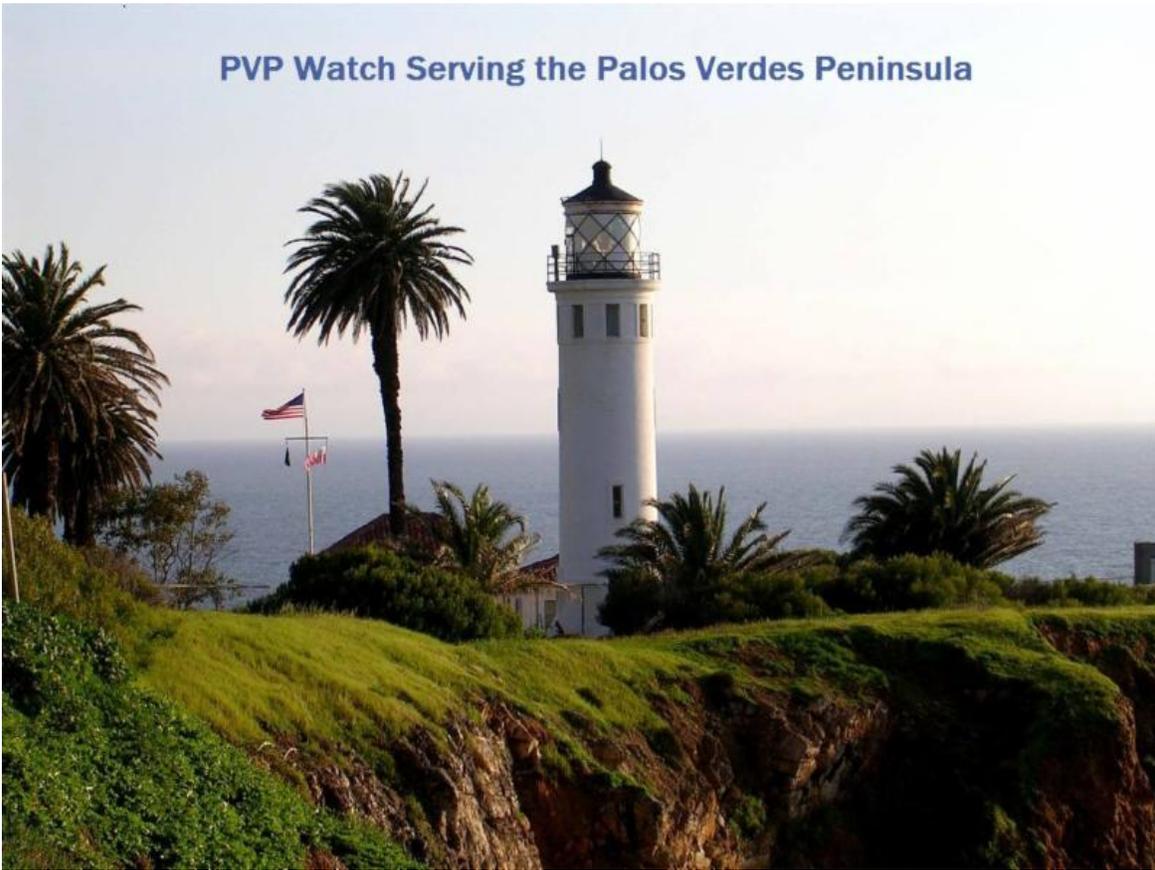


PVP Watch Newsletter – July 2020

PVP Watch Serving the Palos Verdes Peninsula



PALOS VERDES ELECTIONS

2020 is an unusual year in many respects, with COVID-19 restrictions even affecting the way politicians can campaign. Realizing that candidates in local races would have a difficult time reaching the voters with their messages and platforms **PVP Watch in August invited all candidates running in local races on the Palos Verdes Peninsula to be interviewed.** We explained that the results of those interviews and the candidates' platforms would be published in our newsletter prior to the election, as well as possibly our endorsement.

There are 23 candidates running for office this year on the hill and eight accepted the invitation to speak with us. One is an

incumbent. That only one third of the candidates responded is a bit surprising since our newsletter is sent to over 2,000 e-mail addresses, primarily on the Peninsula, and many recipients then forward the newsletter on to others.

Rancho Palos Verdes (RPV) is not having an election since nobody filed to run against Mayor John Cruikshank and Mayor Pro Tem Eric Alegria. According to the RPV city newsletter this is the first time RPV has not held an election to fill city council seats. Pursuant to the election code the city council is authorized to appoint Cruikshank and Alegria to four-year terms, which they did at their August 18, 2020, meeting. It saves the city \$100,000 by not holding this election. **PVP Watch congratulates Cruikshank and Alegria on their second terms and wishes them well.**

These are the other PV Peninsula candidates...

Palos Verdes Estates City Council, where five candidates are running for two positions:

1. **Dawn Murdock**...Murdock was interviewed. She has lived in PVE 22 years and has spent 17 years in business management and consulting. Her specialty is strategy and business operations, finding solutions through collaboration with a focus on cost and benefits. She finds financial constraints the primary issue in PVE, crowding out services and causing deficits starting next year. She supports the PVEPD, pension reform and protecting parklands. She feels greater housing density will reduce quality of life and be a fire danger. She believes she can best unify the city council, which must be done if progress is to be made. To learn more about Murdock visit her website at <http://www.dawn4pve.com> PVP Watch feels Murdock's experience in business management and collaboration will enhance the city council. **We ENDORSE Dawn Murdock.**

2. **Bill Sewell**...Sewell was interviewed. He has lived in PVE ten years and will bring to the council decades of experience

managing major infrastructure projects throughout the world. His last one was upgrading security at San Francisco International Airport. He feels the biggest issue facing PVE is its financial problem, including pension liabilities. He supports the PVEPD, preserving parklands and a transparent city government. He sees increased density as a threat to the city. To learn more about Sewell visit his website at sewell4council2020.com. PVP Watch believes Sewell's background in managing major projects and budgets will be helpful at this time to PVE. **We ENDORSE Bill Sewell.**

3. **Gayne Brenneman**...Brenneman was interviewed. She is a cardiac anesthesiologist who has lived in PVE 20 years. Her career trained her to make important decisions quickly, which the current council is not doing. PVE's biggest issue is the insolvency it is facing. Pension debt and law enforcement issues must be scrutinized and dealt with. Density is a problem the state is mandating that must be faced. She is for maintaining all city parkland. She will increase taxes only as a last resort and will not vote for a bond issue. She feels her unique talents will assist in solving PVE's financial and other problems. To learn more about Brenneman visit her website at www.gayne4pve.com.

4. Jim Roos...did not accept interview invitation.

5. Sanford Davidson (incumbent)...did not accept interview invitation.

PVP Watch feels that whoever is elected to the PVE City Council will immediately need to confront the **looming debt** the city is facing. Each of the candidates interviewed sees that as an overriding issue. We feel to do that, since it is such a major part of the budget, **a serious evaluation of the law enforcement needs of the city must be addressed. If PVE continues to support their police department the citizens should be advised of its costs and how much of an increase in taxes and/or debt will be necessary to maintain it on a long-term basis. Major wants demand major revenue commitments.** The residents need to

know what the cost will be for each taxpayer for the next several years. Only then can they make an intelligent choice and then the council will be able to make the correct decision for the community.

Rolling Hills City Council, where three candidates are running for two positions.

1. Arun Bhumitra...did not accept interview invitation.
2. Beatrice Dieringer (incumbent)...did not accept interview invitation.
3. Jeff Pieper (incumbent)...did not accept interview invitation.

Rolling Hills Estates City Council, where seven candidates are running for three positions:

1. **Jeffrey Romanelli**...Romanelli was interviewed. He has lived in RHE for 16 years and had a 34-year career in the aerospace industry running projects with multimillion-dollar budgets. He has held positions in his homeowner's association (HOA) and in RHE where he chaired the city parks and activities commission. He believes density is the biggest issue facing RHE and will do all he can to fight it. The RHE beautification grants to HOAs needs to be bigger to entice HOA involvement. He is for fully funding the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department to maintain a low crime city. To learn more about Romanelli visit his website at <https://www.jeff4rhcitycouncil.com>. PVP Watch believes Romanelli's engineering, technical and budgetary experience will serve RHE well. **We ENDORSE Jeffrey Romanelli.**

2. **Debby Stegura**...Stegura was interviewed. She has lived in RHE for 30 years and is a retired lawyer who served eight years on the Palos Verdes Library District Board and is now on the University of California Board of Regents. She believes RHE's biggest problem will be maintaining its income stream. That and pensions will need monitoring. Control of land use including

zoning, density and types of housing is a big issue and she opposes state legislation taking local control away. Increased density is a fire threat. Keeping costs to citizens as low as possible while enhancing revenue in commercial centers are important, as is maintaining the equestrian atmosphere of the city. To learn more about Stegura visit her website at

www.debby4rhe.com. PVP Watch feels Stegura's civic involvement and vision will serve RHE well. **We ENDORSE Debby Stegura.**

3. Timothy Buresh...did not accept interview invitation.
4. Bridget K. Carman...did not accept interview invitation.
5. Bruce Steckel...did not accept interview invitation.
6. Velveth Schmitz (incumbent)...did not accept interview invitation.
7. Frank V. Zerunyan (incumbent)...did not accept interview invitation.

Palos Verdes Library Board, where four candidates are running for two positions:

1. **Bob Nelson**...Nelson was interviewed. He has lived on the Peninsula 46 years and has a background in the banking and aerospace industries besides being a small business owner in the community. He and his family have patronized the library since moving here, he is lifetime member of Friends of the Library, served three years on the RPV finance committee and eight years on the RPV planning commission. He feels major problems facing the library are replacing heating and air conditioning at its three sites, as well as a leaky roof in the main library. He supports a teen room in the peninsula center branch and will find ways to cater to senior citizens. He will investigate hiring a grant writer to enhance funding and explore ways the library can grow in a computerized world. Nelson can be contacted at nelsongang@aol.com if you have questions for him. PVP Watch feels Nelson's knowledge of the community and love of the library will make him an excellent member of the board. **We ENDORSE**

Bob Nelson.

2. Ray Randall...did not accept interview invitation.
3. Zoe Unno...did not accept interview invitation.
4. Kingston Wong (incumbent)...did not accept interview invitation.

Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District

Board, where four candidates are running for two positions:

1. **Aura Imbarus**...Imbarus was interviewed. She has lived on the Peninsula 20 years. Born in Romania she began her teaching career there. She has taught 20 years in the U.S.A. She is a certified life coach, full time teacher at West Torrance High School and part time professor at Harbor and El Camino Colleges. She authored two books, one nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. She believes the biggest problem facing the PVPUSD is remote learning. Academically students suffer, and their psychological problems are magnified. She supports a safe return to classrooms as soon as possible. She will explore various foundations as sources of income. She feels Common Core standards do not challenge the average PVPUSD student and result in lower standardized scores. To learn more about Imbarus visit her website at <https://aura4pvpusd.com>. PVP Watch believes Imbarus's international experience and innovative ideas will be an asset to the board. **We ENDORSE Aura Imbarus.**

2. Linda Reid...Reid was interviewed. She was appointed to the board in 2014 and elected in 2016. She feels that she is a consensus builder on the board, active in the community and not beholden to any group. The biggest problem in the district is COVID-19, taking up most the board's time. She supports returning students to safe campuses as soon as possible. A priority of hers is improving the performance of the bottom 25% of students. She supports improving budget reserves. She learned from the defeat of Measure PV and will use that knowledge when seeking future funds. The marine science project is being funded

by developer fees and partnership/grants. She opposes spending general funds on it. To learn more about Reid visit her website at www.reid4pvpschools.com. Despite problems that the district faces and the rejection of Measure PV during her tenure PVP Watch feels Reid's experience on the board and ties to the community during these trying times has earned her another term. **We ENDORSE Linda Reid.**

- 3. Joseph E. Dileva...did not accept interview invitation.
- 4. Jeff Frankel...did not accept interview invitation.

PVP Watch feels the PVPUSD needs new blood on its board. There are only two positions on the ballot this year and Imbarus, with her energy and educational experience, we hope will provide an impetus towards solving some of the district's problems. Finding the funding the district needs, as well as increasing scholastic scores are two of the major things, we hope she has answers to. We are less enthusiastic regarding Reid, and our endorsement comes on a split vote, but the other two candidates did not accept our invitation to be interviewed and we know nothing about them. Our hope is that Reid will use her experience and consensus building skills to convince the Board to adopt some of the vision we anticipate Imbarus will bring to the district.

It is noted that the five candidates running for city council seats who were interviewed unanimously agree that increased **housing density** is a serious issue that will create several problems, including decreasing the quality of life in our community. All agreed that a unified, collaborative approach that includes several South Bay cities would be more effective in gaining the attention and support of state legislators. PVP Watch agrees with this and will encourage them to follow through on this commitment once elected.

The RPV city clerk's office advised that there will be a large secure receptacle in place soon at the RPV city hall where

voters can deposit their ballots. Los Angeles County officials will pick up the ballots on a regular basis through November 3rd. Ballots will be able to be left there 24 hours a day, seven days a week once it arrives.

FUTURE TOPICS AND SUGGESTIONS

Our next newsletter will include PVP Watch's assessments and recommendations on the 25 propositions that will be on your November 3 election ballot. It will be out shortly, watch for it.

PVP Watch is always interested in our readers' thoughts. Recipients of this newsletter are requested to e-mail PVP Watch at info@pvpwatch.com with your comments and suggestions on what you would like to see us address.

WHEN YOU EMAIL US

Please include your name, email address and the name of the City where you live.

PVP WATCH WELCOMES YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

Thank you to those of you who have sent checks to PVP Watch as we rely on your financial support to continue to provide our newsletters. Those wishing to make a contribution of \$25 or more, please send checks to PVP Watch, 5714 Wildbriar Drive, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. 90275

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