

## STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

This report covers three meetings. As usual, all candidates for the various seats were invited regardless of party affiliation. All candidates recommended for endorsement are Democrats. They are listed in the order in which they were interviewed. The Mayor and City Council candidates were asked about potential solutions to homelessness, the lack of affordable housing, goals for going green, the role of the city council in police oversight, as well as appropriate collaboration with the PUSD and PCC. The PCC candidates were asked about the use of the Bond money, declining/increasing enrollment, the continued use of online teaching, dual enrollment, helping students with food and housing insecurity, the concept of shared governance, and the selection of a new Superintendent/President.

(1) The Research Committee met via Zoom on the evening of Tuesday December 5, 2023. We considered the candidates for City Council District 4 and for Mayor.

### MAYOR

Victor Gordo. (Incumbent)

Born in Mexico, Victor immigrated to the United States with his parents as a young child. The oldest of six kids, Victor grew up in Pasadena, attending Pasadena public schools. Victor's father was a dishwasher and cook at Rancho's Mexican Restaurant for 50 years. His late mother, who died when his youngest brother was four years old, was a seamstress.

From age nine until he was 17 years old, Victor delivered the Pasadena Star-News newspaper every day before school and every weekend. He worked evenings and weekends at Rancho's Mexican Restaurant to help contribute to his family. The first person in his family to go to college, he graduated from PCC and transferred to Azusa Pacific University.

Victor subsequently graduated from law school and passed the California Bar Exam on his first attempt in 2002..

Victor is a labor leader who is also the longest-serving president of the Rose Bowl Operating Company, leading it through a successful renovation. As a Pasadena City Council member, Victor has worked for almost 19 years focusing on quality of life issues, including opposing over development, fighting crime, championing a living wage, increasing government transparency, getting rid of problem liquor stores and replacing them with affordable housing, and taking back our parks. Throughout his time as

Mayor, Victor has focused on fostering an improved quality of life and promoting safe, family-friendly environments throughout the City. As Mayor, together with the City Council, Victor has guided Pasadena through the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery during a challenging time of social inequity, mass retirements and the search for a new City Manager.

Allen Shay

Allen filed at the last minute and did not respond to our invitation to interview. He is a business consultant, and real estate broker

The research committee voted 6-1-0 to recommend the endorsement of Victor Gordo.

The steering committee voted 20-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of Victor Gordo

#### CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 4

Gene Mazuda, the incumbent since 2011, did not accept our invitation to interview.

John Doyle

John is a renewable energy professional and long-time resident of District 4, He holds an Economics and Engineering Degrees from Dartmouth College. He supports making life easier for working families as well as increased access to better jobs, education and more affordable housing. John believes there is a need to increase the social safety net in Pasadena, CA and that is why he has named his campaign PasadenaSafe.com.

Jonathan Horton

Jonathan is a Pasadena resident of nineteen years and an alumni of three Pasadena public schools. Over the course of his childhood, Jonathan developed a deep love for his city and community. After earning his BA in political science from Cal State Pomona he began his career advocating for the residents of Pasadena and the rest of California's 28th Congressional District as a federal caseworker.

He assisted hundreds of families with issues ranging from housing to immigration to veterans affairs. Throughout his career, Jonathan has spent countless hours engaging with the residents of District 4, studying the problems that affect them, and seeking out solutions. Jonathan now serves on the Pasadena Human Relations Commission.

The Research Committee voted 6-1-0 to recommend the endorsement of Jonathan Horton.

The Steering Committee voted 19-0-1 to recommend the endorsement of Jonathan Horton

(2) The Research Committee met on the evening of Wednesday, December 5, to consider the candidates for City Council District 6. The meeting was attended by George Brumder, Marguerite Cooper, Jon Fuhrman, Marilee Marshall, Denise Robb, Tim Wendler, Bruce Wright

## CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6

Mark Hanna

The primary issue for Mark that defines his campaign is “parking reform”. He has \$2,000 in parking fines and claims he pays \$200 per year to park in front of his own house. He also wants term limits for council members.

Steve Madison.

Unfortunately Steve’s flight was delayed and he missed his interview but we were able to recommend his endorsement based on our many past endorsements of him, knowledge of his continued performance on the City Council and the lack of a serious opponent.

Steve was first elected in 1999 to represent District 6, which includes the beautiful West Pasadena neighborhoods above the Rose Bowl and in Southwest Pasadena, much of Old Pasadena, the Art Center College of Design, the Convention Center & Civic Auditorium, most of the Arroyo Seco, the historic Colorado Street Bridge and John K. Van de Kamp Bridge. He was reelected in 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2020, each time winning outright in the general election without the need for a runoff. Steve has served as Vice Mayor, on the Council’s Economic Development & Technology Committee, Public Safety Committee and Legislative Policy Committee, the Pasadena Center Operating Company Board, the Multimodal Operations and

Development Entity Board, the Youth Development and Violence Prevention Task Force, and as Chair of the Council's Special Committee overseeing the recovery of over \$5 million in embezzled funds. From 2009 to 2021, he was one of three appointees to and is former President of the Burbank/Glendale/Pasadena Airport Authority Commission, which oversees the Hollywood Burbank Airport (formerly Bob Hope Airport) in Burbank. In 2021 he was selected as the City Council appointee to the Rose Bowl Operating Company.

During his over 20 years on the Council, Steve has championed neighborhood protection and the preservation of Pasadena's high quality of life; a vibrant commercial environment in the Central District; high quality municipal services, especially in the area of public safety; Pasadena's "Green City" environmental initiatives, economic justice including raising the minimum wage and enacting tenant protections; and assisting the Pasadena Unified School District in ensuring every child in our community reaches his/her full potential. In 2000, Steve authored and secured adoption by the City Council of a resolution opposing the extension of the 710 freeway through Pasadena, and he repeatedly urged his Council colleagues to oppose the 710 tunnel, ultimately succeeding in 2015 when his motion passed and in May 2017 when the LA Metro board killed the tunnel project. Steve was the first Councilmember to advocate for a General Plan Guiding Principle in support of public education. During his time on the Council, Steve has hosted scores of district town hall meetings and numerous community-wide forums on climate change, El Niño, growth and development in Pasadena, homelessness, the 710 freeway, alternatives to the 710 tunnel and public safety.

A practicing trial lawyer and a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers, Steve is a partner with Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, LLP in Los Angeles. He joined the firm after spending nine years as an Assistant United States Attorney, where he prosecuted federal criminal cases including major narcotics, political corruption and defense contracting fraud matters. He assisted in the prosecution of United States v. Koon (the federal criminal civil rights case arising out of the Rodney King beating).

The Research committee voted 7-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of Steve Madison.

The Steering Committee voted 20-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of Steve Madison.

(3) The Research Committee met in person all day Saturday, December 9,

to consider City Council District 2 and 3 candidates as well as Pasadena Community College Area 2 and 6 The meeting was attended by George Brumder, Beth Gertmenian, Marilee Marshall, Denise Robb, George Van Alstine, Tim Wendler, Bruce Wright

### CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 3

Brandon Lamar

Brandon was raised in Northwest Pasadena and where he attended Edison Elementary, Elliot Middle School, and John Muir High School. Growing up, however, it was clear to him that the voices in his community aren't always heard at City Hall. This realization made Brandon a community organizer, neighborhood advocate, and a dedicated coalition-builder. At a young age, Brandon became involved with various community programs, including Pasadena Youth Ambassadors and the Pasadena Youth Council. In his early twenties, he became the Chair of the Youth and College Division and the 3rd Vice President of the Pasadena NAACP. Soon after, he was appointed by to the Human Relations Commission where he currently serves as Chair. As the Chair, he has led efforts in making recommendations to the City Council on the prevention of hate crimes and encouraging our Council to correct our wrongdoings concerning the history of racial injustices within our city.

Brandon's career path then led him to a series of roles in the nonprofit and advocacy sectors, where he continued to work toward equity and justice for marginalized communities. He served as the Director of Programs for the LAPD Hollywood Police Activities League, where he led programs and advocacy efforts on issues related to poverty, education, mental health, and community engagement. He currently serves as the California Director for a National Non-Profit working to address racial disparities and other social injustices in our juvenile and child welfare systems.

Throughout his career, Brandon has remained committed to the principle that people power is the key to creating lasting social change. He has worked tirelessly to build bridges between communities, and to empower people to take action on the issues that affect their lives. Whether he is organizing a rally, building a coalition, or speaking truth to power, Brandon's passion and dedication have inspired countless people to join the fight for a

more just and equitable society. Brandon is focused on educating and engaging young leaders to get involved locally civically and politically by forming the Pasadena Young Democrats.

Justin Jones

Justin currently serves by appointment on the City Council. He was born and raised in Pasadena where he attended both PUSD schools and PCC. In addition, he is a graduate of the Pasadena Neighborhood Leadership Institute (PNLI)..

Justin is a Licensed Civil Engineer and an Associate Civil Engineer with the Los Angeles County Public Works. His current role is to help administer the Safe Clean Water Program, which provides local, dedicated funding to increase local water supply, improve water quality, and protect public health. Before serving on the city council, he served as chair of the Pasadena Environmental Advisory Commission and was the former chair of the Pasadena Human Relations Commission. He was also a member of the Pasadena Water and Power Stakeholder Technical Advisory Group for their Power Integrated Resource Plan (IRP).

The research committee voted 20-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of Brandon Lamar

While we liked Justin, and he is certainly a qualified candidate, we were deeply moved and impressed by Brandon's presentation and felt that his focus on policy would make him a valuable addition to the Council.

CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 2

Rick Cole

Rick grew up in Pasadena, attending public schools, serving as student body president at Blair High School where he was an outspoken youthful leader during the struggle to integrate Pasadena's schools. After college at Occidental and graduate school at Columbia, he returned to his hometown and again became involved in his community, this time in the battle to preserve Pasadena neighborhoods from being bulldozed for redevelopment

Rick was first elected to the City Council in 1983 at the age of 29. A staunch defender of Pasadena's neighborhoods, he also championed parks,

libraries, and environmental sustainability. He was re-elected by 78% of the vote and as chair of the Council's Finance Committee helped steer the city through the deep recession of the early Nineties, when California lost nearly three quarters of a million jobs.

When he became Mayor he led the successful effort to rewrite the city's General Plan, championing a civic engagement strategy that drew 3200 members of the community to participate. The award-winning plan called for focusing growth around future light rail transit stations while protecting residential neighborhoods. Voters approved it by 58%. Later, he led the campaign to restore funding to Pasadena's libraries, ratified by 80% of the voters.

Rick has been recognized nationally as one of America's "Public Officials of the Year" by Governing Magazine and won awards for his expertise in municipal management from the American Association of Public Administrators and the Municipal Management Association of Southern California. His hallmark has always been how to improve results for people, striving for "government that works better and costs less."

Rick returned to Pasadena at the beginning of the pandemic and was appointed by the City Council to the Planning Commission where he has championed both affordable housing and raising the city's design standards for multi-family development. His advocacy led him to be honored by Making Housing and Community Happen as an "Affordable Housing Rock Star."

As Executive Director of the Congress for the New Urbanism, Rick spent 18 months visiting 11 states and working on reconnecting communities. US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg invited him as the only representative of a national non-profit to join him in Montgomery, Alabama to announce the \$2 billion "Reconnecting Communities" program – which Pasadena later won a grant to help plan the reclaiming of the 710 Freeway Stub.

Earlier this year, Rick wrote "10 Grand Challenges to Transform Pasadena's Future." The positive reaction to that series prompted him to again seek to represent District Two. Rick also teaches urban policy at Occidental College where he is an assistant professor and at Pepperdine University's graduate School of Public Policy. He formerly taught US History at Pasadena City College. He has been a guest lecturer at USC, UCLA, UC

Riverside, University of Wisconsin, Tulane University, Rice University, Cal Lutheran College, Cal Poly Pomona, Creighton University and Santa Monica College. He has also been a speaker at national conferences of the American Planning Association; American Institute of Architects; Government Finance Officers Association; Urban Land Institute; Congress for the New Urbanism; International Making Cities Livable; American Library Association; Code for America; CityLab; CityAge; Emerging Local Government Leaders; International City/County Managers Association; National Black Caucus; National Trust for Historic Preservation; New Partners for Smart Growth; American Association of Blacks in Energy; the U.S. Green Building Council; and VerdeXchange. He has twice been the keynote speaker for the Mayors Institute on City Design.

### Felicia Williams

Born and raised in Pasadena to an immigrant mother from the Philippines and an African American father, Felicia worked with her mom at her real estate business. Her father, was one of the first African American Pharmacists licensed in California. Felicia attended Polytechnic School and went on to attend Stanford University and UCLA, where she earned an M.A. in Urban Planning. She also earned an MBA from the University of Michigan Business School, specializing in finance and real estate.

Felicia has over two decades of experience working with some of America's top financial firms and Fortune 500 companies, managing and forecasting multibillion dollar projects, investing in our energy grid, and using her financial experience every day to help local governments secure critically needed financing to deliver essential services.

Felicia has also served as the Vice Mayor of Pasadena, President of the Burbank Airport Commission, and works as a financial consultant to cities. Prior to her election to the Pasadena City Council, Felicia served as Chair of the Planning Commission, and on the Boards of Planned Parenthood Pasadena & San Gabriel Valley, the Pasadena Educational Foundation, and the Pasadena Police Foundation.

The research committee voted 6-0-1 to recommend the endorsement of Rick Cole

The steering committee voted 19-0-2 to recommend the endorsement of Rick Cole.



Felicia is certainly intelligent, well educated and competent and we endorsed her in her initial run for City Council. However in her first term on the Council, she did not live up to our organization's progressive values. It was noted that she changed her party registration from Democrat to Decline to State after she was elected, and no longer needed the support of the Democratic clubs. It was also noted that she opposed a proposal that would have provided housing for the homeless on East Colorado and perhaps most notably she opposed "hero pay" for grocery workers who risked their lives during the early stages of the pandemic. While, as Felicia herself pointed out, it gives the right impression to have an African American female on the City Council for most of us that consideration, does not overcome the fact that she does not share our values. The person voting against the endorsement at the research committee described their position as "torn."

## PASADENA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA 2

Jim Osterling, the long term incumbent, is not seeking reelection

Kevin Strotz

Kevin, who currently lives in Altadena graduated from the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD in 2016 and was commissioned as an Officer in the U.S. Navy. He received a Bachelor of Science Degree with a major in Honors Systems Engineering and a minor in German. Kevin was one of 12 community members named this past March, by the PCC Board of Trustees to serve a two year term on the Citizen Bond Oversight Committee. He represents the Bona fide taxpayers' organization.

James Aragon

James has over 30 years of experience in as a counselor/professor mostly at PCC. James was born and raised in East Los Angeles. He graduated from Wilson High School and attended Rio Hondo College. He received a Bachelor of Science in Human Services from California State University, Fullerton, and Master of Science in Marriage and Family Counseling from San Francisco State University. He is now serving as an adjunct professor at Glendale Community College. He served on both the Human Service Commission for the City of Pasadena, and as co-chair for the

redistricting commission for Pasadena Unified School District. James also loves to sing.

The Research committee voted 7-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of James Aragon.

The Steering Committee voted 19-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of James Aragon.

PASADENA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AREA 6 ( portions of Arcadia, El Monte, Rosemead, San Gabriel and Temple City.)

John Martin, the long term incumbent is not seeing reelection

John Quintanilla,

John has served on the Rosemead School Board since 2013.

Ryan Liu

Ryan Liu was the first in his family to go to college. His mother and her family fled the Cambodian genocide as refugees. He grew up in a low-income household. His parents rented a small backhouse in Arcadia so that Ryan and his younger brother could access a well-resourced public school district. Ryan enrolled at PCC while working three jobs. He obtained his bachelor's from Yale, his MS in Higher Education from Oxford and ultimately a law degree from Yale. After securing a job at a law firm in Los Angeles, he helped his parents fulfill a life-long goal of buying a home in America. Ryan says that all of this would not have been possible without PCC giving him the chance, as it has others. He believes that PCC needs critical support to continue its mission. Ryan's platform can be summarized with three points ensuring that PCC students can succeed in their education and careers, collaborating with the community, and promoting responsive leadership

The research committee was very impressed with Ryan.

The research committee voted 6-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of Ryan Liu.

The Steering Committee voted 19-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of Ryan Liu.

Congressional District 28

Judy Chu

The Steering Committee voted 19-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of Judy Chu.

The Arroyo Democratic Club adopted the recommendations of ACT