



“Accountability”
Glendale’s Watchdog

Question of the week:
Are you ready for a change?

Answer from last week: \$800M P&I!

Vanguard
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Week of September 13, 2009
City of Glendale, CA Edition
www.vanguardians.org
818 243 1502

WEBER WINS! QUINTERO LOSES

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 advocacy



Mayor Quintero plays fast and loose with the Brown Act while City Attorney sits back without comment. [09-06-09, Glendale Mayor Frank Quintero Eliminates “OR DURING” from the Brown Act!](#) The proper venue for complaint is the District Attorney, not the City Attorney whose job is to protect City Officials, not the public. The LA DA info is: <http://da.co.la.ca.us/pid.htm>. Feel confident to discuss these issues with Barry Allen.

Mike Mohill turned his speaker card in after the Agenda item was being discussed and Mayor Quintero allowed the presentation even though the Mayor had previously mandated that no speaker cards would be accepted after an agenda item was being discussed. Opengovernment website operator Hal Weber sent complaints to the City Attorney, The District Attorney and the State Attorney General about Quintero’s flagrant disregard of the Brown Act. Apparently the message came across loud and clear.

Monday September 14 is GPD Sgt. Mardikian’s day in Los Angeles Federal Court for a discrimination lawsuit. Council members and City Manager along with former Council member Yousefian and former Police Chief Adams will also be awaiting their call. This should be a reminder to the City Manager of his last days in West Covina and a lawsuit that cost that City over \$1,000,000 because of a similar suit. Honey Vs Distelrath and Starbird 98-55219. If three CCMs get together at the courthouse, is that a Brown Act violation?

City of LA: The Board of Fire and Police Pension Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles is seeking proposals for a Health Services Consultant to conduct benefits analyses and audits for health plans covering approximately 13,000 retirees and beneficiaries.

City Manager Starbird made the right call regarding the compensation of the Pelanconi voting bloc on not giving in to their ME ME ME demands. Where was the compensation for the Brand Blvd. merchants when the street rebuilding took what seemed to be years and merchants went out of business? What about compensation for night workers when the noisy Beeline buses drive by? Or missing an appointment when you are tied up by a funeral procession or a sobriety checkpoint or a fire engine blocking the street? CM Starbird is right. Where will it stop? It won’t because it’s OPM.

Perhaps, as we are being charged the highest utility rates maybe we should consider giving a break to those who are impoverished.

Candidate 460 forms through June 30, 2009 are available by email in an Excel Spreadsheet Workbook from Vanguardians.

FPPC ruled on the Ara Najarian conflict of interest complaint filed in 2005...almost four years later.

I am a legislator. I write the laws therefore I can wrong them. Throckmorton P. Aardvark III

Vanguardians is planning a 250,000 opt-in email campaign for California residents to encourage them to become informed, involved and interested in accountable government. The email will direct them to www.vanguardians.org where your advertisement will be seen. Call Barry Allen if you want to have your business seen by ½ million eyeballs. Get a jump start today by calling now. This is a limited offer.

Sacred cows make the best hamburgers. Abbie Hoffman, political activist

**September 18 FRIDAY BUSINESS BREAKFAST
See you at Foxy’s at 7AM**

Advertisement

Vanguard is published independently by Vanguardians, Inc. 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 government department, through grass roots involvement, engagement and advocacy.



LAUREL MILLER IS ON VACATION THIS WEEK

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



CONTENTS:

- 1) [Commentary](#)
- 2) [Shout Box](#)
- 3) [Public Records](#)
- 4) [Vanguardians](#)
- 5) [The Insider](#)
- 6) [Humor or not](#) Dark
- 7) Neighborhood News Briefs

Public Officials are manufacturers - many make excuses - some make trouble - only a handful make things happen www.betterpublicoofficials.com

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

From the Publisher... THE TIME HAS COME



I have talked about the unsustainability of government officials' wages, benefits and pensions along with the masive bond debt that Glendale has taken on ala the City Manager with the acquiescence of the City Council. I have touched on the continuation of the 'ME' generation that perpetuates the unsustainability of wanting more for less. For instance as we look at the construction of the I-5 flyover at the I-134 the residents want compensation for the noise. Burbank residents that chose to live near the airport wanted and got noise mitigation in and for their homes. People in Montrose demanded the purchase of the Rockhaven property and they got it. We have no idea how much Rockhaven will cost in the end game.

We hear the accusations that the developer community is taking the City for a ride getting all sorts of incentives, for instance a rebate of hotel bed taxes that the City treasury wouldn't have without their investment in the community.

The 'MEs' forget that in order to have all these 'things', they have to be paid for. It used to be the community would get together for a barn raising or raising money for a communal project. Those days are gone.

The City 'gave' Caruso Affiliated \$100M worth of cleared land. In turn CAH spent \$400,000,000 for a project that was projected to bring in millions in sales and property tax revenue. No risk, no reward. The City has spent \$50,000,000 for 'open space' that never may be used. Instead of generating revenue that land has been removed from future productivity while some of the sellers did quite well in directing tax money from the City to their own pockets. Fortunately someone was watching and reported this activity to the IRS.

Developers are singled out as being the bad guys, taking our precious water for multiple dwellings instead of building single family residences (SFRs) that consume so much more water per unit according to the Sierra Club and other conservationists.

What really fuels this 'ME' mentality? I think it boils down to a single word, 'avarice' of special interest 'ME' groups. Airport area residents, Pelaconi Estates, HOAs that dislike change in their neighborhoods, Montrose residents that clammered for a rundown money-pit called Rockhaven and the other habitues of far north glendale (FNG).

Not all the greed is from the City Employee Associations (Unions). It is from everyone that wants more and refuses to pay for it. It comes from those who vote without knowing the issues or the candidates. People that vote purely on the recommendations of those with a vested interest. People that refuse to venture outside of Glendale to see what and how other municipalities function without relying on those with a vested interest to make decisions for them.

Presentations are made to City Council by a number of community sparkplugs [FKA gadflies] to demonstrate the financial issue of spending more that revenues allow. They have presented charts, graphs and PowerPoints often containing materials that can be understood by the masses yet often beyond the comprehension of the Council that then attacks the messengers on unrelated issues not even within the purview of the subject.

The Mayor wanted to curtail questions after a staff report by substituting his own criteria for that of the Brown Act. Fortunately Hal Weber is leading the charge by filing complaints with the appropriate agencies.

The people who watch and attend City Council meetings are beginning to look at those meetings with clearer eyes and more discerning of the remarks being made by Council to reduce 1st Amendment rights. City Manager Starbird took it up himself to stop materials from being distributed at City Hall or as we prefer, the People's House. L'shana tova tikasavu BARRY ALLEN

"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." And, "Money is the mothers' milk of politics." Jesse Unruh

"The American Republic will endure until the day Congress discovers that it can bribe the public with the public's money" - [Alexis de Tocqueville](#)

Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. [Albert Einstein](#)

GUEST COMMENTARY: [Owning Your Circumstances](#)



Craig Hickman

The old cliché “there are two sides to every story” is generally true. A case in point is AIG—the insurance giant that was recently taken over by the government because of its financial failure. AIG’s new CEO Robert Benmosche, in an apparent effort to rebuild morale among the company’s beleaguered and uncertain employees, seems to be telling only one side of the story—the one that suggests government regulators’ are to blame for allowing AIG to destroy itself. CEO Benmosche recently told company employees, “It’s time the people in Congress stopped talking about you as the problem because you’re the solution. It’s not your fault, it’s their fault, it’s the regulators’ fault.”

Whenever you focus on only one side of the story—especially when it involves blaming others—you screen out certain facts that suggest you and others in your organization contributed to creating the circumstances you now face. AIG’s employees are, of course, the solution going forward, but they will experience trouble in obtaining the results they want and need until they own their circumstances—and that includes what AIG management and employees did or failed to do during the past several years that resulted in the company’s financial failure.

In difficult situations such as AIG’s, it’s always easy to feel wronged or persecuted—preferring to let yourself off the hook by blaming someone or something else. We acknowledge the reality that CEO Benmosche and AIG’s more than 100,000 employees face a very difficult challenge when it comes to rebuilding their once vibrant and reliable company. But we also know from experience that successful turnarounds depend on people throughout the organization owning the company’s circumstances, including the historical actions that created those circumstances. Here are some of the circumstances, in our view, that AIG’s management and people at all levels in the organization need to own, if they expect to move forward successfully:

- AIG chartered itself as an S&L, the AIG Federal Savings Bank, in a maneuver to make the understaffed and non-insurance oriented Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) its primary regulator.
- AIG decided to enter high-risk financial services businesses such as commodities, currencies, energy, interest rates, and credit default swaps (CDS) on mortgage and financial companies.
- AIG took collateral from its securities-lending business and invested it in the residential housing market, putting the company at further risk.
- AIG steered independent auditors away from its books in the financial services area, publicly declaring on more than one occasion that there would be no losses.
- AIG was leveraged 11 to 1 (assets to equity) compared to other insurance companies leveraged at 4 to 1.
- AIG destroyed nearly \$200 billion in market value.

To own your circumstances, you must find the heart to see both sides of the story, linking what you and your organization have done or failed to do with the reality of your current circumstances. Such a perspective requires that you replace your blame story with an accountable one. Seeing and owning the accountable side of the story, however, does not mean suppressing or ignoring the victim facts—regulation from an understaffed OTS obviously contributed to AIG’s problem—rather it means seeing the whole story, including the part that may not bode well for your ego or your organization’s pride. In AIG’s case, we sincerely hope that CEO Benmosche and the company’s employees can successfully turn things around in the weeks and months ahead.

Remember, owning your organization’s circumstances—even if you had little or nothing to do with creating those circumstances—will give you the perspective, judgment, and resolve necessary to bring about lasting change. Here are a few questions that may help you to more fully own your circumstances:

1. What facts or situations, which you knew to exist, did you choose not to acknowledge or assume they were someone else’s responsibility?
2. Can you cite and accept the most convincing point of the “other side of the story” that “they” are telling?
3. Were there warning signs along the way?
4. If you wanted to warn someone in similar circumstances not to let their organization make the same mistakes, what would you tell them?
5. What if you were to face this situation again, how would you act differently?
6. What could you have learned from previous similar experiences that might have helped you avoid or minimize the negative outcome?
7. Can you see how “not owning” your circumstances or your organization’s circumstances can prevent you from getting the results you and your organization want going forward?

The benefits of owning your circumstances more than compensate for the heart-wrenching effort involved because finding the heart to own your circumstances allows you develop the necessary commitment to change those circumstances for the better.

Thanks to www.ozprinciple.com Craig Hickman

Commentary: TAMING THE ONE BILLION DOLLAR BEAST



With every passing week the notion that the city council runs wild with the city's expenditures gets another confirmation.

As I present the charts and graphs of the city's 800 million dollars in expenditures to the most involved people in Glendale politics, I get the same response – A jaw dropping gasp. People find it hard to believe that the city is now spending over \$400 million more per year than it did ten years ago.

It will take time for the general public to have this information sink in. People are incredulous. They can't possibly imagine that the city has doubled its expenditure while the population grew a scant 5% in ten years. 100% vs. 5%, it's truly astonishing!

In years past, I've complained about the significant lack of adequate effort to fix the city's sidewalks. Current plans call for a waiting period of up to 12 years to get sidewalks fixed. But when it comes to employee compensation, there is never any doubt that somehow their compensation, direct or indirect will continue to get priority.

Broken sidewalks translate into pedestrian falls. With the elderly now making up over 14% of the city's population and growing, the focus of their wellbeing gets more significant every year. National statistics show that the elderly, who break their hips from a fall, will have a 60% chance of dying of complications arising out of hospitalization within one year after such incident. But who is counting the city's performance toward correcting that problem? It's a quality of life issue that remains hidden.

So now we have an additional 400 million dollars the city council will spend this fiscal year than ten years ago. So where is the effort to make the quality of life report an annual milestone to disclose to the public the true state of the city? It's not in the budget.

My strong guess is that it's by design. If the city is not making headway towards improving its quality of life indicators, it would make the rationalization to raise the salaries of managers more tenuous. We now have over 40% more managers than we did in 1998 and they all clamor to have their pay be compatible to those of other cities. But they leave out many other pay considerations.

Do other cities run their departments with fewer people? Let's not look at that qualifier. Do other cities have more obstacles to achieve departmental objectives? How about a larger number of disadvantaged, the poor and the destitute? Do other cities have a more constrained budget or major layoffs? Do other cities complete more of their big ticket projects on time and on budget? We don't care to find out. Why look at other variables when a simple comparison of pay will do nicely?

The city council's pursuit to rubber stamp salary or benefit increases has been justified often on that simplistic one comparison rule. It seems as if these councilmen have never truly run a business with any significant number of employees or can't handle more than one variable at a time. Or is it perhaps that managers were able to accommodate a councilman's favorite vendor for that city contract? If the true rationale for running for public office was to rub elbows and hand out favors to those with potentially large city contracts, then compensating those employees who made it possible is a foregone conclusion. By George, we need to find out.

So how about having the city fix more sidewalks, or fund artificial turf for Roosevelt middle school, or lower the electrical rates charged the GUSD by 25%? Is it possible that the more money that goes towards public objectives, the less money that will be available for pay, benefits and bonuses?

A Government without adequate oversight often runs amok with the taxpayers' money. Let's put more eyes on this beast before they reach the one billion dollar mark. HERBERT MOLANO



CHRISTIAN ARBID is a Real Estate Broker and Loss Mitigator. If you have questions about Foreclosures, Short Sales, Saving Your Home, Loan Modifications, email him at christianarbid@gmail.com and your question may be answered in the next issue of Vanguard.

Total Number of Current and Active Glendale Foreclosures as of Sept. 11, 09

are: **905**

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 Shout Box

ED – Letters published do not necessarily express the opinion of Vanguardians, this publication, 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 will be published that are signed and are not hate oriented.



Did CCM Friedman raise her voice for more 'office expense' money to help Drayman and Weaver as they begin their re-election run? That's what I think. It appears this was a manipulation to benefit Weaver and Drayman as their coffers aren't as full as those in the 2009 election. JK [ED – A good question, why not go to Council and ask?]

3



Public Information



"Just the facts"

<http://www.management-advantage.com/products/overtime-exempt.html>

Who should get overtime from the State of California

Are you operating a home business and don't have a home occupation permit? The definition is rather vague but Sam Engel, head of the enforcement agency (Neighborhood Services) passed along this information:

In-Home Business Requirements, Summarized

1. The business must have a valid home occupation permit issued by the Permit Center.
2. Deliveries or shipments of product to or from the residence are prohibited.
3. No customers (except for music lessons or 1-on-1 tutoring) can visit the property. All customer contact must be done through the mail or done electronically. No flyers or signs which encourage customers to visit the property are permitted.
4. No storage of product or equipment on the property.
5. The business use must be secondary to the residential use of the property. That is, you must live in the house, and not just use it for a business
6. No signs advertising the business may be placed on the property, including the mailbox.
7. The residence may only be used by the occupants. No employees of the business are permitted to work on the property.
8. No activities are permitted which are out of character with a residential neighborhood.

This may affect landlords, realtors, doctors, lawyers, Avon, Tupperware and who knows who else. Venders, Employees, Customers and delivery trucks in and out of a residential area affect our quality of life. Even storing your Real Estate or for rent signs could do you in. Rather than run your business from home, rent some commercial or office space in Glendale.

Home Page of Open Government (???) in Glendale California



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

Meetings at City Hall (CH) are in the Council Chambers, 2nd 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, September 14

Glendale Water & Power Commission – 4:00 pm, CH 548-2107
 N Glendale Community Plan Advisory Comm. – 5:30 pm, Sparr
 Heights Community Center, 1613 Glencoe Way, 548-2140
 Glendale Commission on the Status of Women – 6:30 pm, CH 548-4844

Tuesday, September 15

2:30 pm, CH Housing Authority 548-2060;
 Redevelopment Agency 548-2005; Joint Mtg Re Love Ride
 sponsorship
 6:00 pm City Council 548-4844

Wednesday, September 16

Zoning Administrator's Hearing -- 9:30 am, MSB 548-2140
 Community-Police Partnership Advisory Committee –
 Noon – Police Community Room, 131 N. Isabel Street,
 548-3140
 Building & Fire Board of Appeals – 2:00 pm, MSB 548-3200
 Planning Commission – 5:00 pm, MSB 548-2140

Thursday, September 17

Arts & Cultural Commission – 2:00 pm, CH 548-2000
 Design Review Board #1 -- 5:00 pm, MSB 548-2140

4 Vanguardians

- At the Vanguardians Friday Breakfast at Foxy's we looked at the candidate 460 forms that are online. One person couldn't find his contribution. We discussed the Home Occupation Permits and the consequences thereof. Each week we add a few new faces and have returning warriors. Become one. This is an excellent opportunity to share opinions about quality of life issues.

- All issues of Vanguard are archived at www.vanguardians.org
- Get breaking Glendale News by signing up for an RSS feed at www.vanguardians.org
- Great opportunity for you to place your ad or link on www.vanguardians.org
- Vanguardians needs a donated car or van in running condition. Blue Book donation value

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

You may donate online at www.vanguardians.org

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, their identities are secret. Vanguard provides them the opportunity to have this forum. The comments are their own.



After reading your "From the Publisher" in last week's Vanguard I can say that you hit the nail on the head with respect to Glendale's manager losing focus on what the big picture is for the City. Assumptions as to what the Council intended and what is best for the community is often just a manager looking at what is best for him personally. As you have reported, who would think to charge a homeowner \$350,000 for trimming their trees, or making a homeowner take out their turf

while we are in a drought, or arrest a homeowner because you don't like the way his house looks, or put so much paperwork in front of a homeowner trying to improve their house that they choose to not improve it rather than fight with the City. The culture of the City to jump on things half ass is legendary. Unless folks like you can convince others to keep questioning staff, the City will continue to waste taxpayer money for personal reasons, rather than for the common good. How long will the Council listen to the City Attorney say, "They can always take us to court if they don't like it," rather than "is this the hill you want to die on?" Our council needs to start using more common sense because they cannot count on staff to use any.

7

News Briefs from the neighborhood

Eleventh hour in Sacramento

Labor unions have been working on resurrecting a controversial bill in an eleventh hour maneuver in Sacramento over the weekend.



In what is known as a gut and amend, labor unions are using language similar to that of AB 155 and inserting it into SB 88 (DeSaulnier) in a less than transparent manner, mangling the democratic process and oversight through a gauntlet of trickery and allegiance. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. If SB 88 passes, CDIAC would have the authority to establish conditions, limit or deny changes to labor

contracts. This is if CDIAC approves the request for a municipality to file for bankruptcy. CDIAC is being sold by labor unions as an added measure of economic security for municipalities to weave through, claiming municipalities will file for and abuse bankruptcy to get out of honoring union contracts.

The great bamboozle with CDIAC, which consists of the State Treasurer, the Governor or the Director of Finance, the State Controller, two local government finance officials, two Assembly Members, and two Senators, and a bankruptcy court is that a bankruptcy court isn't beholden to political influence or to particular group. Neutrality should dictate municipal bankruptcy, not political agendas.

The labor unions evidently aren't going down without a fight, and that means there will be some hucksterism in the last days of the legislative session. In the wise words of Hunter S. Thompson, "Only losers play fair." and moderately decent fiscal policy is at stake. SB 88 was chosen by the labor unions to insert the language of AB 155 into because SB 88 has already been through most of the legislative process; it has been amended and is now eligible for a vote on the assembly floor.

Why this is so important for the public safety and labor unions throughout the state, because this bill will provide labor unions more control over municipalities finances and make permanent union contracts, should municipalities go bankrupt. This leaves public safety unions unscathed and immune to economic realities, and perpetuates unsustainable fiscal policy within each municipality. It is arguably the most important bill for labor unions this legislative session and thus the most important bill municipalities as well in order to maintain the little control they already have over their finances.

In a phone conversation today with Dwight Stenbakken the Deputy Executive Director for the League of California Cities he noted that, "Unions want to stop a local government from breaking a collective bargaining contract with them."

This legendary raid and the possible implementation of CDIAC increases the probability of cities filing for bankruptcy and on top of that make it much more difficult to file for bankruptcy protection.

SB 88 opens the door for labor union abuse of contracts while hijacking the taxpayer unnecessarily for their insatiable demands. Excerpts from a blog by Justin Smith who can be reached at justinsmiths@gmail.com

[Glendale Provides Recent Example of Cities Eyeing Private Contracts](#)

With increasing state mandates on local government and budget shortfalls, private contracts are given a more keen analysis to determine if they are really necessary.

The city of Glendale has decided to re-access its \$64,000 annual contract with Townsend Public Affairs Inc., a local, state and federal lobbying firm. [Read more.](#)

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