



COLAB SAN LUIS OBISPO

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 18 - 24, 2018

COLAB 9th ANNUAL
San Luis Obispo County **DINNER & FUNDRAISER**

John Peschong

San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors Chair
How San Luis Obispo County Can Move The Dal In 2018

Thursday, March 22, 2018

Alex Madonna Expo Center,
San Luis Obispo

5:15 PM - Social Hour

6:15 PM - Filet Mignon Dinner including Wine

Exciting Auction!

\$120 per person / \$1200 per table of 10
Reserved seating for tables of 10

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COLAB, PO Box 13601,
San Luis Obispo, CA, 93406

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Don't Miss One of the Biggest Events in San Luis Obispo County!

SEE MORE DINNER DETAILS ON PAGES 23 - 26

THIS WEEK

GO CARTS AT EL CHORRO REGIONAL PARK

**\$10 MILLION LEGAL SETTLEMENT WITH LOS
OSOS SEWER CONTRACTOR
TO BE PAID OUT OF HIDDEN SOLAR PLANT MITIGATION FUND
(HUH?)**

**FY 2018 - 19 BUDGET PREVIEW
(IN HOME SUPPORT SERVICES, OBAMACARE CUTBACKS, SALARY
AND PENSION INCREASES, & NEED FOR ROAD MAINTENANCE ALL
PRESSURE BUDGET)**

**PLANNING STILL WORKING ON INLAND
VACATION RENTAL ORDINANCE
WHY?
MUCH MORE!**

LAST WEEK

**OIL BAN BALLOT INITIATIVE SIGNATURE
DRIVE LAUNCHED**

NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

**LAFCO MEETING
POTENTIAL GROWING COMPETITION OVER PROPERTY TAX PIE
AS CITY ANNEXATIONS CONTINUE**

SLO COLAB IN DEPTH

SEE PAGE 15

AFTER BILLIONS IN TAX INCREASES, CALIFORNIANS DESERVE A TAX CUT

By Jon Coupal and Vince Fong

SCANDAL, CORRUPTION, LAWBREAKING — AND SO WHAT?

By Victor Davis Hanson

THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

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Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, February 20, 2018 (Scheduled)

Item 11 - Submittal of a resolution approving the January 1, 2017-December 31, 2018 Memoranda of Understanding, and included side letter agreements, between the County of San Luis Obispo and the Sworn Deputy Sheriffs' Association, Sworn Law Enforcement Unit, Bargaining Unit 27, and Sworn Law Enforcement Supervisory Unit, Bargaining Unit 28. After a year of negotiations, including fact finding, the County and the Deputy Sheriffs Association as well as the Sworn Law Enforcement Supervisory Unit have reached contract settlements. The contract terms are from January 1, 2017 - December 31, 2018, which means they are retroactive. It also means that the County and the two unions will soon begin to negotiate successor contracts for 2019 and beyond. The overall costs of the new contacts are summarized in the County table below from the Agenda write-up.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The County's estimated increased costs for the provisions of the attached MOUs are detailed in the table below:

	Fiscal Year 2017-18 increase	Annual ongoing increase
3.5% wage increase, effective the pay period including 7/1/17, and 3.0% wage increase effective the pay period including 1/1/2018	\$754,539	\$1,509,077
\$125 per month cafeteria increase for employee + 2 or more dependents only, effective the pay period including 1/1/2018	\$50,387	\$100,774
\$30 per month uniform allowance increase, effective the pay period including 1/1/2018	\$25,560	\$51,120
\$700 new hire uniform allowance increase for employees hired on or after 12/31/2017	\$4,550	\$9,100
\$62.50 per month for possession of POST intermediate or Associate degree, and \$125 per month increase for possession of POST advanced or Bachelor degree, effective the pay period including 1/1/2018	\$58,125	\$116,250
\$700 new hire safety equipment allowance increase for employees hired on or after 12/31/2017	\$4,550	\$9,100
Total estimated increase	\$897,711	\$1,795,421

The current base pay range for a Deputy Sheriff prior to the new contract is:

DEPUTY SHERIFF: \$6,399 - \$7,781 or \$76,788 to \$93,372. It generally takes 5 years for a new Deputy to reach the top of the range.¹

The new contracts contain side letter agreements whereby the County and the two unions agree to conduct a joint study of compensation. The County is reportedly having difficulty recruiting new deputies and retaining current deputies. It takes several years for a new deputy to become fully proficient in the job. Also the formal training, subsequent field training, and other costs of a new Deputy can be over \$100,000. To lose one after 2 or so years is a tremendous waste.

Future Challenges: Very few individuals who apply for a Deputy position make it through the process, which includes educational requirements, physical courage, mental and physical stamina, psychological clearance, mental acuity, resilience, and other qualifications. Additionally the successful candidates must have clean criminal records and must not been involved in the use of illegal narcotics. Police chiefs and County Sheriff's report generally that about 1 in 100 applicants can make it through. After that there are those who fail the academy or field training and never finish. The job itself requires shift work at night, weekends, and holidays, which can be disruptive of family life. Law enforcement sworn officers must maintain physical fitness throughout their career and must be meticulously groomed and uniformed.

¹ Source: County of San Luis Obispo County Adopted 2018 -18 Budget, page 105.

On top of all of this is the fact that these individuals go in harm's way on every shift. Except for active military in a combat zone, there are few people who leave for work each day knowing that just about any contact could erupt into violence.

The ability to competitively finance the attraction and retention of sworn law enforcement professionals will become ever more difficult each year as increasing pension payments erode the service budget and negative land use policies and progressive ideology undermine the basic economic generators in the County such as the Diablo Nuclear Power Plant, the Phillips 66 Refinery, the Price Canyon oil field, the Community Choice Aggregation energy swindle displaces tax paying private enterprise, and the Weatherby Fire Arms factory moves to Wyoming. The 20 or so maintenance employees out at each of the solar plants will not replace the economic impact of the thousands of career benefited jobs with great salaries, health insurance, and retirement in the aforementioned companies and industries.

These policies also make it impossible for many safety personnel to find a home with a front yard, back yard, side yards, a garage and privacy.

Item 13 - Request to 1) approve an Operating Agreement with Cal Poly State University for the implementation of Phase One of the El Chorro Regional Park Programming Plan and 2) approve associated budget adjustments of \$662,205 for additional improvements. If approved, the County in partnership with Cal Poly and the private sector would begin a phased enhancement of the clubhouse area and would add some new attractions per the list below:

1. Golf Course Transition

- o New Restaurant Concession (already operating)
- o Enter into operating agreement with Cal Poly for investment in the facility and use as the Cal Poly Golf Team home for practice facilities
- o Retain three greens on the existing front 9 for practice greens
- o Retain the back nine holes as the new 9-hole course
- o Construct an additional range adjacent to the clubhouse and equip with ten Top-Tracer hitting bays (provides modes and games for all ages and levels of experience) to attract non-golfers
- o Night lighting of the range
- o Expanded patio to include food and beverage service to the Top-Tracer hitting bays
- o Integrate bocce ball courts adjacent to driving range and clubhouse restaurant

2. Miniature Golf

- o Contract to design and install an 18-hole miniature golf course across from the clubhouse and adjacent to the parking lot
- o Retain the ability to expand to 36-holes
- o Integrate thematic elements from the park and the surrounding Chorro Valley
- o Address ADA accessibility to and through the mini-golf course
- o Integrate online reservation system to operate from the clubhouse

3. Go Carts

- o Contract to design and install an electric go cart track adjacent to the entry road to the clubhouse
- o Install supporting infrastructure and acquire carts
- o Address ADA accessibility to and within the track
- o Integrate online reservation system to operate from the clubhouse

Feature	Capital Cost	Full year operating costs	Full year revenue
Range relocation	\$200,000	\$0 additional	\$0 additional
Range amenities	\$ 75,000	\$ 26,000	\$ 65,000
Mini-golf	\$400,000	\$ 72,000	\$320,000
Go carts	\$300,000	\$120,000	\$265,000
Marketing	\$ 0	\$ 20,000	n/a
Total	\$975,000	\$238,000	\$650,000

Item 14 - Request to authorize a budget adjustment, to satisfy the terms of the settlement reached with ARB, Inc. in the amount of \$9,950,000, for costs related to the construction of the Los Osos Wastewater Project, by 4/5 vote. Essentially the County lost this lawsuit to one of the contractors on the \$183 million project. Two separate contractors had been engaged to install the underground piping portion through the community (under the streets) that connect to the sewer treatment plant. One of the contractors sued the County for extra costs. It asserted that the designs prepared by the County's design engineering consultants were faulty and that therefore the work cost far more than they had bid.

This Board item is deficient in many ways and should be pulled and placed on the business agenda for a complete and transparent discussion.

- a. The Board item indicates that there is a March 1, 2018 deadline to “wire transfer” the nearly \$10 million to ARB, or the settlement will collapse. Why?
- b. It says the original demand was just shy of \$23 million. Actually it was \$15 million and then increased for interest and delays. As noted above, there were 4 separate projects (by geographic area), which were to be installed by two separate contractors. One contractor was budgeted at \$28.8 million and the other at \$32.4 million. How much was actually spent on these and which one involved ARB? The \$23 million demand seems like a substantial error and even the \$10 million is huge in light of the actual budgets for components.
- c. By settling the lawsuit for \$10 million, is the County agreeing that faulty design work did take place? It paid the engineering firm Camp Dresser & McKee at least \$6.2 million for design of the Collection and Recycled Water Design. It paid HDR Engineering \$9.7 million for either design or supervising the project. The County staff was paid another \$2.6 million to work on this aspect of the project.

If the design was faulty, shouldn't the County be looking for reimbursement from the consulting engineers who provided the faulty design?

- d. Where does the overall project budget stand today? How much has been spent and how much is left, and separately from this issue, is it sufficient to complete the project? The write-up states that there is insufficient funding left in the project budget to cover this cost. The public should be provided with all the numbers, and the Board should discuss them in public before voting on this matter.
- e. Even more bizarre is the source for the payment of the \$10 million. The write-up states that it will be funded out of the Solar Plant Mitigation Account. This was created by requiring the companies that constructed the 2 solar plants in the eastern county to purchase as much of the materials, machinery, equipment, and so forth used to construct the plants in a way that the point of sale was in the County. In this way the County would collect the sales tax.

It was estimated at the time that this would be around \$19 million over the life of construction period. In part it was used as a foil to dismiss criticism that the plants would pay very little property tax because the State made these facilities largely exempt. COLAB has been asking for years how much was collected and has been repeatedly told that the County could not release the information because it would betray business secrets of the private sector tax payers.

Now we know that there is at least \$10 million in the fund. It seems ridiculous at this time not to disclose the full balance. In other words, the County is going to pay off a \$10 million dollar

lawsuit and not disclose the impact on fund balance. The project has been completed for several years and nobody's competitive business interests are about to be betrayed.

f. Another question is, since the funds were to be used by the County to mitigate the supposed impacts of the solar plants, what happens to that theory? How much has been spent out of the Solar "Mitigation" Fund so far, and what has been mitigated? If the Board can throw this money around for anything at all, how about replacing the \$11million Fourth District Parks mitigation funds that were ripped off for other districts?

Did staff ever suggest that some this money could be used to restore the money that was looted from the Fourth District?

h. If the County intends to ever pay back the Solar "Mitigation Fund," what will be the impact on the Los Osos ratepayers?

Knowing that this day was coming, did former Public Works Director Pavo Ogren bail out to a provincial small time water district?

The Board needs to get a lot of straight answers here before they let this one go. Ten million here, five million there, your key jobs for working people shutting down or moving to Wyoming, hamstringing an oil refinery, banning oil wells, shutting down vacation rentals, setting up new governments to sell phony green energy credits to the citizens, taxing home builders, and many more disasters are the legacy of the progressive agenda.

Strangely (or perhaps not), an update of the Los Osos Budget table wasn't provided as part of the item.

See the very revealing table on the next page:

Exhibit A2
 Project Cost to Date
 Los Osos Wastewater Project
 As Of 12/31/13

	Item Description	Budget	Costs to Date	Remaining Budget
1	County Financed Pre-Due Diligence costs (through 4/30/2011)	\$ 6,137,210	\$ 6,137,210	\$ -
2	Administration/Preliminary Engineering			
3	Carollo Engineers	\$ 174,562	\$ 167,197	\$ 7,365
4	Meyers Nave...	\$ 26,590	\$ 1,650	\$ 24,940
5	County Staff/Other Direct Costs	\$ 1,994,819	\$ 1,327,545	\$ 667,274
6	Subtotal	\$ 2,195,571	\$ 1,496,392	\$ 699,579
7	Unallocated	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
8	Total of Administration/Preliminary Engineering	\$ 2,195,571	\$ 1,496,392	\$ 699,579
9	Environmental Permits/Mitigation			
10	Coastal San Luis RCD	\$ 30,351	\$ 6,790	\$ 23,571
11	Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck	\$ 90,000	\$ 64,987	\$ 25,013
12	Far Western Anthropological	\$ 921,606	\$ 403,887	\$ 517,720
13	Mid Town Restoration (R. Burke Construction, Inc.)	\$ 400,762	\$ 400,762	\$ -
14	Rick Engineering	\$ 89,055	\$ 89,055	\$ -
15	SLO Green Build	\$ 97,075	\$ 62,005	\$ 35,070
16	SLO Starts Plant Propogation	\$ 54,871	\$ 54,871	\$ -
17	SWCA	\$ 56,539	\$ 56,539	\$ -
18	SWCA	\$ 333,549	\$ 190,921	\$ 142,629
19	Water Conservation	\$ 3,850,000	\$ 859,522	\$ 2,970,478
20	County Staff/Other Direct Costs	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 1,118,528	\$ 281,472
21	Subtotal	\$ 7,303,817	\$ 3,307,666	\$ 3,995,951
22	Unallocated	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
23	Total of Environmental Permits/Mitigation	\$ 7,303,817	\$ 3,307,666	\$ 3,995,951
24	Collection and Recycled Water - Design and Construction			
25	Camp Dresser & McKee	\$ 6,152,408	\$ 5,492,167	\$ 660,241
26	Cardno TBE	\$ 20,659	\$ 20,659	\$ -
27	Collection System Contract - Areas A & D	\$ 28,846,240	\$ 20,221,441	\$ 8,624,799
28	Collection System Contract - Areas B & C	\$ 32,367,500	\$ 19,907,129	\$ 12,460,371
29	Collection System Contract - Pump Stations	\$ 9,544,550	\$ 10,500	\$ 9,534,050
30	HDR Engineering	\$ 9,732,274	\$ 5,449,685	\$ 4,282,589
31	LOCSD 2005 Installed Pipes	\$ 772,029	\$ 772,029	\$ -
32	County Staff/Other Direct Costs	\$ 2,600,000	\$ 1,870,845	\$ 729,155
33	Subtotal	\$ 90,035,660	\$ 53,744,455	\$ 36,291,205
34	Unallocated	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ 0
35	Total of Collection and Recycled Water - Design and Construction	\$ 90,035,660	\$ 53,744,455	\$ 36,291,205
36	Treatment Facility - Design and Construction			
37	Carollo Engineers (Preliminary Design)	\$ 785,244	\$ 785,244	\$ -
38	Carollo Engineers (Final Design)	\$ 4,826,599	\$ 3,245,748	\$ 1,580,851
39	HDR Engineering	\$ 4,022,979	\$ 86,107	\$ 3,936,872
40	WRF Contract	\$ 50,601,814	\$ -	\$ 50,601,814
41	County Staff/Other Direct Costs	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 447,211	\$ 652,789
42	Subtotal	\$ 61,336,636	\$ 4,564,309	\$ 56,772,326
43	Unallocated	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
44	Total of Treatment Facility - Design and Construction	\$ 61,336,636	\$ 4,564,309	\$ 56,772,326
45	Right of Way			
46	Hanner Jewell & Associates	\$ 65,634	\$ 56,897	\$ 8,737
47	Schenberger Taylor...	\$ 66,363	\$ 50,000	\$ 16,363
48	Real Property Acquisition	\$ 2,193,000	\$ 2,181,351	\$ 11,649
49	Price Postal Parma	\$ 130,000	\$ 105,891	\$ 24,109
50	County Staff/Other Direct Costs	\$ 415,004	\$ 393,973	\$ 21,031
51	Subtotal	\$ 2,870,000	\$ 2,788,112	\$ 81,888
52	Unallocated	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
53	Total of Right of Way	\$ 2,870,000	\$ 2,788,112	\$ 81,888
54	Subtotal of Project Costs	\$ 171,879,294	\$ 74,038,343	\$ 97,840,951
55	Contingency	\$ 4,102,113	\$ -	\$ 4,102,113
56	SRF Refinance	\$ 6,288,416	\$ 6,288,416	\$ -
57	Interest/Finance Charges	\$ 1,110,000	\$ 1,020,289	\$ 89,711
58	GRAND TOTAL	\$ 183,379,823	\$ 81,347,049	\$ 102,032,774

Collection system portion of the Los Osos Sewer System Budget

Item 19 - Appeal of Monarch Dune's Conditional Use Permit for the Woodlands.

Neighbors are appealing the Planning Commission approval of a 163-unit addition (originally planned as one of the phases) on the grounds of insufficient water supply. The Planning Department has refuted the appeal information and recommends that it be denied.

Item 22 - Submittal of the Fiscal Year 2018-19 County and State budget update. The item is process oriented and reviews the steps in the budget policy and production schedule. Currently it is forecast that the County would be about \$2.4 - \$4.0 million short in its General Fund to run all the County services in FY 2018-19 at the current FY 2017-18 levels. This is in large part due to increasing salary and benefit costs.

The staff is worried about several external possibilities including:

1.) Increased County cost share for the In Home Supportive Health Services (IHSS): This is a program which was started by the State about ten years ago by which the State and the counties would pay people to care for indigent aging and disabled people within their homes. It was hoped was that it would forestall institutionalization and hospitalization, thereby saving money. About 500,000 people are now on the program. It is not clear if it has saved any money.

As the program expanded it was adjusted to allow relatives of the patients to be hired as their caregivers. Thus you could get paid an hourly wage to care for mom. The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and a new union created just for this group, United Domestic Workers (UDW), saw an opportunity and got the Legislature to mandate that the caregivers had to be in one of the 2 unions. Then the program was expanded to mandate that the counties provide health insurance for the caregivers. Subsequently, and on February 1, 2016, the US Department of Labor determined that the domestic workers were entitled to overtime. That added \$942 million in new cost just that year.

When the UDW Vice President came up from LA to organize the Santa Barbara County IHSS workers, he was impeccably groomed, wore a beautiful \$1500 charcoal gray pin striped suit and had a heavy gold necklace with matching cufflinks and bracelet. His front line organizers looked like the “nurses” from the rock act Motley Crue when they do the long version of Dr. Feelgood in an 18,000 seat arena.

Perhaps UDW was selling the proposition that membership would be a transformative experience.

The SLO County IHSS website states in part:

What is this service?

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program helps pay for services provided to aged, blind, or disabled individuals who are limited in their ability to care for themselves and cannot live at home safely without in-home care. IHSS is considered an alternative to out-of-home care, such as nursing homes or board and care facilities.

Some services that can be authorized through IHSS include: housecleaning, meal preparation, laundry, grocery shopping, personal care services (such as bowel and bladder care, bathing,



grooming and paramedical services), accompaniment to medical appointments, and protective supervision for the mentally impaired.

For FY 2015-16 the State reported the following numbers for the program:

FY 15/16 estimates approximately 463,537 IHSS consumers who receive an average of 101.9 hours per month at an average monthly cost of \$1,291. 96 (absent the cost impacts of overtime)

» *These IHSS consumers:*

- *16% are 85 years of age or older*
- *41% are ages 65-84*
- *36% are disabled adults*
- *7% are under the age of 21*

For 2016-17 the State estimated that it had spent \$10.4 Billion on IHSS.

SLO County's local share cost of the program may rise from \$5.2 to \$7.2 million from this fiscal year to the next, and will probably escalate year after year.

2.) Potential Repeal of SB 1 - the fuel, vehicle registration, and carbon tax approved by the Legislature last year: The County staff betrays its favorable opinion of the tax in the write-up:

First the text points out that the County will start out receiving about \$8.9 million per year, which will grow to \$11 million per year over time. Then:

If the repeal effort is successful, the County will not receive the expected revenue noted above to fund road maintenance work. On the other hand, the Diablo Power Plant was paying the County \$8 million in pure unrestricted general fund and of course generating about \$1 billion in economic impact. Where was staff in promoting a policy of retention and relicensing when it counted?

This report from a strategic point of view is still deficient:

- a. Where is a recommended economic strategy (quantified) to underpin the County service needs and budget?
- b. Where is the 5-year forecast chart which gives the Board some idea of where the County is headed?

3.) Potential Pick up of Affordable Care Act Costs: The staff is worried that if the mandatory provisions of the Federal Affordable Care Act (ACA – Obama Care) are repealed, the County would have to add millions of dollars to cover the cost of the 16,500 new Medi-Cal eligibles that it added under the program. From time to time the cost has been discussed as \$6 million new general fund dollars annually and growing.

Item 23 - Submittal of the Infrastructure and Facilities Five Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This item contains the County's 5-year rolling plan for maintenance of capital improvements and creation of new capital improvements. These infrastructures include roads, bridges, drainage projects, sidewalks, bike trails, and so forth. It also includes the maintenance and creation of new facilities such as parks, general government buildings, fire houses, water and sewer facilities, communications facilities, animal shelters, jails, probation halls, health facilities, etc.

It allows the Board to assess needs, develop funding, and set priorities. This is one of the better processes and presentations in the County. Opportunities for improvement include:

- a. The Board should not consider it as part of a lengthy agenda with other items, but instead should set a half day when it is not busy and go through the presentations and actual summary sheets in detail.
- b. The CIP only presents projects which are funded or are very likely to be funded. It should also include projects that are needed but unfunded to provide a true prospective of any gap that may be occurring. The value is that it would explicate the total needs and allow the Board and community to consider alternative non-tax and debt revenue sources, such as various types of economic growth. For example one of the barriers to new and meaningful housing development is insufficient infrastructure, such as road capacity, traffic controls, and so forth. Similarly, water and sewer, parks availability, firehouses, etc., may be insufficient in certain areas. Having a realistic and comprehensive cost view is an important requisite to having a long range strategic plan.

Otherwise see the link:

<http://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/agenda/sanluisobispo/8409/NSBZZWFyIENJUCBQbGFuIEV4ZWN1dGl2ZSBTdW1tYXJ5IDE4LTE5IHBkZiBBLnBkZg==/12/n/90193.doc>

Matters After 1:30 PM

Item 25 - Request to receive and file a presentation related to the Stepping Up Initiative and San Luis Obispo County Jail inmate health care services and provide direction as necessary. This is a "present and receive" report on the initiative to upgrade the programming, coordination, communication, and technology for managing jail inmate health services. The balance of the report is included in a substantial PowerPoint presentation, which can be seen at the link:

<http://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/agenda/sanluisobispo/8409/NSBZZWFyIENJUCBQbGFuIEV4ZWN1dGl2ZSBTdW1tYXJ5IDE4LTE5IHBkZiBBLnBkZg==/12/n/90193.dochttp://agenda.sloco>

[W1tYXJ5IDE4LTE5IHBkZiBBLnBkZg==/12/n/90193.doc](http://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/agenda/sanluisobispo/8404/U3RlcHBpbmcgVXAgYW5kIEphaWxfQk9TIDAyMjAxOCBBZ2VuZGEuTmV0LnBkZg==/12/n/90300.doc)<http://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/agenda/sanluisobispo/8404/U3RlcHBpbmcgVXAgYW5kIEphaWxfQk9TIDAyMjAxOCBBZ2VuZGEuTmV0LnBkZg==/12/n/90300.doc>

There is no Board action to adopt the program or to finance the requisite enhancements at this meeting. It is likely that these will be included in the proposed budget requests of the cognizant departments.

Item 27 - Submittal of a report on Department of Planning and Building Board directed projects and request for Board direction on the Cannabis Program, as necessary. The Board will receive an update on current and proposed long range planning projects (studies, plan revisions, ordinance revisions, and other assignments). It may also consider aspects of enforcing various portions of marijuana regulation through code enforcement. The task list still contains preparation of a vacation rental ordinance for inland areas of the County. Why? This should be shut down.

Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, February 22, 2018 (Scheduled)

There are no matters of substantial general policy on this agenda. There are several applications for development permits, requests for extensions, and a request for a continuance.

LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 (Not Scheduled)

The Board did not meet.

Background: It has determined to attempt to hold the schedule to 2 meetings per month unless the volume of work or a particular pressing matter requires the addition of meetings. This is a very beneficial improvement for management and staff, as it gets them off the every week treadmill of preparing for meetings. In turn this allows them to more carefully prepare analysis and recommendations. It also allows them more time to focus on managing operations and service to the public. All this eventually saves money. Board members have more time to interact directly with their constituents.

Much of the Board agenda consists of routine housekeeping matters and review of small grants, minor personnel adjustments, ceremonial presentations, and public comment of which very few individuals take advantage. For example, the general public has been almost entirely absent

during extensive and repeated meetings on the size, scope, and intensity of the future of the marijuana industry (the industry has been present). Almost no one attends the budget hearings (accept supplicants for grants), which actually determine much policy.

OIL DRILLING BAN INITIATIVE LAUNCHED

A group called Protect San Luis Obispo County is gathering signatures for a November 2018 ballot initiative which, if approved by the voters, would ban drilling of all new oil wells in San Luis Obispo County. It would also effectively shut down existing oil wells over time because it bans maintenance activities necessary to keep them running. To qualify for the ballot the proponents must secure 8,580 valid signatures by May 2, 2018.

Nipomo activist Charles Varni, who helped lead the effort against the Phillips 66 rail spur, is listed on the organization's website as a "cofounder." No other individuals are listed as members or on a leadership committee. It is not known at this point how many socialist radicals from the Bay Area or wherever are part of the effort this time. They were certainly here in full force providing opposition to the Phillips 66 rail spur project.

Is Varni a front for Bay Area and Santa Barbara County Luddite carpetbaggers? We will have to follow the money if the travesty qualifies.

Their website attacks fossil fuels and the oil industry. It can be seen at the link:
<http://protectslo.nationbuilder.com/>

Their Banner:



Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) Meeting of Thursday, February 15, 2018 (Completed)

Item A-2: Property Tax Exchange Process in the City and State. The Commission heard the report and both City Councilor Fonzi of Atascadero and Supervisor Arnold pointed out how various changes in the finances and requirements on local governments are complicating the issue. As annexations are proposed, more sophisticated financial and operational analysis could be required.

Background: This was an interesting and important report that could presage conflict between the County and the cities over allocation of taxes when annexation of unincorporated County land to cities takes place.

As cities expand and annex more land, the costs of some services are shifted to the annexing city. These often include police, fire, public works, parks, drainage, refuse collection and disposal, and administrative overhead. The County retains responsibility for public records, elections, District Attorney, Public Defender, Public Health, Mental Health, Child Protective Services, some court expenses, regional parks, Social Services, jail operations and facilities, emergency preparedness, Agriculture Commissioner, and many health and human services programs. The issue then becomes: What proportion of the property tax does the County retain in the annexed area, and very importantly, what portion of the future growth does it retain?

How this is managed is an important subject because it can impact growth, housing, and business development. Earlier in the year some of the cities suggested a review of the existing formula. The report is kind of a primer or Annexation 101 class and is worth reading. It can be seen at the link:

<http://nebula.wsimg.com/5f16b0ab41548068f4cc542200fc312d?AccessKeyId=242F22EFFF FDE4B18755&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

COLAB IN DEPTH

IN FIGHTING THE TROUBLESOME, LOCAL DAY-TO-DAY ASSAULTS ON OUR FREEDOM AND PROPERTY, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE LARGER UNDERLYING IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CAUSES AND FORCES

AFTER BILLIONS IN TAX INCREASES, CALIFORNIANS DESERVE A TAX CUT

By Jon Coupal and Vince Fong

For millions of Californians, the state has been rendered unaffordable because of foolish and counter-productive policies emanating from Sacramento. A shocking one-third of California renters spend at least half of their take-home pay on rent, and only 40 percent can afford to purchase a median-priced home. Little wonder, then, that one in five Californians lives in poverty — the highest poverty rate in the nation.

Small businesses are struggling as well. Nationwide, nearly ten percent of new entrepreneurs start from at or below the poverty line, but according to the Institute for Justice, California is third worst in terms of burdensome licensing laws.

At every moment of every day, Californians are taxed. We have the highest personal income, sales, and gas taxes in the nation. Even though Sacramento is sitting on a \$4.6 billion budget surplus, high state taxes are continuing to gouge hard working Californians. In fact, over \$15 billion in annual tax increases have been enacted since Gov. Brown took the reins in 2010.

Thankfully, there is a better way to improve the lives of all Californians.

Taxpayers, small businesses, families, homeowners and renters can finally get some relief through the California Competitiveness and Innovation Act (AB1922), which was recently introduced in the state Legislature and is supported by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association.

Small businesses employ about half of our state's private sector workforce, providing people with their jobs and livelihood. The people who own these businesses are our friends, neighbors, brothers, sisters, moms and dads who are being stripped of their hard earned dollars by non-stop tax and fee increases year after year.

California needs to reverse its notorious reputation of being anti-business. We can start by eliminating the \$800 franchise tax on small companies. An \$800 annual tax on a business that might earn as little as \$9,040 a year is absurd. No other state in the nation discourages businesses by imposing such a tax.

The bill will also lower the state personal income tax rate for ordinary Californians. Working-class individuals and families struggle enough as it is, and even though wages are on the rise, they haven't kept up with the high cost of living. The proposal will allow working and middle class families to pay a lower state income tax rate. California should encourage people to work hard and dream big in this state without worrying if they can afford to live and work here.

Tax relief can also help address California's housing crisis. The state needs to build 180,000 new units of housing a year for the next ten years simply to keep pace with demand. Right now, the state builds roughly half that. To keep that figure in perspective, since 1990 there have only been four years where the state built at least 180,000 new units of housing, and none since 2005. Rents are at record highs because the state has failed to build additional housing stock.

To ease the burden, AB1922 would double the renter's tax credit which would provide meaningful savings, especially for millennials and minorities trying to afford their first home. For homeowners, the bill doubles the homeowner's property tax exemption. This exemption has not been raised since 1972. Back then, the median home price was \$25,000. Today, it's over \$500,000.

Meaningful tax relief will allow families to control their own future by allowing them to put money away for retirement, investing in lifelong dreams, or saving for their children's college education. Tax relief might also help keep our citizens in California instead of moving to Texas, Nevada or Florida where taxpayers are actually respected.

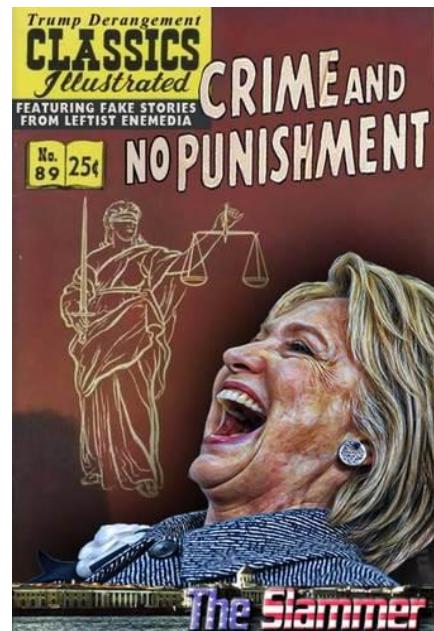
Jon Coupal is the president of Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association. Assemblyman Vince Fong represents the 34th Assembly District in the California Assembly. This article was presented on the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association Web site and the Orange County Register of February 9, 2018.

SCANDAL, CORRUPTION, LAWBREAKING — AND SO WHAT?

By Victor Davis Hanson

The FISA-gate, Clinton emails, and Uranium One scandals are sort of reaching a consensus. Many things quite wrong and illegal were done by both Hillary Clinton and her entourage and members of the Obama agencies and administration — both the acts themselves and the cover-ups and omissions that ensued. Remember, in the FISA-gate scandal such likely widespread criminal behavior was predicated on two premises: 1) certainty of an easy Clinton victory, after which the miscreants would be not only excused but probably rewarded for their zeal; 2) progressive hubris in which our supposedly moral betters felt it their right, indeed their duty, to use unethical and even unlawful means for the “greater good” — to achieve their self-described moral ends of stopping the crude and reactionary Trump. (The image to the right appeared in the February 12, 2018 edition of American Thinker, separately from Dr. Hanson’s article).

The wrongdoing probably includes attempting to warp a U.S. election, Russian collusion, repeatedly misleading and lying before the FISA courts, improperly surveilling American citizens, unmasking the names of citizens swept up in unlawful surveillance and then illegally leaking them to the press, disseminating and authenticating opposition smears during a political campaign, lying under oath to Congress, obstructing ongoing investigations, using federal funds to purchase ad hominem gossip against a presidential candidate, blatant conflicts of interests, weaponizing federal investigations, trafficking in and leaking classified information . . . The list goes on and on.



The State Department is now involved. Apparently anyone who was a former Clinton smear artist can pass fantasies to a sympathetic or known political appointee at State. And if the “dossier” fits the proper narrative and shared agenda, it gains credence enough to ensure that it is passed up to senior State officials and on to the FBI. Perhaps a private citizen with a grudge against a rival should try that as well.

These scandals will grow even greater before various congressional investigations expire.

In some sense, we are in uncharted territory — given the misadventure of appointing Robert Mueller as special counsel. His team is now replaying the role of Patrick Fitzgerald in the Scooter Libby case: investigating a crime that did not exist and that even if it did was committed by someone else.

The Mueller team’s likely parachute will have little if anything to do with the Russian collusion that it originally and chiefly was appointed to investigate. Instead, it’s likely to settle for perjury and obstruction charges against peripheral Trump officials (if the cases are not thrown out by possible reliance on tainted FISA transcripts).

The indictments may gain a little traction if they are timed to be released before the midterm elections, hyped in the mainstream media, and calibrated to be tried before liberal D.C. juries. The investigation may seek some redemption or justification if it criminalizes the secretly taped bombast of a Trump family member, catching him in some sort of perjury trap or business misdeed.

Yet Mueller’s appointment makes resolution of FISA-gate and its associated scandals more difficult to resolve. His value for the Left is not in what he will find but that his mere presence will become an argument ipso facto for never again appointing anyone like him. After all, has the U.S. government ever had two special counsels working at cross-purposes, each investigating one of the two candidates in the prior presidential election

Once a special counsel is appointed, can he be superseded by a really special or special-special counsel, an attorney who might have to investigate the other special counsel (who was in charge of the botched Clinton Uranium One scandal, who was appointed through a clear and constructed conflict of interest, and whose own team is largely composed of proud partisans and campaign donors, and who may have been involved in using poisoned FISA surveillance data to leverage confessions or indictments)?

It is unlikely that Rod Rosenstein will demand to see whether Mueller, after almost nine months, has actually found much evidence of collusion. Nor is Rosenstein apt to order Mueller to cease a mostly dead-end investigation and redirect it along a freeway of Clinton-Obama-connected

collusion, obstruction, and fraud. (Read the Page-Strzok text archive to see why the present weaponized bureaucratic culture in D.C. is utterly incapable of disinterested inquiry.)

Still, Democrats at some point will see that what they thought was the formerly defensible is now becoming absolutely indefensible. Adam Schiff, after months of leaking, making grandiose false statements on cable TV, and getting punked by Russian comedians, is now a caricature. He became the sad legislative bookend to the neurotic James Comey. Schiff will probably soon be forced to pivot back to his former incarnation as a loud critic of FISA-court abuse.

Those who still persist in denying the extent of clear wrongdoing will suffer the tragicomic fate of Watergate-era Representative Charles Sandman (an authentic World War II hero) and Rabbi Baruch Korff (who as a child fled Ukrainian pogroms). The last diehard supporters of Richard Nixon as he faced impeachment, they both ended up widely discredited because of their political inability or personal unwillingness to see what was right before their eyes.

After all, professed civil libertarians, hard-hitting investigative reporters, and skeptics of nontransparent and overreaching federal agencies are now insidiously defending not the just the indefensible, but what they have claimed to have fought against their entire lives. Woodward and Bernstein in their sunset years have missed the far greater scandal and in their dotage will likely nullify what they once did in their salad days.

If the economy keeps improving, if Trump's popularity nears 50 percent, and if polls show the midterm elections still tightening, we should see the politics of Democratic equivocation sooner rather than later.

So what would be their terms to call it all off?

I think the Democratic fallback position will be to point to the career carnage at the FBI and DOJ as punishment enough.

Director Comey was fired. Deputy Director Andrew McCabe was forcibly retired. FBI lawyer Lisa Page was reassigned and demoted. FBI general counsel James Baker resigned. Senior agent Peter Strzok was reassigned and demoted. The former FBI director's chief of staff, James Rybicki, resigned. Mike Kortan, FBI assistant director for public affairs, took retirement. Deputy Attorney General Bruce Ohr was reassigned and demoted. Justice Department's counterintelligence head, David Laufman, resigned. A cadre of others "unexpectedly" have left, allegedly (or conveniently) for private-sector jobs. Such career implosions do not happen without cause.

And if that is not enough, Democrats may further tsk-tsk that if there were perhaps zealotry and

excesses, they were in the distant past. An out-of-office Susan Rice, Ben Rhodes, Samantha Power, James Clapper, John Brennan — and Barack Obama — may have stepped over the line a bit in matters of surveillance, unmasking, and leaking. But do we really wish to go back and put another administration on trial, politicizing governmental transitions?

And if that is not enough, Democrats will also shrug that the collusion mess was analogous to another Republican Benghazi hearing: lots of embarrassing smoke of “what difference does it make” admissions, but little fire in proving beyond a shadow of a doubt that the main players engaged in prosecutable crimes.

And if that is still not enough, Democrats in extremis may concede that Mueller could retire with his minor scalps, and both sides then could call it quits, even-steven. Who knows, perhaps they will say that Christopher Steele had a history with Russian oligarchs and was using his paymaster Hillary Clinton as well as being used by her?

Accepting any of these obfuscations would be a grave mistake.

Voters would only grow more cynical if some Americans were allowed to abuse constitutionally protected civil liberties, and to lie to the Congress, the FBI, and the courts, while the less connected others go to jail for much less. Without a judicial accounting, it will be impossible to clean up the hierarchies of the FBI and the DOJ.

Indeed, absent accountability and punishment, the new modus operandi would be for any lame-duck incumbent administration to use federal agencies to enhance the campaign of its own party’s nominee. It would be only logical to conclude that criminal acts used to help a successor would be forgotten or rewarded under the victor’s tenure.

What is needed?

Attorney General Sessions must find muscular, ambitious, and combative prosecutors (preferably from outside Washington, D.C., and preferably existing federal attorneys), direct them to call a Grand Jury, and begin collating information from congressional investigations to get to the bottom of what is likely one of gravest scandals in post-war American history: the effort to use the federal government to thwart the candidacy of an unpopular presidential candidate and then to smear and ruin his early tenure as president

Only another prosecutorial investigation, one way or another, will lead to resolution, take the entire mess out of the partisan arena, and keep the anemic Mueller investigation honest — with the full knowledge that if its own investigators have violated laws or used tainted evidence or in the past obstructed justice, then they too will be held to account

*Victor Davis Hanson is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and the author of *The Second World Wars: How the First Global Conflict Was Fought and Won*, released in October from Basic Books. Dr. Hansson has been a featured speaker at various COLAB events. This article first appeared in the National Review of February 13, 2018 and was also posted on the Hoover Institution of Stanford University Hoover Daily Report of February 13, 2018.*

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