

COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

WEEK OF MARCH 3-9, 2013



COLAB SLO

COLAB
San Luis Obispo County

4th Annual
Dinner & Fundraiser

Thursday, March 21st, 2013
Madonna Expo Center, San Luis Obispo

Speaker: Victor Davis Hanson
Author, Historian, Professor, Classicist, And Nationally Syndicated Columnist

Dr. Hanson (author of 17 books, hundreds of articles, and newspaper editorials – including in The San Luis Obispo Tribune) is one of the current era's most incisive and prophetic interpreters. Hanson, through the lens of history, argues that, "The more you give people, the more entitlements they want." "The Welfare State has driven people from self-reliance that sharpens democracy to dependency that blots it out." Dr. Hanson is the Senior Fellow in Residence in Classics and Military History at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, and a Professor of Classics Emeritus at California State University, Fresno, as well as a nationally syndicated columnist for Tribune Media Services. He is the fifth successive generation to live in his family farm house (near Selma, California) where he was a full-time orchard and vineyard operator.



Social Hour, No Host Cocktails - **5:30 pm**
Filet Mignon Dinner Including Wine - **6:30 pm**

\$125 per person / \$1100 per Table of Ten
Reserved Seating for Tables of Ten

For Tickets, mail check to:
COLAB, PO Box 13601
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

*Remember
to bring your ticket
to enter in the
door prize
drawing!!*

For more information call: (805) 548-0340

SOME BOARD MEMBERS SEEKING TO MUTE PUBLIC COMMENT?

SLO TRIBUNE FALSELY IMPUNES ARNOLD

WILL SLOCOG BOARD RESTRICT ANTI- SMART GROWTH PUBLIC COMMENT ON MARCH 6TH?

Board Meeting of Tuesday, February 26, 2013 (Completed)

Public Comment Irritates Some Members of the Board of Supervisors: During the February 26th meeting the Supervisors took up the issue of conduct by public speakers. The issue was not noticed on the public agenda. Board Chair Teixeira announced that inappropriate public comment would not be permitted. A speaker who violates the rules will be asked to cease. If he or she refuses, the Board will recess the meeting and have the room cleared and then resume. Supervisor Teixeira stated that Board meetings must be suitable for family viewing.

Background: During the regular February 19, 2013 Board meeting, a speaker who said he lives in Bruce Gibson's, 2nd district chastised Supervisor Gibson and his Legislative Aide in very nasty and derogatory terms inappropriate for a public meeting of a legislative body. The content and tone of the comments violated the Board's published rules and the norms of decency.

Supervisor Gibson chimed in, "Thanks Chairman Teixeira - It occurs to me, that this Board needs to continue this discussion of public comment." Supervisor Mecham stated, "this is not a town hall, it is a business meeting".

Some Board members expressed negative feelings about repetitive public commentators who appear frequently on the same subject. Former Supervisor Shirley Bianchi said that the comments of February 19th constituted a hostile workplace for the county employees. She went on to state that someone else's sex life is not within the purview of the Board. She then stated that "them what can do do, and them what can't talk."

It will be interesting to see if Board members, County Counsel, or other staffers propose amendments containing new restrictions on public comment to the Board Meeting Rules. No doubt, such an eventuality will beckon extensive public comment and other forms of direct action. Different communities have different tolerances for dissent. As more and more people wake up to the enviro-socialist program of higher taxes, fees, erosion of property rights, economic controls, political correctness, "soft" totalitarian behavior controls, and other aspects of the maturing leftist cancer, elected bodies can expect more vigorous and pointed confrontations. After all, it's only our homes, farms, businesses, standard of living, and families that are the subjects of their relentless attack.



Iconic New England Town Meeting



Berkeley City Council Meeting
No bourgeois decorum here.

San Luis Obispo Tribune Reinforces Leftist Attack on Supervisor Arnold

Maliciously and falsely, the San Luis Obispo Tribune has gone out of its way to link Supervisor Arnold to this aberrant outburst by one individual. COLAB was present, and in no way did Ms. Arnold support or acknowledge that speaker. At the end of the public comment period, Ms. Arnold thanked a number of regular speakers for coming and participating. (She has done this before on a consistent basis.) These include a former Congresswoman, people who are afraid that the costs of the Los Osos sewer project will make them homeless, a gentleman who is concerned about smart growth, people concerned about the CAPSLO misappropriation of funds allegations, COLAB staff and supporters, and others.

What You Can Do: The Tribune should correct and clarify in the same space within the paper where it printed its opinion, disguised as a “news article.” Businesses and citizens should place their advertising in alternative media outlets. The real estate industry (large color display sections), car dealers, and large stores are major revenue producers for the Tribune. Why are they supporting a newspaper that supports the smart growers, taxpayers, regulators, and other parasites that are out to control and actually diminish business?

Item 28 - County’s State Legislative Program. The Board adopted its of FY 2013 Legislative Program, which consists of general policies and specific actions which it hopes the State Legislature would adopt. The Board, on a split vote, rejected the continued inclusion of a provision to make it easier to increase taxes. Arnold, Mecham, and Teixeira were opposed to the provision (although Mecham seems not totally opposed – he wanted to take no position until he sees specific bill language). The item was a policy to support a reduction in the required vote threshold from 67% to 55% for approval of tax overrides for library funding, gasoline taxes (County may be preempted from levying gasoline with gasoline taxes by State law), and sales taxes. Perhaps the leftist members of the board would

like to see a State-wide ballot measure to charge you more at the pump. The proposal is quoted below:

1.Support legislative or initiative efforts which would modify the vote threshold Requirement local voter-approved for library funding, gasoline and sales taxes from two-thirds to 55%.

Supervisor Adam Hill is vehement in his opposition to super majority vote requirements and directly challenged Supervisor Arnold, who led opposition to the provision. His objection seems deeply embedded in his belief that in a democracy, there should be absolute authority of the current (at any time) voting majority. He expressed the view that the current requirement that State budgets be adopted by a two-thirds vote should be abolished and that “the two-thirds requirement has paralyzed California.” Apparently, and although he did not say it directly, he believes that the voters should have unfettered ability to raise taxes, approve projects, and expand government by a 50% plus 1 vote. He rejects “ideological arguments” for super majority votes.

For example, what if the public employee union-controlled Super Majority State Legislature awards their public employee union friends increased benefit formulae? Those vested benefit provisions would become contractually unalterable and permanent for all those covered at the time. Even if the voters subsequently revolted and were actually able to throw out the perpetrators, the provisions would be permanent. Of course this actually happened in 2001 when the Legislature authorized a 25 percent increase for most public safety employees (3% at 50 years of age formula pensions).

It’s the same for debt on long-term capital projects such as high speed rail, water systems, schools, universities, bridges, libraries, roads, and others. Once the bonds (debt) are authorized and sold, the taxpayers are locked into paying back the principal and interest for decades into the future. A change in voter sentiment or the State legislature can have no impact as the debt is a contractually and constitutionally protected obligation to the bondholders.

Should a passing transitory majority ,on any given day, be able to burden future generations with huge obligations? How does this comport with Hill’s highly touted “sustainability” principles?

Other tax expansion provisions and a number of supports for “smart growth” contained in the package were not discussed or debated.

The link below will take the reader to a short video of Hill trying to position Arnold on the issue of taxes and super majority votes. It is illustrative of the environment.

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, March 5, 2013 (Scheduled)

Item 4 - Down Payment Assistance Program. Your State tax dollars are being used to provide down payment assistance to private citizens to enable them to purchase a home. The write up states in part:

Over the last six years, the County's First Time Home Buyer Program (FTHB) enabled 16 low-income families to become homeowners by providing down payment assistance using CalHome funds. In 2012, the County was awarded a \$1 million in Cal Home grant to help another 20 to 25 low-income home buyers. The CalHome funds will expire in 2015. The County will start accepting applications from potential homebuyers and expects to spend the existing \$1 million CalHome grant over the next two years.

On January 22, 2013, California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) issued a new Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for \$49 million for the CalHome program. Local jurisdictions may apply for up to a maximum of \$1 million in grant funds for eligible activities including the First Time Home Buyer Program. The deadline to submit an application to HCD is March 20, 2013. Although the County previously received a \$1 million CalHome award, staff is confident that there are enough eligible homebuyers and enough homes available at appropriate prices to use both the existing \$1 million and another \$1 million before these grants would expire. Therefore staff recommends applying for an additional \$1 million CalHome grant to help more low-income homebuyers countywide. If HCD awards the County \$1,000,000 in new CalHome funds, then another 20 to 25 low-income families may achieve homeownership over the next three to four years.

The report provides no information on the price of the homes, how many of the ones which already received a grant are still occupied by the original grantee, how or if the homes are maintained as permanently affordable, when they are sold, and so forth. Nor does the report provide any information relative to the financial effectiveness of the type of construction. In other words, are they sticking built or manufactured homes? Wonder if any of CAPSLO's homeless clients are getting one?

Item 7 - 2nd Quarter Financial Report. Overall, the County Budget is essentially on schedule. There are several problems, including higher Public Defender costs due to a multiple defendant murder trial (over budget by \$550,000), increased foster care costs in Social Services (over budget by \$600,000), and an Appeals Court decision which impacts all counties, requiring that they reimburse cities for charges levied for property tax assessment and collection services. For SLO County, this is estimated to be \$1.9 million.

Airport revenues are off due to continually declining airline passenger enplanements. The Financial Report suggests that the problem is due to weather and runway construction problems in San Francisco (SFO), which resulted in cancelled flights to SLO. The enplanements have declined for 3 out of 4 years. Should the Board be concerned about the business climate, the difficulty and cost of permitting, and weak business expansion and retention as causes? Are the City of San Luis Obispo's planning processing fees and mitigation exactions negatively impacting business growth? The enplanement data could be an early warning.

The full report may be accessed at:

<http://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/agenda/sanluisobispo/1899/UTJfRlIfMjAxMi0xM19yZXBvcnRfU2VjdGlvbnNfMS01XygzKS5wZGY=/12/n/12656.doc>

Item 9 - Federal Community Development Block Grant and HOME 2013 Allocations.

The Board will be divvying up \$2,532,589 in Federal Community Development Block Grant and Home Funds to County agencies and to five of the cities in the County. These agencies will in turn provide grants to various non-profit housing and service agencies that assist people of low income. County Planning will rake off \$206,000 for administration of the program. There are some small grants for CAPSLO included. In summary, the program is very process heavy (requires many public meetings) and provides a way for the Supervisors to pass out money that does not come from local taxes. As you wade through your Federal income tax forms this month, you may want to reflect on this one. The Navy can't deploy a carrier battle group to the Persian Gulf for lack of funding but the County court house gang has a nice source of patronage money – plus the County keeps a few more planners on the payroll. Of course this situation is duplicated in thousands of cities and counties all across the country.

In August 2012, the County began preparing the 2013 Action Plan which is part of the Urban County of San Luis Obispo 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan. The County and five of its cities together qualify as an Urban County eligible to receive annual formula grant awards from United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The current participating cities include Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Morro Bay, Paso Robles, and San Luis Obispo.

The staff report even mentions the sequester:

Staff is estimating an 8% cutback to the CDBG program due to the upcoming federal budget cuts known as sequestration which is expected to occur in March. The Program Year 2013 CDBG allocation would be \$1,619,169. For purposes of the funding recommendation process, participating cities also elected to reduce their 2013 allocation figures by 8% in anticipation of federal budget cuts to the CDBG program.

<p>San Luis Obispo County Council of Governments (SLOCOG) Meeting of Wednesday March 6, 2013- 8:30 AM 1055 Monterey St. (Scheduled)</p>
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Item B-2 - Legislative Program. The Program has been returned to the agenda from the February meeting and contains some minor adjustments. The major item involving reducing required voter thresholds from 67% to 55% has been removed and is scheduled for the April SLOCOG meeting. As our readers and meeting attendees may recall there was considerable discussion at the February meeting on this issue. See the discussion of Board of Supervisors

February 26, 2013 item 28 (above) on its Legislative program for related information. The arguments are likely to be repeated at SLOCOG in April.

The remainder of the SLOCOG Legislative Program is largely concerned with protecting and increasing Federal and State transportation funds which are passed down to cities and counties.

CEQA: There is also a section on reforming CEQA which is absolutely necessary. The problem is that the SLOCOG recommendations are limited to transportation projects and or smart growth projects. The problem is far more extensive. It is strange that the local public officials on SLOCOG are not calling for general CEQA reform as well. The platform states in part:

*a) Support legislative efforts to simplify the CEQA review process for projects related to **infill development**, safety, emergency and rehabilitation projects, and project or programs that are **consistent with the goals and objectives of an adopted Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)**, including, but not limited to public transit amenities and service changes, bicycle, pedestrian and other livable community projects within targeted development areas.*

b) Reform CEQA to better account for the positive environmental impacts of certain transportation and land use projects, allowing for a more comprehensive evaluation of the trade-offs.

*c) Extend CEQA streamlining to transportation operational improvements projects located within public right-of-way that are **consistent with the adopted Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)** in the adopted Regional Transportation Plan, within specified parameters.*

*d) Support extending the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) streamlining provisions to CEQA, as outlined in the recent federal transportation legislation (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century – MAP 21). **Highlighted sections are COLAB's emphasis.***

Will SLOCOG Board Members Attack or Restrict Members of the Public Who Speak In Opposition to “Smart Growth” and Related Issues?

During the February 6, 2013 SLOCOG meeting several of its Board members were critical of a public speaker. Our subsequent report is repeated below because of its importance.

Background-Speaker Marginalized: A subsequent private citizen speaker expressed concerns that the SLOCOG and the jurisdictions were traveling down a path ultimately inspired by international ideological doctrines which advocate dense development, severe restrictions on carbon base fuels, mandated use of public transit, restrictions on the use of private automobiles, restrictions on suburban development, and a number of economic and social equity concepts. These are embodied in public policy documents such as the United Nations Agenda 21 (climate action principles) and the Charter of the International Communities For Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). San Luis Obispo County was a

member of ICLEI for a period of time and hired two ICLEI staffers as consultants to help prepare its Greenhouse Gas Assessment prefatory to developing its Climate Action Plan.

A number of San Luis Obispo citizens are concerned about the radical environmental roots of some of the doctrines and object to the socialist pronouncements which are advocated along with them. There have been a number of forums and educational sessions in San Luis County (some attended by hundreds) to discuss these issues and their potential application at the local level.

In a very unfortunate retort, Paso Robles City Council Member Fred Strong drew an analogy with some 1950's civil rights opponents who accused civil rights advocates of being communists in order to undermine the movement. He compared current opponents of restrictive land use, expensive mass transportation schemes, increased housing density, and travel controls/taxes (which are being proposed in the name of "social equity", "economic equality", and "climate change") with the 1950's civil rights opponents. In other words, if a citizen sees a connection between Agenda 21 and ICLEI doctrines and current local land use policy initiatives, he or she is guilty of fear mongering. Strong seems to be saying that the expansive land use regulatory initiatives being proposed and implemented to combat greenhouse gases are purely local (perhaps pushed and/or mandated by the State and US Governments), and that they have no connection to the UN, concepts embodied in Agenda 21, or those promoted by ICLEI. He should probably read the County's greenhouse gas assessment and other documents and then look at some of the California Air Resources Board web pages and see the express links. We are pretty sure that some of his constituents can help him.

Speaker Mocked: Even more unfortunately, and by way of mocking the speaker, SLO City Mayor Marx, under the guise of posing a question (Ms. Marx is an attorney and fully understands the status of the UN), cynically asked counsel to opine on whether or not the United Nations has any authority in San Luis Obispo County. To further mock the speaker Chief Deputy County Counsel David McNulty mockingly replied, "Absolutely." He then said "no, not any."



Remember the Alamo- March 6, 1836

