



COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY



WEEK OF OCTOBER 18-24, 2015

**FINAL COUNTDOWN:
SAVE TUESDAY OCTOBER 27, 2015 FOR
PERMANENT WATER MORATORIA, AG
OFFSETS AND OTHER NEW
REGULATIONS-TIME NOT YET CERTAIN**



COUNTDOWN TO WATER LOCKDOWN!

HILL TO BE COUNTY MASCOT?

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, October 13, 2015 (Completed)

Item 4 - Report on the Countywide Communications Plan. The Communication Plan document states, "THE COUNTY HAS AN IDENTITY CRISIS." The Board listened to the

staff presentation about the Plan and was surprisingly not embarrassed. In fact Gibson praised the effort.

Hill, in an aside, asked if the County would be adopting a mascot. Compton straightaway purred a truly Churchillian response: “Are you volunteering?” Compton stated that the whole thing smacked of Kardashianism. The item was a show and tell with no actual vote. Apparently the process will proceed.

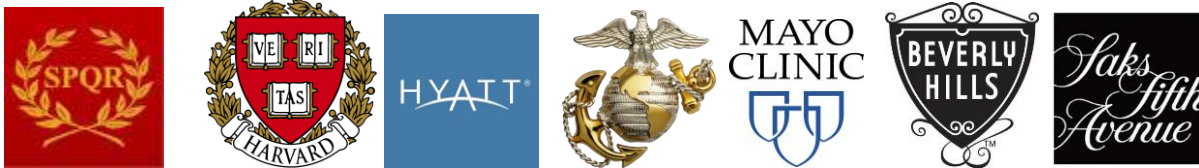
Background: The self-absorbed and touchy-feely Plan lays out a process by which the County, through a series of meetings, will cure this ostensible “problem.” The narrative continues:

*As a government organization, the County of San Luis Obispo doesn't have a clear brand identity or brand standards, the lack of which has contributed in the misuse of the County seal as a logo as well as the creation individual department brands. **The County needs a brand that all departments, employees and citizens can identify with and be proud of.***

The County should explore the branding process and develop a new brand identity, or refine its current brand, and standardize how that brand is represented across all departments in all communications.

This is great! Instead of working, the CEO, department heads, and managers can attend a series of meetings to develop this plan and work on a new logo. Meanwhile, your permit is taking 2 years and more fees.

Excellence and Identity:¹



While everyone has had some fun with the County’s self-proclaimed “identity crisis,” we should not forget the more important underlying issue. The ‘brand’ symbols displayed above receive instant recognition and are emblematic of organizations which are more than best in their class, in their market, and in their “industry.” The real challenge for the County (and any organization which is serious) is how to become so excellent that its “brand” is inherent in its products, services, value for price, and most importantly, the experience of the customers.

¹ SPQR (Senatus Populusque Romanum/The Senate and the Roman People) City Logo for over 2,000 years. As a famous guidebook says: *Whatever you may seek there, Rome makes you feel good. The Vatican for the pilgrim. Forums where Cicero, Caesar and Augustus are brought back to life. Baroque churches, where Bernini and Borromnini confront each other in a ruthless struggle, for art lovers. Pictures from Fellini movies, figures of Gassmann and Mastroianni, for cinema enthusiasts. This is the Eternal City, where our language and civilisation come from. In Rome, you feel so quickly at home, that you soon make it your own.* Eternal City – now there’s a local government brand.

Thus the issue is not logo conformity or laboriously explaining or justifying the organization's existence. It is the quality of service delivery and attitude while providing the service. One problem in most government agencies is that the employees and officers are first and foremost members of their professions – fireman, police, planners, engineers, accountants, social workers, lawyers, craftsmen, secretaries, physicians, public administrators, and so forth. The standards of their profession are the first loyalty. (Sometimes their union is their first loyalty.) Their second loyalty is to the structure, rules, and process of the institution. Service attitude will vary with the culture of the organization and the community in general. Finally, there are employees and officials who are agents of ideology and/or political loyalty which transcend the mission of the agency, professional standards, and sometimes even the law.

They forget that their business should be doing whatever it takes to provide excellent customer service.

The captive customer (who is captive by virtue of residence within the jurisdiction) is often regarded as a burden. “I need to check on the status of my (subdivision, land use permit, tasting room, etc.). When will it be issued?”

Counter person after calling around: “Rebecca is handling that case and will be gone until next Monday. Please check back then.”

Customer: Can I talk to Rebecca's Supervisor?

Counter Person: “She's in a meeting.”

Customer: “Is there anyone I can talk to?”

Counter person: “Not really.”

A contrasting Hyatt conversation during check in at one of their resorts:

Customer: “I saw on the web that you had some room upgrade offers, but the waterfront cottages were not included on the list. Is there any way to see if one those is a possible upgrade and what it would cost?”

Desk receptionist: “I don't know but let me check here (she spends about 45 seconds clicking around on the computer/while you are waiting they hand you a glass of champagne). “Ok, there is one and I can let you have it for an extra \$50 per night.” (Note: In total and with the original room price, this is far under the normal stated price.)

Customer: “Which one is it”?

Desk receptionist: “L-15 right here by the beach and a fire pit”



(as she points to the map.)

Customer: “Ok, great - thank you so much”.

Desk receptionist: “Do you have luggage”?

Customer: “Yes, it’s out in the car.”

Desk receptionist: “Ok, here is your cottage pass, drive over, and the Bell Staff will meet you to bring your bags in. Or if you wish the Parking Valet guys can bring your car over and you can stroll.”

Customer: “Great!”

Desk receptionist: “Is there anything else I can do for you?”

Note: The Desk Receptionist had the authority to respond and make the deal. She did not have to call for a manager, seek a waiver, or tell the customer to come back later for an answer and she said yes! Plus she made more money for Hyatt on what would have been a vacant room.

At Saks (and Nordstrom’s too) if they don’t have the exact dress at your store in stock, the sales person will computer and phone search the inventory of every Saks store and warehouse in the world right in front of you. “I can have it here by 3 PM tomorrow so you can try it on.”

Item 5 - Report on Department of Planning and Building Priorities. The Board, reacting to neighborhood concerns, directed staff to:

1. Develop an inland vacation rental ordinance (the current ordinance focuses on the beach communities). Several Board members report anecdotally that they are receiving complaints about party and event noise (weddings) from neighbors of homes which are rented out for repeated weekends. Music and noisy party guests are the apparent cause of the disturbance. No data about the actual frequency, location trends, or intensity was presented prior to the Board making the decision.

The development of the inland vacation rental ordinance could be prefatory to the revision of the events ordinance or a least an effort to conform provisions of the 2 ordinances. This is particularly a concern of Supervisor Mecham.

2. There is a large group of Avila Beach area residents who are concerned about the intensification of visits to the charming but physically isolated community (one two-lane canyon road in and out). They actually suggested that the Board impose a development moratorium until a new, stricter community plan is developed. At this point the Board seemed to shy away from the moratorium idea. They did agree to make the community plan process a priority and to

update traffic studies in the next 6-9 months in order to determine if restriction on development could be justified on the basis of insufficient and/or overcrowded access.

3. The Board also directed staff to begin investigating the feasibility and cost of beginning to eliminate the billboards along highway 101.

4. The proposed work plan already contained recommendations for making various types of permitting more efficient and reforming the way CEQA data is handled. SLO County retains the old practice of not allowing applicants to see the content of an EIR on their projects until they are fully completed. This prevents them from being able to explain their projects or to make adjustments until the draft EIR is published and the public process is started. Misunderstandings by reviewers become barriers and require costly and time-consuming revisions and recirculation. Other counties have addressed this problem. The Board seemed OK with the staff working on repairing this problem.

5. The Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) process was made mandatory several years ago and, as we forecast at that time, has become a problem. Supervisor Arnold and property owners are seeking reform. Presumably the staff will work on this one.

6. Arnold had a number of suggested updates to various technical provisions related to agricultural processing and sales, the AG Cluster Subdivision Ordinance, and others. These did not make it onto the formal list. Gibson moved the staff report priorities and dismissively suggested that the staff could work on them "if they had time."

Background: Actually, the staff report itself was a breath of fresh air as it requested the Board to, in effect; spend fewer resources on ideological climate change projects (and related regulation development) and more on streamlined permit processing and related improvements. It also recommended that the Board authorize a change in focus from endless planning to actual implementation. It further noted that planning should be related to economic realities and impacts.

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, October 20, 2015 (Scheduled)

Item 2 - Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. The drought continues. Trees are dying, creating a fire hazard in some areas such as Cambria. The impact on agriculture economically has not been determined. It will be reported after the harvest is complete. Communities seem to be exceeding water-rationing requirements.

Obviously and not included in the report is the fact that the drought has been seized upon by anyone who is opposed to any kind of development to justify disapproval of specific projects. On

a larger scale the drought is being used to promote statewide regulations and restrictions and to attack historic constitutional water rights or rural overlies.

There is considerable talk of the potential for the El Nino phenomenon to generate a very prolific storm season during the winter of 2015-16. Caution should be exercised in that the El Nino publicity could be hype to get everyone excited and then if the rain fails to come, exploit the massive disappointment and general fears to ramp up regulation and assaults on private property even further.

On October 27, 2015, the Board is slated to adopt a whole new set of regulations as well as making the Paso Basin moratorium permanent. Why not wait 4 months to see if the El Nino rains actually come?

Reservoir Levels (% of capacity):

Reservoir	% of Capacity	Current Acre Feet Storage
Nacimiento	20%	76,625
Whale Rock	38%	14,736
Lopez	31%	15,442
Salinas	13%	3,215

Source: www.slocountywater.org County of San Luis Obispo

Item 16 - A hearing to consider approval of ordinances to amend the County Code (Titles 2 and 19) by dissolving the Department of General Services, creating the Department of Central Services, and transferring responsibility for building maintenance, facility planning, and architectural services to the Department of Public Works, 2) request to adopt resolutions to establish the new classification and set the salary range for the Director of Central Services and amend Position Allocation Lists to reflect the transfer of positions to the Department of Central Services and addition of positions to the Department of Public Works, and 3) authorize the Auditor-Controller to transfer unspent appropriations for the Department of Central Services to Fund Center 116. All Districts

Reorganizations are always fertile ground for mischief. The ultimate questions include: Will they provide better service; forestall future budget increases; provide actual budget savings; get rid of dead wood employees; or what? The County continues its dissolution of the General Services Department. The write-up states:

The General Services Agency was dissolved on October 7, 2014. The dissolution of the Agency created four separate departments (General Services, Information Technology, Airports, and Parks and Recreation), which allowed for more direct oversight and enabled staff to focus on specific operational areas. The goals of the dissolution of the Agency were to improve services in several key areas, including strengthening the management of the County's capital projects program.

Now in a further step:

Since dissolution, it has become apparent that facilities maintenance and capital projects management would be better aligned with the Department of Public Works, which would be responsible for all County facilities, including roads, bridges, buildings, and water and wastewater systems. This transition involves the Department of Public Works broadening their oversight and management of the County's infrastructure. It also includes forming a new the Department of Central Services to focus on internal services which interface with all other departments. With this reorganization, the divisions of building maintenance and architectural services will move to the Department of Public Works, while the divisions of real property services, purchasing, central mail, and fleet services will comprise the Department of Central Services.

The former General Services Department struggled with construction project management. A number of projects, when bid, exceeded the architects' estimates and amount of funding available. We are not privy to the current situation and it is not clear if those projects presently underway are on budget and on schedule. The Board letter is silent on the operational reasons for the reorganization. As it says above and somewhat euphemistically: *"facilities management and capital projects would be better aligned with the Department of Public Works..."*

Interestingly the Closed Session Agenda contains a late item for the "Appointment of the new Central Services Director. Does this mean that the reorganization decision is a done deal even before the policy decision to create the new department has been reviewed in public session, received public comment, been deliberated upon by the Board and the required ordinances have actually taken effect? Is the purpose of the closed session to review the recruitment process or to actually make an appointment?

Item 17 –This item relatedly deals with the status of various capital projects which are underway or about to start. With the exception of one, they seem to be tracking properly. Thus the reasons for the shift are not clear. It could be that Public Works is an engineering-centric organization and the various disciplines including project management can best be supported there. On the other hand, there is the risk that the Director, who already must supervise some very large construction projects, the road program, the flood control program, water systems, and the implementation of SGMA, etc., could be stretched thin.

Matter After 1:30 PM

Item 20 - Presentation of a project update and Septic System Decommissioning and Reuse Plan for the Los Osos Wastewater Project. This item deals with the process by which the County will both compel and assist the Los Osos residents to hook up to the new sewer plant system. It also deals with how the existing in-ground septic facilities will be reused or managed once they are disconnected.

With respect to the first issue the write-up states:

A major focus of current staff efforts and planning is on the upcoming lateral connection process, where each property owner must connect to the completed project. Public outreach and education is a critical part of the connection phase and includes several areas of focus.

- Financial assistance programs are being developed to assist low income, senior, and disabled residents with the costs of the project. Public Works is working with a non-profit housing agency to conduct workshops where individual homeowners can receive assistance in determining grant or loan eligibility and apply for assistance.*
- Lateral connection process, timeline and requirements will be communicated through direct mail to property owners and monthly informational workshops to be held during the connection period.*
- Contractor outreach and education will focus on attracting qualified contractors to meet the demand for completing more than 4,000 lateral connections in approximately one year. The County will conduct training sessions to inform contractors of the project's permit requirements. A list of qualified and trained contractors will be provided to the public.*
- Septic system reuse options are an important part of the project. As described below, a septic system reuse plan is a project permit requirement and will provide important water resources benefits.*

A lot of this seems to be sugar coated language that actually means that putting in the house laterals (from the house to the pipe in the street) will be the resident's responsibility and will cost. (They don't say typically what it will cost.) Then there is the issue of the trench and complications where it must cross a driveway or other construction. How will the situation be handled in cases where the house is below the road and the pipe in the road?

As noted above, the second part of the item deals with reuse:

Tasks completed under contract to date include:

- Research the potential for the reuse of septic system components.*
- Develop a suite of feasible alternatives for the reuse of septic system components.*
- Prepare system reuse minimum standards designed to protect public and environmental health, and as a guide for construction inspections.*
- Adapt Title 19 of the County Ordinance section 19.07.027 to allow for additional septic tank re-use options.*

□ *Prepare Public Education materials, including the Homeowners Guide to Septic System Decommissioning and Reuse (See attachment).*

□ *Public Education Outreach (presentations at Los Osos town hall meetings, contractor outreach meetings, presentation to Los Osos Community Advisory Council); an ongoing task*

This one is not too specific. So there are tanks and other structures under the ground. Just how would they be used?

Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, October 22, 2015 (Scheduled)

General Note: This is a very busy Planning Commission Meeting with many applications from individual citizens for a variety of projects. The most significant is Item 14 below, which has public policy implications in terms of the County's overall attitude toward the oil industry and industrial development in general.

Item 14 - Continued hearing to consider a request by FREEPORT-MCMORAN OIL & GAS for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to amend the previous CUP to extend the amount of time allowed drilling previously approved Phase IV oil wells (D010386D). This request would extend the current limit for an additional 3 years to install these previous approved wells (approximately 31 wells not yet installed). The project is located at 1821 Price Canyon Road (San Luis Obispo) on the east and west sides of Price Canyon Road, approximately 2.7 miles north of the City of Pismo Beach, in the South County planning area (San Luis Bay Inland sub area South). The Environmental Coordinator found that the previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) is adequate for the purposes of compliance with CEQA. CONTINUED FROM 9/10/2015

Note that this item will be time certain at 1:30 PM or thereafter.

As indicated in the item title, this is a request to extend an existing permit time limit to complete 31 oil wells that have already been permitted. The Commissioners had a number of questions, which have now been answered as part of the staff write-up. One significant factoid which emerged is that the property is the third biggest property taxpayer in the County.

The write-up states in this regard:

County Revenues from the Arroyo Grande Oil Field

The Commission requested information regarding county revenues associated with this project. In talking with the Tax Assessor's office, the County does not collect royalties or excise tax. However, the property taxes paid by FMOG are reassessed every year, where they factor in barrels of oil extracted yearly, remaining reserves and the current price of oil. According to the

latest Auditor Controller's Office information (for fiscal year 2013-2014), Freeport was identified as the 3rd largest property tax contributor (accounting for 19% of all County property tax revenues).

While it is true that Freeport (successor to Plains Exploration and Production) is the 3rd largest single taxpayer, it is not 19% but .19%. The chart below illustrates the relative percentages.

**County of San Luis Obispo
Principal Property Taxpayers
Current Year and Ten Years Ago
(in Thousands)
(UNAUDITED)**

Taxpayer	Industry	Fiscal Year 2014			Fiscal Year 2005		
		Assessed Value	Rank	Percentage of Total County Assessed	Assessed Value	Rank	Percentage of Total County Assessed
Pacific Gas & Electric Co.	Utility	\$ 2,565,300	1	5.96%	\$ 2,168,919	1	7.28%
Beringer Wine Estates Company	Winery	95,337	2	0.22%	65,500	5	0.22%
Plains Exploration & Production	Petroleum & Gas	82,999	3	0.19%	-	-	-
Mustang UCAL LLC	Apartments	78,423	4	0.18%	-	-	-
Pacific Bell Telephone Co	Telephone	72,603	5	0.17%	72,519	4	0.24%
E&J Gallo Winery	Winery	63,115	6	0.15%	-	-	-
Martin Hotel Mgmt Co LLC	Hotel	61,484	7	0.14%	-	-	-
Southern California Gas Co	Utility	60,148	8	0.14%	48,983	7	0.16%
Pasquini Charles Jr Tre Etal	Private	56,778	9	0.13%	-	-	-
Twin Cities Comm Hospital Inc	Hospital	54,445	10	0.13%	-	-	-
TOSCO Corp	Petroleum & Gas	-	-	-	174,001	2	0.58%
Duke Energy Morro Bay, LLC	Utility	-	-	-	130,715	3	0.44%
UHS-Corona Inc. A DE Corp	Health Care	-	-	-	55,470	6	0.19%
Sierra Vista Hospital Inc	Hospital	-	-	-	45,941	8	0.15%
Charter Communications	Communications	-	-	-	40,246	9	0.14%
ESJ Centers LLC ETAL	Real Estate	-	-	-	32,432	10	0.11%
Total		\$ 3,190,632		7.41%	\$ 2,834,726		9.51%
Total County Assessed Value		\$ 43,059,945			\$ 29,886,105		

Source: County Property Tax System

Note that oil and gas companies and utilities are among the most important property taxpayers. Also note that the large solar corporations in the eastern county are not on this list, as their production facilities are exempted from the local property tax by state law as part of the huge government subsidies which they enjoy in the name of climate change.

Current Application: As noted above, this is an application to simply extend the current permit by 3 years. The Center for Biological Diversity, Sierra Club, and others are opposing the permit extension. The decision on this permit may be a portent of future County decisions related to oil and gas development. The Sierra Club has been particularly hysterical, untruthful, and virulent. Its October newsletter included the headline displayed below:

Oil vs. Aquifer



Pump & dump! Ash Lauth of the Center for Biological Diversity works the crowd outside the SLO meeting on the proposal to exempt an aquifer from the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Future Application: Separately from this application is a pending application to open a new phase of production with new wells in the future.

...a Conditional Use Permit has been submitted by Freeport-McMoRan to expand the existing oil field. The application includes 350 new wells and 100 'redrills' or replacement wells. An environmental impact report (EIR) is currently under preparation. The applicant has requested that completion of the DEIR be put on hold until the State's Aquifer Exemption (AE) process is completed. Once the AE process has been completed, the Draft EIR will be completed and released for public review and comment.

The environmental organizations are positively apoplectic about this one.

COLAB Santa Barbara County Scared Straight Event Fills Santa Maria Fair Park Convention Center Building (Wednesday, October 14, 2015) Completed

An energized and committed crowd of COLAB members and supporters from both SLO and SB Counties filled the Fair Park Convention Center to hear Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association President Jon Coupal, Flashpoint Senior Correspondent Katy Grimes, and San Diego Union California Columnist Steven Greenhut dissect the spiraling financial and social collapse created by the "leadership" in Sacramento. The event was attended by candidates for County Supervisor positions, State Assembly, and Congress and as well as current elected officials. A superb steak dinner with wine was served by Testa Catering (with fresh strawberry garnished chocolate bundt cake). Guests enjoyed an auction of spectacular resort stays, catered dinners, wine, private vacation home stays, and other prizes. The proceeds help sponsor the Andy Caldwell Radio show from 3-5 PM every weekday afternoon. The broadcast covers northern



Ventura County, all of Santa Barbara County, and on up into San Luis Obispo County – the largest public affairs show audience on the central coast.

Some of the auction items are displayed below:

Item #9
Overnight Round-trip Jet Service to Las Vegas!

Departs from Santa Barbara and weekday or weekend available!
Donated by Santa Barbara Aviation



Item #10
Hitching Post Dinner for 20
Filet Mignon and Lobster, Sides & Dessert!!!
Served at the Original Hitching Post in Casmalia!
Donated by the Ostini Family



Auction Item #3
1 Week at the Grand Pacific Palisades Resort in Carlsbad, CA

Stunning views of the Carlsbad Flower Fields and the Pacific Ocean!
Olympic-sized swimming pool, Children's interactive water park, Family Pool,
Award-winning Karl Strauss Brewery Restaurant and directly across from
LEGOLAND!. 3 bdrm/2 bath condo sleeps up to 9 people!
May 1-8, 2016

