

August 20, 2019

To the Hermosa Beach Planning Commissioner Hoffman, Saemann and Flaherty:

I write this letter to bring to your attention communication, coordination and deliberation that took place outside the public hearing and deliberative process as part of the Limited Live Entertainment Permit approval, which in part, will be evaluated tonight for the M-1 Zone. I believe this should be considered both in the context of this hearing as perhaps the legitimacy of the original legislation that was passed.

As you are aware, the Short Term Entertainment Permit "STEP" legislation (later to be termed "Limited Live Entertainment Permit") was proposed and developed by an organization named THRIVE Hermosa. Publicly described as a "resident advocacy group", the organization is privately comprised of a significant number of Hermosa Beach elected and appointed city officials. Specific to the Planning Commission, two current Commissioners, Marie Rice and Dave Pedersen were members of THRIVE at the time STEP/LLEP item came before you in various public hearings. Commissioner Rice is also a co-founder of the THRIVE organization.

As part of their membership in THRIVE, Councilmembers and Commissioners participate in the organizations mission of "Transforming Hermosa's Resources Into a Vibrant Environment." The organization's internal communication methods are kept outside of public view including the use of via private emails, a closed Facebook page named (THRIVE Hermosa), and private "working group" and "big" meetings (see attached). These meetings and technological tools are used to privately develop plans, coordinate, deliberate and build collective concurrence outside the public view including the THRIVE "STEP" program working group. In the case of "STEP", while Chairman Rice disclosed her membership at the 6/25/19 meeting, neither Commissioner Rice nor Commissioner Pedersen publicly neither recused their participation in the deliberation nor disclosed their participation or leadership roles in THRIVE before or during the public hearing on 8/21/2018, and 9/19/2018. In fact, both Commissioner Rice and Pedersen publicly thanked the organization giving the public an impression that they were not members.

Not only were there substantive conversations among city officials concerning the agenda item prior to public meetings, perhaps the most telling, Marie Rice participated in the secret THRIVE Hermosa Facebook page with an account "Meg Elizabeth" thus concealing her true identity (see attached). This leaves questions as to why a public official would conduct official city business in a secret Facebook page using a false identity. Further, as an example of a pre-determined view, communications between THIRVE members Commissioner Ellman (STEP working group lead), and THRIVE member Councilmember Armato (whom would be the final decision maker on the item), referred to a influential local business owner who disagreed with the "STEP" legislation as a "t**d" and "not rational" via a private text exchange before the hearing (see attached). Clearly, the decision to pass the legislation had already been made before the hearing as evidence by Councilmember Armato's like on June 26, 2018 to a closed Thrive Facebook post regarding STEP "becoming a reality" (see attached). It should be noted, that none of the City Council disclosed their Membership in THRIVE at the hearing in which it was approved.

In closing, its clear that some of the non-elected THRIVE members are not aware of how the organization and it resources have been used and the code of conduct required by public officials. Unfortunately, some well-meaning residents may have been used by officials attempting to reduce public meetings to mere formalities in which decisions have been pre-determined. The above is simply one of many overt instances of these activities. I challenge those of you who holding official positions that are not involved to stand up for the respectful majority in resisting these like-minded officials as they continue to privately decide what is good for the people of Hermosa Beach.

Jed W. Sanford

Hermosa Beach Business Owner

Past President Hermosa Beach Chamber of Commerce

Example of THRIVE Member email distribution sent by Marie Rice for a "Big Meeting"

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Marie Rice** <marierice@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, May 31, 2017 at 6:38 PM

Subject: RSVP Requested: THRIVE Hb meeting - Monday, June 12th @ 7pm

To: Alan Benson <albenson2@verizon.net>, Barbara Ellman <hotelell@earthlink.net>, Becky Scholten <hermosamomx3@gmail.com>, Bill Phillips <williamcaryphillips@gmail.com>, Bob Wolfe <Bob.Wolfe@outlook.com>, Claudia Berman <bermzies@gmail.com>, Crystal Jarvis <hermosabeachfamily@yahoo.com>, Dave Pedersen <davep2014@gmail.com>, David Grethen <dgrethen@roadrunner.com>, Dennis Jarvis <dbjprod@verizon.net>, Doug Collins <doug.collins@roadrunner.com>, Geoff Hirsch <gh90254@gmail.com>, George Schmeltzer <g.j.schmeltzer@att.net>, Greg Stager <greg@sunsetsinc.com>, Hany Fangary <hany.fangary@gmail.com>, Jeff Davis <davis.jeffrey77@gmail.com>, Jeff Duclos <jaduclos@aol.com>, John Schattinger <jschattinger@gmail.com>, Justin Massey <justin.massey@gmail.com>, Kenneth Sarno <kmsarno@verizon.net>, Lauren Mains <laurenjeanne@sbcglobal.net>, Marie Rice <Marierice@gmail.com>, Moira Nelson <moiraln@verizon.net>, Nadine Skye-Davis <nskyedavis@gmail.com>, Pat Escalante <pescalante@hbcso.org>, Rick Learned <ricklearned@gmail.com>, Robert Rosenfeld <robertnr541@gmail.com>, Sheryl Main <main1@me.com>, Stacey Armato <staceyardmato@gmail.com>, Stephen McCall <stephenjmccall@gmail.com>



Next Big Meeting-

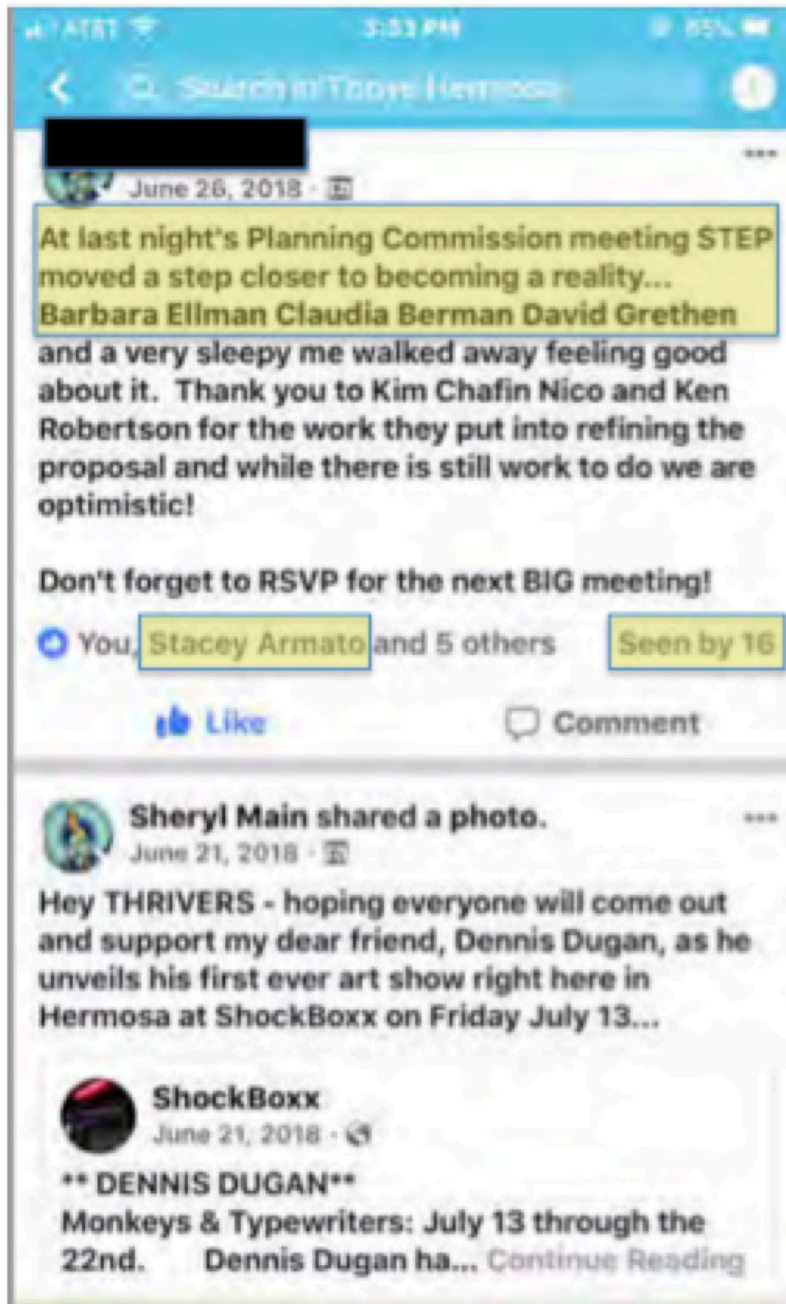
June 12th @ 7pm

Time: 7-9pm

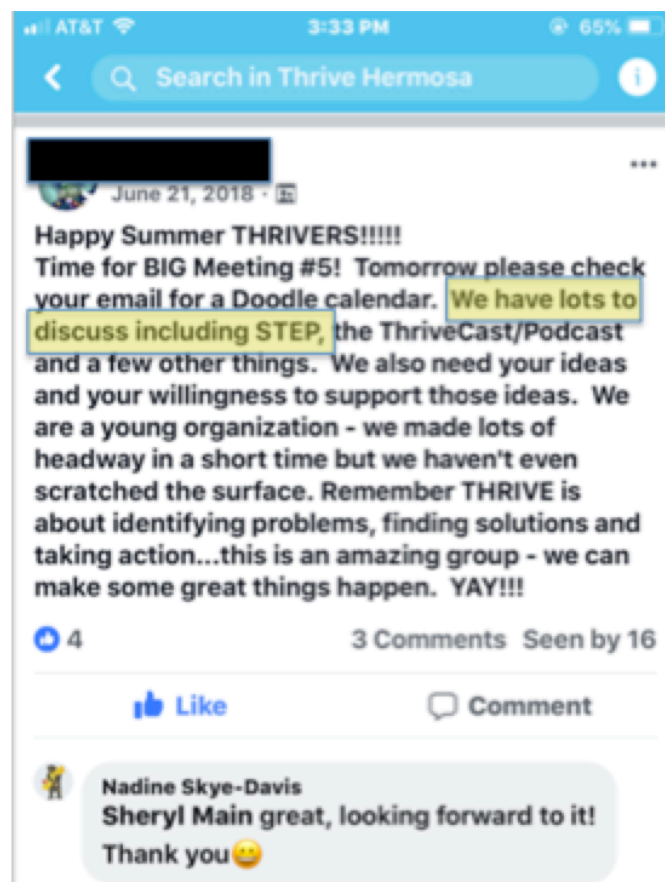
Location: South Park / Classroom #2

(Entrance and some parking on Loma)

Example of THRIVE Hermosa Closed Facebook post and "like" by Mayor Armato on 6/26/2018



Examples of THRIVE Hermosa Closed Facebook post on STEP & Dave Pedersen.



Example of THRIVE Hermosa Closed Facebook post with Marie Rice as "Meg Elizabeth"



Rick Learned is 😊 feeling excited with **Claudia Berman**.

September 26, 2017

An important Study Session is coming up next Thursday, October 4, at 7PM. I haven't seen the Agenda yet but it will be a look at all the City facilities and the beginning of a planning process. I had a meeting with Sergio yesterday about a THRIVE project Claudia and I are working on and I am excited about the way Sergio thinks. Stay tuned. The agenda for that is coming out next week.



You, Stacey Armato and 3 others

2 Comments Seen by 18



Like



Comment



Meg Elizabeth Rick Learned The Agenda is now posted! And in another exciting update, our M-FAD Project is a GO! We have approval to work with the Parks & Recreation Commission Subcommittee (Fellow Thrivers **Robert Rosenfeld** and **Lauren Pizer Mains**) as they fulfill their mission to evaluate our city facilities that generate revenue streams. Our Thrive Working group is David Grethen John Schattinger **Rick Learned** and me (Marie Rice). Lets' get after it!

Like · Reply · 1y · Edited

Chat (Off)



Commissioner Rice LinkedIn Profile



Marie Rice

Planning Commissioner at City of Hermosa Beach

Connect

Mess

Experience



Co-Founder

Thrive Hermosa Beach

Nov 2016 – Present · 2 yrs 10 mos

Hermosa Beach CA

THRIVE Hermosa Beach is a community network utilizing the talents and skills of residents to educate, advocate, and participate in creating a more vibrant Hermosa Beach where people, business and City THRIVE (Transform Hermosa's Resources Into a Vibrant Environment).

thrivehermosa.com

Texts between THRIVE Members Mayor Armato and Commissioner Ellman on STEP Aug 21, 2018

