

December 4, 2019

Councilmember Stacey Armato  
Mayor Mary Campbell  
Councilmember Michael Detoy  
Councilmember Hany Fangary  
Councilmember Justin Massey  
City Manager Suja Lowenthal

**City of Hermosa Beach, Ca. 90254**

**12/4/19 SPECIAL MEETING, ITEM 2 - BROWN ACT DEMAND TO "CURE AND CORRECT" SUPPLEMENTAL LETTER SUBMITTED TO THE CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE ON 12/4/19 AT 9:00 A.M.**

I offer the following thoughts and suggestions (in no particular order) that I sincerely hope our current City Council/Manager Team might take the time to read and meditate upon with my sincere wishes that you all might find an element of some personal and/professional benefit to you before today's 6pm Special Meeting at which the November 21 vote appointing Councilmember Massey as the city's new Mayor ProTem (out of rotation) will hopefully be rescinded and our current Council will behave conscionably and appoint our most transparent and deserving Councilmember Hany Fangary as Mayor ProTem (adhering to our 40 year rotation tradition) :

***Although definitions vary from source to source, most agree that an act is defined as bullying when:***

- the behavior hurts, humiliates, or harms another person physically or emotionally, and
- there is also a real or perceived "imbalance of power," which is described as when the (Council) person with the bullying behavior has more "power," either physically, socially, or emotionally, such as a higher rank and
- It is intentional, meaning the act is done willfully, knowingly, and with deliberation to hurt or harm.

***Listen to your City Attorney:***

- Who recommends that our Councilmembers promote a collegial environment: an adjective meaning mutual consideration and **respect** among your colleagues

***Try very hard to:***

- Keep personal likes and dislikes out of the equation. Your fellow councilmembers and the city manager are **NOT** your family or personal friends; they are your "PROFESSIONAL COLLEAGUES," and you need to work effectively and professionally with them .
- Take your role to evaluate your city manager's performance seriously. Performance evaluations are an important communication tool between the manager and council. This provides the opportunity to communicate how the council views the manager's performance, including areas of strength and areas for potential additional emphasis. This is also the only opportunity for the council **AS A WHOLE** to provide this input. Also, due to the inherent challenge of multiple individuals attempting to evaluate an individual who works for them as a group, **the use of a consultant to facilitate the evaluation can be very helpful**. Might Hermosa Beach City Council members support a more formal annual performance evaluation of the city manager replacing the current verbal, interview-based reviews with established metrics and goals?

***Always Remember that:***

- An unstable council relationship has negative consequences for the city council, the manager, the organization and the community. A positive and mutually supportive relationship will increase the odds of having a high-performing and successful city. Councilmembers and the manager need to make creating, supporting and sustaining their relationship a high priority.
- First and foremost, the relationship between the city council members is a partnership that serves the community. This partnership benefits immensely from a council that sees itself as a **TEAM**. While council members can and do disagree on various issues, they can nevertheless function as a **TEAM** if **ALL** members can agree that their shared goal is to make the **BEST** decisions possible **for the community they serve**. It should be a collaborative effort in which ALL members bring something of value to the task at hand.
- City manager jobs see frequent turnover; every five years, half the city managers in the country are either fired or voluntarily leave their positions. "The threat of termination is constantly hanging over the head of the city manager, creating a certain vulnerability that permeates their work and life," "The volatility and constant turnover means that many managers are continuously changing positions and many cities are continuously introducing new managers to the community and staff ....."
- **BUILDING A POSITIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP IS CRITICAL**

- **Civility** and communication are key elements of an effective council partnership. Respectful discussions that incorporate civility set a positive tone for council meetings and council interactions and help foster a welcoming environment for community members who attend council meetings.
- Separating the people from the problems is another helpful strategy. Emotions can make problem-solving more difficult when people feel passionately about an issue. But attacking the problem — **INSTEAD OF EACH OTHER** — offers a more effective approach and a better way to preserve an important working relationship. It's OK to disagree, but it's not OK to be disagreeable and **disrespectful** of your fellow councilperson.
- When communication falters, problems occur. Avoiding conflict, which is human nature, can be a barrier to progress on tough issues. Address issues directly as they arise by communicating clearly and respectfully. Bear in mind that **conflict can play a constructive role in problem solving**. COMPLACENCY can be a red flag. A complacent council and city manager may be avoiding dealing with controversial or thorny problems. Such avoidance can ultimately make the problem much harder to address.
- Building capacity creates a more effective team. The governance team (mayor, council members and city manager) should get to know each other — how each person approaches issues, decision-making and so on. This can be accomplished at informal meetings or workshops throughout the year. In the event that council members disagree, clear ground rules (norms of behavior and practice) can help quell acrimony before it becomes a problem. **It's important to remember that trust is built around understanding and respect, not necessarily agreement.**
- Transparency is a fundamental component of democratic government and addresses the rights of citizens to know about activities of their government. **Secrecy in government often leads to an abuse of power and a lack of accountability.**

Sincerely

Anne Garvey-Zaworski P.E.