



Promoting accountable, cost-effective and efficient government and opposing unnecessary taxes and spending



September 29, 2022

CoCoTax Vice President's Report Sept 23, 2022

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Supervisor Karen Mitchoff, who has served on the Board of Supervisors since 2010 and was on the City Council person and Mayor of Pleasant Hill, was our luncheon speaker. She related how Covid created a hybrid form of Board engagement. It led to having speakers address formal meetings with time consuming irrelevant opinions and soap box subjects not under the jurisdiction of the County. Some people spoke on every item. This resulted in public speakers being limited to 2 minutes each. Subjects often covered were over COVID & vaccine fears which led to hostile responses that even resulted in death threats.

There was an issue with public servants interacting with the public and not being vaccinated. It was about them and not about the public welfare. They were required to test every week.

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### LUNCHTIME SPEAKER (continued)

Supervisor Karen Mitchoff feels we have a real problem in current local and regional government because no one is filing to run for elective office. No one wants to run because they see what goes on in the meetings. We need good candidates, We need to encourage people to run for office. In cities with districts you don't need a lot of dollars to run. In a district of 3,000 people you only need 1,501 votes to win. Two city councils have no midterm elections and people are not showing up to vote. She felt there a distrust in elections in Contra Costa County. Questions of voter fraud is a major issue. Questions were raised about the use of unsolicited absentee ballots. You really don't know who is voting it. This practice first came about with Covid. Unsolicited mailing of ballots occurred to registered voters who had not requested one. Signatures are compared with the registration signature when the votes first come in. But they are then separated. It was pointed out that once the ballot is received and the signed envelop are separated, there is no way to associate the ballot again to verify the legality of the vote, unless there is a recount. In recounts the signatures envelopes are retrieved and are compared. Upon a death, some decedents continue to receive ballots although deceased. Certificates of death and the registrations are handled in the same office.

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Luncheon Speaker (continued)

Voter rolls are cleaned of the deceased by newer computer systems that compare records, which are corrected within 6 months of death. Another issue is Immigrants who get a driver license and get an automatic voter registration. Some are young kids not yet able to register to vote. These issues affect less than 1% of the votes with the possibility of fraud. She offers that the process is open to public view and a vote recount is always open to a candidate.

The passage of County Measure X, a 1/2 cent sales tax can do a lot of good things for fire, police, and health services. The Supervisors have taken steps to fund body cameras for the Sheriff's Department. The younger progressive voters want it used for more actions of a national and statewide nature. Again, it's not within the county jurisdiction. They lack an understanding of fiscal accountability and responsibility. It is not understood that ongoing expenses are required each year and we can use one-time expenditures. A capital expense like a parking lot require only a one-time expense, but health care services ae ongoing. Our County Health services undocumented immigrants in healthcare if they show up. This is better than having them show up in the emergency room with untreated more aggressive medical conditions.

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Luncheon Speaker (continued)

Regarding providing attorneys for tenant’s evictions, if lawfully evicted, why use the allocation for attorney’s fees. It’s a better use of county services to help the people in applying for grants that will allow more people to be housed.

With the homeless problem the majority are due to drug and alcohol addiction. Those are the underlying conditions to be addressed, not merely homes. They ae not getting the health services they need. We need to expand mental health services. Mitchoff stated that if they don’t want to get the health services they need, then “homelessness” is a choice. But it is an unfinished job we need to address.

She mentioned that the CA Legislature has taken a “heavy handed” approach against local control of community zoning. Cities are threatened with loss of transportation dollars if they don’t amend their local ordinances. Mitchoff announced with pride that the bonds funding employee OPEB have been fully paid off. Mark Fernwood/ Jim Pezzaglia

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