



“Accountability”  
The Government Watchdog

# Vanguard

Los Angeles CA Vol VI  
Week of May 15, 2011

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[www.vanguardians.org](http://www.vanguardians.org)

818 243 1502

## GLENDALE FIRE COMES TO THE RESCUE

**Vanguardians Purpose:** To Inform, Educate, & Motivate the people for their Non-Violent Involvement, Engagement & Advocacy in local government.

### Weekly Glendale Vanguardians Meetings are coming back

However, we need your input.

It is our intention to invite a city official each week to engage in a dialogue.

Please send the following information to [info@vanguardians.org](mailto:info@vanguardians.org) or call 818 243 1502.

What day of the week would you prefer? What time of day? What location? Other comments:

Consensus: Fridays, 8AM

“I predict future happiness for Americans if they can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people under the pretense of taking care of them.” – Thomas Jefferson.

### CONTENTS:

#### News:

NY State Senator heads to jail  
\$200 K OC lifeguards  
Bell disability for cops  
San Bernardino officials indicted  
Pension data public  
Vallejo BK ending  
Real agenda bafflegab  
Watchdog training

#### 1) [Commentary](#)

[Barry Allen:](#)

[Herbert Molano:](#)

Surreal punch in the solar plexus  
Aboutasbad, California

#### 2) [Shout Box](#)

*City data – killer*  
*Bruce Philpott provides info*  
*Najarian vs. Drayman*

#### 3) [Public Records](#)

It can take 24 days

#### 4) [Vanguardians Watchdog Training](#)

#### 5) [The Insider](#)

Budget – Smoke & Mirrors

#### 6) [The Denizens on the Dais](#)

Split screen tells all



[Former New York State Senator Sentenced on Obstruction of Justice and Tax Charges](#)

[Lifeguarding in OC is totally lucrative; some make over \\$200k](#) High pay and benefits for lifeguards in

Newport Beach is the latest example of frustrating levels of compensation for public employees. More than half the city’s full-time lifeguards are paid a salary of over \$100,000 and all but one of them collect more than \$100,000 in total compensation including benefits. When thinking about career options with high salaries, lifeguarding is probably not one of the first jobs to come to mind. But it apparently should. In one of Orange County’s most desirable beach destinations, Newport Beach, lifeguards are compensated all too well; especially compared with the county annual median household income of \$71,735.

[California asks Bell to investigate police disability pensions](#) Los Angeles Times Former **Police Chief Randy Adams** negotiated an agreement with former Bell City Administrator Robert Rizzo when he was hired in 2009 that stipulated that he ...

## [Four Prominent San Bernardino Figures Indicted for Conspiracy to Commit Bribery in Multimillion-Dollar Scheme](#)

Three men were arrested Tuesday morning in San Bernardino County in a \$102 million bribery scheme. Former Supervisor Paul Biane, was arrested at 5 p.m. Tuesday. The four individuals were indicted yesterday by the San Bernardino County Grand Jury on 29 counts of conspiracy to commit bribery, misappropriation of public funds, improper influence, conflict of interest, and additional charges.

**"When public officials act corruptly, every Californian is their victim," said Attorney General Kamala D. Harris. "Let the San Bernardino indictments send a strong message that we will never tolerate this sort of abuse of the public trust."**

**Appellate court: Sacramento County must make pension data public** An appeals court ruled this morning that Sacramento County's retirement system must turn over pension data requested by The Bee.

**VALLEJO, Calif. WSJ** —City leaders say they expect Vallejo to emerge from bankruptcy protection by July as settlement talks with its creditors near final agreement, in a case being closely watched by the municipal-bond industry and by financially stricken cities across the country. Vallejo, which filed for Chapter 9 protection in 2008, represents the biggest municipal bankruptcy in California since Orange County filed in 1994 and one of the largest in U.S. history. In January, the city of 120,000 people some 30 miles northeast of San Francisco submitted a plan to exit from bankruptcy and began negotiating on a debt restructuring with major creditors. City leaders secured deals with Vallejo's largest debt holder—Union Bank of San Francisco—and bond insurer National Public Finance Guarantee Corp.

**Real agenda cloaked in government buzzwords and bafflegab** April 19, 2011 by **FAC** [4 Comments](#)

**BY DICK ROGERS**—When it came time last December to vote on a labor contract for hundreds of city workers, San Leandro leaders didn't scurry into a back room to make the politically hot decision in secret. That's the good news.

The bad news is that San Leandro, like other local governments, obscured its intent and minimized public participation in another way. Call it hiding in plain sight.

Instead of helping the public by spelling out the most salient contract provisions, the city's official agenda announced the upcoming vote like this:

**"Resolution Approving the Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] Between the City of San Leandro and the San Leandro City Employees' Association, Local 21 IFPTE, AFL-CIO [SLCEA] (provides for a two-year contract for the period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2012)."**

**Did that mean city workers were in line for raises or two years of wage stagnation? Was the City Council about to adopt pension reform or continue business as usual? What was the price tag for taxpayers?**

Civic Watchdog Training

Vanguardians has received a grant for materials and facilities to provide training and educational materials for training in the Sunshine Laws to prepare watchdogs for public advocacy in California local government. Contact Barry Allen at 818 243 1502 or email him at [info@vanguardians.org](mailto:info@vanguardians.org) for more information.

**SAMUEL ADAMS: It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires in people's minds.**

**Vanguard** is published independently by Vanguardians, Inc. Advocating for Accountability— Our vision is to live in a community where all people can enjoy accountability, integrity, effectiveness and responsiveness from our government.

## **1 COMMENTARY**

*You may agree or disagree with the views below. Feel free to comment on them. The commentaries do not necessarily reflect the position of Vanguardians*

**FROM THE PUBLISHER... SITTING IN THE CAT BIRD SEAT**



It has been a busy week for Vanguardians as we prepare documents to forward to various State and Federal agencies. Meanwhile fitting in speaking appearances at various governmental agencies including the City of Glendale CA.

Wednesday evening I was the guest of Marie Stein the host of Pasadena Now where we discussed issues of importance to the stakeholders in local government especially Pasadena and its neighboring cities. Just prior to airtime I heard from Vanguardians' Oxnard affiliate giving me the status on a criminal investigation there that may well be bigger than Bell.

Then there was a call about whether or not an elected official was living in his district while another questioned whether someone was complying with a city ordinance that required that a commissioner be a 'qualified elector.'

On the first issue we decided that the unintended consequence would have the non-resident replaced by someone with a potential felony hanging over him.

Our research on 'qualified elector' showed there is no definition in the State of California. However, one appellate court gave it a definition: 'registered voter.'

Listening to Mayor Laura rattle on about Vartan Gharpetian and his secret society, the GPOA, Glendale Property Owners Association, not to be confused with the other local GPOA, the Glendale Police Officers Association, made me recall having attended a first meeting at the demised Harvest Inn on Brand. The people there for the most part were Glendale Property Owners who were looking for recognition not provided by the Glendale Homeowners Coordinating Council (GHCC). I checked the state records and there, lo and behold, I found the not-so-secret society listed as an LLC.

If Ms Friedman was responding to the letter from a fictitious person who may have been sitting on the dais, shame on her. I wonder is she responds to the 'you won the Irish sweepstakes'.

Have you ever heard Mayor Laura ask about the \$20,000,000 in no bid contracts to Hopkins Construction whose CEO was the former Chair of the Planning Commission? Or the influence that Attorney John Gantus can peddle as a forever member of the Civil Service Commission?

Meanwhile she would turn to her right and look at Ara Najarian for his approval with an expression that said, "Did I do it right?"

Meanwhile she exercised her right as Mayor to reduce speaker time on budget issues that only Rafi Manoukian pushed for real answers on.

There are some serious data in the Willdan User Fee Report. One bit shows a city employee's annual, fully burdened cost to be in excess of \$800,000. It also showed that the Glendale Fire Department will be able to create a revenue stream of over \$60,000,000 if council adopts their fee recommendations.

So who are we mere unelected mortals to question Council, Staff and Consultants?

There is another question...who came up with a population of 207,000 when the 2000 population was 194,000 and the 2010 population was 191,000? Was this an attempt to get Fed money that will have to be repaid?

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*Most people want the benefits of an accountable government but are afraid to work for accountability or to support those that do often because they fear retaliation or are the beneficiaries of the largesse or corruption of government*

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### **SURREAL PUNCH IN THE SOLAR PLEXUS**



The last most demeaning display of cowardice I saw personally was after an altercation inside a high school bus. A bully had directed some derogatory words at the girlfriend of a weak kid who responded aggressively at the bully inside the bus. To avoid a real fight, both the kid and his girlfriend stepped out of the bus at an earlier stop only to watch the bully step off as well. The bus emptied to watch the confrontation. Outside on the sidewalk, the bully forced the weakling to drop to his knees and beg for mercy to avoid getting a beating. It was the most sickening display I'd ever seen until last Tuesday.

I was standing behind Captain Stavros head of the GFFA (Fire union) as the city council voted four to one to prevent open labor negotiations with the city's employee organizations. Rafi Manoukian was left by himself promoting transparency and accountability in the most critical process that is impacting the city budget – Salaries and Pensions. When the four-to-one vote was announced by the city clerk, Stavros flexed his left arm twice and signaled to two other fire fighters nearby their near total control of the city council. Four weaklings had dropped to their knees and asked for forgiveness from Stavros for even considering the motion. Stavros flexed his muscles and the four weaklings peed in their pants.

For the past week the city council had been meekly cutting services to the weakest segments of the city. Cut the hot meal to elderly shut-ins. Cut parks and recreation. Cut capital improvements. Cut library services, leave non-profits flailing in the wind. They were cutting services and staff everywhere while piling on the benefits to those who remained. One chart showed pay increases of less than one tenth of one percent while a fifty-three percent increase in benefits loomed so large that I was nearly speechless. But so were the council members. Mum was the operative word.

**Get this straight Glendale taxpayers, residents and stakeholders. Except for councilman Manoukian you have no one looking out for your interests.**

No one. Fees will go up. Utility rates will rise, services will go down and employee benefits will go through the stratosphere. Get it deep into your skull GCEA, your jobs will be on the line next as the GFFA and the GPOA and the GMA will drain the city's coffers for their handsome early retirements and fat overtime filled checks. Your brothers in organized labor would rather eat their young than give up their lucrative pensions and benefits.

And to think that I fought in Viet-Nam and put my life on the line to preserve American democracy from the communist threat. Never did I imagine that, forty years later, I would be watching first-hand as the country I so admired rots from the inside out.

**HERBERT MOLANO** [Click here FOR Glendale Today New content](#)

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## **ABOUTSBAD, CALIFORNIA**

Key coordinates: East of the 5 Freeway, South of the 134

Population: 191,719

Latitude: 34.1467 N

Longitude -118.2486 W

Leadership

Cojones: 20%

Wussies: 80%

Government: Quasi-representative democracy (Military-like oligarchy)

Motto: "Nobody knows who we are"

Climate: Mildly bigoted with warm, sunny summers.

Sister city: Abbottabad, Pakistan

Nestled in a small fertile glen near the large valley of San Fernando ruled by uniformed men under the guise of a democratic process. Deeply divided along ethnic lines where politicians get elected with support of the local elite military-like organizations. Financially unstable with major unfunded obligations that may bankrupt its ability to provide an adequate quality of life for its residents.

Long term history: Founded just over 100 years ago as a bedroom community with some local commerce and access to real cities adjacent to it. Residents with perennial identity problem. To the east a more culturally dynamic city. To the west a more commercially successful one. To the south a behemoth metropolis.

Recent history: In 2001 the civilian government approved a massive pension benefit to its local military allowing them to retire with 90% of their last highest annual pay that is often artificially enhanced in the last year of employment. The pension benefit is now sinking the city's finances but no one claims responsibility. Were the local rulers complicit or just simply inept?

The 2001 pension change called "3%@50" was justified on the high value of the pension system assets which were computed on the stock market bubble of 1998. Though by April of 2001 the stock market had crashed, the city leadership chose to bypass that inconvenient fact and justified the pension increases on a fantasy valuation that existed only on outdated paper.

Did the city management and their uniformed cohorts know of the asset valuation deception and choose to keep the elected civilian leadership in the dark? Or were they simply and outrageously incompetent?

As of May 13, 2011, residents of their sister city in Pakistan wonder if their military knew of the presence of Bin Laden and kept it a secret from everyone else, or were they just simply and outrageously incompetent and could not detect the dastardly presence right before their eyes?

Bin Laden in Pakistan, or "3%@50" in California. That's how sister cities perform. A weak civilian leadership with the real power wielded by men in uniform.

**HERBERT MOLANO** [Click here FOR Glendale Today](#) New content

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**The penalty good men and women pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men. PLATO**

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**TAKE ACTION – GET INVOLVED – BE INFORMED – SHARE VANGUARD – VOLUNTEER**

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## 2 Shout Box

ED – Letters published do not necessarily express the opinion of Vanguardians, Vanguard News Service, the organization or Barry Allen. Names are used only when requested. Initials are used as there are people, believe it or not, who are concerned with retaliation or have issues before a legislative body. Letters may be published that are signed and are not hate oriented.

Finally, the City has published some interesting data, at least in part, as recorded in the Willdan Report presented 9 May 11. At the time, I noted some interesting numbers, but it took until today, before I could read the entire report, and comment. Here are my observations.

See pages 36-41 the first appendix, which gives some (a lot of data is not included, but this was interesting to me) actual current "Fully Burdened Hourly Rate" (FBHR) for a number of positions.

First observation = there are 33 positions listed costing us more than \$200/hour.

Second observation = the highest FBHR is \$505.85 for a Police Lieut. in Public Works, Parking.

Third observation = the City Engineer FBHR is \$407.33, may not get OT; a Principal CE costs \$364.63, a Sr. CE costs \$342.10, and a Project Mgr (finally we have one??) costs \$257.28.

Fourth observation = in the Police Dept. the Chief costs us \$297.77, a Capt. \$251.46, and a Lt. \$206.73 (no parking tickets?).

Fifth observation = the Fire folk only cost us \$226.79 for a Marshal, and \$248.07 for a 'Preventer'.

Sixth observation = the poor under paid Head Librarian only costs us \$248.07.

Keep taking it to them! **Nick Friesen [ED - Those are all per hour costs.]**

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This past week there has been a flurry of emails between Glendale resident Carole Weling and Fire Captain Steve Stefani over issues involving workforce demographics and engine company staffing. For public information purposes, I have presented some information to help concerned citizens of Glendale understand the issue more clearly.

The actual percentage of fire versus medical calls is now closer to 10% vs 90%. The GFD uses a third kind of call to change the percentages. They are known as miscellaneous or service calls. The GFD, like all other fire departments, used to staff engine companies with three. Mrs. Weling's question asked how many trucks were staffed with four. That means truck companies and they have always been staffed with four, but prior to the 1990's, most fire departments still staffed their engine companies with three. Many have gone back to staffing with three while others, like the LAFD, have decided to close stations instead. Today in the City of Los Angeles, there are between 15 and 22 station closures each 24 hours. LAFD could keep all stations open if they staffed with three, but the union doesn't want to staff with three. They would rather continue staffing with four and close stations. It doesn't make sense but it has become a political issue and not one of fiscal prudence or common sense.

The reason why fire departments began adding a fourth firefighter on engine companies is based on a CalOSHA rule that requires four firefighters make up an entry team to extinguish a fire inside a structure. Fire managers, aided by the fire unions, argued that without the fourth firefighter on engine companies they would not be able to attack a burning building. The OSHA law was added in 1999 and that is when most fire departments began adding the fourth position. But because there are other functions to be performed at the initial stages of a structure fire, most fire departments acknowledge that the first arriving engine company, even if it is staffed with four, cannot assemble a four person entry team.

But the GFD continued this unsafe policy until August 3, 2009. On that date, a first arriving engine company attempted to comply with their policy by making an interior attack on a residential structure fire. Two firefighters made entry while the other two failed to form a rescue team required by CalOSHA. Rather than wait for the second arriving engine to muster the required resources to conduct a safe entry team, they violated their own internal policies, the National Fire Protection Association and CalOSHA. The result was one firefighter almost lost his life from exposure. He was in the Grossman Burn Ward for over three months. And, for the first time in modern history, the City of Glendale and the GFD was cited by CalOSHA for its failure to meet legal and lawful safety standards. If they do this in the future, according to CalOSHA, the GFD is subject to criminal prosecution for willful failure. If they staffed back to three, they would never again be in a position to try to make entry before the arrival of the second engine company. In the specific case, known as the Chilton fire, the second engine arrived in less than one minute, which is the average.

After this near-death incident, Chief Scoggins maintained that he was still going to keep the policy of attacking a structure fire if the first arriving engine company was staffed with four. Learning this in first person from the fire chief, I felt I had no other alternative but to bring this dangerous policy to the attention of CalOSHA. They conducted a thorough investigation and found the GFD in violation of their safety standard on entry teams. Having received a formal notice of violation, the GFD has now changed its policy and will conform to CalOSHA law.

The only problem for the GFD is that the change in policy removes the last element to their argument to staff engine companies with four firefighters. That was the prime reason given by fire management and its union to support the four-person staffing model. Now that the GFD has changed its policy on this issue, the final justification to staff with four has evaporated. They only need three to handle the medical back up calls and three are all that are needed to extinguish non-structure fires such as car and trash can fires.

Regarding Mrs. Weling's concerns as to why the GFD has not hired females or minorities, there is no pressure being applied to Chief Scoggins to do so. No one is holding him accountable for his budget, staffing policies or personnel selections. The GFD still assigns a \$200,000 (full cost burden) driver/aid for the battalion chiefs while other important services are being cut in other departments. The GFD would save \$6 million annually if it staffed engine companies with three and removed the driver aids for the battalion chief. **Bruce Philpott**

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I think it was very interesting to see that Councilman Najarian in the midst of his second term got a wading pool and one-termer Drayman got Rockhaven, MONA and Trader Joe's, a Laemmle Theater, a Komar Hotel and a new mixed use property. Can you explain this? ML [ED – Actually we can but have been asked to not speak to the issue. Suffice it to say that Najarian is independently wealthy.]

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### 3



### Public Information



“Just the facts”

We are awaiting public records requests for which can take up to 24 days.

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“All truths are easy to understand once they have been discovered; the point is to discover them.”- Galileo Galilei.

#### Agendas for the City of Glendale CA



Click to view the agenda [City Council](#) [Housing Authority](#) [Redevelopment Agency](#)

Meetings at City Hall (CH) are in the Council Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor at 613 E Broadway.

Meetings at the Municipal Services Bldg. (MSB) are in room 105 at 633 E Broadway.

Meetings at the Perkins Bldg (PB) are in the Conference Room at 141 N Glendale Ave.

Phone numbers are in area code 818 unless noted otherwise

#### Monday, May 16

Glendale Audit Committee – 8:00 am, PB 548-2085

Parks and Recreation Commission – 2:30 pm, CH 548-2000

**Tuesday, May 17** No Meetings Scheduled

#### Wednesday, May 18

Planning Hearing Officer-- 9:30 am, MSB 548-2140

Planning Commission – 5:00 pm MSB 548-2140

Town Hall Meeting for West Command Area – by  
Glendale Police Dept. --6:30 pm, Salem Lutheran  
Church Fellowship Hall, 1211 N. Brand Blvd.548-4818

Thursday, May 19

Design Review Board #1 – 5:00 pm, MSB 548-2140

Saturday, May 21

Annual Great American Clean Up – 8:30 am,  
100 N. Block of Isabel Street, 548-3972

Friday, May 20 No Meetings Scheduled

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## 4 *Vanguardians*

Vanguard archives are available by clicking – [Home Page of Open Government \(???\) in Glendale California](#)

People from all over LA County are asking for Vanguard and for Vanguardians training. We are expanding our coverage of LA County activities to accommodate the needs of the community.

Vanguard is following these lawsuits and others: the 5 GPD officers; Rodriguez; Gillespie; Hayn; Hunter; Mendoza. The cases cited are from the Randy Adams regime and continue under Chief DePompa.

### VANGUARDIANS needs your Continuing Financial Support

Please make checks payable to “VANGUARDIANS” Mail to: POB 11202 Glendale, CA 91226

Your contributions are tax deductible. You will receive a receipt for income tax purposes

- The [Ralph M Brown Act](#) mandates legislative bodies to provide each person an opportunity to speak and requires that agendas are posted and meetings are open.
- The [California Public Records Act](#) (PRA) is the tool to get information about the operations of government.
- The [Political Reform Act of 1974](#) allows public access to the financial reports of public officials.
- [www.maplight.org](http://www.maplight.org) to follow the money trail from special interests to the policy maker

To become more involved in your community, to learn how to use these important tools, call 818 243 1502

### More about **VANGUARDIANS**

Your tax-deductible contributions support the **mission** to:

- ❖ Provide, without bias, the timely dissemination of information and knowledge of government activities to the community and elected officials
- ❖ Build, train and empower a knowledgeable, aware and involved community-wide group to monitor the integrity, performance and responsiveness of elected officials and government operations
- ❖ Encourage, by example, a community free to exchange facts and opinions on public issues by facilitating open debate and discussion on the issues
- ❖ Seek accountability, effectiveness and responsiveness from our government to insure integrity, efficiency and cost effectiveness
- ❖ Make government acutely aware there is a community watching, monitoring and measuring their activities

#### **We, the people, have spoken...**

We want to be connected to the Government

We want to be an integral part of the government process – not just a deep pocket

We want to be aware of the crucial developments facing government that directly impact on our ‘quality of life’

We want to know that our money is being spent wisely and prudently

We want to leave a prospering community for our children and grandchildren

#### **Comments from the Community**

[From The Glendale News Press 12-29-2003](#), the beginning of Accountability in Glendale. Claiming that the city needs better oversight to monitor its finances and actions, [Barry Allen] is calling on city residents to form a watchdog group to look into everything, “I think an outside, independent agency that isn’t funded by the city; that’s funded by a grass-roots initiative, is what we really need.”

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Moral cowardice that keeps us from speaking our minds is as dangerous to this country as irresponsible talk. The right way is not always the popular and easy way. Standing for right when it is unpopular is a true test of moral character. [Margaret Chase Smith](#)

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**5** **the Insider** is written by city employees that care about the way the City is run. As they are concerned about retaliation, their identities are secret. Vanguard provides them the opportunity to have this forum. The comments are their own.



A preview of the budget presentation shows it for the magic show that it is, all smoke and mirrors. Hopefully you will be able to get at the more detailed information in the future, but the overviews have been distorted to project what Directors think the Council wants to hear. It is guaranteed that the council won't ask the pertinent question during the hearing, keeping those for the closed door, one on one meeting they are having with managers. Just remember that Parks numbers matched until it was discovered that there wasn't real money in the accounts.

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**"Politics is entertainment. It's a sport. It's for the well groomed and well heeled. The impeccably dressed. Party animals. Politicians are interchangeable." - Bob Dylan**

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## **6 THE DENIZENS ON THE DAIS**

Mayor Friedman is certainly not an advocate for transparency in government allowing Herbert Molano 3 minutes to speak on just one issue in an eight hour budget study session. Then at the regular council meeting she proved to be even an inadequate inquisitor grilling Vartan Gharpetian over the GPOA that she knew little or nothing about, calling it a secret society like maybe the Masonic Order with their secret handshake.

Najarian was enraptured with the Mark Lassiter letter that perhaps he wrote or collaborated on. He quizzed Vanguardians Barry Allen on anonymous letters containing contact information for another person. Allen said that coupled with unsupported and unverified 'facts' it should be trashed. Allen said that when he received the letter he did some checking to locate Mr. Lassiter, a person that doesn't exist in Glendale.

Weaver attacked Manoukian's pick for a commission while no one ever mentioned Weaver's cozy relationship with one of his nominees. Maybe people should ask Mr. Weaver if he ever paid for the plans for his addition. Ask to see the cancelled check.

Quintero made the right decision stating that the nominating council member is responsible for his nominee. Of course Quintero only patted his appointee Weisman on the back for supporting council issues that are outside the jurisdiction of the city council.

Manoukian needs the support of two other council members or this city will be in even worse financial straits. Manoukian has a website that he has made many important city documents available. [www.manoukian.us](http://www.manoukian.us)

City Attorney Scott Howard says 'Sayonara Glendale' in August

### **Overall rating for the week ending May 14, 2011:**

Weaver	Quintero	Najarian	Friedman	Manoukian
<b>D</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>A</b>

*"You can't win an argument with a Moron, an Idiot, or a Political Bigot" Kraft*

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