

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Research Committee met on the morning of January, 14, 2017 to interview candidates for City Council. Marguerite Cooper, Jon Fuhrman, Dale Gronemeir, Jim Heringer, Dolores Hickambottom, Susan Kane, Marilee Marshall, Barbara Paul, Ed Washatka, and Bruce Wright participated in the interviews for the contested City Council seats. Jim Heringer could not stay for the voting and therefore is not counted in the number (9). Jean Register arrived in time to participate in the interviews for District 5. (10). The same 10 people then proceeded to interview candidates for the contested PUSD seats. (10)

CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

The candidates were asked to discuss whether our police department was losing officers due to lack of sufficient pay and good working conditions, their views on recent development and its effect on traffic, parking and preservation of our trees. They were also asked to comment on “in fill development” or the idea of transforming commercial properties into housing or mixed use, their interest in ameliorating the suffering of the homeless, ensuring the protection of our immigrant population, especially in terms of how, if at all, police officers should interact with ICE and whether City Council members are sometimes inappropriately prevented from communicating fully with their constituents by advice from the City Attorney.

District 7

(1) Phil Hosp, a Republican, graduated from Loyola High School. After receiving a business degree from Boston University, he served four years as a Tank Officer in the U.S. Army, achieving the rank of Captain. Hosp served two tours in Iraq and was awarded the Bronze Star. After serving in the military, Hosp obtained a law degree from Loyola Law School and is currently a securities fraud attorney with an international firm. He has been active in a number of organizations, including the Los Angeles Big Brothers Program and Loyola Law School Veteran's Justice Project. He lives in Madison Heights with his wife and two preschool daughters. Hosp's emphasis is on reducing development, crime and traffic. He favors more and better planned mass transit, citing as an example of bad development, that the light rail was placed at ground level, dividing the city in half and creating a traffic nightmare. He thinks we should retain the best officers and increase their salary. Hosp acknowledged that the police have to interact to some extent with ICE but was adamant they should not be enforcing immigration laws and believes the immigrant community should be protected, as immigrants are an important part of our economy and part of the diversity that is important to our city. Hosp's endorsements include the Pasadena United Teacher's Union

(2) Alejandro Menchaca, lifetime Democrat, lives in the South Lake District. He was born in Montebello, earned a BA in political science from Stanford and a law degree from USC Law School where he was president of La Raza Law Students Association. He was admitted to the bar in 2002 and currently has a solo practice in Los Angeles. Menchaca is the Founder and President of the Latino Professional Network which presently has approximately 40,000 members from diverse fields and backgrounds. Through the efforts of Menchaca, this organization has supported numerous local charities and community initiatives. He has served on the boards of East LA Weingart YMC, the Mexican American Bar Association, and the Mexican Cultural Institute. In 2010, he ran for State Senate in District 22 and played a large role in drawing the Latino community to support Eric Garcetti in his mayoral election. He thinks our starting salaries for police officers could be higher and that our budgetary problems could be solved through a sales tax. He favors revitalizing South Lake to appeal to millennials, maintaining and expanding park space and protecting our trees, noting that some children from the inner city never see a tree but live in a world of concrete. He does not think the police should enforce immigration law.

(3) Sheena Tahilramani, a Republican moved to Pasadena relatively recently from Washington D.C., choosing Pasadena because of its “economic, social and educational opportunities.” She has a background in public relations and is a small business owner.

She previously worked at the White House Office of Political Affairs and then at Karl Rove & Company where she served as the company liaison to high level client external organizations such as Fox News and the Wall Street Journal. With respect to the police department, she believes we should stick to the budget. Urban planning is not her area of expertise but she would like to see more mass transit, use of bikes and move away from cars. Protecting our immigrant community is not a priority for her as she believes illegal immigrants are a problem and that people can and should immigrate legally as her family did.

(4) Andy Wilson, a Republican, was appointed to fill Mayor Tornek's seat and now seeks election. Wilson has lived with his wife and children in Madison Heights for 20 years. An avid walker, he is a strong advocate for enhancing pedestrian and biking infrastructures to reduce local traffic and is a strong advocate for preservation of our trees. He holds an MBA from Harvard and a BS in engineering from Dartmouth. He supports revitalizing South Lake and focusing new development in the downtown core so that our historic neighborhoods are not overwhelmed. Wilson served for 6 years on the board of Pasadena Heritage, an organization that is largely responsible for preserving our historic neighborhoods and buildings throughout the city. Wilson is a tech start up entrepreneur and the founder and director of Momentum Venture a seed fund focused on early stage technology companies that are looking to expand. His ongoing volunteer activities, include co-founding and running Innovate Pasadena, a grass roots community

building effort focused on motivation/entrepreneurship and local high-tech job creation.

Wilson believes that our police department has not managed its image very well and is too defensive about feedback. He agrees we need qualified people and that we should offer competitive pay but believes that pension obligations are the biggest budget problem. Wilson's endorsements include Terry Tornek, Bill Bogaard, Victor Gordo, John Kennedy and Steve Madison.

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It should be noted that another candidate, *Bryan Witt*, a recently registered Democrat, who describes himself as the only "progressive democrat" in the race was scheduled for an interview but did not appear. When called to see if he was coming he apologized and said he had forgotten or calendered the interview for the wrong date.

Analysis: Among the District 7, candidates, with the exception of Tahilramani, the answers of the candidates we interviewed in this non- partisan race were within the acceptable range. Tahilramani's views were far to the right of both of the other Republican candidates and, thus, she was not seriously considered as a suitable candidate for the endorsement of a progressive organization. As the endorsement recommendation reflects, this was a close one. Wilson was perceived by some to be slightly more to the progressive end of the Republican spectrum than Hosp while others saw little difference. Menchacha, is a progressive Democrat, whom we would like to see more involved in local politics particularly in ACT. Some people wanted to

consider endorsing him and/or would have been comfortable in not endorsing anyone at this time. Menchacha was not more seriously considered because, as one person pointed out, he has gotten a very late start on his campaign, and has little or local support which will make it hard for him to win in District 7.

The research committee voted 5-4-0 to recommend the endorsement of Andy Wilson

The steering committee voted 12-3-2 to recommend the endorsement of Andy Wilson

District 5 Candidates

(1) **Victor Gordo**, a Democrat and successful labor lawyer has served on the City Council since 2001 and has worked throughout his tenure on improving the quality of life in District 5 where he lives with his wife, and two young children. He was most recently reelected in 2009 with 91.2% of the vote. Born in Mexico he arrived here at age 5 and attended Madison elementary. He later delivered the Pasadena Star News. The first person in his family to attend college he worked his way [waiting tables] through Pasadena city College and Azusa Pacific.

On the City Council, he has led efforts to combat liquor stores which were negatively affecting residential neighborhoods and has replaced them with affordable housing. He is a strong advocate for affordable housing, economic growth and stability in the local business districts and promoting safe, family-friendly environments. He supports getting people out of their cars, improving public transportation, and appropriate development along the inner corridor. Gordo, a naturalized citizen, who

grew up in a garage with his parents and siblings, under the constant threat of deportation, is very sensitive to the protection of our immigrant community especially children. Gordo believes that we need more and better paid police officers and is working with the city and the police union to achieve these goals. A strong advocate of community policing, and officers on bicycles, he laments that during the recession the special enforcement teams were cut in half due to lack of funding and have not been replenished, a situation that seriously hampers the prevention of serious gang crime such as that which recently occurred. Gordo, strongly believes that it is not the function of the police department to enforce immigration laws but acknowledges that it is not possible for the police to be ordered not to speak to ICE.

(2) Aida Morales, a Democrat, Guatemalan American and 50 year resident of Pasadena, has a BA from Cal State Los Angeles. She has served on the Northwest Commission, the Affordable Housing Action Committee and the Guatemalan Heritage Organization. Morales is a concerned and politically active citizen. However, given her lack of familiarity with the issues of interest to us we did not consider her a viable candidate at this time.

(2) Krystal Lopez Padley, a Decline to State, asserted that she does not identify with either the Democratic or Republican parties. Lopez Padley was born in Santa Ana. She earned a BA in English Literature from UCI and a masters in writing from Sarah Lawrence College in New York. She resides with her husband and preschool children in

the Northwest Area of Pasadena and laments that her neighborhood parks are not safe for her or her children. She thinks that the police have a morale problem as opposed to a pay or staffing problem and that more transparency and more trust between the police and community is important. She is strongly supportive of affordable housing, protecting immigrants, alleviating traffic congestion by adding more cars to the light rail, more dedicated bikeways, more buses and bus routes.

Analysis: With respect to the District 5 candidates it was noted that it would be nice to have more women on the City Council and that Lopez-Padley is an attractive energetic young person. We felt that she has a future in local politics and we would like to see more of her, although some of us tend to distrust decline to state registrants. Most significantly, given our knowledge of Victor Gordo, most of us did not find credible, her assertions that the incumbent was an “empty chair” who was not interested in the needs of his constituents. The lively discussion which ensued prior to our recommendation of Gordo was, however, mostly about policing issues, as one individual who participated has strong beliefs that we don’t need more police officers and it is not enough for our department to have a policy not to enforce immigration laws but that officers should actually be ordered not to interact with ICE. Gordo and this individual disagree.

The research committee voted to 6-3-1 to recommend the endorsement of Victor Gordo.

The steering committee voted 13-3-1 to recommend the endorsement of Victor Gordo

PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT CANDIDATES

Given the threats of mass deportation emitting from the Trump administration, the candidates were asked their views and ideas on how to protect immigrant students. They were also asked how the Board should use the \$23 million received from the state to improve the academic performance of disadvantaged children and youth; how to help more Latino and African American students meet the state standards for proficiency in Language Arts and Mathematics and how to meet the challenge of forecasted lower enrollments. Further, they were also asked to comment on the success of the current superintendent and whether or not the Board's attorney should be allowed to prevent Board members, as elected officials, from communicating fully with their constituents.

All candidates who answered our questions supported the Safe Zone resolution which had been put forth by Elizabeth Pomeroy and which had recently passed 8-0. They all supported protecting the children but were not as yet sure how far they would be able to go, how the resolution would be implemented and what more could be done as the details would need to be worked out, likely without publicity, and training provided at all level. They all thought the Superintendent was doing a superior job and that any problems that had occurred had or would be alleviated in the future through more transparency. All candidates thought more analysis of the data was required to determine how best to spend the state funds to serve the needs and raise the scores of the disadvantaged and that we

needed to work on more attracting students. They all also thought they should be allowed to speak with their constituents except on confidential matters which were related to personnel or were the subject of litigation.

District 1

(1) Kimberly Kenne, a Democrat and incumbent, and current President of the School Board is an Altadena resident and a system integration expert by profession. Kenne has a BS in Business Administration from Georgetown University, where she majored in finance and minored in computer Science. Kenne was originally elected to the Board in 2011 and reelected in 2013. She has been actively involved as a parent leader at the school site, district, and state levels since her children started kindergarten.

(2) Rita Miller, a Democrat, has been a resident of Altadena since 2011. She holds a law degree from Santa Clara University School of Law was admitted to the bar in 1988 and worked as an attorney for 12 years. She is presently a high school teacher at LAUSD. She is currently teaching at Downtown Magnets High School, Rita is a 2-year member of the Student Site Council and current Parliamentarian. She is active in her school, offering extra assistance to students after class and participating in the many Downtown Magnets ASB events.

The research committee voted 9-1-0 to recommend the endorsement of Kimberly Kenne

The research committee voted 16-0-1 to recommend the endorsement of Kimberly Kenne

District 3

(1) Michelle Richardson-Bailey

Richardson-Bailey was born and raised in Pasadena and attended local public schools: Washington Elementary, Don Benito Elementary, Eliot Junior High, Pasadena High School, and Pasadena City College. She and her husband have 3 children who all attended Pasadena public schools.

Richardson Bailey has served as a Pasadena City Commissioner for the last 13 years, and previously Chaired the Northwest and Human Relations Commissions. Bailey has been an employee of PUSD for the last 14 years. She recently joined the district's Equity and Access Committee, and the School Site Council at Blair school. She is a former Vice President of the Classified School Employees Association (CSEA), Pasadena Chapter 434, and is a member of the Pasadena Alliance of African American School Educators .

She believes that the diversity of our district should be reflected in the governing board, and that she brings the missing minority perspective for the under representation of our diverse community. Richardson Bailey is endorsed by Anthony Portantino, Tyrone Hampton, and Renatta Cooper.

(3) Adrienne Ann Mullen, a Democrat, was appointed to the Board and now seeks election. She holds a doctorate in Education from UCLA and presently is Dean of Adult

Education in the Los Angeles Community College District. Mullen has worked in public and private education for over 28 years. Her goals are to be sure the district is a good steward of public funds and to increase the district's reserve. She further states that she will work to grow the dual enrollment program with PCC which allows current high school students to take college classes while completing their high school diplomas and to grow signature programs like dual language immersion and other magnet type programs across district schools.

The research committee voted 10-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of Michele Richardson Bailey

The steering committee voted 18-0-0 to recommend the endorsement of Michele Richardson Bailey.¹

District 5

(1) **Matthew Baron**, a recently registered Democrat, and self proclaimed “Berniecrat” teaches agriculture and seems to be doing a great job creating school gardens and encouraging troubled youngsters. It was difficult to interview Baron and more difficult to determine his view on the issues. While seemingly he is a progressive person in his own way, he made it clear that he did not like our questions or our process. Despite the fact that a detailed explanation of our interview process had been provided to him in writing, he did not seem to understand or more accurately want to acknowledge

¹ Another member arrived accounting for why there are now 18 votes.

that he was seeking our endorsement and we were going to ask the him questions that were important to us.

(2) Elizabeth Pomeroy, a Democrat and incumbent, graduated from Stanford University and holds a Ph.D. in English from UCLA. She served on the staff of the Huntington Library for ten years, and also worked at the W.M. Keck Foundation in Los Angeles. She has taught English at Pasadena City College for a decade, and earlier taught at UCLA, UC Irvine, and California State University Los Angeles. Her first teaching years were in middle school and high school. Over the past thirty-five years, she has been active in local organizations, serving as Board member of the Pasadena Historical Society, Pasadena Sister Cities Committee, the Sierra Club and other groups. She has served the City of Pasadena as a member of the Recreation and Parks Commission and the Library Commission. Her son and daughter both attended Pasadena public schools.

The research committee voted 8-1-1 to recommend the endorsement of Elizabeth Pomeroy

The steering committee voted 16-2-0 to recommend the endorsement of Elizabeth Pomeroy