

**Supplemental to the 7/10/2018 Hermosa Beach City Council Agenda's
Consent Item 2-g**

July 7, 2018

To: The Hermosa Beach City Council and Others.

From: Howard Longacre, Hermosa Beach resident.

Re: Wasteful-Spending-Nonsense-Consent Item 2-g

Staff Recommendation:

- 1. Re-appropriate funds in the amount of \$75,672 from Capital Improvement Funds FY2017-18 to FY 2018-19;**
- 2. Award Professional Services Agreement to Davey's Resource Group to provide Tree Inventory GPS Mapping, Condition and Hazard Assessment services for all city maintained trees in parks, medians, and the Greenbelt in the amount of \$65,672;**
- 3. And approve a 5 year subscription for Tree Keeper software in the amount of \$10,000.**

Gentlemen, Ladies, and others:

This item was taken off of Council's June 12, 2018, meeting-agenda, at the meeting, and for unclear reasons. I had submitted a supplemental to the item at the time. That supplemental became part of the testimony nonetheless, however was neglected to be included with this item when it returned on this agenda. I thusly am now having to resubmit my written testimony for the item again and as revised below.

Apparently few, if anyone bothered to read my submittal as submitted for the June 12 meeting.

Thus once again I am pointing out that this item is appearing on the Consent Item in contradiction to the very statements on the agenda regarding items on the Consent Calendar along with that being in direct contradiction to prior councils' direction for large spending items to be listed as Municipal Items. This item clearly belongs under Municipal Matters. It's not routine. Why was at least that not corrected with the return of this wasteful \$100,000 spending proposal?

Anyway, here again I am submitting my comments regarding this de facto \$100,000 of wasteful spending.

To repeat: Once again an item is appearing on the Hermosa City Council agenda's Consent Calendar which should of course have been placed under Municipal Matters. This \$100,000+ spending item for tree-inventory nonsense is not a "more routine matter" as stated in the printed description, right on the agenda face, for **Item #2 Consent Items**.

Placing this item where it belongs, i.e., under Municipal Matters, would mean only that you on Council would, at the minimum, have to at least listen to the clerk read the item's title, and

recommendation with the spending amount, and then make a motion, take any testimony, and approve the item. You do not need to do any more, if such is the Council's desire.

I cannot tell you how many times in the past that the Council has actually directed that such significant, non-routine spending items be placed under Municipal Matters. Why isn't that direction being followed? Who is it that does not follow Council's direction, or are one or more members of the Council directing staff from behind the scenes to simply ignore that public-given direction. Btw, council-members should not be directing City Staff other than the City Manager. Is that going on? Are Council members directing City Staff members/directors when not in a public council meeting? It's my view that such is happening quite often, and that is of course quite inappropriate as it places city staff in a difficult position, and undercuts the City Manager's role. In some cities that is an ethics violation.

Regarding this \$100,000 wasteful-spending Item 2-g being again unwisely placed on the Consent Calendar, it should also be noted that Hermosa Beach is not the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, whereat they essentially hide virtually all spending under the Board's Agenda Consent Items Calendar.

When you on the Hermosa Beach City Council are so cavalierly spending the people's money, and it does come from real people's wallets, you should well know, and should also know that it is in fact real money (not Monopoly money), again taken from the people, the least you on the Council could do is to read and announce the item and the amount being spent for that item, such that the few people who can even stomach viewing your meetings, are aware of just how much money you are often just frittering away on purely nonsensical, useless crap to additionally waste staff time, and additionally waste more money.

When you hide, or have the City Manager de facto hide non-routine spending stuff on the Consent Calendar, and it is the Council that's doing the hiding, don't claim otherwise, and doing so with the hopes that no one on Council or in the public pulls the item, you are being deceitful, plain and simple. Is that your objective, to be deceitful? You're not saving meeting time. Don't use that as an excuse. You are hiding significant stuff by allowing it to be placed on the Consent Calendar, notwithstanding that it's a public agenda.

Now, let's get to the problem with this item. At a prior recent meeting I commented in writing on hundreds of thousands of dollars being spent unnecessarily in that one meeting. Here is another example of \$100,000 to be frittered down the toilet, and actually much additional cost that is really hidden from view that will be incurred as a result of this sweet-sounding, new-consulting nonsense.

In actuality, from reviewing the staff report, one can see that a lot of staff costs have already been run up, with staff time wasted, getting just to this point of award of contract.

Yet there is no cost indicated in the staff report as to the real cost to get to this point. I.e., the carrying out of all the work to create all the reports and analysis to simply place this tree analysis nonsense-crap out to bid. It appears to have been quite significant, the staff time already expended to date. A genuine make-work project.

Nor are there any costs indicated as to the staff time that will be expended to review all the data to be coming in, or to work with the contractor month-after-month and in the years ahead, and then the ongoing recurring costs to maintain the software, and to enter the data into the various data bases, and to learn how to even use the software. This is just another incredible, expensive,

boondoggle. The city has gotten along for well over a century without space age crap to count trees in this tiny city. Stop burning money on this nonsensical crap. Cut your losses now. The \$100,000 (read the staff reports) is just the tip of the iceberg of what the true costs will be for this ongoing nonsense.

Trees die. If a tree can't survive in this climate or soil, it gets sick and dies. Once in a while a tree may fall over. That's always a risk. Replace it. Stop with this nonsense of now-to-be endless expensive technical studies with ongoing staff time required, and the rehiring over-and-over of consultants.

It's been my opinion, and that of others I believe that since the former Public Works Director implemented nothing but studies, after studies, after studies, it seems like the Public Works Department has become study-happy while next-to-nothing gets finished in a reasonable timeframe. That is a real problem. This tree nonsense is not a real problem.

This recommendation award itself is a kind of a clear indication that the latest Public Works Director of the musical chairs going on in the Public Works Department during the last 5 years, also doesn't have a clue when he allows this nonsense to come forward to you. Where is his real cost estimates for you of what this is going to cost in staff time ongoing. Why are you not demanding real cost estimates into the future.

This is another boondoggle that's going to cost a minimum of half a million dollars and probably more over the first 10 years in staff and additional consulting time, and further after about two years, it will more than likely simply get swept aside and forgotten all about, and all the money, and all the staff time expended will have been flushed down the toilet as so many other studies have been in the last 40 years. It's outrageous the blundering of Hermosa City Councils when it comes to starting processes resulting in the endless hiring of consultants for things that in the first place simply only required common sense approaches with existing staff and some honest hard work in the field.

The Council once again, without thinking, gave direction to staff to go out and do something stupid, to thus bog down the Public Works Department further, while meanwhile the **8th Street Safe Walks to School Sidewalks** project between Valley Drive and Hermosa Avenue continues to go essentially nowhere as it is in its 5th fiscal year of phony Council "high priority".

Council, you would best stop ordering studies until this sidewalks project is accomplished. You're looking like a bunch of buffoons when you cannot get a residential sidewalks project done, in now to be over 5 years. It's a sidewalks project! Get it done. Get the minutes of the meetings done, and get real minutes instead of the useless present minutes that your no-bid-contract-city-attorney essentially encouraged a prior council and the elected City Clerk to accomplish. Do something meaningful for the city. Meeting after meeting there is nothing but useless pabulum items frittering the people's money down the toilet.

Btw, one of the Public Works Commissioners, at their commission meeting in May, and without a formal vote of the Commission simply and implicitly directed that the Public Works Director bring back to the commission for yet another review, the 8th Street Sidewalks project. And the Public Works Director agreed. That is insanity. And also, the Public Works Director at that

time indicated he was going to have yet another meeting with residents about the 8th Street sidewalks project.

Obviously the Public Works Director can address concerns one on one with residents at any time if there are still issues after four solid years, but how long, how many resident meetings over the last four years is really necessary? What is really going on? Someone(s) perhaps are purposefully dragging this project out, and btw, just because there are evidently to be no “free-to-use Electric Charging Stations” along this sidewalk, and just because there are to be no solar cells embedded in the handicap ramps or along the school-children’s sidewalk, the 8th Street Safe Walks to School sidewalks project should not continue to get the incredible short shrift from the Hermosa Beach City Council that it clearly has been getting.

Council, why are you so impotent, that you are unable to get the 8th Street sidewalks project accomplished year after year? It should be discussed at every meeting at this point, to display the obvious incompetence. And then, why is Hermosa Avenue being unnecessarily and expensively ground and paved, when all it needed was a first class slurry seal and new thermo-plastic markings. The pavement is in very good condition right now, with superficial cracks over the underlying concrete surface. I know that street very well. Who is running this town at the moment and making these costly and poorly-planned decisions? It certainly does not appear to be the City Council that’s in control and in their public meetings, as apparently if it doesn’t have anything whatever to do with Council’s ultra-green, nanny-state agenda, your Council evidently could not give a rat’s behind about the things that actually do matter, and which will actually benefit the men, women, and children of this city.

And then yes, I did forget, not that it mattered to the residents by and large, that the last council did expedite for their own personal agendas, the installation of solar cells on the Community Center roof, and essentially that did come out-of-nowhere, and in record time, followed by Council having a big photo-op on the rooftop; And additionally of course, that was all done, while residents and children continued to have to walk in the street, on 8th Street, between Valley Drive and Hermosa Avenue due to the dangerous sidewalks condition, and illegal parking that council after council have allowed for decades, and still do, while looking the other way.

This of course all being while the present council spends its time focused on state political issues, and also while it seems to be quietly converting Hermosa’s city government to an ultra-left wing (you may call it GREEN) form of government, via incremental staff selections, those that I don’t recall being ever discussed openly, or being placed on the ballot as an issue, or appearing in council candidate campaign literature, i.e. the slippery changing of the city’s staff itself.

Hermosa Beach supposedly was to have a non-political government, at least that’s what most understood for decades, however all one sees these days is a focus by the City Council related to the two local state Democrat legislators, and of Council’s support for the essentially out-of-control state government, that has already turned California into the costly “nanny state” it has become. Not a meeting seems to go by without Council dwelling on nonsense state issues, rather than staying focused on Hermosa Beach issues that actually matter to the city’s residents.

One really can see a 'Recall' coming for certain members of this present Hermosa Beach City Council if the Council can't get back to running this town sensibly, and frugally, and stop with all this left-wing political crap that you and your handful of groupies seem to be involved with 24/7. You on council clearly seem to believe you are doing so damn much good that you can do no wrong. You're doing wrong at every meeting and you don't even see it. That clearly means that you may well be beyond ignorant of your own arrogance.

The 8th Street Sidewalks project is the project that should be on this agenda for award of a construction contract, instead of this absurd waste of staff time with the waste of \$100,000 on a boondoggle for yet another waste-of-money, costly consultant STUDY process, that will produce absolutely nothing of substance to improve the quality of life of the Hermosa Beach men, women, and children. This represents a pure waste of staff time and people's money for more consultants. \$100,000 down the toilet.

But oh, yes it will spend a lot of money. This item, to say it again, flushes 1000 one-hundred dollar bills down the toilet. I.e. \$100,000 and a lot more when you add in the staff time already expended in the past year, and the staff time to be expended in the future out years. The council should learn to spend money as if it were coming out of its own pockets. Receive and file this item. Cut your losses now on this item. And btw, it's long overdue that you have a big sign placed in the Council Chambers that says, **"THINK FRUGALLY, BUT BY ALL MEANS AT LEAST THINK, and ESPECIALLY BEFORE YOU BABBLE USELESS NONSENSE FROM THE DAIS, TO MAKE IT APPEAR LIKE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING"**.

The Council should not spend a dime more of staff time on this "sick" tree "STUDY" crap when you have not a clue as to what the real staff time and cost will be in the future as a result of another glitzy software package and data-base to be cluttering the shelves of the Public Works Department in no time at all.

This money would be far better spent by donating it to the city schools, or paying for police work to prevent crime in the city, or contributing to a new police station, and on and on. I evidently didn't realize the city has so much money to burn and throw down the toilet. Money to burn. Money to burn. Let's at least have a party and burn the money in a bon-fire on one of these summer evenings on the beach. That would be as useful this item.

This money would be better spent simply pruning some limbs hanging over sidewalks that people have reported, instead of endless GPS etc. studies. Good God, rocket science to do everyday maintenance of trees. Absurdity and waste is becoming unending in Hermosa Beach, most evidently. \$100,000 to burn and flush down the sewer, and City Council meeting after City Council meeting, just flushing the people's money down the sewer. Money to burn.

Disclosure to the Council: I do not set policy in Hermosa Beach. I have never set policy. And, never will, except by voting in an election. Some on Council evidently think otherwise. I also have never received a penny or asked for such, or any behind the scenes gratuity, comp-d drink, food, tickets, etc., in any form for following all the stuff, much of which is quite deceitful or poorly accomplished, by elected Hermosa Beach officials of this city for the past 40 years. Herein again are of course just my views, as always, JUST MY VIEWS. I pay taxes. I have a right to comment and have views on the deceitful or just plain stupid stuff that goes down by Hermosa Beach City Councils, meeting after meeting. Kindly, if you do not like my views, if you have an incredibly thin skin, or if you

need to be pampered and patronized 24/7 as being such an important, big-shot city council-person, then consider getting off the city council, and perhaps also consider moving to a country more applicable to the kind of dictator you may prefer to really need to be. If you believe that any of this disclosure does not apply to you, simply ignore such. It most certainly does apply to at least one and more likely two of you. It is truly unfortunate that it is necessary to place this disclosure in my supplementals. It is done so as to avoid confusion by anyone on the council who may be so ego-centric to not understand my views and rights to them.

End of Supplemental.