

**WRITTEN
PUBLIC
COMMENT**

**CITY COUNCIL
MEETING**

OCTOBER 18, 2022

From: "W. Richard Mills" <dmillshome@wrmcpas.com>

Date: October 17, 2022 at 3:37:31 PM PDT

To: John Pena <jpena@laquintaca.gov>, Kathleen Fitzpatrick <kfitzpatrick@laquintaca.gov>, Linda Evans <Levans@laquintaca.gov>, Robert Radi <Rradi@laquintaca.gov>, Steve Sanchez <ssanchez@laquintaca.gov>

Subject: Dune Palms Bridge Project

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Madame Mayor and City Council Members –

A point of clarification respecting the additional funding request for the Dune Palms Bridge Project.

On October 5, 2022 the Financial Advisory Commission conducted a Special Meeting which was the same day that the City received 5 bids. The low bid was 31% higher than expected. Thus, the FAC was not aware of this development and was unable to even consider it.

Previously, the Staff and the FAC had agreed to use a combination of Unassigned Reserves and Measure G Reserves to fund the advance funding of \$15,905,300.

Now the Staff is requesting additional funds of \$4,501,803 from the same sources. The FAC has no knowledge of this request. This is a significant matter and deserves input from the guardians of Measure G. In fact, at the October meeting the FAC formed a three-member sub-committee to study the "General Fund Balance and Reserves Policy".

I am unclear respecting the urgency. The next meeting of the FAC is November 9, 2022.

Respectfully submitted –

Dick Mills
Chair, Financial Advisory Commission

From: Eevet Edens <ed@desertcancerfoundation.org>
Sent: Monday, October 17, 2022 12:46 PM
To: City Clerk Mail
Cc: Eevet Edens
Subject: Public Comment from Desert Cancer Foundation

EXTERNAL: This message originated outside of the City of La Quinta. Please use proper judgement and caution when opening attachments, clicking links or responding to requests for information.

Hello,

My name is Eevet Edens, Executive Director of the Desert Cancer Foundation. I would like to submit a WRITTEN COMMENT for the city council meeting on Tuesday, October 18, 2022. Are your meetings also on zoom? I would like to attend and may have a schedule conflict depending on the time for public comments... thank you :)

COMMENT:

Good afternoon Mayor Evans, City of La Quinta council members and city staff. We want to publicly THANK YOU for your support of Desert Cancer Foundation!

We truly appreciate the funding from your Community Grant Program for 2022-2023, and support of Desert Cancer Foundation (DCF). Your ongoing partnership helps us provide vital cancer care and treatment for residents who otherwise could not access or afford vital care! On behalf of DCF's Board of Directors, staff members, and the residents we serve, thank you!

And on the heels of a very successful Paint El Paseo Pink - we send a special thank you to Mayor Evans for your attendance of this beloved event. You are true leader and partner in every sense, and we're honored to have you attend and grateful for your support of DCF to provide for valley resident in need.

With much gratitude,
Eevet Edens, Executive Director of the Desert Cancer Foundation

Warm regards,

Eevet Edens,
Executive Director,
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[Email: ED@DesertCancerFoundation.org](mailto:ED@DesertCancerFoundation.org)
www.DesertCancerFoundation.org



From: George Batavick <georgebatavick@yahoo.com>

Date: Saturday, October 15, 2022 at 11:32 AM

To: Linda Evans <Levans@laquintaca.gov>, Kathleen Fitzpatrick <kfitzpatrick@laquintaca.gov>, John Pena <jpena@laquintaca.gov>, Robert Radi <Rradi@laquintaca.gov>, Steve Sanchez <ssanchez@laquintaca.gov>

Cc: Jon McMillen <jmcmillen@laquintaca.gov>, Claudia Martinez <cmartinez@laquintaca.gov>, Bryan McKinney <Bmckinney@laquintaca.gov>, Julie Mignogna <jmignogna@laquintaca.gov>

Subject: Potential City Funded Turf Rebate Program

** EXTERNAL: This message originated outside of the City of La Quinta. Please use proper judgement and caution when opening attachments, clicking links or responding to requests for information. **

Madam Mayor and Members of the City Council,

At your October 18, 2022 City Council Meeting, Staff of our Public Works Department will be leading a Study Session to "Discuss Implementation of City Funded Turf Rebate Program." The Study Session Memorandum concludes "Given the success the turf rebate program in neighboring cities, it is proposed that the City of La Quinta consider appropriating funding for a similar rebate program in partnership with CVWD. Staff recommends that the program be available to those residents, businesses, and HOA's that qualify under CVWD's current Turf Rebate Program on a first come, first serve basis."

I am ADAMANTLY opposed to the City of La Quinta implementing a City Funded Turf Rebate Program. My reasons follow.

The State of California has historically mismanaged its water resources, leading to the current concerns about future availability. This mismanagement, coupled with a number of past years with low rainfall and low snowpacks, has exacerbated this situation. However, instead of improving the state's water infrastructure by investing in new reservoirs and salinization plants using ocean water, politicians on both sides of the aisle have invested in such boondoggles as the bullet train to nowhere. Now the state is looking to the Cities and local water utilities to bail them out of their water mismanagement by declaring a State of Emergency and imposing draconian conservation measures.

It goes without saying, reasonable water conservation SHOULD ALWAYS be a priority for the City and its residents, businesses and HOA's. The viability of La Quinta relies on an adequate supply of water to help support its economy, especially those parts of our economy in the resort and hospitality area (eg hotels and golf courses.) The City continues to do its part to conserve water as evidenced by the many past and planned turf conversion projects, and should be applauded for these efforts.

Residents, businesses and HOA's likewise need to do their part to conserve water by installing smart irrigation controllers and, when sensible and affordable, convert their turf areas to desertscape (drought resistant plants and rock) or artificial turf. However, this is a personal responsibility of the residents, businesses and HOA's and requires them to work with CVWD to take advantage of their existing rebate programs. It is NOT a City responsibility to provide additional rebates as there is no direct benefit to the City to do so. Instead, additional City rebates would impair our finances.

As an example of how rebates should work - I live in the Griffin Ranch Community and serve as the HOA's Financial Advisor and, until recently, the Chair of our Landscape Committee. Over the past 2 years, we have had a number of turf conversion projects. Most recently in our main entry area, we converted 24,685 square feet of turf to a combination of desertscape (for 21, 725 sq ft) and artificial turf (for 2,960 sq ft). The net cost to the HOA follows:

Removal of existing turf and installation of desertscape	\$90,000	
Installation of artificial turf	26,750	
Total cost		\$116,750
CVWD rebate @ \$3 a square foot		(74,055)
Net cost to HOA		\$42,695

In our case we charged 50% (\$21,348) to our reserves and the other 50% to our operating expenses. All of this was properly managed within our HOA. We were not looking for a subsidy, tantamount to free handout, from the City, as we accepted it was OUR responsibility and NOT a City responsibility to complete this work.

Regarding CVWD, they play a sort of carnival “shell game” with their rebates. Their rebates will all be recouped thru future rate increases or Tier adjustments. Additionally, the loss of revenues from lower water usage resulting from turf conversions will likewise be recouped thru future rate increases and Tier adjustments.

The Staff, under Fiscal Impacts, mention the funding options of Measure G Revenues or Reserves, Natural Disaster Reserves, FY 21/22 Surplus, or Unassigned Reserves. The use of Measure G Revenues or Reserves is a nonstarter as such use would run afoul of Measure G’s intent. Certainly, Measure G was not intended to provide subsidies to selected residents, businesses and HOA’s. And I do not see our water issue a national disaster. Regarding the use of FY 21/22 Surplus or Unassigned Reserves, the FAC has just initiated its Reserve Study, so Commissioners will need to include this Surplus and Unassigned Reserves at their current levels in its Study. Also, our unfunded pension liability needs to be considered before committing City funds for a rebate program.

It is my strong opinion, the City should NOT consider a Turf Refund Program for its residents, businesses and HOA’s as there is NO direct benefit to the City. Rather it would drain some of our current finances already facing the potential passage of Measure A, and a looming recession.

In closing, now is the time for the City to conserve our finances and not needlessly use them to help selected residents, businesses and HOA’s with their turf conversions which are clearly their responsibility. Additionally, there is no need for the City to “keep up with the Joneses” when viewing other Coachella Valley City Rebate Programs, nor do we have to “virtue signal” the City is doing something to quell the loud voices of the unrealistic expectations of the water conservation crusaders.

Thank you for considering my views on this matter.

Regards,

George Batavick

Sent from my iPad