

Valley VOTE
Valley Voters Organized Toward Empowerment
by
Michelle Dornfest

Community Meeting Report – January 20, 2014

Valley VOTE Board members, community leaders, and concerned citizens convened at Galpin Ford to hear featured speakers, ASSEMBLYMEMBER RAUL BOCANEGRA and President of the City of Los Angeles Board of Public Works Commission, KEVIN JAMES. Several Community Valley VOTE committee reports are summarized below.

GUEST SPEAKER

ASSEMBLYMEMBER RAUL BOCANEGRA

39th District

(D-Pacoima), Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Revenue & Taxation Committee



We are implementing strategic legislation to expand state tax credits for film and TV production, to curtail Hollywood’s exodus of entertainment jobs, Bocanegra said to the Valley Vote community.

Bocanegra was elected to the State Assembly in November 2012, to represent California's 39th district, which includes the communities of Pacoima, San Fernando, Arleta, Mission Hills, Sylmar, North Hollywood, Lake View Terrace, Northeast of Granada Hills, Sunland-Tujunga, and Sun Valley.

Bocanegra is one of eight Assemblymembers appointed by the Speaker to a “Water Bond Working Group”. He is seeking to preserve the state’s long-term supply of water, while protecting California’s natural habitat. He emphasized that California, still has millions of people living here, who do not have access to clean drinking water.

GUEST SPEAKER

KEVIN JAMES

**President of the City of Los Angeles Board
Of Public Works Commission**



“It is easy to talk about what’s wrong with the City, it’s much more of a challenge to step up and do something about it,” Kevin James said to Valley Vote.

Issues of concern addressed by Kevin James, include:

- a) The Proposed Street Bond
- b) Improving the City of Los Angeles Planning and Permitting Process
- c) Street Lighting – The City is in process of converting existing lighting systems to LED lights
- d) Accelerating the repair of street pot holes in the city
- e) Parking Reform

Kevin James was a former Mayoral candidate who spent time with more than 50 of the City's Neighborhood Councils, as part of his campaign.

The Department of Public Works provides city services in five major program areas: Contract Administration, Engineering, Sanitation, Street Lighting and Street Services. These key areas contribute to the quality of life, and the protection of the environment.

The Department is the city's third largest municipal division with a \$559 million operating budget. The Board is the city's only full-time policy-making entity and oversees more than 5,800 department employees.

Public Works Services Include:

- Clean Up Assistance
- Graffiti Removal
- Public Affairs Programs
- Bids and Proposals
- Insurance

VALLEY VOTE COMMITTEE REPORTS

****THE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE PRESENTED TO RICHARD LEYNER, A Valley Vote Founder**

I.

VICTOR VIERECK, CPA
The Valley Economic Report
January, 2014

“Impact of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance”

Viereck reported:

It's that time of year when the City of Los Angeles' Housing and Community Investment Department (LAHCID), formerly the Los Angeles Housing Department, “reminds apartment owners of what an oppressive city their property is located in.”

Viereck advised that owners of Los Angeles apartments, built before 1979, are required to pay the annual Rent Stabilization Ordinance Registration Fees and Systematic Code Enforcement Program Fees, due by February 28, 2014. The fees need to be received by February 28th, not just postmarked by February 28th.

The penalty for late payment of property tax is 10%. For income tax, the late fee is less significant. If a tenant is late paying the rent, the late charge is limited to 6%, of the rent. But if an apartment owner pays the RSO Fee and the SCEP Fee, just one day late, the late charges are 150% for the RSO Fees, and 200% for the SCEP Fees. For owners who occupy one of the units, the due date is January 31.

Viereck said: “What a message this is from city government, to people who want to provide housing. This approach does not encourage affordability.”

II.

DENNY SCHNEIDER

President Alliance for a Regional Solution to Airport Congestion - The Latest BURBANK AND LAX Airport Issues

Denny Schneider - Aviation Topics in the Region

Air travel in this region, is concentrated at LAX. Los Angeles Airport leadership knew thirty to forty years ago that LAX would not be able to support all of the region's needs for air flights, so they purchased Ontario and Palmdale airports, with the purpose of improving utilization of these airports.

Airport leadership signed "Memorandum of Understandings" with local residents to operate their airports for the benefit of all of Southern California. LA Airport leadership, so far, has failed to live up to its commitment. Last year, LAX increased its passenger count 4.4% to 66+ million annual passengers (MAP), almost at its highest level ever, but the outlying airports have less patronage, than when LAX took over.

At this point, Palmdale Airport has no commercial service; and Ontario Airport has lost travelers. This means more than a million extra cars are being introduced into LA's freeways, to transport inland empire travelers to LAX. Ontario is in a legal battle with the City of LA, for control of its airport.

Good news for those impacted by helicopters! Congress included in its funding bill a mandate that the FAA should work to develop regulations to reduce attendant helicopter noise, within one year. Prior to passage of this type of law, all reductions were strictly voluntary.

The FAA is planning to release revised flight paths in the Southern California region within about a year, as part of the Optimization of Airspace and Procedures in the Metroplex (OAPM). The purpose is to increase the sky's capacity to handle flights, using GPS controls and reduced safety spacing, between aircraft. There is much to be seen in the future of airspace allocations. The FAA has forecast of a million operations at LAX by 2030, which is a drastic increase from the 600,000 operations, at present.

The Alliance for A Regional Solution to Airport Congestion, ARSAC, continues to push for a network of SoCal airports to facilitate economic growth. Several court cases are in process regarding LAX growth as well as that for Ontario. We are hopeful that these issues will be resolved this year, and that LA Airport's impact on the health, economy and quality of life for surrounding residents will be improved.

For more information: Denny Schneider www.RegionalSolution.org Denny@WeLiveFree.com

III.

BART REED

The Transit Coalition, Executive Director

TRANSIT CORRIDOR REPORT

“Los Angeles Metro Transit fares, are nearly the lowest in the world,” Reed told the Valley Vote audience.

In essence, the transit system fares are being economically balanced, by cutting down on transit service.

A student project called “Complete Streets”, is designing a layout to narrow streets in a specific area of L.A., to provide more space for bicycles, equestrian and walkways. In December of 2012, Los Angeles Metro adopted a Countywide Sustainability Planning Policy and Implementation Plan, which outlined steps to expand and improve Metro’s role as a leader in sustainability. Due to the adoption of this policy, Metro is moving forward with a Complete Streets Policy and multimodal performance metrics for transportation projects in 2014.

The critical Expo Line expansion is about halfway built, at this stage.

IV.

JOE VITTI

PRESIDENT, VALLEY VOTE

“Pandora's Promise”

Vitti said that most residents in Los Angeles are not aware of the fact that approximately 9-10% of the power distributed by the LADWP, for the last several years, has been generated from nuclear power plant facilities. However, they are very aware of the fact that their bi-monthly DWP bill for power has been significantly increasing, over the last several years.

The city of Los Angeles has a 10% interest in ownership of the Palo Verde nuclear facilities in Arizona. The power from this plant is shared by a number of utilities. AZ has a one /third interest in the facility. The cost of energy from this facility is the lowest of all power sources and is about the same as from coal fired plants. It is possible to add additional reactors at the Palo Verde site. This could result in lower energy costs for L.A. business and residents, in terms of future DWP bills.

There is worldwide expansion of Nuclear Power. It has an outstanding record of dependable base loaded power, and safety in this country.

“Pandora's Promise” was a 2 hour CNN report, broadcast on Nov.11, 2013. Filmmaker Robert Stone profiled Energy Experts and leading Environmentalists who once preached against nuclear energy, but today **embrace it.**

The Environmentalists highlighted in the CNN report include:

Stewart Brand - Founder and publisher of the Whole Earth Catalog

Richard Rhodes -Pulitzer Prize Winner - "The Making of the Atomic Bomb"

Gwyneth Cravens- "Power to Save the world".

Mark Lynas- Environmental Activist

Michael Shellenberger- President and co-founder of "The Breakthrough Institute".

VALLEY VOTE

President, Joe Vitti

Date of Next Meeting:

Monday, February 17, 2014, 6:30pm

LOCATION: Galpin Ford - 2nd floor meeting room 15555 Roscoe Blvd (at the 405) Parking: Free parking in the Galpin Lot on the West side of Orion Please do not park in the customer service areas.

Valley VOTE Mission Statement:

Valley VOTE, a diverse coalition of San Fernando Valley Residents, business people, educators, community activists and organizations, is committed to exploring and fostering the implementation of programs that empower the people of the San Fernando Valley and the city of Los Angeles, to improve local governance, education and public participation on policy matters. Please forward this Email to interested individuals and organizations.

Valley VOTE Inc. is organized and operated exclusively for social welfare purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code since 1998.