



Valley VOTE

Organized Toward Empowerment Voters
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VALLEY VOTE REPORT: February 16, 2015 MEETING

Minutes accumulated by Denny Schneider

Galpin Ford - 2nd Floor Meeting Room, 15555 Roscoe Boulevard, North Hills, CA 91343

*Valley Vote meetings are held the third Monday of each month to address critical public policy issues impacting the San Fernando Valley. **The next meeting will be March 16, 2015.***

This meeting featured Joel Fox, editor of Fox and HoundsDaily.com website and former president of Howard Jarvis organization and Rosyln Wolin, President of the San Fernando Valley Arts Council along with timely, topical committee reports.

President Joe Vitti encouraged all to become active participants either as Board members or Executive Board members. Become an active Valley Vote volunteer or to see the dozens of position statements addressing key Valley VOTE issues, visit our website: www.ValleyVOTE.org.

Joel Fox, Editor of Fox & Hounds Daily.com



Joel Fox is president of the Small Business Action Committee and has a historied background in public affairs, public policy, and business issue development and reporting. Joel provided insight into the upcoming gaggles of CA Propositions which may be placed on the upcoming election ballots and why so many more propositions will qualify for the ballot.

He spent 19 years with the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association and as its president from 1986 to 1998 was instrumental in the creation and passage of the famous CA Proposition 13 which limits annual property tax assessment increases. Joel explained that Prop 13 is good public policy because it provides a stable 5-7% property tax revenue growth over inflation so that long term planning can accurate. Prior to Prop 13 passage property tax revenue went up and down significantly as the economy evolved from good to bad. It was passed during a time when high inflation was rampant and the property tax increases so large that people on fixed incomes were literally driven out of their homes. Although polls show that 66% of Californians continue to approve of Prop 13 there are some who want to modify it by creating a "Split Roll." A Split Roll is when residential property valuations will continue to be protected at 1% increases, but commercial property would no longer be limited. Detail changes are not established and this issue is controversial. Joel expressed concern that split roll would not be a good change. If this is on the ballot Joel predicted that there will be large campaign expenditures with unions typically favoring split roll.

Joel expects a plethora of propositions on the November ballot. They will be easier to qualify. He explained that the signature collection time period was increased by twenty to 180 days. Further, Joel noted, there was a major reduction in the number of people voting in CA gubernatorial elections. This is the basis for the number of valid signatures required to place propositions on the ballot. The last election vote count dropped precipitously from 800,000 to only 585,000.

Joel told us that June ballot propositions are limited to those approved for the ballot by the state legislature; the large ballot increase will be in November. One June item already approved would

allow the legislature to suspend voting rights of State Senators convicted of crimes which would later be cause for removal from office.

Joel mentioned that there are interesting politics on when propositions are on the ballot. One constituency may favor a tax but object to a different ballot measure if it would motivate opposition voters to show up to vote on their issue. Potential propositions mentioned include:

- A modified English only referendum for ballots and other activities.
- Disposition of Federal medical payments directly to providers instead of going through CA channels.
- An oil severance tax for all oil taken out of the ground and/or directing local control of oil drilling authorization and taxes.
- Increased taxes on cigarettes
- Legalization of marijuana
- Rescind plastic bag prohibition
- Pension reform
- Extension of “temporary” taxes?
- LA Charter amendments to change election dates
- New ways to replace funds for redevelopment such as Valley Plaza

Roslyn Wolin, President, San Fernando Valley Arts Council



The 48 year old Council was created by the LA Cultural Affairs Department to promote the arts. It has been a non-profit 501c3 since 1973 to promote programs for youth, seniors, and the disabled. It operates with all volunteers and is looking for a new home in the Valley.

Roslyn Wolin spoke about the importance of an Art Center in Woodland Hills. She reminded us that the SFV has a wealth of art and cultural diversity and there is a need to have a center of creativity. There are record numbers of actors, companies, and artists yet lacks gallery, workshop, and rehearsal space.

Roslyn noted that the SFV Museum of History also lacks physical space and is working toward a common facility to meet the arts and history needs. They tried to find vacant City property with no success. The Museum found limited space to lease in Northridge. Since developments are required to fund 1% of the cost for art she is hoping to find a donor. She'd like Cultural Affairs to allocate some of the \$7.5M it hasn't spent this year as this is an underserved area like many others in the City. North Hollywood has the largest number of theatres outside of New York.

The Art Council works with schools to invoke programs and support scholarships. Everyone was urged to support the Valley Studio Tour which helps to raise funds. She is hoping that the Westfield Center might come up with some space or help with funds from the “Village” development, but has been unsuccessful so far in obtaining space. There need to be cultural activities to result in “cultural tourism” so please help. Hopefully there may be space in Macys or Sears. Whatever is found it is desired to be at least 6000 square feet in size to provide most effective use. Small groups are expected to pay as much as \$200/ hour and the Art Center wants to minimize that cost.

During discussion it was suggested that one of these large businesses may have a foundation that could help with needed funding. Alternatively, partners who are part of the large centers may have their own foundations as well. Another art related issue raised was that the 1% spent on art is not always spent to foster local art, but instead goes to out of the region artists. There should be a local preference requirement on who is funded for art projects.

Valley VOTE Committee Reports:

Joe Vitti – re: membership

Our purpose is to fight for fair representation for the SFV and to ensure the City acts in the best interest of its citizens. Membership applications were distributed and can be found on the website www.ValleyVOTE.org.

Vic Viereck - Minimum Wage

On line there is information about the UC Berkeley Institute for Research on Labor and Employment. The Institute created a 26 page report regarding their study on the Minimum Wage issue. Although I did not thoroughly read the report word for word, I did more than just scan through it. It appears that the entire report relates to the costs to government (taxpayers) for people in the low income categories, but I did not see anything in the report regarding elimination of jobs as a result of requiring increases in the minimum wage. One fact that could have been (but wasn't) included was the impact of the Federal \$10.10 per hour minimum wage that caused the closing of fast food restaurants at many military bases throughout the country.

The study's one-sided report disqualifies the UC Berkeley Institute for Research on Labor and Employment from providing a valid recommendation on the minimum wage. As a result, the UC Berkeley Institute for Research on Labor and Employment should not provide the study on the Los Angeles minimum wage issue. A much more reliable entity for the study would be the Cato Institute.

For additional info: Victor N. Viereck, CPA 12702 Tiara Street, Valley Village, CA 91607
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Bart Reed – Transportation issues

The Transit Coalition has been active with its Urban, Government and Community Affairs Program utilizing the California State University Northridge Tiger Team interns. The organization has been working on a few key advocacy programs which include: relocation of the Northridge Metrolink Station to align with the Reseda Blvd. business corridor, instituting a Saticoy Street Bus Stop on the Orange Line, instituting an Olive View Mental Health Center Bus Stop, extending Metro bus service from California State University Northridge to the Sylmar-San Fernando Metrolink Station, demonstrating the need for additional Santa Clarita Transit bus service and Metrolink train service to and from Santa Clarita Valley from early in the morning to late at night connecting to Downtown Los Angeles to serve workers, seniors, veterans and students, and to establish and document unmet transit needs in the San Fernando Valley for inclusion in the upcoming Metro Sales Tax Measure. He highlighted four topics:

- **West Coast Ports Frozen Due to Labor Dispute and Lack of Contract**
Container ships are stranded at the twin Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, delayed by Long Shore labor action and the dispute between shipping companies and dockworkers, leading to a shutdown of ports. Work rules and ability to fire a mediator are part of the conflict. We expect talks will begin soon.
- **Gasoline Prices Skyrocket**
Retail prices have shot up .50 cents a gallon in 16 days! The oil industry warned about a .70 cent a gallon price increase in January due to Cap & Trade that only turned out to be .08 cents a gallon. This increase appears to have occurred because "they could."
- **CicLAvia rolls into the S.F. Valley on Sunday, March 22, 2015 on an East Valley Alignment**
CicLAvia bike awareness is March 22. An estimated 20% business increase is seen when the event is held.
- **San Fernando Valley Transit Town Hall on Thursday, February 26 at 6 PM**
The event is free. Come discuss the unmet transportation needs of the Valley at the Valley Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 14410 Sylvan St., 2nd Floor, Van Nuys, CA presented by the SFV Council of Governments and MoveLA in cooperation with The Transit Coalition.

To register, call Marisa at MoveLA 310-310-2390 or email: marisa@movela.org.

Ralph Kroy - Sunshine Canyon

The landfill is located at 14747 San Fernando Road, near the "Five" and the "Fourteen" freeway intersection. The landfill has a long history of not following the "rules". It was started as an illegal dump, then legitimized by the City, then purchased by Browning Ferris Industries (BFI). The landfill is now owned and operated by Republic. Note that the large landfill is virtually across the street from one of the nations largest water treatment plants, the DWP / MWD. Think about your drinking water....

The landfill has it's early section without a liner. The next section (LA City) does have a liner. The latest section, the County section, has a double liner. Eventually all single liners leak, per the head of the EPA. Double liners are somewhat better. Remember that the landfill is next to and ABOVE the water treatment plant. You drink the water. (Remember)

Status: The landfill has grown enormously in the last few years, and the waste is the fuel to make enormous quantities of methane (15,000 + cubic feet per MINUTE). It also generates great quantities of noxious gas. The methane is used to generate electricity, a useful result. The electrical generation, however, does make more pollution that the burning of the former flares. This leaves noxious fumes!

The landfill also generates large quantities of dust in its operation. Yes, they water the soil, but there is still major dust in that windy area from this operation. The neighbors of the dump continually report on the foul odors that are generated by the landfill. The City, the County, and the State, are aware of the problem, listen to the reports, and do little to solve the problem. It appears that they all have a vested interest in the landfill, as generates a substantial revenue for these parties.

Present ongoing issues: The landfill continues to make foul odors that are reported to the AQMD. This one landfill has several times the reported, and confirmed, odors of all the other landfills in the County COMBINED.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works is now requiring the landfill to comply with additional actions per their letter of October 22, 2014. to control the noxious odors.

There are other concerns that are being aired, such as the request by the landfill to bring in vast amounts of sediment from County sediment basins. The EIR that was made for the sediment cleanup and disposal operation by the County Flood Control clean up group did not list that the sediment would be sent to Sunshine Canyon Landfill. No notice was provided to area residents as required by law, and no comment period was provided. A modified EIR needs to be provided.
Ralph Kroy rekroy@aol.com

Don Schultz- Valley Airports

Don Schultz provided a history of Van Nuys Airport from its opening in 1928 to recent years when Los Angeles World Airports initiated its \$15M residential sound mitigation program in the early 2000s. It covered about 2000 homes and a few schools were completed about 10 years ago. Most is done to the east and west of the airport, but it is very limited to specific CA and FAA qualification levels. The area off Havenhurst appears to be increasing noise in recent years. There was a mention of complaints near Moore Park in Sherman Oaks, but it was thought to be from Burbank Airport.

He told us that as a General Aviation Airport there are no scheduled flights but does accommodate charter jets. He noted that there is not a 10 PM curfew, per se, but it requires approval to take off in the late evening. It is a reliever airport with 8000' runways, but ONT is better able to handle the large aircraft so most, when needed are diverted there.

The recent ground breaking was for Clay Lacey's additional 6.8 acre site near the hotel which is for building more office and hangar facility. A year ago there was a ground breaking for prop aircraft facilities. The number of prop aircraft is falling and the fixed base jets are increasing because the City of LA makes more money accommodating these larger aircraft.

Denny Schneider - Airport Report

If someone has extreme recruitment skills their help is desired to help find a replacement Executive Director. Ms. Gina Marie Lindsey has announced her retirement to commence this spring.

Last month the airport report addressed "under construction." This month it is a call for active review. Preliminary comments are due to LAWA by March 9, 2015. LAWA released a Notice of Preparation Notice that they are preparing an Environmental Review Document to approve much of the landside airport update activity. This includes:

- **Two automated people movers (APM). One APM will transverse from the Consolidated Rental Car facility in Manchester Square near the 405 to the MTA train stop along Aviation, then stop at an Integrated Transportation Center (ITC) near lot C before dropping passengers in the Central Terminal Area (CTA). The second will go from the Central Terminal Area parking in some manor to a northern portion of a Midfield Terminal Complex behind Tom Bradley International terminal. Passenger drop off in the CTA will be in the middle of the parking lots with long moving sidewalks to access terminals.**
- **A newly located Consolidated Rental Car Facility in Manchester Square**
- **A new Integrated Transportation Center to house all public conveyances and auto drop offs.**
- **Unspecified street and freeway exit changes.**
- **A partial northern section Midfield Terminal that includes busing from the TBIT instead of direct passenger access. Removal/replacement of some support airside facilities.**
- **New police station and new administrative offices.**

The ARSAC concerns are not what is stated as much as what is not. Most of the decisions are already made about the people movers and other facilities and have been briefed to the LA City Council. We are told to accept on faith that the proposed projects are the best possible before any analysis has been presented to the public. For a description of LAX issues go to www.RegionalSolution.org where presentation slides from a town hall are posted.

Denny Schneider, President Alliance for A Regional Solution to Airport Congestion (ARSAC)
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Ernie Hilger - Veterans' rights

On January 28, 2015 The new Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs Bob McDonald announced along with Ron Olson attorney for the ACLU, at a news conference that the VA has struck a deal with plaintiffs' attorneys to return its West Los Angeles VA campus into a facility that truly serves veterans, especially those who are homeless, severely disabled or elderly.

This is a settlement agreement contains many moving parts and many vested parochial interests by "merchants of their interests" with no legally enforceable aspects. In the signed Principles Document it is clearly stated the document is not intended to be enforceable in any court, but is expected to be pursued by the parties to achieve and sustain the goals and objectives contained herein, for the benefit of the nation's veterans.

Since the new Settlement Agreement vacates the courts' prior rulings that have already been adjudicated and leaves organizations like Disabled Veterans to pick up the pieces if/when the veterans don't receive all of the benefits and actions promised. The service organizations appear to have been left out of the agreement. Any agreement enforcement would require another new lawsuit.

Ernie asks us to help educate the public about this agreement and to force establishment of a new Council that has final say about the lands and policies impacting our Vets served in West LA.

- **Establish the Veterans Advisory Council made up of the CEO Officers of the Major VSO's in the State of California to Protect Veterans Interests and Veterans Land. It should be headed by a three or four Star General Officer and have sole authority over the West LA Facility lands and policy. Action should include preparing a new Master Plan for the West LA VA facility.**
- **Any new 501C3 non-profit may only make recommendations to the Veterans Advisory Council.**
- **Change the settlement to make the present leadership advisory only to the new Veterans' Advisory Council.**

Sound Off!

Valley Vote's has added a public comment period to its monthly meeting. Coming toward the end of the meeting, Sound Off! will give members and guests an opportunity to briefly voice their opinions and concerns in brief two-minute presentations. Members attending our meeting will have the opportunity to discuss their concerns.

The press and public are invited to attend the meeting.

The next Valley VOTE meeting will be on Monday, March 16, 2015 at Galpin Ford.

Valley VOTE Mission Statement

Valley VOTE is a diverse coalition of San Fernando Valley residents, business people, educators, community activists, and organizations, committed to exploring and fostering the implementation of programs that empower the people of the San Fernando Valley and the City of Los Angeles, to improve local governance, education and public participation on policy matters. We meet monthly to address key policy issues and hear reports from our standing committee chairs. For additional information about Valley VOTE, for an upcoming meeting agenda, or for previous meeting reports and press releases, we encourage you to go to the Valley VOTE website.