

**From:** Colin Cooley <colin@wicked.is>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 4, 2019 9:51 AM  
**To:** City Council <citycouncil@hermosabeach.gov>; Ann Yang <anny@hermosabeach.gov>; Suja Lowenthal <suja@hermosabeach.gov>  
**Subject:** Mayor Pro Tem appointment

Dear Council Members,

I'm writing to express my disappointment with the manner in which you appointed Council Member Justin Massey as the next mayor pro tem at the November 21, 2019 meeting.

I, along with most residents, see you all as equals up there. All duly elected. And all entitled to your rotation as mayor and mayor pro tem. It's one of the most basic principles of our council-manager government; an entitlement and reward for serving, yet with the mayor and mayor pro tem having no greater official authority than any other council member.

The motion made by Mayor Mary Campbell, only seconds after herself being appointed mayor, and then immediately seconded by Council Member Stacey Armato, however, grossly undermined that principle and expectation, broke with our city's long-standing rotation order and publicly marginalized a duly elected, sitting council member.

I find this action troublesome for a number of reasons. First, it was done with no notice given in advance of the meeting that the regular rotation would be disrupted, and residents had no reason to think that this long-standing rotation order would be altered. Indeed, the meeting in which this took place was largely seen to be ceremonial — a celebratory moment for both the newly appointed mayor and mayor pro tem, pursuant to the existing rotation policy.

Second, when the motion was made by Mary Campbell, no explanation was given and no discussion ensued. This failure to shine a light on the issue up there on the dais, in the chambers, where it should be discussed, is what's most troublesome to me. It is exactly what this city doesn't need right now. We expect collegiality and leadership up there on the dais. We expect transparency and an open, lively discussion, done on the record. If Mayor Campbell could have talked to one person in advance, she should have explicitly discussed it with Council Member Fangary. Instead, the discussion was relegated to a Facebook group and led to a Saturday night press release from the City.

This official City press release, by the way, which was posted on the City's website and submitted to the media, was used to release a statement by newly appointed Mayor Campbell and Council Member Armato with an allegation that Council Member Fangary "has not spoken or communicated with the city manager for several months." This allegation was never publicly presented in the council chambers. To use the City's publicist to release a statement by one council member against another seems to be an abuse of power and contrary to our form of government, which again, gives no greater official authority to any one council member.

Please know I have great respect for each of our council members. I appreciate the time you give me whenever I have concerns or ideas to share. I like you all individually as people and as members of our community. More specifically, I consider Mayor Campbell a great consensus builder, and although I've not always seen eye to eye with Council Member Fangary, I always

appreciate his willingness to listen and engage. This isn't about personalities to me though. It's about principles. It's about the appearance of improprieties, including a possible violation of the Brown Act and a punitive measure without public discourse for a dissenting opinion. It's about the lack of transparency and public discussion, and the chiselling away at the goodwill you've developed and the confidence so many have in you.

In closing, I encourage you tonight to set things right and treat each other with the respect you, yourself, expect from your colleagues (i.e. the Golden Rule we teach our children to follow), and I encourage you to rescind the action taken on November 21, 2019, selecting a Mayor Pro Tem, and return to the normal rotation order.

Thanks,

Colin Cooley