like many others Morton said that “Rec. & Parks Dept. has been absent” and that “We don't have confidence that Rec. & Park can continue to manage the lake.”

Founding member of the Lake Merced Task Force, Dick Allen, agreed, saying in his comment that “Lake Merced has become an orphan between two very powerful departments.” But despite the lack of confidence in Rec. & Parks, Allen said, “we do have confidence in Steve Ritchie.”


Nancy Wuferfel, who is a former PROSAC committee member, spoke saying, “this struggle has been on-going. And, I don't understand why we as a community don't have a greater respect for Lake Merced as a natural resource. This watershed,” said Wuferfel “is a glory for San Francisco. The MOU needs to be revised and all these issues must be resolved,” she said.

Jonathan Farrell is a free-lance San Francisco journalist. Feedback: [jonathan@westsideobserver.com](mailto:jonathan@westsideobserver.com)



## Consolidated Municipal Election, Tuesday November 8<sup>th</sup>

### Vote on measures A-H and elect Mayor, Sheriff and District Attorney using ranked-choice voting!

 Choose a **different** candidate in each column  
To rank fewer than three candidates, leave column(s) blank

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FIRST CHOICE 第一選擇 PRIMERA PREFERENCIA	SECOND CHOICE 第二選擇 SEGUNDA PREFERENCIA	THIRD CHOICE 第三選擇 TERCERA PREFERENCIA
1 Vote for One 選給一位 Vote por Uno	2 Vote for One—Must be different than your first choice 選給一位—必須與第一選擇不同 Vote por Uno—Deberá ser diferente de su primera preferencia	3 Vote for One—must be different than your first and second choice 選給一位—必須與第一及第二選擇不同 Vote por Uno—Deberá ser diferente de su primera y segunda preferencia
ALCATRAZ ISLAND 聖地亞哥島 ISLA DE ALCATRAZ	ALCATRAZ ISLAND 聖地亞哥島 ISLA DE ALCATRAZ	ALCATRAZ ISLAND 聖地亞哥島 ISLA DE ALCATRAZ
COIT TOWER 科伊特塔 TORRE DE COIT	COIT TOWER 科伊特塔 TORRE DE COIT	COIT TOWER 科伊特塔 TORRE DE COIT
FISHERMAN'S WHARF 漁人碼頭 FISHERMAN'S WHARF	FISHERMAN'S WHARF 漁人碼頭 FISHERMAN'S WHARF	FISHERMAN'S WHARF 漁人碼頭 FISHERMAN'S WHARF
GOLDEN GATE PARK 金門公園 PARQUE GOLDEN GATE	GOLDEN GATE PARK 金門公園 PARQUE GOLDEN GATE	GOLDEN GATE PARK 金門公園 PARQUE GOLDEN GATE

**NOT** more than one candidate in a column

1 FIRST CHOICE 第一選擇 PRIMERA PREFERENCIA	2 SECOND CHOICE 第二選擇 SEGUNDA PREFERENCIA	3 THIRD CHOICE 第三選擇 TERCERA PREFERENCIA
ALCATRAZ ISLAND 聖地亞哥島 ISLA DE ALCATRAZ	ALCATRAZ ISLAND 聖地亞哥島 ISLA DE ALCATRAZ	ALCATRAZ ISLAND 聖地亞哥島 ISLA DE ALCATRAZ
COIT TOWER 科伊特塔 TORRE DE COIT	COIT TOWER 科伊特塔 TORRE DE COIT	COIT TOWER 科伊特塔 TORRE DE COIT
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GOLDEN GATE PARK 金門公園 PARQUE GOLDEN GATE	GOLDEN GATE PARK 金門公園 PARQUE GOLDEN GATE	GOLDEN GATE PARK 金門公園 PARQUE GOLDEN GATE

Vote will  
not count

**NOT** the same candidate more than once

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ALCATRAZ ISLAND 聖地亞哥島 ISLA DE ALCATRAZ	ALCATRAZ ISLAND 聖地亞哥島 ISLA DE ALCATRAZ	ALCATRAZ ISLAND 聖地亞哥島 ISLA DE ALCATRAZ
COIT TOWER 科伊特塔 TORRE DE COIT	COIT TOWER 科伊特塔 TORRE DE COIT	COIT TOWER 科伊特塔 TORRE DE COIT
FISHERMAN'S WHARF 漁人碼頭 FISHERMAN'S WHARF	FISHERMAN'S WHARF 漁人碼頭 FISHERMAN'S WHARF	FISHERMAN'S WHARF 漁人碼頭 FISHERMAN'S WHARF
GOLDEN GATE PARK 金門公園 PARQUE GOLDEN GATE	GOLDEN GATE PARK 金門公園 PARQUE GOLDEN GATE	GOLDEN GATE PARK 金門公園 PARQUE GOLDEN GATE

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one time  
only

### Important Dates and Deadlines


**October 11:** Early voting begins at City Hall  
**October 24:** Last day to register to vote  
**November 1:** Last day for vote by mail request  
**November 8:** Election Day Polls open 7:00 am to 8:00 pm

### Questions?

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### Your Voter Information Pamphlet

with candidate statements and summaries of measures A-H will be mailed in October

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\$719,000



**8 Dellbrook Avenue** Modern 2BR/1BA home with great open floor plan, remodeled chef's kitchen, skylights, 2 car garage, garden. Located on large wooded lot.  
\$699,000



**59 Cityview** 4BR/2BA home on 2 levels. Living room with fireplace, open kitchen, dining room, bonus room downstairs, great garden, deck, 1 car parking  
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The election season is heating up, and there is barely more than a month to go. Candidates are making proclamations, ads are appearing on TV and in the papers, and local offices are cropping up all over. And, of course, the accusations of "hypocrisy" are springing forth from all different directions.

This month we cover issues relating to the election; the opening of Interim-Mayor Ed Lee's campaign office on West Portal Avenue; a solid piece on "Ranked Choice Voting" by George Wooding, on what the candidates and political pundits think of the process.

One of our ads, from the Department of Elections does a good job in spelling out the process of filling out the Ranked Choice Ballot. Be sure to take a look at it so there is no confusion when the time comes to make your choices and vote.

It has always been my contention that newspaper publishers should not make candidate endorsements as "the fourth estate" should be as fair and open as possible and try to provide relevant information on both sides of issues.

As we went to press, we had the opportunity to get a close-up and personal look at the major candidates at the West of Twin Peaks Central Council Candidates Forum. The forum, held on October 1<sup>st</sup> at the St. Stephen's Parish Hall, was organized by the WOTPC, which represents the neighborhood associations within the West of Twin Peaks area and was attended by over 400 citizens, and candidate supporters. A recap is slated to appear covering the major questions and responses.

It has been a long time since the major offices in SF have had this number of qualified candidates running. Aside from the Mayoral election, close races are being run for the offices of District Attorney and Sheriff. Well-qualified candidates are also on those ballots, so the voters will have a multitude of prospects and choices to make.

While I commend everyone in the races, I am concerned by some candidates seemingly unrealistic concept that we can continue to put more fees and taxes on SF businesses and residents to solve the many political and societal issues that face the city.

For example, most of the candidates state that MUNI is broken, but increasing parking fees hurt our neighborhood businesses and just throw more money down the MUNI/MTA hole. A tax on cars may relieve congestion, but our neighbors and businesses in Marin and on the Peninsula will reap the benefits, not the merchants on West Portal and at Stonestown Center. To the city department heads, Board of Supervisors and Mayor (whoever it will be): How about getting your fiscal books in line and fixing the out of control spending?

One candidate stated that the city budget is 3x what it was when Frank Jordan was Mayor. Has the city population increased...No, however we get less money from Sacramento (and Washington) and inflation has driven the cost of everything up. But a three-fold increase? An interesting question would be the amount of city employees from then to now.

Another candidate, a Supervisor, spoke of passing legislation that was only deliberated for 30-40 seconds before being passed unanimously regarding making changes in building glass to protect birds. Hey, we all like birds, right? I do. But, what is the cost impact of the legislation on landlords, building owners, tenants and businesses? Could they have possibly cared, if only 30-40 seconds was spent on this? Sounds like a "throw away - politically correct" vote that no one will remember, but may have big costs to those who build and rent city offices, apartments and other civic buildings. If this law was considered for 30 seconds or so, and the ramifications not considered or debated,

Cont. p. 17

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## The Revenue Bond Oversight Committee

By Aimee Brown

In 2002, San Francisco voters approved Proposition P and established the SFPUC Revenue Bond Oversight Committee (RBOC). Our job is to ensure that the SFPUC spends bond proceeds appropriately and complies with prudent financial management. The Committee meets on the third Monday of the month at 9:30 AM on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the SFPUC building at 1155 Market Street. The Committee abides by all sunshine requirements in accordance with San Francisco law and we pride ourselves on being open, accessible and above all else, transparent to the City and its ratepayers. In advance of each meeting, agendas are posted on the SFPUC website, the Board of Supervisors' bulletin board in City Hall and in the Main Public Library government document's section.

*"We have contracted with the City Services Auditor, in their role as independent auditors, to review project expenditures and appropriations and project management costs related to several bond-funded WSIP and SSIP projects. Concurrent with these audits, the RBOC is conducting an intensive review of the SFPUC's construction management processes with the assistance of an Independent Review Panel of industry leaders..."*



Proposition P authorizes the RBOC to review and audit revenue-bond fund expenditures. Our current principal focus is related to the \$4.6B Water System Improvement Program (WSIP), the seismic and reliability upgrade to the Hetch Hetchy Water System. Our current audits are also starting to review the Wastewater Program (SSIP) as it gears up. The Committee conducts its oversight of SFPUC revenue bond expenditures through detailed audits and reports that are funded by a 1/20<sup>th</sup> of 1% fee on all bond issuances.

I have been a member of the RBOC since the Committee was formed in 2003 and I have served as Committee Chair since 2007.

The RBOC is an independent committee whose members are appointed by the Mayor, Board of Supervisors,

Budget Analyst and Controller's Offices and BAWSCA. The Committee is composed of diverse professionals all with varying backgrounds and expertise that we leverage to produce thorough, effective and timely financial audits and analyses of the SFPUC's bond-funded projects. As mandated by Proposition P, the Committee members have expertise relevant to the work of the Committee that includes experience in economics, the environment, construction, project management, auditing, accounting and project finance. The RBOC is a democratically-run committee and all agenda items are subject to majority vote. The diversity in backgrounds and the constituencies that the members represent, foster productive and often vigorous debate. However, despite this diversity of viewpoints, the Committee has always

come together to move forward and find consensus on projects and the scopes of our audits and financial analyses.

In the past, most Committee members have publically commended the work of our independent consulting team. Their audits have found the SFPUC in compliance with the City law, policies and procedures as well as industry best practices. The Committee has had detailed discussions with the General Manager's office about any issues or areas for further improvement that our audits reveal. In fact, we make recommendations to senior staff so they can monitor and remedy any findings and make it easier for the public to understand what is happening with each project. Significantly, most of our recommendations have been incorporated into the SFPUC's practices in order to improve its management of bond-funded construction projects, which ultimately benefits ratepayers. The work our Committee has generated is also presented annually and in public to the SFPUC Commission.

The RBOC is currently engaged in multiple oversight projects. We have contracted with the City Services Auditor, in their role as independent auditors, to review project expenditures and appropriations and project management costs related to several bond-funded WSIP and SSIP projects. Concurrent with these audits, the RBOC is conducting an intensive review of the SFPUC's construction management processes with the assistance of an Independent Review Panel of

industry leaders. Included in this team are faculty from UC Berkeley and Stanford University. The review will examine three areas critical to the successful completion of large-scale construction projects: change management, risk management and project cost, schedule and contingencies; this report is expected to be finished in November.

All of this critical oversight work is ongoing while construction for the Water System Improvement Program is reaching its zenith. We're also beginning to plan for our oversight responsibilities for SSIP. Now, more than ever, we need the input of concern-minded San Francisco residents who wish to lend a hand to help ensure that the WSIP program is completed on-time and on-budget. The vital financial auditing and analyses work of our Committee has never been more valuable to ratepayers and the City than now. Please consider joining us on the third Monday morning of each month. Our Committee is often frequented by members of the public; any and all San Francisco residents are welcome to sit at the table with our Committee members and participate in our monthly meetings or in our working group conferences. Thank you for your attention.

*Aimee Brown is the Chair of the RBOC, she has served on the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board, VP at Goldman Sachs, Principal at Artemis Capital Group and Managing Director at RBC Dain Rauscher, and the National Association of Securities Dealer's Fixed Income Committee.*

### SFPUC Oversight (Cont. from p. 8)

a UC faculty member, with past ties to the SFPUC, and working for his own consulting company (not the independent, multi-disciplinary UC group as originally proposed). The SFPUC (Commission) selected a group of folks labeled the Independent Review Committee (SFPUC-IRC). The RBOC virtually accepts this SFPUC constituted group (SFPUC-IRC)

as their own independent review committee. These thinly veiled, non-structural actions to give a PR perception of the RBOC being independent do nothing to calm market and ratepayer concerns. Au contraire.

*Brian Browne is the Supervisor's appointee to the Revenue Bond Oversight Committee.*

### Dirty Fight Over Clean Elections (Cont. from p. 4)

of the consequences for San Francisco if Elsbernd didn't get his way, threatening the loss of "hundreds of thousands of dollars" needed for essential city services.

As victory edged further from his grasp, Elsbernd derided his colleagues, all but accusing them of chasing unicorns in search of what Elsbernd called a "magic elixir." Challenging the supervisors who voted against his measure, Elsbernd stopped just short of saying "It's on like Donkey Kong," perhaps only because he's unfamiliar with the game. He then went into a sulk.

For most San Franciscans, the issue was an esoteric exercise in the mathematics of campaign finance, like pitting geometry against trigonometry in a test of theorems about vacuums in space.

The reality was more down to earth. The Board was being asked to change the rules for a mayor's election just weeks away, and to do so with an approach dictated by the city's political high rollers intent on flooding the system with campaign money that could provide an insurmountable advantage for themselves.

If this change is approved as it stands, it means that candidates would be denied the ability to match spending with the deep pocket interests at City Hall – where one committee alone has pledged to spend \$1 million to influence voters.

The issue arrived at the Board through a process so private that it would make the Bohemian Club envious. A U.S. Supreme Court decision handed down at the end of June narrowly ruled against an Arizona law setting up a public financing program for campaigns.

Cities across the country began pouring through the decision, examining their own laws, and holding hearings to determine how to comply with the Court while saving the law's intent that campaign spending would not succeed in putting private interests ahead of public interests.

Except in San Francisco.

#### A Bandwagon Rolls Out of Ethics

Here the issue of falls under the Ethics Commission appropriately deemed a Sleeping Watchdog by the Civil Grand Jury that same month. Instead of conducting an "Interested Persons" meeting, including alerting the veterans of the city's public financing campaigns, the Ethics Commission simply added one more item to their July 11 agenda. Only the routine notifications went out.

The July 11 agenda already was full. The Commission was set to deliberate on its response to the Civil Grand Jury report faulting Ethics for failures on nearly every item it reviewed. Executive Director John St. Croix was furious, and drafted a response that heaped scorn on the Civil Grand Jury.

At the same time, Ethics was set to hear its first-ever Sunshine Ordinance violation in a case involving the President of the Library Commission. It was an emotional and contentious topic since Ethics had previously rejected every Sunshine complaint – 18 in all – and the pent-up hostility toward Ethics was palpable. It was also one of the points raised by the Civil Grand Jury.

Sandwiched at the end of the meeting was a discussion about the Supreme Court decision and a staff proposal to entirely gut sections of San Francisco's law.

In all, less than 30 minutes was spent in public hearings and Commission discussion of a key campaign law as the city readied for an election for Mayor, District Attorney and Sheriff.

Unsurprisingly, there were only six speakers on the issue. Most of the testimony came from downtown campaign interests. Representatives of the Committee on Jobs, Building Owners and Managers, the Alliance for Jobs and Sustainable Growth and the Sutton Law Firm spoke in favor of gutting the law and dangled the prospect of suing the City if Ethics didn't act. Their only caveat was that they wanted additional provisions of the law also repealed.

One speaker, former Common Cause coordinator Charlie Marsteller, urged repeatedly that the Commission do more outreach to experts on public finance laws, including participants in the Supreme Court pleadings. No one else spoke in favor of delay.

Some Commissioners were uneasy about jumping onto the bandwagon but were pushed on board by Commission

*"The Board was being asked to change the rules for a mayor's election just weeks away, and to do so with an approach dictated by the city's political high rollers intent on flooding the system with campaign money that could provide an insurmountable advantage for themselves."*

President Ben Hur, who insisted on action that night. Suggestions of consulting with such reputable experts as Bob Stern, head of the Center for Government Studies and familiar as an advisor on the drafting of the original San Francisco law, were dropped without action. Hur needed four of the five commissioners to pass the measure, and he made it without a vote to spare.

By way of contrast, other cities, from Los Angeles to the State of Maine, began an open process drafting various alternatives that could meet the Court's test while preserving the law's intent.

Last week, as the Board met, there were at least 20 options considered to be viable and being weighed by other cities in the context of their laws.

The Center for Governmental Studies had issued a press release even before Ethics met in July pointing to several options that Albuquerque, New Mexico might find sustainable in the wake of the Court's decision. By last week, those options were fleshed out further. New York's Brennan Center for Justice issued a list of remedies that became part of a study by the State of Maine's Clean Elections body.

In July, Maine undertook the steps that San Francisco rejected – pulling together those most knowledgeable about the law, about the court decision, and writing a report with recommendation. Last week they delivered their report ahead of schedule for specific recommendations to the state legislature.

Steven Hill, whose work on San Francisco's law was seminal, drafted potential avenues to preserve the intent of the law while meeting the court's test even though he is working on special assignment in Romania.

San Francisco's Board took up the Ethics Commission proposal endorsed by downtown interests — a "winner take all" for the opponents of public financing.

#### Elsbernd Smokescreen Obscures Factual Review

Elsbernd and Farrell's claim that the city could face hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees defending the city's law, only to ultimately lose, was more than a canard. It was a false trail.

No member of the Board or any supporters of the city's law proposed defending the current law. At most, it would be an issue of defeating a motion for an injunction imposed before the election five weeks away. The cost to the city would be minimal compared to defending the law itself.

Second, any suit to be filed against the San Francisco law likely would come from the Sutton Law Firm that already notified the Ethics Commission that it has a legal argument against the city's law.

This is the same law firm that served as the treasurer for the City College Bond Committee whose officers pled guilty to felonies last week over money laundering. The Sutton Firm, which also serves as the campaign legal counsel to District Attorney George Gascon, was not brought into the prosecution.

The Sutton Law Firm also holds the record for the highest fines ever levied in San Francisco for violating the city's ethics laws, which took place when they failed to disclose contributions by PG&E in a ballot battle over public power. In that case, the

Sutton Firm itself had to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars for its role.

The Sutton Law Firm also was at the center of the controversy over the Gavin Newsom 2003 Inaugural Committee expenses which appeared to be earmarked to illegally pay campaign costs. That incident resulted in a James Madison Award for Oliver Luby and Kevin Liban for their refusal to destroy the emails from the Sutton Law Firm that appeared to outline

such a scheme. The Firm claimed it was all a mistake.

This does not make the Sutton Law Firm incompetent, which it is not, but it is a record of seeking to push the envelope beyond what is always legally defensible.

Currently the firm is involved in a number of San Francisco political contests, including as the attorney for some of those that testified at the Ethics Commission. In an awkward footnote, the Sutton Law Firm also is the attorney for the Leland Yee Mayoral effort. It also served as the campaign attorney for Supervisor Sean Elsbernd.

At Tuesday's Board meeting, Elsbernd's effort will fail if it cannot muster eight votes. The most likely to vote against the measure are Supervisors David Campos, Eric Mar, John Avalos in a switch from last week, and either Jane Kim and/or Ross Mirkarimi, who missed last week's vote and who Elsbernd hopes to convince to vote with him.

#### This Tuesday's Board Meeting

#### SHARON THE HEALTH / By Sharon Caren



**Sharon will be back next month.**  
*She's slathering on the sunscreen somewhere in Florida.*

The likely opponents to Elsbernd's measure have signaled they want an alternative. Maine's preferred alternative is being reviewed by some supervisors, and the original advocates for public finance are drafting options that they believe would meet the court's test but still keep faith with the law's intent.

Even if one of the alternatives could win eight votes, it could not immediately take effect. The Board was told that any change in the current proposal would have to return to Ethics for its vote, where it would again require at least four of five commissioners to support it. The suggestion was made that the Board and the Ethics Commission could act simultaneously.

The failure of the Ethics Commission to provide the due diligence required for such a significant issue could well serve as the explanation for returning the measure for the kind of in-depth study and public outreach that has taken place elsewhere.

Most Board members who spoke on the issue acknowledged that whatever happens now, the entire issue of the city's campaign finance law needs to be revisited and likely revised. Unless the Board plans to go through an extensive outreach and public hearing process to write their own law, the city's Ethics Commission will have to take the lead.

The entire issue has suddenly emerged as a flashpoint in the city's politics, largely due to the strengthened hand of a coalition of groups intent on using millions of dollars to secure influence for the next four years. Whether supervisors vote for their favored approach, as carried by Elsbernd or take another direction will influence both how money is spent now and how individual supervisors fare with the voters.

*Larry Bush's citireport.com is The Wall St. Journal's Blog of the Year 2011*

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## Now At the Movies • By Don Lee Miller

## ABDUCTION

High school senior Nathan: Taylor Lautner learns accidentally that he was abducted as a youth and his parents were really foster parents. His girlfriend Karen: Lily Collins flees with him when his family is killed and their home burned. In their pursuit, they have encounters with Mara: Maria Bello and Burton: Alfred Molina. It's a showcase for Lautner's muscles and acting talent. It somehow doesn't seem fresh; more like stale onions rotting. Profanity. Violence. Written by Shawn Christensen Directed by John Singleton

## COLOMBIANA

When a 9-year-old girl's parents are shot in the same Bogota room with her, it's understandable why she would train to become a hit woman determined to execute the members of the Colombian crime syndicate responsible. Now grown, Cataleya: Zoe Saldana (*Avatar*) almost has a liquid body as she pours herself through elevator shafts and ductwork to kill the assassins. Her partner and boy friend, Danny Delaney: Michael Vartan attracts her interest and ours. CIA agent Richard: Collum Blue and mobster Marco: Jordi Mollà complete the cast. Profanity. Violence.

## CONTAGION

In some ways, this sci-fi thriller seems to be following the old Irwin Allen formula of his films of the '70s. Put an all star cast in a disaster flick. It all starts when Beth Emhoff: Gwyneth Paltrow returns from a trip to China. Her hubby Mitch: Matt Damon has taken care of the kids and cannot help but notice the changes in her health. Despite the efforts of a noteworthy medical and administrative team at the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control (CDC): Dr. Erin Mears: Kate Winslet, Dr. Ellis Cheever: Laurence Fishburne, Lyle Haggerty: Bryan Cranston, Jennifer Ehle: Dr. Ally Hextell, Elliot Gould:

Dr. Ian Sussman, and Marion Cotillard: Dr. Leonora Orentes, within days there are a million victims worldwide. Note that all of web journalist Alan Krumweide: Jude Law's scenes with exteriors were filmed around San Francisco in February. Profanity. Disturbing images. Also in IMAX.

## THE DEBT

In Germany, Rachel Singer: Helen Mirren, her ex-husband, Stefan Gold: Tom Wilkinson, and David Peretz: Ciaran Hinds in 1997 learn the whereabouts of the target of their earlier botched job. Flashback to 1966, a secret agent Mossad team led by young David, 29: Sam Worthington who found Nazi war criminal, Dieter "The Surgeon of Birkenau": Jesper Christensen in East Berlin but failed to kill him. Rachel has been following every lead to track him down; perhaps because he disfigured her face. Directed by John Madden. The screenplay by Matthew Vaughn, Jane Goldman, and Peter Straughan is based upon the 2007 Israeli film: *Ha-Hov*, written by Assaf Bernstein and Ido Rosenblum. Profanity. Violence.

## DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE DARK

Young Sally, 8: Bailee Madison is sent to live with her father, Alex: Guy Pearce and his interior decorator girl friend, Kim: Katie Holmes in their historical countryside home, Blackwood Manor. Alex has been restoring the home to its former grandeur, when a famous painter lived there, with the help of handyman Harris: Jack Thompson. Alex plans to get a cover story by having home magazine publisher Charles Jacoby: Alan Dale at the unveiling. Next step: to sell it at a profit. Before the opening, gnomes attack and kill Harris and terrorize Sally every night. Alex finds it hard to believe that gnomes really exist and sends Sally to a shrink. When they slice her shower curtain and draw blood while she bathes, then her father believes her. It would spoil the dramatic ending for me to tell more. See it. This very terrifying film

was directed by Troy Nixey with screenplay by Guillermo del Toro (Pan's Labyrinth) and Matthew Robbins based on the 1973 teleplay by Nigel McKeand. Action Profanity. Scary images, Extreme violence.

## DRIVE

Driver: Ryan Gosling and the sweet girl down the hall, Irene: Carey Mulligan, become more than neighbors. In addition to his stunt-driving for movies, he drives getaway cars for holdups. Always without a word, he just chews that toothpick. There are enough car chases to satisfy even the most rabid fan. The large supporting cast which delivers strong performances includes Shannon: Bryan Cranston, Blanche: Christina Hendricks, Nino: Ron Perlman, and Standard: Oscar Isaac. Rounding out the cast of the non-stop action thriller is the particularly obnoxious Bernie Rose: Albert Brooks. This high-action adventure was well written by Hossein Amini and directed by Nicolas Winding Refn. Profanity. Violence.

## KILLER ELITE

Mercenary Danny: Jason Stratham is lured from retirement to rescue his mentor Hunter: Robert DeNiro from Middle Eastern captors. Former British Special Air Service (SAS) soldier Spike: Clive Owen is intent on rubbing out Danny before he can take out any more rogue SAS men. To quote Danny, "Killing is easy; living with it is the hard part." Davies: Dominic Purcell and Anne: Yvonne Strahovski are also cast. There's more dialog than in most action flicks, which in this case is not necessarily for the better. Directed by Gary McKendry in his directing debut. The screenplay by Matt Scherring was inspired by a Ranulph Fiennes book. Profanity. Extreme Violence.

## THE LION KING 3D

The King of the Lions, Mufasa: v.o. James Earl Jones defends his kingdom against his evil brother, Scar: v.o. Jeremy Irons. Young

Simba: v.o. Jonathan Taylor Thomas and Nala run off together when his father dies in a hyena stampede and his uncle Scar burdens him with the responsibility of his father's death. Adult Simba: v.o. Matthew Broderick and the Adult Nala: v.o. Moira Kelly return after a couple of years so Simba can confront Scar and claim his throne. The African animal tale is given a fresh approach that makes it even more enjoyable.

## MONEYBALL

This one is for all the Oakland A's fans. After losing the 2002 series to the Yankees, General Manager Billy Beane: Brad Pitt gets unique statistical data from Peter Brand: Jonah Hill which he uses to make a winning team. Team owner Art Howe: Philip Seymour Hoffman evokes tension between himself and Billy. Sharon: Robin Wright provides the romantic conflict. Bennett Miller, Capote, directs from the screenplay by Stephen Zaillian, Oscar winner for Schindler's List, and Aaron Sorkin, Emmy winner for The West Wing. Based on Steve Cheri's story and Michael Lewis's book, it was originally developed by Steven Soderbergh, before he left the project. Profanity.

## OUR IDIOT BROTHER

Hirsuite Ned: Paul Rudd, lands in jail because of his pot problem. This creates conflict between his sisters, Miranda: Elizabeth Banks, Natalie: Zooey Deschanel, and Liz: Emily Mortimer and Mother Ilene: Shirley Knight. Some funny moments, but there should have been more. This Long Island comedy was directed by Jeremy Peretz and written by David Schisgall and Evgenia Peret. Brief Male & Female Nudity. Profanity.



Dr. Annette Lust



Flora Lynn Isaacson

is personal and gripping. Performance wise Moreno meets this challenge in this two hour show that could still be trimmed and the pace quickened throughout.

In her final message she repeats her mother's wise adage "Keep moving" and adds "the body knows what the brain ignores" and "no spirit is ever diminished by a passion for life!"

*Life Without Makeup* plays through October 30th. For information call 510-647-2949 or 888 4-BRT-TIX. Dr. Annette Lust

## EDWARD ALBEE'S DELICATE BALANCE

Edward Albee's forty-five year old Pulitzer Prize award winning *Delicate Balance* comes to life on Aurora Theatre's opening night with the presence of Albee, who lauded director Tom Ross and the actors for their polished performance.

With a cast of solid Bay Area actors, artistic director Tom Ross' production conveys the playwright's absurdist depiction of a bourgeois family co-habiting with family members and neighbors and tolerating one another's habits of alcoholism and illusions. Model wife Agnes (Kimberly

King), wife of a sedentary Tobias (Ken Grantham), whose main occupation is to drink cocktails, keeps a delicate balance in this ambience in which she feels estranged from her uncommunicative husband and her alcoholic sister Claire (Jamie Jones). At one point, in walks their friends Harry (Charles Dean) and Edna (Anne Darragh), who ask for a room to sleep because they are frightened. They move into Julia's room, (Carrie Paff), she has just left her fourth husband, rants about having her room occupied by the couple, who decide to stay on longer. Tobias can't send away his best friends.

On a deeper level, this absurdist situation brings about Albee's examination of moral and philosophical conflicts about how we should respect others' needs and

Cont. p. 14

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## AT THE THEATER • By Dr Annette Lust and Flora Lynn Isaacson

## AWARD WINNING: AFIELD

San Francisco's 20th Fringe Festival presented *Afield*, a World Premiere that won the 2011 Best of Fringe. Also, Best of Fringe 2010 winner, Linda Ayres-Frederick's *Afield* features an all star cast: Carolyn Doyle as Miriam, Bruno Kanter as Samuel, and Heidi Wolff as Pig, directed by Joe Weatherby (also "Best of Fringe").

With Miriam's arrival in a desolate field of land mines, farmhand Samuel becomes hungry enough to barbecue the Pig who could save his life. At issue here is who will survive their battle and the flood that comes to end their world.

The mood of this play is tense as Miriam, Samuel and Pig vie for survival in a no-man's land ravaged by floods and war. This absurdist tragicomedy calls to mind plays by Samuel Beckett.

All three actors are outstanding in their roles. Nervous and fretful, Miriam returns to her home, a wasteland littered with land mines. She encounters Samuel, a simple minded farm hand tending a small patch of land. He is resigned to the precarious nature of their survival. They might be the last humans on earth, but are not the only creatures. Into their lives stumbles Pig, a wild boar who could prove to be a valuable ally or a great meal. Pig is cleverly costumed by Wes Crain. This play asks what it means to be human and to find hope in a world overrun with cataclysm and despair. Brilliantly directed by Joe Weatherby, we find a strong bonding between Miriam and Pig. Samuel appears most of the time to be a villain. Linda Ayres-Frederick is a talented playwright as well as a fine actress, producer, director and critic.

*Afield* will be replayed on Oct. 1th at 7 p.m. at the Exit, 156 Eddy Street, San Francisco. For tickets and info call 415-673-3847 or visit www. SF Fringe.org.

For future info contact www.PhoenixTheatreSE.org. Flora Lynn Isaacson

## RITA MORENO'S LIFE WITHOUT MAKEUP

Stage and screen star Rita Moreno, who for six decades has played such roles as Anita in *Westside Story* and Maria Callas in *Master Class*, is presently telling her

own story in *Life Without Makeup*. Moreno's solo, that covers her early immigration to America through six decades, is written by Berkeley Rep artistic director Tony Taccone and directed by David Galligan with choreography by Lee Martino.

Moreno, looking fresher and more youthful than her age, relates how she and her mother left Puerto Rico when she was five to sail away on a Puerto Rican boat called "Stupid Face." Her mother who upon seeing the Statue of Liberty says, "And so this is the lady who runs this country!"

Moreno describes their early days in New York living in a single room on the fifth floor where Moreno spent hours sitting on the fire escape dreaming of becoming someone important. She began by redubbing film dialogue into Spanish and playing bit parts in which she utilized her dance and singing talents. After waiting day by day for the phone to ring for a film role, it was not until 1961 when she performed Anita in the film version of *West Side Story* that her career skyrocketed and she won the Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony awards.

In the second half of her solo, Moreno describes her encounters with film notables as Clark Gable and Darryl Zanuck, as well as Marlon Brando with whom she fell madly in love. Added to Moreno's personal and moving account are clips of her performances in former movies, and her dance and song sequences with young dynamic dancers Ray Garcia and Salvatore Vasalo that she handles well despite her advanced age.

Content wise, Tony Taccone's script

## EVERY • SUNDAY MORNING

Farmers Market | Every Sun | 9 am– 1pm | Stonestown: at Stonestown Galleria (19th Avenue @ Winston)

## EVERY • TUESDAY NIGHT QUE SYRAH

Happy Hour Every Tues | 4–8 pm | Que Syrah. Take \$1 off each glass, 10% off of each bottle of wine consumed at the store. Tapas Every Thur & Fri | 5:30–9 pm | 230 West Portal Avenue 731.7000

## EVERY • THURSDAY–BALLROOM DANCING

Social Ballroom Dance classes for couples - 6 lessons for \$70. per couple. Forest Hill Christian Church, 250 Laguna Honda Blvd. 661-2746.

## EVERY • FRIDAY NIGHT

Friday Night Jazz Fri | 7–11 pm | Cliff House, Balcony Lounge – 1 Seal Rock.

## DAILY THRU OCT 30 • WICKED PLANTS

Tues - Sun | 10 am-4 pm | Paralysis, strangulation, derangement—it's mayhem under glass. The Conservatory of Flowers presents Wicked Plants: Botanical Rogues & Assassins. Mother Nature's most criminal creations and atrocities. conservatoryofflowers.org.

## SAT • OUTER NORIEGA STREET FAIR

Sat Oct 1 | Noon-5 pm | 1st Annual Outer Noriega Merchants Street Fair. Info: noriegamerchantsassociaiton@gmail.com - 45th to 46th Ave.

## SAT-SUN • WORLD VEGETARIAN FESTIVAL

Sat-Sun Oct 1-2 | 10 am-6 pm | 12th World Veg Festival/County Fair Building, Golden Gate Park (Lincoln and 9th Ave). Min \$8 donation - Children(-12), seniors(+65), students with ID free. Info: 273-5481. Guest speakers, cooking demos, intl vegetarian cuisine, free food samples, music, speed dating, educational exhibits on health, humane and environmental topics. www.sfv.org

## SUN • THE GOLDEN GATE PARK BAND

Sun Oct 2 | 1pm - 3pm | Golden Gate Park: Music Concourse Bandshell The Golden Gate Park Band, under the direction of Michael L. Wirgler will present "All That Jazz" – a concert of swing and jazz favorites featuring the Artie Shaw Clarinet Concerto. 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Dr.

## MON • SF CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

Mon Oct 3 | 7pm | Faculty Artist Series | Jean-Michel Fonteneau, cello and Mack McCray, piano play Rachmaninoff Cello Sonata, Beethoven Cello Sonata and the Andante from Fauré's Cello Sonata \$20 general/\$15 students/seniors Info: 503-6275 Conservatory of Music 50 Gough.

## WED • CHARLES MANN

Wed Oct 5 | 7pm | National Academies' Award winner-1491 argued that pre-Columbian society was more sophisticated than we believed. 1493, after Columbus hit landfall, began the greatest exchange of flora and fauna ever witnessed. BookShop West Portal. 80 West Portal Ave. Info: (415) 564-8080.

## SAT • ZOO VOLUNTEER DAY

Sat Oct 8 | 8am | 2nd Sat- every month, SF Zoo, 1 Zoo Rd, Lake Merced. Help keep the zoo beautiful by picking up trash, painting, and taking care of foliage. Participants receive a coupon for a free steam train ride. 753-7080, sfzoo.org.

## TUE • AUTHOR MARY ROACH

Tue Oct 11 | 7pm | Mary Roach will discuss *The Best American Science and Nature Writing*. Called "America's funniest science writer" Roach is the best-selling author of *Packing for Mars*, *Stiff*, *Spook*, and *Bank*. 80 West Portal Ave. Info: (415) 564-8080.

## TROLLEY DANCES

Sat-Sun 15-16 | 11am, 11:45am, 12:30 pm, 1:15 pm, 2pm, and 2:45pm | Begins at the SF Main Public Library. (100 Larkin St) the 8th Annual takes audiences from the Civic Center to West Portal Muni Station. Bay Area dance

luminaries performing outdoor, site-specific work. Free

## TUE • TARAVAL PUBLIC SAFETY

Tue Oct 18 | 7pm | Captain Curtis Lum, Taraval Station Public Safety Community Meeting, the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Taraval Station 2354 24th Ave.

## TUE • LAURIE BARKIN

Tue Oct 18 | 7pm | The author will discuss *The Comfort Garden: Tales from the Trauma Unit* - her experiences as a psychiatric nurse at SF General. True and fast-moving stories – many tragic, some humorous. Bookshop West Portal. 80 West Portal Ave. Info: (415) 564-8080.

## TUES • GOLDEN GATE PARK TOUR

Tues Oct 18 | 9:30am | Christopher Pollack, author of San Francisco's Golden Gate Park and Golden Gate Park: San Francisco, leads various walks around the park on this monthly venture. Pre-registration is required. 3rd Tues of every month. Price: \$8- SF Botanical Garden, 1260 9th Ave

## TUE • TARAVAL PUBLIC SAFETY

Tue Oct 18 | 7pm | Captain Curtis Lum, Taraval Station Public Safety Community Meeting, the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Taraval Station 2354 24th Ave.

## WED • JENNIFER ARNOLD

Wed Oct 19 | 7pm | *In a Dog's Heart*. Our dogs need to live a good life, two decades raising and training service dogs for people with disabilities. A keeper book. BookShop West Portal, 80 West Portal. 564-8080

## WED • CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Wed Oct 19 | 7pm | Sara Bard Field's 88-day cross-country auto trip with 500,000 signatures of California women, who had already won the vote in 1911. Actor Bonda Lewis, Merced Branch Library, 155 Winston Dr. 355-2825

## SUNSET/PARKSIDE NERT

Thu Oct 20 | 7pm | Neighborhood Emergency Response Team, www.sfgov.org/site/sfnert) meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at Incarnation Episcopal Church, 29th Avenue near Noriega

## THU • RACHAEL HERRON

Thu Oct 20 | 7pm | *Wishes & Stitches* takes readers back to Cypress Hollow for the third novel in her heartwarming knitting romance series. BookShop West Portal, 80 West Portal. 564-8080

## FRI • NATIVE PLANT SALE

Fri Oct 22 | 1-5pm | California Native Plant Society's Yerba Buena native plants local to SF. Select indigenous drought tolerant plants, 350 O'Shaughnessy 531-2140 or e.edelson@sbcglobal.net or cnps-yerbabuena.org/

## SUN • MUSIC ON THE HILL

Sun Oct. 23 | 7pm | Works for strings, bassoonist Rufus Olivier. Villa Lobos, Mozart, Beethoven & Bernard Garfield. St. Aidan's Church 101 Gold Mine Drive, Diamond Hts. \$15/\$9. Reserve at moth-muse2@yahoo.com or 820-1429.

## TUE • THEN AND NOW IN THE SUNSET

Tue Oct. 25 | 7pm | SF History Assn VP Lorri Ungaretti, SF historian of the Sunset District will show images coupled with what stands in the same places today. St. Philip's, 725 Diamond (24th), Noe Valley, \$5 non-members. 820-1429.

## THU • EMILY LEIDER

Thu Oct 27 | 7pm | Discussion Myrna Loy Author of the excellent biographies *Dark Lover* and *Becoming Mae West*, comprehensive biography of Myrna Loy as accomplished actress and humanitarian. BookShop West Portal, 80 West Portal 564-8080.

## FRI-SUN • MIRALOMA HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

Fri 5-9pm | Sat 10am-4pm | Sun 11am-4pm | Nov 4, 5 & 6 | Miraloma Improvement Club, 350 O'Shaughnessy 584-9369

Got a local event? editor@westsideobserver.com



## SUNSET-PARKSIDE NEIGHBORHOODS FREE DAYS AT THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES • FREE

October 28, 29 & 30 SUNSET AND PARKSIDE RESIDENTS in the 94116 and 94112 zip codes only. Each neighborhood, defined by zip codes, will have opportunities to visit the Academy for free over a three-day weekend (Friday, Saturday, or Sunday). California Academy of Sciences, 55 Music Con course, Golden Gate Park.

The Rules: Each visiting adult must show a valid photo ID with proof of residency. The following items or combinations are acceptable: A driver's license or state ID card; Photo ID plus postmarked envelope, postcard, or magazine label with name and date; Photo ID plus utility bill (gas/electric/cable), bank statement, or letter from a government agency with name and home address (not a P.O. Box). Only residents from the zip codes invited on the designated dates will be admitted free of charge. Limited to six children each.

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Few Surprises at WOTPCC Mayoral Forum

## Large Turnout as Candidates Woo the Westside

By Mitch Bull

A crowd of over 400 provided a standing room only audience for the West of Twin Peaks Central Council Mayoral Candidates Forum, held last Saturday at St. Stephen's Hall.

Eleven candidates spent 90 minutes responding to questions submitted by the audience and there were few surprises in their answers. Candidates Dennis Herrera, Leland Yee, Phil Ting, Joanna Rees, Ed Lee, Tony Hall, Bevan Dufty, David Chiu, Jeff Adachi, Terry Joan Baum, and John Avalos took every opportunity to try and answer the questions asked, and to show how they differ from the other candidates. (Candidate Michaela Alioto-Pier could not attend due to a death in the family.)

The 3 moderators, journalists Ken Garcia (SF Examiner), Debra Saunders (SF Journal) and John Diaz (SF Chronicle) worked to ensure that each candidate was given the opportunity to answer the same number of questions, although with rebuttals to "attacks" and clarifications of points several of the mayoral wannabees ended up with more microphone time.

City-wide issues and topics dominated most of the questioning, much to the dismay of those in the audience who were looking for specific positions from the candidates on Westside issues such as the 19th Avenue transportation planning, the housing element and other issues involving Lake Merced and Golden Gate Park.

The questioning kicked off with the discussion of the general SF business climate, where Board of Supervisor's President Chiu and candidate Rees called for elimination of the Payroll Tax on businesses citing the number of large businesses that have left SF to relocate to the Peninsula and the East Bay. Green Party candidate Baum was vocal in her opposition to the tax breaks that were afforded to Twitter and said that we need to tax the rich people and corporations and institute a commercial rent tax.

On the issue of homelessness, Interim Mayor Lee cited the progress of Care Not Cash and the good work that the city is doing with the SFPD to help the homeless and reduce the issues of aggressive panhandling. He cited the need for more housing and support services.

Former Supervisor Hall fired off that Care Not Cash is a boondoggle that supports the homeless non-profit agency machine and ends up costing the city more than \$60,000 for each homeless person. State Sen. Yee cited the problems in that there are many causes for the homeless issue and that the people themselves are not being diagnosed individually, and that we have not provided real solutions to treat the cause.

The upcoming \$250,000,000 Street Repair Bond was also discussed as Lee, former Supervisor Dufty and Assessor Ting all supported the bond, explaining that the city government had not made street repair a priority and have deferred maintenance for the last 10-20 years, instead spending budget dollars on public health issues and homelessness.

Housing was addressed as a question was posed if it was OK for neighborhoods to have the right to stop "rubber stamped" high-density development. Public Defender Adachi was clear on the yes side where neighborhood people have to be included and the city is too cozy with developers. Dufty also is in favor of neighborhood participation but believes in a consensus dialogue, when pressed for a yes

or no relating to neighborhood rights, he eventually said yes. On the other hand, Yee cited the result of the CCSF/neighborhood negotiations that resulted in a successful project, but said no, when pushed for a yes/no answer.

A question about the use of public financing for elections brought a spirited dialogue with Mayor Lee stating he had not taken public financing. That brought the response from Adachi that he (Lee) didn't agree to accept it because it would have put a cap on what he could have spent. Now he has no cap. Hall and Dufty both stated they have no "sugar daddies" or machines backing them. Herrera chimed in on funding that will stop the influence of special interest groups.

The moderators next question was pointed: "Mayor Lee, will Rose Pak and Willie Brown have more influence on you if you are elected?" Lee responded that he makes decisions in the best interest of the city and that he has been doing it for 22 years and you don't see Rose Pak and Willie Brown influencing the decisions I have made.

Dufty answered with a proclamation that he will have an open door policy at Room 200 (Mayor's Office) and will be accessible to the voters and to the 26,000 people who work for the city.

Candidate Rees responded by calling for "full transparency and disclosure" of budgets for each department and the calendar of who the Mayor is meeting with, citing a meeting the Mayor had with the afore-mentioned Pak, that was not listed on his publicly released schedule.

When asked about "Ranked Choice Voting" and who would be their 2nd or 3rd choices few of the candidates wanted to respond. Ting said he didn't have a decision yet for 2nd and 3rd; Hall stated, "there is not anyone up here that I would make a 2nd choice vote"; Baum said to "vote with your heart" for choices 1 and 2 and to use your 3rd choice for the "lesser of two evil" choices.

SFMTA Increases were also addressed as Chiu replied that MUNI has mismanaged their funds and they need to fix their house. Supervisor Avalos says he supports higher parking fees, and tax increases to make MUNI run more effectively, as well as an increase of the portion that SF receives of the vehicle licensing fees, and to work for more Federal dollars. Ting stated that the MTA lost \$7M in parking ticket revenue and their solution was to write more tickets. MUNI needs to run better.

On the Central Subway project, Rees stated it should go forward as funding is in place and underway, but again cited the need for full transparency. Herrera adamantly said No to the project, citing the initial \$653M cost that is now \$1.6B for a 1.7-mile project that doesn't tie to the MUNI Metro system.

Questions were also asked about legislative action taken by the Board of Supervisors on Public Nudity, and Bird Safe glass for downtown buildings. Chiu defended the bird glass law saying the board goes through thousands of pieces of legislation and by a unanimous vote passed the bird glass legislation but is was only deliberated for 40 seconds or so. Avalos also cited the need for the law to help the aviary segment from flying into windows as often.

The recent issue where the Board of Supervisors approved the Parkmerced project, then had five legislators submit legislation to "gut" the just-approved legislation was also questioned. Chiu defended the attempt at change saying that there is

a need to have the ability to make changes and that Prop E will do that. Avalos agreed saying that there are many different constituent groups that feel different about every topic and need to be heard and addressed. Rees cited the need for public hearings as people she speaks with feel their voices are not being heard, and the city disregards those that are heard to "do

what they want to do anyway."

When asked what one issue is not getting the recognition that it should, the candidates responded: Yee – the issue of the State of California pushing more and more down to the counties and cities. How are we going to pay for these services? Hall – Corruption in city government; the budget

Cont. p. 19



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From the Border Hilary Gordon

## LATE SUMMER GARDENS, Part II

Images by Blair Randall, 2011

Last month, this column covered some tips on design and care of the late summer garden. A month later, and we are still in the same late summer weather pattern, with mostly foggy days on the western side of the city, dry soils, and cool temperatures. As each week of late summer passes, the summer-dry garden looks more and more disheveled and dreary, unless the gardener follows a few simple rules.

# 1: Plan for this time of year, which is the most challenging for the summer-dry gardener. There are a few special plants which are at their blooming best this time of year, and they are precious for us fog-dwellers.

Because many San Francisco gardens are small, vertical space is very important when filling a garden visually. Some of the brightest performers at this time of year are vines. Semi-tropical Bougainvillea vines are blooming brilliantly now with great splashes of crimson and purple, and Blood-red Trumpet vine adds to the bright scarlet medley. Both these vines need some summer water until they are established, and then can go dry, especially near the coast. Give them some support with a sunny fence to climb, and they will delight the late summer garden for years to come.

As the days begin to shorten, the beautiful Princess Flower begins to perk up. A large shrub or small tree covered with big brilliant purple flowers at this time of year. Princess Flower is looking good in the late summer garden as other plants are fading. In small San Francisco gardens with dry summer soils and lots of shady spots, Princess Flower can be a problem-solver. It prefers to have its roots in a shady spot, and then grow up until its crown is in the sun, so it is an excellent choice in the shade from a north facing fence. It needs some summer water to help



Miscanthus

it get established, and then mature plants can weather our dry summers, especially near the coast.

Another beautiful accent in the late summer garden comes from ornamental grasses. Many of these are very comfortable in dry soils, and bloom in the late summer adding their graceful or erect textures to the garden scene. Red Fountain Grass (Pennisetum rubrum) is blooming now, as is Japanese Silver Grass (Miscanthus sinensis). The flowers of both these grasses are beautiful enough to cut for flower arrangements.

Rule # 2: Finish any leftover clean-up from winter and spring. Last month's column covered dead-heading, or

removing faded blossoms to lighten the visual load of brown, grey, dying and fungus affected plants in the garden. Another tip to help open up the late summer garden visually is to finish cutting back cool season plants which are dying back, in some cases removing everything that's above ground.

During the rainy season, many garden plants complete their vegetative growth, and then bloom in spring as the rains are ending. Plants with this seasonal pattern may be completely dormant and resting in the soil now, either as bulbs or corms in the case of perennials, or as seeds in the case of annuals. In these cases, it is safe to remove all the withered leaves and stems from last winter and spring, creating more freshness and space in the late summer garden.

Some examples of summer-dry bulbs which follow this pattern are Watsonia (Bugle Lily), Chasmanthus (Adam's Rib), and Sparaxis (Harlequin Flower). Last year's leaves and stems can be cut right down to the ground once they have turned mostly brown. Many gardeners have already done this, but if the faded plants are still taking up visual space in your yard, now is the time to cut them down, before the new green shoots of next year's



Sparaxis

plants begin to emerge.

Traditional spring bulbs, such as tulips and crocuses are available in nurseries now. But these bulbs which have to be dug out, refrigerated, and replanted every year are not a permanent solution in a sustainable garden. They simply are not a match for our climate, because they grow best where there are cold winters. This year might be a great time to at least try some of the less well-known bulbs, like those in the preceding paragraph, which thrive all by themselves in our climate, and come back more vigorously year after year. There's nothing wrong with getting a few tulips, too, for old time's sake.

Rule # 3: Some cool season plants do not need to be removed entirely, but they will benefit from being cut back hard at this time of year. Many perennials that grew during the rainy season and bloomed in winter or spring, are now faded, over-grown and sprawling. By cutting these plants back hard, and leaving only a few sturdy branches with a few leaves on them, the gardener can both prepare these plants to do their best in the coming rainy season, and also clear up the fading jumble of the late-summer garden.

Some examples of plants that can benefit from being cut back hard now as we head into the shorter days of fall include Forget-me-nots and Primroses on the shady side of the garden, and African Daisies on the sunny side. If given a good haircut now, these plants will delight you with fresh, full leafy growth in winter followed by bright flowers in February and March.

Anemones Cutting back cool-season perennials will also clear and clean the late summer garden, and let your Japanese anemones, Tritonia, Lantana, and other late summer and fall blooming perennials stand out.

Rule # 4: Feed the soil where you have cut back hard and removed lots of debris. Organic gardeners know that



Anemone another of the many late summer blooms at Garden for the Environment

you cannot keep removing bucket after bucket of garden debris and trimmings without putting something back into the soil. Ideally, our garden debris goes into the compost pile, and recycles back into the soil as finished compost. But for many home gardeners, the garden debris goes into the city green bin, is composted by the city, and ends up building the soil in a vineyard in Sonoma instead.

Composts, manures, and other soil amendments are available in nurseries bagged, and adding some form of organic soil amendment or mulch to the garden after a big clean-up is simply part of the cycle of gardening. Fall is a great time to add mulches and soil amendments in the garden, because winter rains will help carry the nutrients deep into the soil. Purchased soil improvers can become expensive, though, and so we often tend to use less than is really needed.

Sometimes it works to go in with neighbors, and get a big delivery of compost or manure and share it between several gardens. It's more affordable that way. Some stables will deliver manure for free if they can drop off a whole truck-load. Mushroom compost, (my personal favorite) can be delivered by the cubic yard or sometimes half yard. Try American Soil in Richmond, Ca. Mar Vista Stables in Daly City or Sea Horse Ranch in Half Moon Bay. These are just a few starting points; there are many more resources out there to be discovered.

By following these few simple rules, the late summer/early fall garden can be turned from a dreary, cluttered and unhealthy place into a little paradise, just waiting for the first drops of autumn rain.

Hilary Gordon is Sustainable Landscape Education Manager at the GFE. A professional landscape gardener from 1984 until the present. Have a question for Hilary? Meet her in the garden Wednesdays 10-2 and Saturdays 10-4. Garden for the Environment is at 7th Avenue and Lawton



Theater (Cont. from p. 19)

yet protect ourselves from being abused. There are also the themes of alienation, the middle age fright of being abandoned, and the illusionary thinking that alcoholism provides to deny reality. The playwright also poses questions about how true we are to ourselves in marriage and in our social relationships without sparing us the mental or emotional blows of this realization.

What weakens the highly vibrant staging and top performances of the play is the length, and wordy text that otherwise offers comically absurd scenes and perceptive philosophical truths.

Kudos to Richard Olmstead for a simple workable set, to Callie Floor for appropriate costuming, to Kurt Landisman for lighting and Chris Houston for sound.

A Delicate Balance plays until October 9th, 2011. Info for this play, or Stravinsky's and Ramuz' Soldier's Tale in November, call 510-843-4822 or visit www.auroratheatre.org. Dr. Annette Lust

Candidates Debate (Cont. from p. 18)

now is 3x higher than when (Frank) Jordan was Mayor. Baum – we need another voice in politics and it's time to pull SF and the country to the left Adachi — Reality is missing. The city is not addressing fiscal reality.

The final two questions dealt with Ed Lee's decision to run for Mayor after saying he would not, and the highly contentious issue of Pension Reform.

Lee defended his change of mind by stating that when he initially moved into the position he was focused on the job at hand (Finding a new Police Chief; dealing with the budget deficit; negotiating an agreement for pension reform; working on the America's Cup program, and trying to keep Twitter in the city. Citing the need to continue the "new civility" in the city government and the need to keep the city strong and united, and that he was asked by several of the supervisors, and others to run, he did change his mind to seek a full

term.

Pension Reform and the "dueling" Propositions (C and D) closed the forum with each of the candidates giving their opinions:

Avalos, Chiu, Dufty, Lee, Ting, Yee and Herrera support the Lee-negotiated Prop C, while lining up against the Adachi-sponsored Prop D. Adachi and Hall support Prop D, as they state it will save twice as much as Prop C. Baum is against both measures while Rees stated that both measures are unrealistic as they are based on an investment return of 7.75% annually, while the reality shows returns in the 2.3% range.

At that point more than the allotted 90 minutes had elapsed and everyone was thanked for his or her participation; the doors swung open, and the attendees were left to ponder what their decisions will be on November 8th.



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