



“Accountability”
Glendale’s Watchdog

Come to City Council Tuesday – Ask the Council why they are giving \$6.5M in pay raises, not including overtime or benefits, when we are in an economic downturn, when gas is \$5 gal, when food costs have gone up and jobs are non-existent – when homeowners will be faced with more bond debt in order to pay these salaries.

Vanguard
Weekly News Vol III
Week of June 15 2008
City of Glendale, CA Edition
www.vanguardians.org

Yousefian Displays Backbone

The four stages of Vanguardians “First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.”
Mahatma Gandhi describing the stages of establishment resistance to a winning strategy of nonviolent activism

When WE are complacent THEY win!

Convention: if the content is underlined and blue, it provides a link to additional resources

We accept no funding from any governmental agency or political institution. Your support of Vanguardians is critical in winning a battle we cannot afford to lose. All donations are tax-deductible. Vanguardians is a 501(c)3 charity.

NEWS

Yousefian stood alone when it came to hard questions on the budget and \$6.5M pay increases. Mayor Drayman is quoted in a local newspaper that he will be happy with a 4-1 vote. Yousefian questions how the City can operate with just \$40,000 in contingency funds. Just Tuesday the Council approved spending \$120,000 for the City’s negligence in tearing up PacBell cables.

According to GNP, Maria Rochart’s New Horizon’s facility at 746 S Glendale has defaulted on FY 02-03 property taxes in the amount of \$18,000+. Will the CDBG funds get there on time?

The \$40,000 worth of City funded shuttle buses from the parking structures to the Americana are running empty. The concept was good (there was no bus service on Memorial Day). Where is project management?

Route 13 – the Glenoaks Canyon exclusive...Council and the public are still awaiting the ridership numbers...ever since January

Good news Orange County – Sandra Hutchens is the new Sheriff brought in to clean up the mess left by indicted Sheriff Carona. Sources said they want to break the stranglehold of the ‘Good ole boys’.

Oops...not one but two MISDIG telephone cable cuts. City wanted to fight. Lost. \$120,000. Negligence.

He that is of the opinion money will do everything may well be suspected of doing everything for money. --Benjamin Franklin

WEAVER WATCH

CALL: Last week there was a response to the article on Weaver having the City pay for his Glendale Chamber of Commerce mixers even before the Vanguard Weekly was published. Did you make that up? [ED – A draft of Vanguard is sent to our content advisors each week. One of those advisors felt the necessity to respond, thus it was included.

City already has an ordinance for Mr. Weaver: 9.18.030 Prohibition against certain forms of aggressive solicitation. Aggressive Solicitation prohibited. It is unlawful for any person to solicit, ask or beg in an aggressive manner in any public place.

City Attorney protects Weaver by refusing to disclose where the GWP \$5,000 went. However, it discloses the same type information regarding other Council members. A bit of favoritism?

LETTERS: I just got through watching the video stream on the city council agenda having to do with Weaver and his association with several non-profits and not so non-profits relating to the Glendale Rose Parade Float. I heard accusations of Pay to Play which conjures the worst of east coast politics. Kudos to Yousefian for showing integrity in exposing this real or appearance of misconduct by Weaver. Here we have a city councilman who is so desperate to raise money for his pet projects that he calls the big developers who have business before the city to put the squeeze on for amounts ranging up to five digit figures. This pattern of aggressive solicitation has caused a breach in Weaver's ability to continue serving as a council member, without having addressed the issue of where did all the money go. Isn't Weaver, who lives on a

fixed government income, undergoing a sizeable expansion to his home? The only way he can redeem himself is for him to open his books and let the public see where the \$80,000 to \$100,000 has gone over the last five years. But, according to Weaver, his accountant has told him that he doesn't have to show the public his records of where the money went. Until he does, I find his behavior to be repugnant, unacceptable and the last straw.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEAVER, SHOW US THE BOOKS!!! MB

Here is how Weaver can simply get out from under this enormous cloud of suspicion of impropriety and wrong-doing. All he has to do is make public three little columns of numbers:

1. Column # 1. The total amount of money he has collected on behalf of his solicitations and other donations made through one of the organizations -- non-profit or otherwise -- that he created.
2. Column # 2. An itemized list of exactly where the money went. This should equal the amount brought in under Column # 1. Along with cancelled checks
3. Column # 3. Itemize miscellaneous expenses.

The total of columns # 2 and 3 should equal the amount in Column # 1.

Anything less will continue to draw deep suspicion of Weaver's motives and intent, regardless of what the city council does in the future to curtail such outlandish behavior that is now and will continue to be an embarrassment to the council as a whole. But the council cannot clean up what has already been done. Only Weaver can clear the cloud. The question is, will he? DW

Birds of a Feather – a benefactor to Miss Asia: According to an article published in August in the Beaverton Valley Times in Oregon, Donald L. Platz, one of the company founders (Dorn-Platz), voluntarily surrendered his California real estate license in May after a state Real Estate Department investigation concluded Dorn Platz & Co. moved \$622,000 in clients' trust funds through seven bank accounts, including one for Dorn Platz Properties, in order to make it appear as though the company was financially sound. Dorn Platz & Co. maintained "a money loop of their 48 property-owner clients' trust funds wherein trust funds were transferred from Dorn Platz & Co. to its unlicensed property development affiliate Dorn Platz Properties Inc. and then transferred it back in a circular transaction for use as a slush fund involving a minimum of 1,000 unauthorized wire transfers," the report stated. The transfers were in violation of California real estate regulations and investigators concluded the conduct of Dorn Platz & Co. officials "constitutes negligence and incompetence."

ELIE WIESEL It may well be that our means are fairly limited and our possibilities restricted when it comes to applying pressure on our government. But is this a reason to do nothing? Despair is not an answer. Neither is resignation. Resignation only leads to indifference, which is not merely a sin but a punishment

All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is for good women & men to do nothing

If you have issues with the City and you fear retaliation, bring them to Vanguardians and we'll share them with the appropriate department assuring your anonymity.

City Council

Council	6-10-08	Cum	Contact info
Drayman	C	B	jdrayman@ci.glendale.ca.us;
Najarian	D	C	anajarian@ci.glendale.ca.us;
Quintero	C	B	fquintero@ci.glendale.ca.us;
Weaver	C	D	dweaver@ci.glendale.ca.us;
Yousefian	A	B	byousefian@ci.glendale.ca.us;

Barry spoke on [pay raises and budget](#) Decorum on the part of the Council was lacking. Najarian called people that spoke to the Vallejo bankruptcy vultures. Drayman said he was under attack for the lack of interpretation services and spent our time vindicating himself with a bit of (yawn) [entertainment](#). Once again attempted to vindicate himself after a dissident spoke against the future expense of the Rockhaven White Elephant. Weaver for the most part, kept silent. Quintero did his best to shore up his previous budget faux pas. Yousefian was far and away the star of the show with his incisive and insightful questions and responses.



© Stephan Pastis/Diät. by UFS, Inc.

City Manager Shares his management style with the Council



A Glendale Vulture swooping in for the rot

The City Council needs to get young people involved in the governmental process. More than inviting 3rd and 5th graders to sit in the Council Chambers. We have a responsibility to educate our future generations with the awesome power they would have as legislators. Pauline Field is the visionary behind the birth of the Commission on the Status of Women. Part of that vision was to require that there be appointed two student Commissioners each year something that has inspired young people (high school and college) to become aware and involved. The challenge to the City Council is to pass a Resolution that will require every Commission and Board to appoint two student Commissioners. Go for it. Leave more to the future than the bond bills from the past.

FIRE DEPARTMENT



The GFD gave away a 100' aerial ladder truck valued at \$280,000 to Rosarito Beach, Mexico. They did keep its mate for back up. Meanwhile did they check with Parks, GWP or DPW to see if they could add that asset to their arsenal? Maybe they could have donated it to the Glendale Community College for their firefighters training program. The mismanagement continues. Instead of acknowledging Bruce Philpott's numbers were correct they decided to start operating with a three man engine in Chevy Chase Canyon because, as we understand, it was pay-back for challenging them. If they thought Philpott was wrong and just wanted to test it, they would have pulled someone from a station with a truck and an engine company, making it 7 instead of 8 firemen.

FLORYNCE KENNEDY You've got to rattle your cage door. You've got to let them know that you're in there, and that you want out. Make noise. Cause trouble. You may not win right away, but you'll sure have a lot more fun.

JOHN F. KENNEDY Without debate, without criticism, no administration and no country can succeed -- and no republic can survive

Vanguard is published independently by *Vanguardians*; Advocating for Accountability— Our vision is to live in a community where all people, regardless of geography, background or economic status, can enjoy accountability, integrity, effectiveness and responsiveness from our elected officials and each of the city's departments, through grass roots involvement, engagement and advocacy.

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1 **Commentary** *You may agree or disagree with the views below. Feel free to comment on them.*

Commentary is available in Spanish

"Qui non intelligit aut discat aut taceat" ***"Who does not understand should either learn, or be silent."***

One of the Vanguardians advisors disagrees with me over the concept of, 'just get out the vote' versus understanding the issues and the stance of the individual you are planning on voting for. Unfortunately we have the propensity of voting for an incumbent, someone we know, a cultural name, someone in the same business or our next-door neighbor. We have been acculturated to just vote. You know, because you voted. The next thing that doesn't have the same values and you want all the issues, not just the ones that affect accountability issues, fiscal responsibilities there will be candidate forums. Attend as many as you can to learn if the candidate sticks to their message or panders to the crowd; look at who are the financial supporters and don't bother with slate mailers or fancy 4-color mailers. Vanguard will be publishing a rating based on questionnaires we send to candidates. I know this is early but it provides a jump start for those that are looking at the issues. If you don't know the issues and the stance...don't vote!



I made a commitment to attend and speak at a DRB meeting and unfortunately other meetings ran longer than I had anticipated. Had I been there, this is what I would have said: "We are a Nation of Laws...not of humankind. Sometimes we agree with the law other times not. The laws are made by people in order to prevent chaos. Laws are made under a 'majority rules' arrangement in a

democracy. The minority still has rights. Those that don't approve of the laws can lobby to change them or appeal to a higher authority, in this case from the DRB to the City Council. Attrition also brings about change, those in the majority may not stay the majority and the laws will change. That being said, for those that don't agree with the decision today, they have options.

Jesse Unruh said, **"If you can't drink a lobbyist's whiskey, take his money, sleep with his women and still vote against him in the morning, you don't belong in politics."**



The most profitable and the best run ship in the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line (RCCL) is the Monarch of the Seas that sails out of San Pedro twice a week to Baja California.

Pauline Field and I have taken that route many times over the past 10 years and when we were aboard for R & R on the cusp of June we were pleasantly surprised. The food was excellent; the service excellent, the ship was clean and comfortable for the 2500 passengers. Debarkation on Monday morning started at 6:30 AM, something that just a few years ago didn't start until almost 9. Captain Karin Stahre-Janson is the 39 year old woman Master of this ship. The only woman Master of any major passenger cruise ship. I asked her how she was able to get all these accolades in just two years. Her answer was she had a fantastic, innovative,

customer oriented executive staff. A staff that wanted feedback from the passengers. Pauline did an in-depth interview with Captain Karin for the [Equality Standard](#) a publication of [Fifty-Fifty Leadership](#). Pauline and I were so impressed that we will once again bring our [Fieldworks](#) brand of Seminars at Sea to the Monarch of the Seas. For more information, [click here](#). This whole issue is one that the all male City Council and testosterone charged City Management should look at. A lone WOMAN whipped up the troops and gave them their marching orders. She demanded measureable results while giving the Managers the support instead of micromanaging them. Results? Profits instead of Deficits. Expanded revenue centers using existing facilities. (By the way, their meeting facilities are superb.)

Four men in uniform troop up the hill looking for permission to look for fire hazards. Permission granted. They walk around and say everything is ok and head down the hill. It took four firefighters when it could have taken only two or better yet, one for each lot in the canyons. "Gotta keep 'em together, might get a call," is fire management's mantra. Send two guys out in a utility vehicle while leaving two back at the station with the engine. Get a call, both vehicles should be there simultaneously. The same thing happens when it's off to the market to buy victuals. Just a management decision. Compare that decision with that of Police management. A tree fell across Chevy Chase blocking all lanes at 4AM. The police arrive in a two person car. Next thing that happens is that another police car comes to....pick up the second person, take him back to the police station to get another car and continue patrol. That is solid management where the direction comes from the top down, not the union up.

Your continued and ongoing support for Guardians and other civic watchdog groups is money well spent to bring accountability back to local government. But we can't do it alone.

WE NEED YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE FINANCIAL [HELP](#) TODAY For all of us to have a better quality of life.

The only way to make sure people you agree with can speak is to support the rights of people you don't agree with. [ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON](#)

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

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](#)

2 Potpourri

[WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS](#) Restriction of free thought and free speech is the most dangerous of all subversions. It is the one un-American act that could most easily defeat us.

Letters & Email

ED – Letters published do not necessarily express the opinion of Guardians, this publication, the organization or Barry Allen. Names are used only when requested. Letters will not be published that aren't signed and/or are hate oriented.

On June 3, 2008, during the morning budget study session, in response to the issue of Weaver's involvement with aggressive solicitations of major developers who had business before the city and accusations of Pay to Play, Quintero said, "I am not interested in the pay to play issue. Here we have a councilman who said right on camera that he doesn't care about unethical behavior of one of his colleagues. He said he was only interested in increasing volunteerism for the Glendale Rose Float program. He was then told that every year they have more volunteers than they need. Two Oops for Mr. Quintero: one for his failure to see the significance of Weaver's unethical

behavior of putting the squeeze on wealthy developers who have millions of dollars in business before the city council for approval, and two, for his lack of knowledge that the City's Rose Parade Float organization is more than flush with volunteers. Oops, a third time for Quintero. Excuse me, but after I looked again at the video stream, I discovered that Quintero make a third Oops! When he went down the list of possible cuts to the police department, he said that he supported the elimination of the three police officers that are assigned to the three middle schools as School Resource Officers. He then said that he would vote to keep the Police Athletic League

(PAL) and Star programs in place. After he was told by Deputy Police Chief DePompa that the PAL and Star programs were run by the middle school Resource Officers and would have to be eliminated along with the staffing positions, Quintero tried to look competently informed, but had to acknowledge his poor understanding of relationships to officers assignments and programs. He then embarrassingly rescinded his support of the two programs that are conducted by the School Resource Officers. TE

Mayor Drayman would rather have a Council member on the dais who has all the underpinnings of corruption personified than dysfunction. Of course, in Weaver he has both. Apparently for Drayman, decorum is better than honesty. Closed government rather than open. Drayman has brought discussion and debate in the forecourt...but what about the backroom. I fear that Drayman is just another Dave Weaver. He has his constituency; wanted a TV show; is very involved with the Montrose Park people and delivers for his friends. He apparently doesn't like you [Barry Allen] because of your fearlessness and tenacity. KC

Barry Allen and Herbert Molano:

Very nice presentations to the Council regarding the 08-09 Budget, even if it is pretty much after the fact that their minds are already made up. As long as they set the agenda, gather the data and their forces, prior to making each issue public, the public will be in "catch up mode". You two have given the public a more balanced view, and are working hard to get and keep even with our politicians. Keep up the good work. FN

That Yousefian has cojones when it comes to standing up for the residents. Last year he did it for the Glenoaks Canyon homeowners and was removed from the airport commission. This year he has the audacity to challenge Management of the budget and pay raises. At least there is one Councilman that stands up for us. Weaver on the other hand steals from the City, makes developers pay for his vote and then gets a warm reception from his colleagues. Drayman didn't even want to get involved. Tsk, Tsk Mayor Drayman...and to think I voted for you. HJ

CALLS: Who did Weaver or whichever organization give scholarships to? Call Weaver 818 298 6880.

Is Glendale getting less patriotic? I see far fewer City flags flying. Doesn't the American flag flying at night need to be lighted?

The people I know in Glendale who want an accountable government are afraid of being retaliated against by the City.

What's this about that you have more than one social security number? [ED Several years ago, Maria Rochart of City-funded New Horizons had a private investigator investigate me to have information to discredit me after I did a public records request to determine who paid for her trip to Minneapolis that Mr. Weaver was scheduled to go to. She then circulated that report with certain correct information (name, birthdate, social security number, mother's maiden name) to certain City Council members and other community members. During that time my identity was stolen and bank accounts were stolen. A police report was made and there was no follow-up investigation by the GPD. The detective said that his boss didn't want to go there. This report was made a part of the CDBG hearings but still they continued to pour money into New Horizons.)

LINKS [Click here for Vanguard Archives by Hal Weber-- Open Government Guide](#) www.vanguardians.org [Check Zip Code Demographics](#) [Global Incident Map updated every 5 minutes](#) for a free copy of waste of taxpayer money, read [Piglet Book 2007](#) . -- [ZIPskinny - Get the Skinny on that ZIP](#) [Vanguard in the Daily News](#) [The Glendale California 100K Club](#)

Just enter your zip code when requested and you can find out which gas stations have the [cheapest prices](#) (and the highest) on gasoline in your zip code area. It's updated every evening.

Links have now been added to connect you DIRECTLY to Streaming Video of all four Budget Study Sessions:
[The Glendale California Budget](#)

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

Monday, June 16

Public Meeting: Regency Plaza Project Draft Environmental Impact Report – 6:00 pm, Room 106, MSB,

Tuesday, June 17

2:30 pm Glendale Housing Authority -- Glendale Redevelopment Agency City

Special Meeting – City Council RE: Montrose Work Plan

Joint Meeting – Glendale City Council/Glendale Redevelopment Agency RE: Downtown Specific Plan

6:00 pm - Glendale City Council + **Joint Meeting** – Glendale City Council/Redevelopment Agency/Housing Authority RE: Smoking Prohibitions

Thursday, June 19

Arts & Cultural Commission – 2:00 pm, City Council Chambers, City Hall, 613 E. Broadway, Glendale. 548-2000

Glendale Design Review Board #2 -- 5:00 pm, Room 105, Municipal Services Building, 633 E. Broadway, Glendale. 548-2140

ARTICLES

Los Angeles Wave

Chamber of Commerce still at odds with city over audit

A dispute between the Chamber of Commerce and the City Council has reached a bitter stalemate, with the business organization refusing to submit to an audit and the key question left unanswered: how has it spent the money it received from the city? For more than two decades, the chamber has worked with the city to promote businesses and to stimulate Lynwood's lackluster economy. The city has paid an annual fee for the chamber's services — \$95,000 a year since at least 1998 — and during that time, the chamber has frequently submitted financial reports and openly disclosed its activities.

Sacramento Bee

State access law ignored by many local agencies

Ever wonder how much money your mayor got from developers? Want to know how much your city councilman spent on his last election bid? Want to find out this information without having to supply personal information about yourself? Well, tough luck if you live in some communities. Seven out of 13 city halls and county election offices around the region failed a Bee test of a state law that guarantees public access to the financial disclosure forms for elected officials.

3 Open Government



The United States Attorney's Office Central District of California

"This office is committed to identifying and prosecuting individuals who violate the public's trust," said United States Attorney Thomas P. O'Brien. "Public corruption is one of the top priorities of the Justice Department, and my prosecutors will vigorously pursue these types of cases to preserve the integrity of government at all levels."

Thanks to www.CFAC.ORG City Salary Increases in Closed Session

The California Brown Act states that, except for closed sessions to meet with the city's negotiator in bona fide labor relations situations concerning represented and unrepresented employees, "closed sessions may not include a discussion of or action on proposed compensation except for a reduction of compensation that results from the imposition of discipline." Gov't Code section 54957(b)(4). Consequently, the city's plan to discuss salary increases in closed session would appear to violate the Brown Act, and that violation would not be cured by stating after the closed session what action was taken. As the California Court of Appeal has said, "Salaries and other terms of compensation constitute municipal budgetary matters of substantial public interest warranting **open discussion**" *San Diego Union v. City Council*, 146 Cal. App. 3d 947, 955 (1983).

Sacramento Bee

Editorial: Let Public in on government labor deals

Peter Scheer, who heads the California First Amendment Coalition, has a novel idea: End the secrecy surrounding local government labor contract negotiations. You can understand the logic and the urgency behind his idea when you consider the situation in Vallejo. That city is filing for bankruptcy. Why? Local officials approved salary and benefits costs for current employees and retirees that are more than the city can afford. Those decisions were made during and in closed sessions.

Brown Act re: CLOSED MEETINGS

4 Vanguardians

Vanguardians Speakers Bureau provides speakers that are not restricted, restrained or prohibited from speaking candidly on their topics -- there is no approval required from the City Officials.

1. Bruce Philpott on answers to the Glendale Fire Department lack of accountability.
2. Dr. Richard Espiritu on ADA compliance. 90% of our population is affected by disability
3. Barry Allen – How accountability through advocacy helps bridge the gap between the public and government; the California Sunshine Laws – Open Meetings, Public Records and Public Officials' Financial and Conflict of Interest reporting requirements -- Financial Red Flags

These knowledgeable people are available for your organization, service club, homeowners or neighborhood associations. Call Vanguardians 818 243 1502 or email us at info@vanguardians.org to book them

**Vanguardians need your financial help to do our best for Glendale
Rides needed for seniors to attend City Council Meetings**

VANGUARDIANS

Please make checks payable to "VANGUARDIANS" Mail to: POB 11202 Glendale, CA 91226
Contributions are tax deductible – You will receive a receipt for income tax purposes

Vanguard1@charter.net to subscribe to the Weekly News on issues that impact Glendale. **The media with a voice; the organization that gets results you want; we encourage and support advocacy, involvement and engagement with government.**



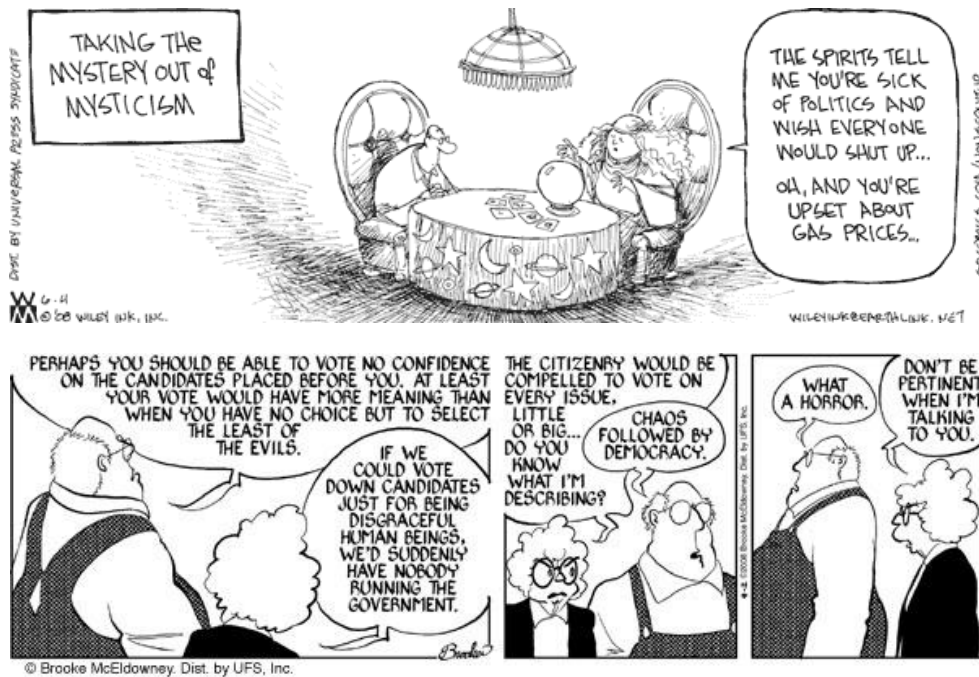
5 the Insider is a digest of information from city employees that care about the way the City is run. As they are concerned about retaliation, Vanguard provides them the opportunity to have this forum. Their identities are kept confidential. The comments are their own.

In the salary discussions, it's funny that Starbird would talk about maintaining salaries to attract good quality front line staff because it is the front line staff that is constantly looking to leave for better working environments. Management in Glendale is old school as they love to rule by power. It is rare for the front line staff to get praise but common to be blamed. The front line folks that worked so hard in GWP, Streets, Building and Safety, Planning and Fire to get the Americana open on time while the managers get praised, but not the front line staff. The folks at Caruso did a far better job of appreciating the City's front line staff doing the work far better than any manager in the City.

It looks like the City will be looking to raise a lot more fees in the coming months and they may not be in full compliance with State Law. You can expect VANGUARD to be on top of the issue when it raises its head.

HARRY S TRUMAN Once a government is committed to the principle of silencing the voice of opposition, it has only one way to go, and that is down the path of increasingly repressive measures, until it becomes a source of terror to all its citizens and creates a country where everyone lives in fear.

6 Humor



7 JUMP

Let me entertain you
 Let me make you smile
 Let me do a few tricks
 Some old and some new tricks
 I'm very versatile
 And if you're real good

I'll make you feel good
 I want your spirits to climb
 So let me entertain you
 And we'll have a real good time, yes sir
 We'll have a real good time

Barry spoke during the Public Hearing on the Budget:
 "According to City Manager Starbird we need to increase revenue. Not decrease spending. Bruce Philpott gave a reasoned method of reducing costs by \$10,000,000 a year and CM Quintero, Najarian and Weaver said. 'No'. It has only been in the last few years that Glendale has 4 FFs on an apparatus. Meanwhile there is less than \$1,000,000 a year in structure damage. A sad day when we let the firefighters and other unions dictate the budget.

The public comes to the City Council and says, "Buy Rockhaven", "secure Brand Park", "buy open space – keep the developers out", and the Council responds by doing that. The public says, "We want fiscal accountability – change GFD staffing form 4 to 3", and three Council members say, "No".

The City Manager says we have to pay more to get good personnel. Today, no cities are hiring. This is an opportunity to cut back on pay and benefits.

We did creative financing to repair the MSB by encumbering assets because the money just was not there.

Here are some specific recommendations:

- Consolidate HR functions in the Fire Department under Matt Doyle to reduce redundancy.
- Taxicab licensing involves three City Departments – Transportation, City Clerk and the Police Department. They need to be under one roof just like tree permit applications were combined by Parks and Public Works
- The Wellness operation covers property rental, a nurse a doctor and contract personnel as well as medical equipment and drug purchases. Either lease out the function or contract with our three excellent hospitals.

Barry spoke on employee pay raises: Today we will start the process to grant employees about \$6M in raises. According to the City Manager in today's GNP "It doesn't help the public, if we can't hire frontline service people," he said. "If you're not keeping up, and you're falling behind, then that becomes a pretty deep hole to climb out of." With a 5% to 8% employee turnover rate, and a current stock of 100 vacant positions, attracting a talented

pool of candidates is a major concern, city executives said.

The salary increases were based in large part on paid surveys of 13 other similarly sized cities in Southern California.

The best frontline employees: The Fire Department can't keep overtime controlled; the finance department double booked revenue and somehow added \$30M to last year's capital outlay and had to bring in the City's Internal Auditor to get the operation on track so there would be a budget, the tree fiasco, costly losing litigation and a water department that gives money to a City Councilmember. Maybe the time has come to measure up to our own City rather than another City.

We have seen how of the 4 City employee associations only the firefighters union stands in place of their management. Rather than become another Vallejo, let's ask these union representatives to cut back 90% of their contract pay raises and benefit increases.

When contract negotiations begin for the fire department in January, let's make them open as allowed by the Brown Act rather than secret.

Thanks for this information on the Brown Act re: CLOSED MEETINGS

Closed meetings are the exception and permitted only if they meet defined purposes and follow special requirements (§§ 54954, 54954.2, 54954.5, 54957.7).

EVEN AT CLOSED MEETINGS...

Special public notice and agenda requirements apply (§§ 54954, 54954.2, 54954.5, 54957.7).

All actions taken and all votes in closed session must be publicly reported orally or in writing within 24 hours (§ 54957.1(b)), and copies of any contracts or settlements approved must be made available promptly (§ 54957.1(b),(c)).

What if...

CLOSED MEETINGS MAY BE HELD FOR: Personnel -- Only to discuss the appointment, employment, performance evaluation, discipline, complaints about or dismissal of a specific employee or potential employee (§ 54957). The employee may request a public meeting on any charges or complaints.

But closed sessions are NOT ALLOWED for discussing:

- general employment
- independent contractors not functioning as employees
- salaries
- the performance of any elected official, or member of the board
- the local agency's available funds
- funding priorities or budget

Pending Litigation -- Only if open discussion "would prejudice the position of the agency in the litigation." The litigation must be named on the posted agenda or announced in open session unless doing so would jeopardize the board's ability to service process on an unserved party or conclude existing settlement negotiations to its advantage. (§ 54956.9).

To qualify, the agency must:

- be a party to pending litigation (§ 54956.9(a))
- OR expect, based on certain specified facts, to be sued (§§ 54956.9(b)(1),(b)(2))
- OR expect to file suit itself (§ 54956.9(c))

Labor Negotiations -- Only to instruct the agency's identified negotiator on compensation issues (§ 54957.6). (Note: school districts are covered by the Rodda Act, Govt. Code §§ 3540-3549.3)

Property Negotiations -- Only to discuss, with an agency's identified bargaining agent, price or payment terms. The parcel, negotiators and the prospective seller or purchaser must be on the agenda. (§ 54956.8) Final price and payment terms must be disclosed when the actual lease or contract is discussed for approval. (§ 54957.1(a))

Others -- License applications for people with criminal records (§ 54956.7); threats to public services or facilities; (§ 54957) insurance pooling (§ 54956.95).

What to do if...

8 Coming attractions

Saving money for the City -- a vision. Stop being afraid of your elected officials