



"Accountability"
The Government Watchdog

IF YOU'RE NOT
OUTRAGED
YOU'RE NOT PAYING
ATTENTION

Vanguard
News Service Vol V
Week of April 25, 2010
www.vanguardians.org
info@vanguardians.org

ASK AND WE WON'T TELL

Vanguardians Purpose: To Inform, Educate, & Motivate for Involvement, Engagement & Advocacy



CITY COUNCIL SPENDS OVER \$2,000,000 OF TAX MONEY ON THE NEON MUSEUM AND REFUSES TO DIVULGE documents and reports indicating any studies on the Museum of Neon Art demonstrating the financial impact on the City of Glendale as well as the impact on the environment. Response from the City Attorney: [Please be advised that records responsive to your request below are exempt from production pursuant to Govt Code](#)

[section 54956.8.](#)

Why is the City being so secretive when it spends your money? This carries the same smell as the refusal of the City to inform the stakeholders about who received, how much and for what reason, the performance bonuses issued by the City Manager.

WHERE IT ALL STARTED...THE UNSUSTAINABILITY OF PENSIONS: http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/99-00/bill/sen/sb_0351-0400/sb_400_cfa_19990928_142123_sen_floor.html

[Click here for a chart](#) showing the compensation for 188,000 Bay Area government employees. Vanguardians is putting together a similar list for LA County cities. It took a Supreme Court decision to obtain this information through public records. There is absolutely no sense of value for the money except in the front end of the government process. Vanguardians can use your financial support in completing this project. Some cities are refusing to provide this information which will have to be obtained through the intercession of the courts.

Luna Playhouse, 3706 San Fernando Rd., presents the Sunshine Boys on Saturdays and Sundays in May and Aunt Dan and Lemon on Thursdays and Fridays in May. Call 818 500 7200 for tickets and information. www.lunaplayhouse.org

Accolades and kudos to MonsterToners in Arcadia for sales of toner cartridges and service with a smile. You can save time and money by calling ahead to order and then to take the short drive to pick up your toner at bargain basement prices. www.monstertoner.com 800 988 5350. Monday through Friday.

Vanguardians is establishing a City Wide Financial Oversight Committee to review public documents and report on them. If you have an interest, contact Barry Allen for details and a meeting.

Vanguard is published independently by Vanguardians, Inc. Advocating for Accountability– Our vision is to live in a community where all people can enjoy accountability, integrity, effectiveness and responsiveness from our government.

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1 COMMENTARY

You may agree or disagree with the views below. Feel free to comment on them. The commentaries do not necessarily reflect the position of Vanguardians

From the Publisher... THE BUDGET STUDY SESSION



The comments following oral communications were very telling. Dave Weaver declaring with his usual anecdotal comments that the speakers were only using data that supported their opinions while he chattered away about how he looked at the salaries of 100 city managers. Weaver has previously pulled that card yet when he was called to produce the data, he didn't and couldn't because it doesn't exist. We all listened to Weaver last week as he exclaimed that in the past he would speak directly to the developers without management interference and things got done. Couple that to the comments of John Drayman about the backroom deals on the openspace acquisitions since Weaver has been on the Council. Issues that have been reported in Vanguard. Weaver wanted to hush Drayman as this was closed session material. Drayman countered with the fact he wasn't on the Council when \$25 Million went from the taxpayers to certain developers, some without a proper appraisal. Several of these developers then participated in some of the Weaver enterprises. Weaver acted like the typical bureaucrat protecting his boss, Jim Starbird. Praising him as the best City Manager money could buy. I guess Weaver still thinks like a 37year civil service employee with no ambition. He forgot that when Starbird came to Glendale the City was debtfree and today the City owes almost one half billion dollars not counting interest.

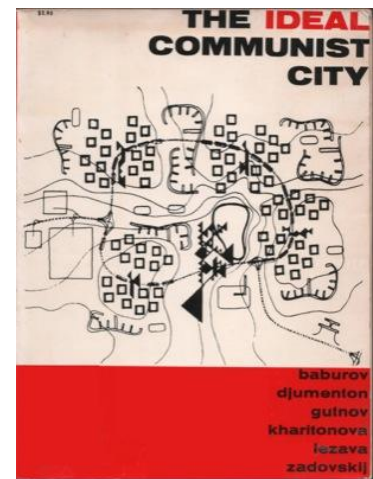
Jim Starbird weighed in on how previous Councils did a disservice to the City by making the decisions they did that set the City up with the lack of CIP funds. He is happy with the present City Council as he knows he has at least 4 votes for anything he wants. Starbird offered no solutions like Charter amendments. He offered no solutions to reduce the \$2M a year spent on temporary staff. He offered no solutions on crosstraining employees. He offered no solutions on the GFD paramedic program that he greenlighted in 2001 that booted the private ambulance service at \$475,000 a year. He never asked for where was the \$17 million from the new model. He didn't speak to unnecessary fire injuries due to poor fireground management nor to the \$10 million in savings as pointed out by Bruce Philpott in 2008.

Nor did Starbird mention how he would borrow all the money he could so our future generations could pay it back when he was long gone.

Then there was Frank Quintero speaking about the Communist style apartments from years gone by; created by past Councils. Quintero forgot that he has supported some of the same future problems in the variances he has approved.

The Glendale stakeholders have read the details of their City in these pages; details provided through public records; details analyzed by experts and presented for public scrutiny for the purpose of education, even though Vanguardians has been the recipient of a well organized attack orchestrated by those who have been in the spotlight we have focused on them. Something we do with your continued financial support.

We will continue to support our opinions with facts that are available to every member of the public; we will continue to publicize this information for all. **BARRY ALLEN**



NEXT WEEK: TAXPAYERS PAY THOUSANDS FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE FOR CITY EXECUTIVES

Most people want the benefits of an accountable government but are afraid to work for accountability or to support those that do often because they fear retaliation or are the beneficiaries of the largesse or corruption of government

THE PRESSURE IS ON...MOLANO...THE PAST...CATCHING UP WITH THE PRESENT

The Glendale News Press described Herbert Molano as a gadfly in their [article](#) on this week's budgetary meeting that focused specifically on the drastically reduced Capital Improvement Plan funds which finance things



like infrastructure repairs and the acquisition of open land. The term “gadfly” has both negative and positive connotations— at once an irritant, the gadfly personified is also the one who upsets the status quo, and in politics, is the small but powerful being that asks the tough questions and makes the biting statements that any governing body must be burdened with. On Tuesday evening, the City Council seemed more open to being poked and prodded, as both the City Manager and the Council addressed one of Molano’s biggest issues— benefits and salaries of city workers.

Though it might not have been in depth, or the answer Molano was looking for, the Council was certain that it wasn’t simply benefits (or even just the recession) that was the culprit for the problem with the CIP shortfall in their city, but the history and decisions of previous councils. Starbird spoke about a City of yesteryear, committed to keeping taxes low; it was then forced to rely more heavily on pulling monies from the Department of Water and Power’s General Fund. Starbird and those who have sat on the council longest talked about a city that at one time, needed more services in lieu of capital projects. “We were capital rich but program poor,” he said. And so a CIP that once took 50% of sales tax revenues was leveled out so that the projects that had come from the CIP could actually be maintained.



The history lesson provided by Starbird, Quintero and Weaver did show the complexity and predicament the current council presides over, there was some progressive thinking (or at least wishing) going on in the building. As Molano begged for comparative, transparent, and statistical data broken down department by department that would help explain why the CIP funds have dwindled so shockingly in the last few years, it was newly appointed Mayor Ara Najarian and newest Council Member Laura Friedman who took the most proactive approaches to figuring out their city’s fiscal breakdown.



Going off what Molano had brought up earlier, Friedman asked that perhaps, at a later date, the council could take a hard look at the lesser funded departments and figure out where the funds will go in the future and Najarian echoed that statement several times more.

Drayman spoke frankly about the misuse of Capital investments in terms of open land. In the past, open land was purchased with actual city council members interjecting themselves in deals, which not only led to the prices being driven up, but to the acquirement of spaces that weren’t well thought out, and to this day are virtually unusable for residents.

One of the most interesting things to witness besides the austere reflections on the past and the brutal honesty over the present, was how they all, cynics or idealists, want clarity on Glendale’s future. In the midst of bitter feelings expressed primarily by CCM Quintero over what Glendale once was and might never again be, there was actual talk about what these representatives want for their city, and what needs to be rectified. Perhaps it was the special meeting status, possibly it was the crazy windstorm outside, or maybe it was that the buzzing fly finally got the old horse to buck; either way, Glendale’s governing body free flowed, got some demons out, and looked like a City Council with potential to do what they all, at one time had hoped to do, before the distracting and dimming effects of politics had a chance to set in. **LAUREL MILLER**

**COMMENTARY: THE QUINTESSENTIAL SOVIET AND THE RISE OF SOVIET-STYLE GOVERNMENT
THE GENERALISSIMO SPEAKS**



In what is perhaps the most egregious example of subterfuge and deception, Councilman Frank Quintero denigrates investors who built multi-family homes in Glendale in the 1980's. Those investors who put their own money at risk, without any government subsidies, without any favor from councilmen, are now in the eyes of this councilman, Soviet-style, evil-doers. What gets me so blown-over is that Quintero made his soviet-style remarks during the budget study session and not the Housing Authority session where he reigns as the Generalissimo of government housing.

Quintero is probably the most prodigious double-speaking and duplicitous elected official I ever had the misfortune of befriending. As a state assembly candidate, he turned on his Armenian (ANC) benefactors by labeling Paul Krekorian a terrorist. Now, safe in his council seat, he trashes all previous councilmen for the hyper growth in southern Glendale. To Quintero, all those councilmen from the 1970's and 80's made Southern Glendale into a quagmire of Soviet-style construction.

In the mean time, while he trashes independent investors, he, as a member of the Housing Authority, approved the 65-unit City Lights public housing project in Southern Glendale and another "City Light's" named development of 68 units, and many others.

What could be more Soviet-style than government-owned or government-financed public housing of which Mr. Quintero is the leading proponent? Just sign up for the lottery folks as the luck of the draw will tell you if you qualify for affordable housing. For every unit of affordable housing, there will be a developer wondering why he should risk all his money when there is a game he can play with the councilman and all the Federal and State

money that the Housing Authority gets every year. At least the Soviets sunk their own money into their public housing. Our government, instead, borrows the money from the Chinese and our children will wind up paying for it.

What Quintero doesn't tell you is the real reason he ran for public office in the first place. He couldn't possibly have sought public office for true public service. All the evidence points to the deals he can arrange for developers who want a piece of our tax dollars. Just take a look at the financing of the [Affordable Housing Portfolio](#) of the city of Glendale. If you pay close attention, you'll see the minuscule investment made by the new cronies of Mr. Quintero and the massive amounts of taxpayer money that is going into those projects. But that is only the half of it.

Many of these projects are being funded and built at an enormous artificial cost. Some of these projects have been completed at a stated cost of roughly \$475 per square foot. A cursory look at similar sized construction of four to seven story buildings and 65,000 square feet show that construction costs should be around \$180 per square foot. For that matter, look at the current price for apartment buildings in Glendale and you'll find prices around \$200 per square foot with the land included.

So why is Quintero really in public office? Here is my unabashed claim. It's about the money folks. Whether it is about being at the center of influence handing out HUD money to his new-found friends in housing development, or offering tens of millions of Redevelopment participation money to high-rise hotel and condo developers, or offering zoning variances that allow a developer to by-pass parking requirements and save millions in construction costs. That is the real name of the game.



All the duplicity, campaign money, and union kissing ties in very neatly. The dots are all connected. Now that Quintero feels he has least two other council members firmly aligned with him (Drayman and Friedman), he is ready to release his vitriol on whoever calls him out on his misdeeds. Quintero, as the Generalissimo of the Housing Authority, now has the credentials to seek potential developers and convince them that he can make their development deals a reality. But he can't do it alone; of course, he needs the city staff to help develop the plans and HUD paperwork to pave the way for the projects he wants to usher through.

Often, those housing projects can't pencil out the way a developer wants without the help of the city staff. The councilmen don't control the city staff directly. So if city employees were sticklers to the letter of the law, many of those projects would be much more expensive to construct or would be delayed far too long, or be subject to real competition. The city council only controls the city manager directly. So if Jim Starbird wants to stay on the job, he needs to make sure his staff helps make the troika's projects a reality. How does Jim do it? With the taxpayers' money. That's how.

That's the logic behind the behemoth salary and benefit increases. That's the big carrot that aligns the management staff. By my rough estimates, in the last ten years alone, the cumulative salaries and benefits received by the GPOA, GFFA and GMA above the Consumer Price Index are well over a hundred millions of dollars. And when the carrot is not enough to persuade some employees, then they are bound to be stuck in jobs with limited possibilities for promotion.

What if the employee complains to the civil service commission? What if he claims that he was by-passed for that well deserved promotion? Well, that's where a choice selection to the Civil Service commission has a pay-off. The councilmen have their choice men in the civil service commission - like John Gantus - who despite severe conflicts of interests himself and a disciplinary action by the California Bar, has remained for three terms as the darling of the Council. Employees, who get no relief from the Civil Service Commission, now regularly resort to civil lawsuits against the city.

Here, then, is the *raison d'être* why these men fought so hard to gain a council seat. It's the place where a small business owner can wind up with a mansion by the golf course that he can attribute to his wise real estate investments. It takes a while to let the reality sink in. But, in the end, after watching hundreds of council meetings, countless Redevelopment Agency meetings, countless Housing Authority meetings, what you realize that it's all only about the money - the taxpayer's money. There in the budget are the hundreds of millions of dollars waiting to be tapped by the exquisite sociopath, by the righteous curmudgeon, by the great pretenders looking for a way to augment their own retirement investments.

We are in a sinking ship America, and the hull of government is cracked from Washington to California, to all the local governments where taxpayers are not paying attention. We are drowning in deficits while the public unions tether their rich pensions to the taxpayer. It's all there for you to see in every annual financial report and every week during each city council meeting. It's Soviet-style governance in everything but name. It is brought to you through the hand gestures of the friendly politician, the ultimate friend of the public unions, the buddy of the developers, the quintessential Soviet-styled technocrat or autocratic generalissimo. Day by day, politicians like these are dismantling our democracy and selling out our economic future.

If they succeed, may God have mercy on our American souls. **HERBERT MOLANO**

COMMENTARY II: THE REAL MOTHER'S MILK OF POLITICS

Life can have such awful moral setbacks it seems that it requires the resilience of Job just to keep our sanity. We hear it every night on the news: A spouse is caught cheating repeatedly, a son is caught dealing drugs, or a business partner is discovered having embezzled money for years. But we have to include, in that immoral list, the toll that political setbacks have on our lives. There is the needless war into which country's leadership takes us, the politician deeply indebted to a wall-street investment firm, or the promising leader who turned his back on those who helped him get elected. That is the way I often feel about John Drayman.

From time to time Drayman brings an observation that conveys a thought-out evaluation of past policies. At



other times he's nearly unrecognizable to me. Last week he observed accurately that the tens of millions the city spent on hillside open space did nothing to alleviate the need for parkland that would meet the needs of our various populations. Then later in the day, he misdirected an issue in a manner very typical of political misdirection.

My comments addressed the issue of growth in salaries beyond any reasonable justification. The issue I presented during the budget study session was, in essence, this: "Should the city continue to increase the salary and benefits of the city staff at rates greater than the Consumer Price Index (CPI)?" As proof, I displayed the a graph built from city records showing the steady upward trends in salaries and benefits growing at a rate that was almost three

times the CPI.

Drayman, in his reply, implied that I would complain about any compensation at all. He painted the issue in a manner for which he has a special political talent; "We sometimes talk about the money that goes into salaries as if it's some horrific thing cities do,"

To me, when a city gives pensions that are in the millions of dollars to each of the highest paid employees, amounts that are well above their expectations when they were hired by the city, that is a significant problem. When those pension costs prevent a city from creating adequate parkland or prevent the proper maintenance of roads that is hugely detrimental to our quality of life.

What a contrast to the John Drayman I knew. I remember the frequent visits I made to John's photo studio before he was elected to the city council to discuss how distant and unengaged the city council behaved towards the merchants on Brand who had been hit hard financially due to the prolonged reconstruction of Brand Blvd. I was suggesting that city employees be encouraged to shop on Brand so as to provide some economic relief to merchants whose customers were avoiding the congestion and reconstruction in front of their shops. Drayman seemed to have the right anecdote on similar circumstances of the city's neglect for the merchants in Montrose.

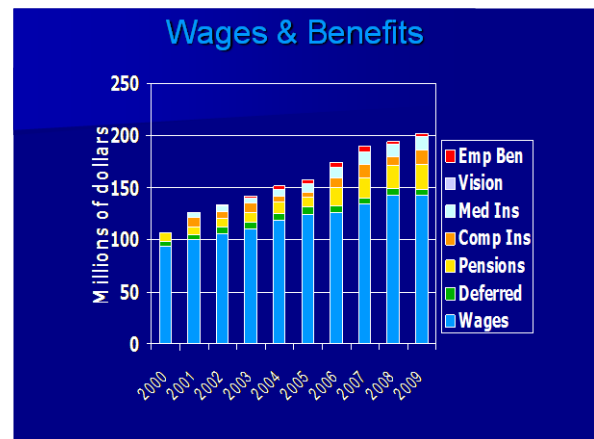
Now, just a few years since his election, as I mention the dismal record the city has on the high commercial electricity rates that are impacting businesses hard, the only response I get from Drayman is a deafening silence, and often, with a bit of gamesmanship right before my eyes.

It has become common practice for councilmen to look elsewhere when I come to speak during public comments. They don't look up to look at me. They'll shuffle papers, appear to be busy with other items on the agenda, speak to each other, or like Weaver, simply walk out as I start to speak. Drayman, instead, plays a little game. He looks straight at me as if interested in what I am about to present, then rolls his eyes and drops his eyelids as if falling asleep within the first thirty seconds. It could be disconcerting to any speaker, but as I look around, I can spot the smiles on some council members and staff, as if his gamesmanship from the dais is a pre-arranged sophomoric game.

But there is no laughing matter when it comes to businesses hard-pressed to stay viable or struggling to meet one of the highest electric utility rates in California or the disrepute Glendale has for being unfriendly to new small businesses that want to take up a storefront somewhere in the city.

But now, it seems that what I get from Drayman is often not much different than the replies I get from Weaver or Quintero. He is unmoved by the very same issues that he railed against before he got elected. There hasn't been a single year since I started tracking Starbird's performance that total payroll and benefits have not increased. Since the year 2000 payroll and benefits have increased around 72%. While some departments like libraries, or the city clerk's office or the city treasurer have hardly grown beyond the CPI, other departments like fire and police have more than doubled. They've been suckling at the taxpayer's breast far too long and don't want to wean themselves into reality.

These two departments, plus the cadre of city managers have been the greatest beneficiaries in payroll and benefits since Starbird became city manager. The number of managers has grown by nearly 40% according to



the city's workforce demographic report while the city's population grew by a scant 3.5%. So where is Drayman's position in all this?

When city managers, fire captains, and other safety personnel can retire on multi-million dollar pensions at age 53, it should be a matter of deep concern to all taxpayers. The money that leaves the city's treasury into the pockets of city union insiders is not available to fix our roads, or replace aging water mains or fix our sidewalks, or add another needed traffic signal, or provide support for after-school programs.

The issue for Glendale taxpayers is a very simple one. Should we continue to lavish high salaries and benefits on the top three city unions or do we take care of the city's infrastructure and attend to the needs of the community that require a significant and steady appropriations of the city's funds?

You can find councilmen being pro-public whenever city policy does not require any major expenditure of the city's funds. That's why the cell-tower issue was an easy lob that councilmen were eager to smash across the net. Or let them smash another return when there is a large mansion being proposed for a quiet neighborhood. But let there be a project or policy that requires a permanent impact on the general fund, and you can see the consternation on the city unions and the city managers. We are somehow putting their relentless drive toward salaries increases and benefits in jeopardy. There will be less money to tap into.

As of today, in the battle between the city's unions and the public interest for our tax dollars, the public loses. Let's remove the carefully articulated banalities and friendly face that Drayman and Quintero often portray. They've yet to demonstrate support for the rate-payer or the taxpayer. They've yet to formulate a consistent policy direction to promote a prudent government. Worse still, Drayman seems to have no inclination toward controlling the city's wasteful practices.

I can't find much wisdom coming from the city council dais today. There is very little of it to be found. We seem to be held hostage by four inexperienced adolescent boys having a field day with 800 million of our taxpayer dollars. So who's watching them? The city's managers do. They'll let the boys play so long as they don't jeopardize the manager's relentless drive toward those golden multi-million dollar retirements. The real mother's milk of today's California politics. To me, it's the sour milk that is poisoning government finances. **HERBERT MOLANO**

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Glendale residential foreclosures as of 4/23/10

TAKE ACTION – GET INVOLVED – BE INFORMED – SHARE VANGUARD – VOLUNTEER

2 Shout Box

ED – Letters published do not necessarily express the opinion of Vanguardians, Vanguard News Service, the organization or Barry Allen. Names are used only when requested. Initials are used as there are people, believe it or not, who are concerned with retaliation or have issues before a legislative body. Letters will be published that are signed and are not hate oriented.



Just finished reading Vanguard. It would seem that a lot of time is spent looking at how much the City spends and the salaries City Employees make and that is good. I don't see much being published about what the city is or is not doing about the development action taking place in the city. Vanguard used to reveal the waste spent in the performing or not performing tasks in the

city that affect all of us who walk the city streets weekly. For Example: Brand Blvd clutter on the sidewalks. You can't walk down the center of the city on Brand Blvd. without running into the many outdoor establishments that have encroached on the city sidewalks making it very difficult to walk safely. Don Cucos Mexican Restaurant takes up more than half of the sidewalk as well as Porto's Bakery, Carousel, Far Niente, the Granville Café and the worst of all, The Gaucho Grill that takes up more than half the sidewalk with their fence that must exceed the city requirements for encroachment. The only place that seems to have done it right is Panera Bakery that keeps its tables close to the building. There are others but you get the idea. Does the City Council ever get out of their chambers and walk the city streets to see all these violations that make it very difficult for people to navigate the streets?



I must admit I had my doubts about The Americana on Brand keeping things in order but they have done a magnificent job of patrolling the Americana and even during the quiet of the morning there are guards seeing that people are not trashing the area (Kudos to Mr. Caruso and his staff). I could name another dozen things that are a violation of our community street access but you get the IDEA. Let the Council get off their ASSES and work for their salaries and make the city a better place to walk around.

Thanks to Vanguard and all that you reveal but we need to make more of the little things transparent to the citizens who never complain but just endure. It would make it a lot more interesting to read in Vanguard the visible improvements in the streets where we live. D

[ED- David...thanks for your note. Take pix and email them to us and we'll include them to illustrate what you have indicated. The real issue IS the finances. There is not enough money to pay the employees AND keep the city clean.]

One thing that Vanguard should look into is the Farmers Market on Brand every Thurs. The quality of the food is very poor and would not pass the health code and it ties up a whole city block for a day. No wonder all the stores are closed down in that area. It contributes nothing to the revenue source to the City. It should be moved or shut down. How much revenue does the one at Montrose contribute? MW **[ED – Re Montrose...very little in sale taxes as food is not taxed. The records for the payments by the vendors are quite confidential and go directly to the MSPA. Vanguard has been the recipient of many documents regarding the distribution of funds and the disposition of cash payments by certain vendors.]**

Great News, the City is hiring a Revenue Manager to help solve our problems. All Vanguardians can relax now. MB **[ED- They really need an expenditure manager. Can you imagine how much taxpayers spend to feed the city employees?]**

Why doesn't the city negotiate away some of the very costly bonuses that government employees receive. These add thousands of dollars every year to their compensation. They are included in their last year income that factors into the retirement amount they will receive. I looked at a few of these existing contracts and discovered why all police and fire are on the \$100,000 and \$200,000 Glendale list.

Here are just some examples of how government employees are able to retire at 100% of their pay. If you retire at 90% of pay, but that pay is inflated by 10% due to bonuses, 90% of pay at \$110% gives the retiree essentially a 100% retirement. And that is not exclusively for just public safety. Other bargaining units have gotten very clever with their negotiations having learned from the pros, public safety unions. City councils are often eager to approve these costly and needless benefits. They are able to add on in many cases at least 10% above their regular compensation rates as a result of accrued benefits that meet "bonus" pay obligations. Interesting to note that none of them have anything to do with performance.

- 3% to 7% for a two and four year college degree
- \$250 a month for good target practice twice a month at the police range
- 5% to 16% for certain city paid training certificates (paramedic certification pays the 16%)
- 5% to 20% for longevity pay (not Glendale yet, but they are in many MOU's)
- 2% to 5% for special assignment or working night or graveyard shifts
- \$200 to \$1000 for equipment and clothing allowances or reimbursements annually
- 2% to 5% for bilingual pay
- 11% pay for firefighters who have to work a normal business schedule of 40 hours Monday through Thursday (4 days, ten hour plan).

When the entry level salary is in the mid ninety thousand as is the case with not only police and fire, but in other contracts as well, it doesn't take but one or two bonuses to push these entry level people into the six figure range. At a time when cities are struggling to stay afloat, it makes all the sense in the world to remove these giveaways during the negotiating process. Don't hold your breath. HG.

I just read something on Politico.com about a huge and growing and unfunded cost for state and local governments, including Glendale. It has to do with another aspect of the underfunded accounts in CalPERS. They are called Other Post Employment Benefits or OPEB's for short. Researchers have now determined that the unfunded obligations for these additional benefits across the nation are \$1.5 trillion, due primarily to cover retiree insurance premiums. It's not that our government leaders don't have any solutions; most of them don't even know these debt obligations exist in the first place. Bigger financial trouble is brewing and no one is willing to address it. RT.

Drayman certainly attacked his friends Weaver and Quintero as the two of them voted to buy Oakmont V and Flint Canyon, open space that is not usable. Is this Drayman posturing? Why didn't he speak on these issues before he was elected? Why hasn't he challenged this before? There are many questions I have about Drayman.CJ

3



Public



Information

"Just the facts"

A review of certain documents provided under the Public Records Act showed that there is still plenty of travel expenses for seminars and meetings that could be replaced by the use of audio and visual conferencing. Many of the elected officials and executives take advantage of meetings at resorts on the taxpayer dime.

[Home Page of Open Government \(???\) in Glendale California](#)



Click to view the agenda [City Council](#) [Housing Authority](#) [Redevelopment Agency](#)
Meetings at City Hall (CH) are in the Council Chambers, 2nd Floor at 613 E Broadway.
Meetings at the Municipal Services Bldg. (MSB) are in room 105 at 633 E Broadway.
Meetings at the Perkins Bldg (PB) are in the Conference Room at 141 N Glendale Ave.
Phone numbers are in area code 818 unless noted otherwise

Please note: City Council Chambers will be closed from March 17 through May 31. All meetings that are normally held in Chambers will be moved to Room 105 of the Municipal Services Building, 633 E. Broadway.

Monday, April 26

- **Special Meeting** – Budget Study Session – 10:00 am, MSB 548-4844
- Historical Preservation Commission – 2:00 pm, MSB 548-2140
- Transportation and Parking Commission – 6:00 pm, MSB 548-3960
- **Community Meeting** – RE: Recommendations of North Glendale Community Plan Advisory Committee – 7:00 pm, Clark Magnet School Auditorium, 4747 New York Ave., La Crescenta. 548-2140

Tuesday, April 27

- Housing Authority -- 2:30 pm, MSB-548-2060
- Redevelopment Agency -- 2:30 pm, MSB 548-2005

- City Council -- 6:00 pm, MSB 548-4844

Wednesday, April 28

- Civil Service Commission – 5:00 pm, MSB 548-2110
- **Community Meeting** – Repeat of Monday Mtg

Thursday, April 29

- Design Review Board #1 - 5:00 pm, MSB 548-2140
- "Take Back the Night Rally" – by Commission on the Status of Women – 5:30 pm, Parcher Plaza (behind City Hall), 613 E. Broadway 548-4844

4 *Vanguardians*

Public Notice: Vanguardians and its subsidiary Vanguard Weekly News Service filed the annually required IRS Form 990N with the IRS on April 17th prior to the due date of May 15, 2010. The California compliance has likewise been filed.

Vanguardians, a local government accountability organization, **needs a volunteer construction project manager**. We sometimes find it necessary to review public documents such as construction plans, bid documents, work and change orders and want a chartered professional to prepare our reports.

FOR SALE.... a 1975 34' Silverton twin engine Cabin Cruiser located in Long Beach. Serious inquiries only. Revenue will be used for Vanguardians operations.

Five years of Vanguard are archived at www.vanguardians.org

Vanguardians has embarked on an ambitious program that will allow the public to see comparable wages and benefits paid by cities in Los Angeles County. The request for information can be found on the [home page](#).

Vanguardians requested information from Planning Director Haghani to determine if two Glendale City Council members got a free ride by allegedly violating zoning codes and permit requirements. The document can be found on the [home page](#), and we are still waiting while the wagons circle.

Vanguard is following the Charter Cable Lawsuit (2); the 5 GPD officers; Ovasapyan; Foothill Lumber; AIG (Gladys); they can be found at www.vanguardians.org

Get breaking News by signing up for an RSS feed at www.vanguardians.org

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- The [Ralph M Brown Act](#) that mandates legislative bodies to provide each of us an opportunity to speak and requires that agendas are posted and meetings open.
- The [California Public Records Act](#) (PRA) is the tool we use to get information about the operations of government.
- The [Political Reform Act of 1974](#) allows public access to the financial reports of public officials.

To become more involved in your community, to learn how to use these important tools, you can go online to www.vanguardians.org or call 818 243 1502

5



the Insider

is a report from city employees that care about the way the City is run. As they are concerned about retaliation, their identities are secret. Vanguard provides them the opportunity to have this forum. The comments are their own.



"I have browsed through your recent articles. Suffice to say there is much if not all I disagree with, but am sure it would be fruitless to attempt to correct the record. I do want to clarify one item since it directly impugns another individual. You have made numerous references about Mike Haney being my personal financial consultant. While Mr. Haney does work for an investment firm, he absolutely is not and never has been my investment counselor. I do not and have never had a single penny invested with him or his firm, nor have I ever consulted with him, either formally or informally on my personal finances. Mr. Haney has specific professional protocols [sic] he must and does adhere to that would prohibit such a relationship.

I am sorry you are being provided such inaccurate information, and as my advice before, would be helpful if you would verify your facts. Regards, Bob McFall" **[ED – To reiterate...this column is written by city employees. Often they are venting because of issues that they want their bosses to resolve. They are often fearful of bringing issues to the attention of their immediate supervisors. City department managers should use this column as a mirror to resolve issues. Most often it is used as a reason to find and retaliate against whistle-blowers.]**

As noted before, the Lee and Bear cases before the Civil Service Commission were open hearings, which mean that the procedures and evidence are all public records. Anybody is free to review them and talk about them. Since the Commissioners are used to being shielded from having their actions reviewed, this may have caught them off guard. Each of the days a portion of the hearing was conducted, the matter took almost a year to get resolved by the commission, was attended by a few brave employees so that they could see what was going on and report back to others. All of those that attended came away with the same conclusion, "this is a joke!!!" First, the commission assigned the same hearing officer to hear both cases so that they could control the outcome. The Hearing Officer for both cases was John Gantus, who in all his years on the Commission has never once failed to vote in favor of the City in such a hearing. Although both Bear and Lee requested to have independent hearing officers, the Commission would not budge from having Gantus hear both cases. Bear's case was determined first and Gantus' findings were amazing. First he noted the report that was the basis for the action, the "Horgan Report" (that we still have to talk about), was fraught with errors and based on a dearth of information. Then he talked about "testimony" from Lee and an "unnamed plan checker". Problem is that there's no record that Lee or an "Unnamed Plan Checker" ever appeared at Bear's hearing. He also noted that Zurn supervised Bear, although, if you recall, Zurn testified that he had never even read any of Bear's evaluation, let alone supervised him. He also noted that Bear had never had a poor evaluation; in fact his evaluations were excellent. Then he ruled that he was upholding the action against Bear, essentially ending Bear's professional career.

His action immediately destroyed all faith by staff that the commission would ever provide any of them with a fair hearing. Maybe that was the plan from the start. Make sure that staff knows that no matter what kind of job they do, management could do whatever they want to anybody they choose to. So when Molano talks about Civil Service protection for employees, most will just laugh at that notion. The Commission is there to support management decisions, not protect employees.

Everybody knew that Lee's ruling would be just a formality after the Bear ruling, and it was more of the same. In the Glendale News Press, there recently was a picture showing a person in a t-shirt that said, "Actions without punishment, are actions encouraged" in an acknowledgement of the genocide. The same can be concluded about the commission and its treatment of these two employees. The fact that a commissioner can make false statements and get away with it says volumes. In fact Gantus was later nominated to stay on the Commission by

Najarian. Only Yousefian voted against him. The rest of the Council supported Gantus because he was a doing what they wanted him to do by supporting management. After all, the commission does not make “findings of fact”, only “findings”, so we all guess that mean that they can do anything they want, and they do!!! The fact that none of the employee associations spoke up for these guys at the time the increase in retirement was being discussed or when Gantus was being nominated for another term on the Commission also speaks volumes. All were willing to throw individuals away for the greater good of the contracts.

6 THE ILLUSTRIOUS CITY COUNCIL

Some men are born mediocre, some men achieve mediocrity, and some men have mediocrity thrust upon them. -- Joseph Heller, Catch 22.

When did it begin?

Weaver*	Quintero	Najarian	Drayman*	Friedman
1997	2001	2005	2007	2009

* Drayman and Weaver terms end in April 2011

Last week’s questions...Planning Director Haghani assures Vanguard that he is investigating the allegations against two elected officials.

The check bouncer asked that Vanguard not embarrass him further.

7 NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD

[Why top City employees should live in the City they serve.](#)

[A second CalPERS rate hike for employers](#)

[Retirees in CalPERS and CalSTRS will get a 2 percent increase in their monthly checks this year, even though a rare drop in the cost of living means that Social Security recipients get no increase. So, they are at it again, those public pensions under fire for being unaffordably generous, a threat to state and local government budgets, and a potentially crushing burden for future taxpayers.](#)

[Schwarzenegger, Villaraigosa back plans to rein in pension costs](#)

[Pension consultant Girard Miller](#) told California's Little Hoover Commission that state and local governments have \$325 billion in unfunded pension liabilities, which he said amounts to \$22,000 for every working adult in the Golden State.

[Membership in \\$100,000-plus pension club leaps by 50 percent](#) Last fall, when **California Pension Reform** wrested the database of state retirees earning more than **\$100,000** a year from the **California Public Employees Retirement System**, there were **6,133** people on the list. Now – just shy of **one year** after the first database was released – an update shows that the *new* total of people in the **\$100,000-plus** public pension club is **9,111** - a staggering **49 percent increase**.

Municipal Bankruptcy Bill Passes Out of Senate Local Government Committee on Party-Line Vote

It was no surprise on Monday, April 19, when the three Democrats on the Senate Local Government Committee cast 'aye' votes in support of [AB 155](#) (Mendoza). This bill would require municipalities seeking federal bankruptcy protection to obtain approval from a state committee (the California Debt and Investment Advisory Committee) with no experience in federal bankruptcy law. [\[FULL STORY\]](#) **This bill has the support of the Fire Unions.**

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