

City Council eComment Report

December 9, 2025

Agenda Item	Name	Comment	Position
12. PUBLIC COMMENT	tony higgins	<p>Dear City Council Dear City Manager Napolitano Dear Chief Phillips.</p> <p>I hope Chief Phillips presentation in the 12/9 CCM will squarely answer questions the community has regarding the HBPD response to the ongoing Ebike-Teen-Thug problems that have plagued our community over the past 3 years.</p> <p>Hopefully it will not be just another "The King can do No Wrong" presentation .</p> <p>I think what many are struggling with can be understood by considering Chief Phillips' answer of "No" when asked if retrospectively the HBPD would have handled anything differently in the last town hall.</p> <p>At least City Manager Napolitano acknowledged in Francois' Dec 1st Town Hall that the city's press release covering the teen-thug beating (url below) "fell short." and "It could have been better and we'll do better in the future."</p> <p><a href="https://www.hermosabeach.gov/Home/Components/News/News/4461/28">https://www.hermosabeach.gov/Home/Components/News/News/4461/28</a> Chief Phillips' said "The goal [of the ill-fated press release] was to put enough information out there to address some of the ***umptions that were going out on social media."</p> <p>Rather than simply admitting the above press release was a mistake and intentionally or not, its effect was to blame the victim , the Chief seemed to try and justify the press release by stating its goals were well intended.</p> <p>Im sure many read that as still being blind to the fact that his detectives and the city as a whole completely misrepresented the magnitude and characteristics of this attack.</p> <p>What I think residents are hoping for is that the Chief will speak candidly in his 12/9 CCM presentation about what was done right, what was done wrong, what the plan is and specifically what HBPD will do differently going forward.</p> <p>Thank You for Considering</p>	No Position

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12. PUBLIC COMMENT	tonyhiggins	<p>Dear City Council</p> <p>Why is our city clerk refusing to provide any information on WHEN public access will be restored to 20+ years of granicus council &amp; commission videos, minutes, financial reports, council agendas and staff reports.</p> <p>Ive made 3 requests for info on this with no response from the City Clerk's office</p> <p>A couple months ago this escribe notice suddenly appeared.</p> <p>"The City Clerks Office is currently migrating City Council and Commission data from before July 1, 2024, into our updated agenda management system, eScribe. We appreciate your patience as we work through this transition. Past City Council and Commission meetings will be temporarily unavailable. Updates to this project will be made here".</p> <p>20+ years of data!</p> <p>To the best of my knowledege there was no advance notice nor any explanation of why this data couldn't be ported over while retaining granicus access.</p> <p>Public access to city documents is a foundational city clerk duty.</p> <p>Yes public access was cut off by our City Clerk without any meaningful council review or public input.</p> <p>How is that ok?</p> <p>The clerk has said nothing about what documents will/wont be ported over to escribe nor any info on when access will be restored.</p> <p>Simply said, this is dereliction of you duty to the public.</p> <p>I hope the city can do better going forward.</p> <p>Sincerely, Anthony Higgins</p>	No Position

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12. PUBLIC COMMENT	Adam Morrison	<p>Its a genuinely sad day for Hermosa Beach. Our City Council has managed to do the impossible: replace a qualified, experienced City Manager with a stooge like Napolitano, who has zero city management experience and a track record that would make any responsible community run in the opposite direction. Instead, they handed the job to a man best known as a horrific slumlord with multiple health and safety violations in his own complexes.</p> <p>A simple Google search shows Napolitano has tried and failed spectacularly to win every election hes entered, largely because voters can spot his odious character and abrasive personality from a mile away. And if that werent enough, his awful YouTube videos alone should disqualify him from overseeing anything more complex than a ring light. Ive seen middle-school group projects with better lighting, editing, and basic awareness of how the human face works on camera. If he cant figure out YouTube, how is he going to figure out city management?</p> <p>We traded competence for chaos. Vision for vanity. A steady hand for a feckless one.</p> <p>City Council didnt just make a bad decision. They made an embarrassing one. And Hermosa will be paying the price long after this appointment becomes the cautionary tale it already is. Congratulations City Council on hiring the Anthony Rendon of City Managers.</p>	Against
15.e APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION FOR DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF MONUMENT SIGNAGE - 25-AS-098	Robert Aronoff	Thank you Chuck an Missy. I have always admired you suport of our comuninty.	For

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15.e APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION FOR DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF MONUMENT SIGNAGE - 25-AS-098	tony higgins	<p>Dear City Council,</p> <p>One has to wonder if a large digital billboard wont degrade the ambience of our Historic 1930's era Community Center Building.</p> <p>Is there anyone besides the Chamber of Commerce and local business owners that actually want this sign?</p> <p>Its a slippery slope.</p> <p>tonyhiggins</p>	-
15.e APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION FOR DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF MONUMENT SIGNAGE - 25-AS-098	David Grethen	<p>This agenda item should probably be pulled from Consent. While grateful for such a generous donation, we should acknowledge the potential for conflict between the donor's and public's preferences for the location and design of the sign. I was encouraged to see provisions in the agreement that begin to address this. But a discussion of adequacy of those provisions, and review of the history, prior discussion and public engagement on this matter would be worthwhile.</p> <p>Daviid Grethen - Public Works Commission</p>	No Position

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<p>15.e APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION FOR DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF MONUMENT SIGNAGE - 25-AS-098</p>	<p>tonyh</p>	<p>Please note i apologize i that i can't delete my previous post. There is more to consider.</p> <p>Dear City Council,</p> <p>I appreciate the well intended community spirit behind this donation.</p> <p>But one has to wonder if a large digital billboard wont degrade the ambience of our Historic 1930's era Community Center Building.</p> <p>But I think its fair to ask if there anyone besides the Chamber of Commerce, local business owners and event promoters that actually want this sign or other digital billboards?</p> <p>Can anyone see this expanding up and down PCH or Pier Ave or Downtown along Hermosa Ave</p> <p>Could it be a slippery slope to digital billboard way-fairer signs on Artesia, Aviation or Gould.</p> <p>Will the city sell advertising spots on this billboard? I hope the council is clear on this and establishes digital billboard guardrails. A good argument can also be made that digital billboards significantly increase distracted driver rear-end and sideswipe accidents. PCH in Hermosa is already inundated with road closures due to auto accidents. Is it in our resident's interest to increase this risk? No the sky is not falling. More like drip drip drip Many coastal cities do not permit digital billboards Malibu, La Jolla, Carmel, San Simeon, Cambria and most coastal cities in San Diego County. Yes i appreciate that Long Beach, Santa Monica and Manhattan Beach do. But again, before you commit to this i think its fair to ask about guardrails. Thank you for considering tonyhiggins</p>	<p>-</p>

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15.e APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION FOR DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF MONUMENT SIGNAGE - 25-AS-098	Howard Lee	<p>Mayor, Councilmembers, and others:</p> <p>Thanks go to former Mayor Chuck Sheldon and Missy Sheldon for their generous gift. However, notwithstanding, there are far better uses in City for this donation to benefit for long-term remembrance of the Sheldon's contributions to the city.</p> <p>I submitted a letter appearing on the Council agenda of the December 9, 2008 agenda (ironically, exactly 17 years to the day of this December 9, 2025 council meeting). Please click/tap the attachment to this eComment to review that letter.</p> <p>Most Respectfully, Howard Lee</p> <p>Again&gt; Please click/tap the blue attachment to this eComment to review the letter.</p>	-
15.e APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION FOR DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF MONUMENT SIGNAGE - 25-AS-098	Howard Lee brief addendum	<p>Note in my other eComment following below, to see the attachment you need to click/tap on the eComment for the blue attachment link to display in a small window. Just hovering a mouse over the eComment will not display the attachment.</p>	-

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Agenda Item	Name	Comment	Position
<p>16.a ADOPT AN URGENCY ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE 2025 CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS CODE, INCLUDING ALL APPLICABLE ADOPTED PARTS; ADOPTING THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE; ADOPTING LOCAL AMENDMENTS; REPEALING OUTDATED PROVISIONS - 25-CDD-123</p>	<p>Jon David</p>	<p>I recognize the urgency ordinance must be adopted tonight to meet the state's January 1, 2026, deadline for the 2025 California Building Standards Code, ensuring continuous enforcement authority.</p> <p>However, our local amendments go beyond state requirements in ways that create inefficiencies and burdens for staff, residents and businesses such as requiring \$30k in undergrounding for a simple \$3k electrical panel change, which isn't mandated by the California Electrical Code. Even worse, things like this have unintended consequences that result in the shutting down of business.</p> <p>We also need to eliminate outdated, legacy code provisions to prevent more frustrated residents and "Becker building stories" that highlight inconsistent enforcement and regulatory hurdles.</p> <p>I understand now is not the time because of the urgent nature of this ordinance but this should be brought back when there is less urgency so there is enough time for meaningful public comment.</p> <p>When adopting this, please direct staff to bring back the ordinance and related code change recommendations to Council early next year for refinements that align better with our city's current needs, reducing burdens without sacrificing safety. This could be part of a larger conversation about finally completing the comprehensive update that was to be done years ago.</p>	<p>No Position</p>

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<p>17.a ADOPT A RESOLUTION AND APPROVE A CONTRACT FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF STEVEN NAPOLITANO AS CITY MANAGER - 25-AS-102</p>	<p>Laura Pena</p>	<p>Dear Mayor, Council Members, and Staff - First, I want to express my appreciation for the selection of Steve Napolitano as our new City Manager. As the staff report highlights, he brings a long track record of success in areas such as economic development, public safety, homelessness, infrastructure, regional partnerships, and community engagement. Given the importance of these areas, many residents naturally want to understand how his performance will be measured and what indicators will be used to show progress on these priorities.</p> <p>The City Manager Employment Agreement requires the Council and City Manager to jointly establish performance goals and objectives within 45 days of the effective date (Section 9). These goals form the basis of the City Managers evaluation and should guide the work of the organization.</p> <p>I fully respect that personnel evaluations must be conducted in closed session and remain confidential. However, the performance goals themselves are not confidential, and publicly sharing them does not disclose any private evaluation content. It simply communicates what the Council is asking the City Manager to accomplish.</p> <p>For Council Members who believe that performance expectations should not be disclosed:</p> <p>Confidentiality applies to the evaluation meeting and discussion, not to the goals the Council sets for the City Manager.</p> <p>Sharing goals does not critique, praise, or expose anything about the City Managers performance, it merely communicates the Citys priorities.</p> <p>The public has a legitimate interest in understanding how the Citys top executive is being directed, especially on major issues such as economic development, public safety, homelessness, and infrastructure.</p> <p>The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Guidance in Performance Management for Local Government emphasizes that performance management works best when organizations clearly define what they are trying to accomplish and align performance expectations with strategic plans and publicly stated priorities.</p>	<p>For</p>

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		<p>The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) explicitly recommends that governments identify, track, and communicate performance measures, noting they should be communicated internally and externally to promote accountability and understanding.</p> <p>These principles support transparency in expectations not public disclosure of evaluations.</p> <p>Publishing the City Managers agreed upon performance goals would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen trust in Councils oversight role as elected public officials</li> <li>Allow the community to understand how major priorities such as economic development, public safety, and organizational performance will be measured</li> <li>Demonstrate responsible stewardship of tax dollars</li> <li>Align our City with widely accepted performance management practices</li> <li>Maintain full confidentiality for personnel evaluations</li> </ul> <p>For these reasons, I recommend our City Council consider publicly sharing the mutually agreed upon performance objectives and offering periodic, high level updates on progress. This maintains full compliance with personnel privacy laws while enhancing transparency and confidence in the City's leadership.</p> <p>As always, I appreciate your thoughtful consideration. Laura Pena</p>	
17.b CONTINUED REVIEW OF THE CITY'S RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMIT PROGRAM - 25- AS-099	Robert Aronoff	The City needs to restore reasonably priced one-day event passes (party passes) for residents. They residents to introduce new people would not normally come to HB to stay long enough to explore the shops and other advantages of HB, without being forced to leave because the meter is expiring.	No Position

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<p>17.c PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO STREAMLINE BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICATIONS PROCEDURES FOR COMMERCIAL BUSINESS LICENSE AND HOME OCCUPATION. - 25-CDD-166</p>	<p>Laura Pena</p>	<p>Dear Mayor, Council Members, and Staff - I appreciate the streamlining efforts by our Community Development Director and staff regarding the home occupation and business license processes. The draft revisions clearly demonstrate progress in this area.</p> <p>I recommend our City take the next step and update the underlying home occupation provisions in the application so they better reflect how people actually work today particularly as new technologies, AI-driven work patterns, and digital micro-enterprises rapidly reshape our economy.</p> <p>The current code restricts activity based on business type rather than actual neighborhood impacts. It bans employees, client visits, vehicle signage, equipment over 120 volts, and even the listing of a business address. These restrictions were crafted in a different era long before remote professional services, online commerce, digital content creation, the gig economy, or AI-enabled work became mainstream. Today, nearly half of all U.S. small businesses are home-based, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration.</p> <p>Importantly, most of these home-based enterprises are quiet, low-impact, and entirely compatible with residential neighborhoods. They involve laptops, video meetings, creative digital tools, consulting, teaching, or remote professional services not the high impact business types the old rules were designed to regulate.</p> <p>Updating the ordinance to regulate actual impacts (noise, traffic, parking, safety, and exterior appearance), rather than prohibiting entire business categories would protect neighborhoods and allow residents to participate in the evolving economy. This approach is also consistent with the staff reports framing that home occupations are typically limited and low-impact, and that our goal is to foster local economic vitality.</p> <p>I also recommend the City involve our business community, Chamber of Commerce, and local entrepreneurs as partners in these updates. Their lived experience and perspectives will ensure that the revised code is practical, forward-looking, and supportive of the kinds of innovative work now emerging. With AI and digital tools accelerating new forms of income generation from consulting to robotics to creative and analytical services we should position our City to welcome, not unintentionally restrict, this next generation of small business activity.</p>	<p>For</p>

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		<p>Supporting low-impact home-based businesses is not only a matter of fairness, it is an investment in the long-term health of our local economy. These entrepreneurs often become the future tenants of our commercial districts, the employers of local residents, and the contributors to our tax base. Modernizing our home occupation rules so they reflect current work realities will help ensure our City remains a place where small businesses can start, grow, and thrive.</p> <p>As always, I appreciate your thoughtful consideration. Laura Pena</p>	
<p>17.g APPROVE THE PROPOSED TREE REPLANTING PLAN FOR VALLEY PARK AND THE GREENBELT - 25-PW-091</p>	<p>MC Guerry</p>	<p>The city should only be planting native Californian trees. I ask the council reject the suggested list of trees and ask instead for one that only has native Californian trees.</p> <p>Our region has lost over 90% of local butterflies and songbirds since the beginning of the twentieth century due to replacing local native habitat with exotic non-natives. Many of these species exist nowhere else and are now threatened. Planting non-native trees and plants means a future where the only birds you will hear are gulls, crows, and a few invasive European species.</p> <p>There is no such thing as a "California Friendly" tree or plant that is not native. Our native pollinators evolved hand-in-hand with native plants. Native butterflies will not lay eggs on non-native plants/trees. The primary food source for local baby songbirds is native butterfly caterpillars. Most native bees cannot utilize non-native flora, no matter how pretty the blooms are. 90% of insects cannot co-exist with any non-native trees/plants, making every non-native planting unfriendly to California.</p>	<p>Against</p>

**City Clerk,**

This submittal is for inclusion under 'Written Communications' of the December 9, 2008 regular City Council agenda. Please date-stamp-receive and advance a copy to the staff members indicated.

**Thank You.**

December 1, 2008

To:

Hermosa Beach City Council, City Clerk, City Treasurer, City Manager, City Attorney, Community Development Director, Public Works Director, Community Resources Director  
City of Hermosa Beach  
1315 Valley Drive  
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254

From:

Howard Longacre, a Hermosa Beach resident

Re:

**#1- Unneeded and improperly approved city electronic video advertising marquee at the Community Center's corner of Pier Avenue and Pacific Coast Highway, with Brown Act violating action having been taken by the City Council at their November 25, 2008 regular council meeting.**

**#2- Ongoing AB1234 requirements and continued receipt by two councilmembers of an improper "car allowance".**

Att:

**Ref-A Marquee staff item of 11-25-2008 city council meeting**

**Ref-B Signs in Open Space text amendment - staff continuation item of 11-18-2008 Planning Commission meeting.**

**Honorable Mayor, Councilmembers, and others:**

**Re: #1- Unneeded / improperly approved city electronic video advertising sign marquee de facto contract.**

With all due respect to Ryder Communications, I believe this whole Pier and PCH Community Center Marquee supposed "free" giving-back-to-the-community by Ryder is little more than the city participating in another ad-hoc setup scam, this time for Ryder. What Ryder is giving for free, in my view, is next to nothing as compared to what they already have and will be receiving in publicity and who knows what else monetarily from a city expenditure likely to exceed \$100 thousand for this "free" project. It's not really charity by Ryder if they will be receiving something significant in return, and I believe they will be getting much in return, and perhaps already have in free publicity.

There's no doubt that Ryder would like to point to this marquee, which the city's people will be stuck paying for, and additionally will be stuck paying to maintain its expensive electronics and computer. And there's no doubt in my mind that Ryder would probably like to sell such a marquee to many other cities and perhaps using the same so-called "giving-back" type of "free" offer. These video displays are being hustled to government agencies across the country, many for athletic fields. Electronic flashing outside advertising blight nationwide is what these costly signs amount to. Many are even being sold to churches. There's one in Harbor City that blinds you at night when you drive by it.

Advertising blight nationwide and on the Interstates is becoming a significant nuisance. This video display will obviously be expensive to maintain especially with Hermosa's corrosive salt air environment.

In my view the city council is participating in little more than an advertising hustle. The city absolutely does not need a big visible maintenance nightmare blight on that corner, and all unthinking councilmembers pushing this idiot box display will be blamed for it when they run for council next should it get built and especially if it is paid for with money directly or indirectly taken from basic infrastructure needs such as street paving.

Last September Ryder was given special privilege to give an advertising presentation pitch at the beginning of a council meeting. No member of the public was given anything but a 72 hour notice that the city had essentially given this outfit keys to the city on the basis of a so-called "free design" to replace as Ryder claimed, "the tired" sign there now. It's not clear to me what part of their offer is really free. By the way after Ryder was given their special extended time to hustle their sign idea, former Mayor George Barks was treated like dirt by the Mayor and City Attorney when he spoke a few seconds beyond the council dictatorship's three-minute rule. He was speaking against the ridiculous idea of giving away parking on Pacific Coast Highway so more traffic could be hustled from Redondo Beach and Palos Verdes to the El Segundo corporate rental buildings, an idea that was incredibly dumb to even be considered by the city council.

It's been no secret that the Chamber of Commerce business lobby and the Community Center bunch have been looking for a way to get the city to stick in a video display or other electric sign on that corner, and for over two decades. Now it looks like the residents will again be paying for, it if not explicitly, certainly implicitly, and will then have to put up with such flashing, gaudy, trashy, visual nuisance thing on city property forever.

There is in fact nothing wrong with the present sign and if it is a problem by all means take it down. It's clean, simple, and doesn't require a rocket scientist to change a few letters. The best thing to do is simply remove it or stop putting up so much crowded text on it if the sign is a problem for Public Works Director Rick Morgan's staff to deal with. How did we put up with it for 40 years that it is now suddenly such a problem for the director?

The city does not need a costly marquee at that location in the first place. We have enough costly top management bureaucrats at the moment eating up all available discretionary cash. What city around here has a trashy "High-Definition" video sign for their central gateway? Lawndale on the freeway?

This is just another Hermosa Beach trashy idea being back-roomed into concrete without any careful thought or planning whatever, but of course keeping Hermosa Beach trashed seems to have been the purposeful agenda here for decades. Look at the way our beach is trashed with so many unnecessary giant advertising commercial event giveaways all summer. It didn't used to be that way until the councils of the last 14 years built this costly to the city, mammoth bar and cab district. The city council permits all those beach trash events obviously to keep the bars full of drinkers and the city impacted for the residents. If the council were to put any of those beach events on the ballot, they wouldn't get very much of it approved. Its mostly advertising trash that keeps the city run down and impacted. Now you on the city council evidently want to put such stuff at the corner of Pier and PCH and without any thought whatever as to the cost, negative effects, nor real need, and without even consulting with the town's people. Oh, that's right the town's people are not to have a say in such insider things are they and they best not ever go over that council 3 minute "rule".

The present marquee is to now be replaced with, as Ryder said clearly, a "High Definition" 8-foot or perhaps even larger video display. They didn't bring a single dimension for their sales-pitch

presentation. It's in fact obviously going to be an obscene advertising vehicle for the community center staff to toy with for hours from its special little computer, setting up displays for it. It will cost much more in wasted staff time on its computer than changing the letters manually once a month. But of course City Manager Burrell has probably figured he can make some token money selling ads on the thing, forgetting the fact that it's going to be just more degradation for the whole community for any such token money to generate staff work. More wasted time on gaudy flashing trash for the city.

And if one pedestrian is killed or maimed while busy traffic at that corner is distracted viewing this "high definition" video screen nonsense, well, no big deal. No shortage of people or cabs in Hermosa Beach. What's one dead or maimed kid or old fogey at that corner?

The fact is that Hermosa Beach does not need an expensive high-definition video television display at Pier and PCH. No question about it, the city does not need this. It's trash TV to be at the city's gateway, just like at home on the TV. High quality elite advertising trash TV stuff. High quality expensive unneeded trash TV to be more correct.

Unfortunately what is really obscene is the fact that this once again has already turned into a slimy back-room ad-hoc deal with Ryder getting the contract via this inside track first unfortunately setup by Councilmember DiVirgilio and with the city staff now just rolling the thing into existence while a lazy city council could evidently not care less. Staff management seems to love to play with such little projects rather than dealing with the mundane like paving the streets. And then Ryder must already be saying, "wow, we didn't realize how easy it is to wheel and deal such stuff in Hermosa Beach."

The question really has to be asked at some point though as to whether Ryder has/will or its partners have/will be giving any campaign donations or other gratuities to any councilmembers or staff in addition to their so-called "giving-back-to-the-community"? That's a pretty common thing for "communication" aka "advertising" companies to do, is it not? Marketing. The only thing Ryder is providing for free in my view is to give a single rendering that does not even look like something that belongs on that property or any property in town. Just my view for what it's worth.

Who is to be paying for the engineering? Where will that cost get hidden? Does Ryder currently have a city license? Already staff is eating up city time on this ad-hoc out of no-where nonsensical project. Would it not be better, if staff has free time on their hands, to instead be directed by the council to provide a coherent plan to pave and maintain all the city's residential streets that are in such "tired" condition? Where is the plan and timeline for paving each and every street?

Are the city streets not more important than a high-definition video sign at the corner of Pier and PCH? These residential streets are eighty plus years "tired" since they were last paved in the hill section. They are much more "tired" and needing of discretionary city money than a tacky high-definition gimmicky video display to distract and hype the bar district or other commercial impact to the PCH traffic flying by to Redondo Beach and Palos Verdes or the El Segundo corporate centers. Many things here are more needy for city money than replacing a marquee sign that is not even broken. Why is the council constantly screwing with ad-hoc costly projects and not dealing with important down to earth matters? This council is unquestionably lost and completely unfocused on what is important to the residents. It seems to just put in its time week after week on whatever comes up.

The rendering provided by Ryder could have been worked up with a photo-shop program by many a high school student in an hour or so on their home computer. Ryder communications is an advertising company. They are now using the city and in my view have already gotten four or more stories in the paper with their name prominently displayed. They have had two opportunities to give a sales pitch at the beginning of a meeting with no public comment invited or even allowed, and in fact the city council in the last meeting took a Brown Act violating action by all but officially awarding a

contract for over \$100 thousand to Ryder communications and their partners. The council voted 5-0 on Councilmember Keegan's quick and dirty motion straight from Burrell's last minute added staff report, even though dated 11/20/2008 (see Ref-A below) to "...direct staff to work with Ryder Communications to implement the sign." It is very clear to me that this whole thing has already been worked up between the city manager, Ryder, and the City Council members. The meetings more and more appear to be just window dressing for what is already worked up in advance.

The council saw a single photo rendering and provided for no public comment. And what's worse, Burrell verbally, but not in the 24 hour provided "staff report" made one of his sly meeting comments, "we can take 100 thousand from the Tyco fund to pay for this, we don't have an estimate yet". This is the way the council approved the Pier Avenue lop-sided poor design fiasco they still are pushing forward. No alternatives. Just take it or leave it people, we know what is best. We are the council and the city manager. Everything worked up in advance.

So, talk about an absolutely outrageous ad-hoc spending project approved essentially with two sales-pitch "presentations" at the front of two council meetings. This is flat out despicable. The Hermosa city council has become 100% deceitful or just plain stupid-arrogant or both.

Then further the agenda that was posted at the police station and then on the Internet stated for the first 92 hours that Ryder Communications would make a presentation at this last meeting. Didn't say anything else, i.e. as to what kind of presentation, what it was for. No one would have guessed it was a presentation under "Presentations" to essentially be awarded a de facto contract to work with staff and implement a new high-definition video display which is to be paid for with the people's money. There was no staff report during those 92 hours when most people would review the agenda materials. It looked like a regular PR presentation as often made about i.e. going green. Of course this proposed sign is far from "green" in many respects. In fact on Sunday I wondered what they were going to talk about in this Ryder presentation. Never dreamed it was to approve the sign design and award them a de facto contract for a \$100 thousand sign. I learned a day after the meeting that the agenda wording was changed and a staff report was added 24 hours before the meeting, this being accomplished on the Internet but no where else.

The matter needs to be completely re-agendized at least as a municipal matter and then the city council would best take no other action but to forward the entire matter to both the Public Works and Parks and Recreation commissions for their careful analysis as to what the city even wants up there at Pier and PCH and what the function and look of a new Marquee should be, and how it should relate to the architecture of the Community Center and Pier Avenue project.

Then and only then you should next invite a number of art design colleges in the area to submit ideas/designs for a Hermosa Beach marquee. They would probably love to participate. Ryder's one-shot design is a dismal failure with that video screen up in the air on that goofy skeleton structure. Looks ridiculous! Sorry, but awarding an advertising company anything at all, is like awarding the design of a chicken coop to a fox! I am not at all impressed, especially after viewing both "sales" pitches made by Ryder. Best not use any city money for this that could be shifted around or used to free up other money to pave not only our "tired", but failed residential streets. It is time the city council takes care of important infrastructure for the tax paying residents and stop frittering away hundreds of thousands for the benefit of insider city wants that councilmembers evidently think are keeping them elected. I've never seen such a bunch of wheeling-dealing small-time dysfunctional council people on Hermosa's city council as you people are.

You've already had an advertised hearing in the Planning Commission (nothing done) to change the city laws with respect to these video signs but it was continued (and with no re-advertising?) to the Planning Commission meeting in January. I note though that the way it was first advertised for that now-continued hearing, that the town's people would not have had a clue that it was about providing

for all kinds of animated video and other displays that currently are banned in town. You would best make sure your Community Development Director re-advertises and specifies something more clear than he did for the public hearing that's been continued. Direct that a new Public Hearing notice be made for this hearing that spells out the item clearly. This continuation business on advertised public hearings of general community interest has long been an insidious trick by Hermosa government to eliminate public involvement by claiming to save a few pennies on re-advertising. It's been a disgrace for years, the processes used by this city's government with respect to public hearing notice and continuing matters up to three times, the grinding down and elimination of any public participation.

Everything seems to be being railroaded through to give Ryder all the nuts and bolts needed to put their so-called "free" contribution into concrete. Free that is except for the residents having to pay the cost. Something that none of the reporters have yet to mention in their stories. Some people actually believe that this marquee is being fully donated by Ryder. It most certainly is not. In my view they are the ones to be profiting most.

Why was there just this one "design" presented?

Why does the public have no say in this matter?

Why is Burrell proposing to take from his "smoke and mirrors Tyco fund" \$100 thousand for a sign when a few months ago he and the city council claimed the city has no extra money for anything? If there is \$100 thousand available then it had best be used to pave the resident's streets. How many of you on council discussed in private with each other and/or Burrell, prior to the meeting, the taking of \$100 thousand from the Tyco fund for this video sign. I doubt he would have just tossed that out at the meeting had not some or all of you talked to him in private about that first. He was clearly dropping that into the record so that in future meetings it could be stated we discussed the use of the Tyco money in a prior meeting. Do you people all know the meaning of the word deceit? Is this the way all government works from the President down to the tiny councilmember?

Why does the city attorney say nothing when you do these things in meetings that clearly don't meet the requirements of the Brown Act? He sure was quick to go ballistic when Mr. Barks spoke a few seconds too long. It's more than sad the way council meetings are conducted. You wonder why so few participate. Guess what? There is a reason. Maybe that's what is desired by the council, city manager, and city attorney, that the public just pay their taxes, shut up, and stay away. By the way the agenda still says, "Please Attend". But it does not say, "Please Attend and Participate", as it should.

This item, after Ryder's September sales pitch, should have first been sent to the Public Works Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission for noticed public hearings to consider the need. You are talking about putting a giant video blight on that corner which could well be a nuisance hazard to traffic, a flashing light nuisance to residents, general advertising blight, a pedestrian hazard, and little more than an attractive nuisance in general, as well as an ongoing costly city maintenance and staffing item.

You've not even had a discussion of what exactly the purpose and use would be for this video sign. Is it advertising? To me it appears to be just more ad hoc waste of money the council does not have to waste. This clearly isn't a little marquee with some single color electric text as in front of El Segundo or Redondo High School, or the low-resolution image small-marquee over at the former Aviation High School. This as per what Ryder stated it's to be, is a (were you listening) "high definition" 8 foot or bigger display. Will Ryder be picking all the contractors that the city will be paying? Will his contractors thusly have the inside tract sort of like the "Cape Seal" street slurry company did?

Any such new marquee should do nothing more than the present sign does and it should not stand out like a big blinding soar thumb. It should present no more than a few brief easily read text messages. Nothing at all like this communication, except perhaps, "Hermosa Needs New Councilmembers". That might be good. There should be no hopping, jumping, or video commercial advertisements, cartoons, cutesy pictures, etc at that corner. This should not in any manner be an entertainment device such as those you see on the Sunset Strip or Hollywood Blvd.

It should be a much smaller, lower marquee with conservative ageless design character that ties into the design of the community center. What is proposed appears to just be another goofy piece of ad-hoc "art". Ad hoc junky art.

Again after proper discussion in the Public Works and Parks and Recreation Commissions I recommend that you send a letter to college art/architecture departments and let their students submit some designs. Give them the specifications as to what the sign's limited purpose is and how big it should be. Let them make their presentations. No specifications exist at the moment except those that the ad firm Ryder has created to perhaps fit their own "giving" agenda.

There is no rush for this unneeded ad-hoc advertising vehicle that Ryder communications will get a ton of free publicity from. If you view Ryder's presentation in your last meeting, it was again nothing more than a sales pitch. Didn't you see that? Again Ryder stated that our present school marquee looked "tired". That's just like the folks who said our Upper Pier Avenue looks "tired". It looks tired like Pier Avenue only because it's purposefully not being maintained. The council is permitting blight to occur so people can say it needs to be torn down and replaced. Created blight is a standard government trick, is it not, such that a hidden agenda can then be accomplished?

The only problem with the present sign is that it needs some paint and minor repair, and also the Community Resources Department needs to stop putting so much unreadable text on it.

The bottom line is that in the last meeting you clearly violated the Brown Act again. The public was not permitted or invited to talk at that point in the meeting yet you took action. The posted agenda was incomplete and did not mention the purpose of the presentation. It should have been a municipal item or even a public hearing item.

This has been a total setup scam for Ryder and its partners to perhaps take over signage for the community. I note they recently signed up El Segundo to put signage through their residential community from the main highways to route people through their residential to their quiet downtown. I guess El Segundo wants to destroy their downtown and impact their residential too. Too bad. In Ref-B below is the Planning Commission item as directed by the council from the September Council "presentation" when no one was able to speak on the matter and where no plan had even been considered of what the purpose or need of such change in ordinance and the ramifications of same would be.

**Re: #2- Ongoing AB1234 requirements and continued receipt by two councilmembers of an improper "car allowance".**

California's state ethics law AB1234 was written specifically to reduce expense reimbursement abuse by politicians and other government officials. It also requires regular ethics training to be received by officials. Are all city officials receiving the required regular ethics training?

Incredibly, two Hermosa councilmembers are evidently still receiving of the city treasury, a phony car allowance that's costing the city a total of \$33.6 thousand during their four years in office. These two councilmembers need to immediately stop receiving these unwarranted "car allowance" payments and pay back what they've improperly received since AB1234 became law 35 months ago. This car

allowance was a sham from the day it was first added. Former councilmember Benz referred to it openly as being "pay".

Councilmembers receive a yearly stipend of \$6,360 to cover miscellaneous incurred costs that their service incur, and further, councilmembers may submit expense reports for reimbursement of extraneous costs. AB1234 also requires the city to have written policies in place as to what may be expensed and which must be justified as a true expense worthy of reimbursement. It is my understanding that councilmembers are also receiving city paid public employees retirement system (PERS) as well as the availability of full health insurance for their entire family. All as result of various councils giving themselves these benefits for the volunteer elected position they hold. Such benefits might be justified for some but there is no indication in Hermosa Beach that such benefits have brought benefits to the community. In fact it seems to have made being on the council something that keeps dead wood and incompetence there. The best councilmembers seem to have asked for the least in the past.

Many individuals contribute a tremendous amount of time to the city without receiving a penny. Appointed commissioners and volunteers of all kinds also often expend money of their own for their contribution to the city. Some may actually put in more time than some councilmembers have.

The city has a paid professional staff. If councilmembers want to be paid, they should apply for a job. They have chosen to run and serve the electorate. The councilmember job is a volunteer elected position. No one forced any councilmember to run for council.

At the minimum, the three councilmembers not receiving the car allowance should agendize for the next council meeting this matter and take action to terminate the improper car allowance and remove the improper car allowance language in any city policy. Otherwise these other three councilmembers, who are not receiving the car allowance, are in effect complicit with the two that are receiving the car allowance, by their inaction to stop those two councilmembers from taking the car allowance.

It is most unfortunate that some are seemingly applying loopholes that ethically-challenged councilmembers of other cities are using to violate the very clear intent of the AB1234 ethics law, or operating on the basis that it's OK until a court finds and declares it invalid. What is it that the council does not understand about AB1234? One has to believe that the city attorney has told all of you in private most clearly that you should no longer be receiving the car allowance, no matter how much good you believe you are accomplishing for the city. I, and others, frankly wonder what in any councilmembers' mind makes him continue to improperly take this money from the people's treasury. Two of you seem very much lost in a council bubble regarding this matter.

Reference A - City Manager's staff item for Ryder Communications presentation item of the November 25, 2008 City Council Meeting. Although dated November 20, 2008, this was not made available until Monday, November 24, 2008. Two improper approvals were made on a presentation item, which on the posted agenda did not even mention what the presentation concerned. The Brown Act was violated in multiple manners.

November 20, 2008

Honorable Mayor and Members of  
the Hermosa Beach City Council

Regular Meeting of  
November 25, 2008

**GATEWAY SIGN AT COMMUNITY CENTER**

**Recommendation:**

1. That the City Council approve the design concept of the Messaging Gateway Sign; and,
2. That staff be directed to work with Ryder Communications Group in implementing the sign.

**Background:**

Ryder Communications Group (Julian Ryder and Andrew Frank) have developed a Messaging Gateway Sign that will replace the existing sign on the Community Center lawn.

Please review it and approve the concept and direct staff to work with them to implement the sign.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen R. Burrell  
City Manager

Reference B - Planning Commission item continuing matter to January Planning Commission meeting from meeting of November 18, 2008. Note that the agenda item did not reflect correctly the matter, namely that it was regarding electronic and animated signs which currently are prohibited. The item needs to be better defined and re-advertised prior to the next meeting on the matter.


**9. TEXT 08-7 -- Text amendment regarding signs in the Open Space zones and establishing requirements for community sign programs.**

**Staff Recommended Action: To continue to the January 20, 2009 meeting**

**CITY OF HERMOSA BEACH  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Planning Commission

**From:** Ken Robertson, Director 

**Date:** November 11, 2008

**Subject:** TEXT 08-7 -- Text amendment regarding signs in the Open Space zones and establishing requirements for community sign programs: Continuation to January 20, 2009

This item involves a text amendment to allow new sign technologies in the Open Space zone as directed by the City Council on September 9, 2008. Text 08-7 is continued to January 20, 2009 to allow time for the public review process for an environmental negative declaration to be completed prior to Commission review.

--- end of written communication ---