

May 16, 2024

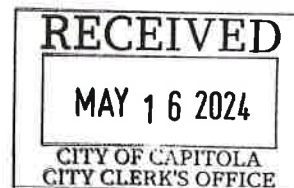
Dear Mayor and Council Members,

I am writing as a concerned employee of the City. At a time when future City revenues are not certain and there is a possibility of going into deficit spending in the future, I find it concerning that the budget proposes expanding and reclassifying the Recreation Division to Community Services and Recreation Department. Per the City Manager and proposed budget, this change will cost the City approximately \$78,000 per year. I think it is also prudent to mention that the expense to the City for providing the growing recreation services over the past few years has grown significantly and is projected to continue to rise.

The concern is that it is happening concurrently with employee labor negotiations. By appropriating the funds to expand a non-essential department, you are sending a message to staff that their needs are not important. Most of your staff live paycheck to paycheck and cannot afford to even live in the City they work for. As an example, the entry level Public Works employee wage is the same as the starting wage at a fast-food restaurant.

While I (and other employees) are excited that the Recreation Division is able to offer so many great opportunities to residents, it is a hard pill to swallow that you place greater importance on providing increasing non-essential services to the public than providing for your employees that provide essential services.

Thank you for your time.



Dear Council Members,

I am writing to you to voice my concerns regarding the proposed reorganization of the Capitola Recreation Department. Although I do believe that everyone deserves a fair raise, I believe that giving one person a \$40,000 raise amid citywide negotiations is in poor taste.

In addition, it has come to light throughout the negotiation process that the city is interested in bringing the three Recreation Coordinators up to the market median effective immediately. Other city employees would be receiving a market adjustment contingent upon the passing of Measure F and would be brought to 5% below the market median. I am troubled by this proposal because I feel it is extremely insensitive to the rest of the city employees. Additionally, it worries me that some of our most essential workers are being paid as little as \$20.38 an hour, which is not a living wage for anyone living in Santa Cruz County.

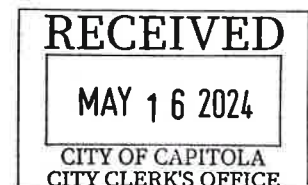
Last September Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 1287 into law, which includes a \$20 per hour minimum wage for fast food workers and a fast-food regulatory council which has the authority to raise the industry's minimum wage annually.

To promote one person and increase their salary by \$40,000 and give 3 more an immediate raise up to market all within the recreation department would be fiscally irresponsible. I fear that this leaves the remainder of the City of Capitola essential employees feeling underpaid, underappreciated, and undervalued.

As a full-time city employee living paycheck to paycheck it is extremely frustrating to see one non-essential department seemingly put above all the rest.

I fear that with these changes' employee morale, job satisfaction, and overall attitudes of individuals within this organization will be left at an all-time low.

Thank you for your time and I hope you will consider these points when making a decision regarding the 2025 budget.



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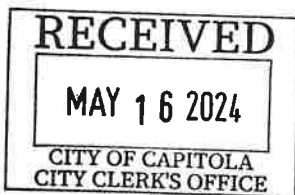
Comment on Agenda Item 6A

As City Council members you were elected to make financially responsible decisions that benefit the entire community and city staff for the long term, not short-term benefits of a few. Establishing a new department without generating additional revenue only increases administrative overhead and organizational complexity without any clear benefit.

There is a concerning lack of financial transparency with this proposal, we need to know what existing programs and departments will be affected and exactly how the proposed \$80k in additional reoccurring annual costs will be spent. Do existing revenue streams cover these significant expenses? What revenue does this newly proposed department bring, and what are their costs? The City is investing nearly \$7 Million dollars in a new recreation facility on land we don't own, inflating staffing costs at the same time is disproportionate. The police department is in the flood zone, no plans exist to make a change there. The Public Works Corporation yard has no budget for improvements. The City Hall study shows that all staff spaces are sub optimal. Where is the equity in these decisions? A decision not to act, is still a decision.

At a previous City Council meeting, Council approved the completion of a comprehensive salary compensation study, are there positions identified from that study that are being acted upon now? If so which ones, and what actions are being taken for the remaining positions within the Police Department, Finance Department, Planning Department, Public Works Department, Building Department, and the City Managers Office (Clerks, IT, HR, not the CM, that position has been well compensated)? Implementation of any actions should take place across all departments to ensure fairness.

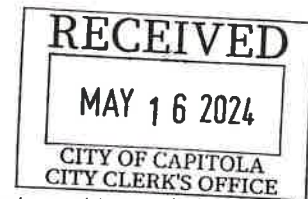
Let's prioritize responsible decision making by postponing this non-urgent, costly long-term decision until city staffing and investments can be thoroughly and fairly addressed.



CITY OF CAPITOLA
CITY CLERK

MAY 16 REC'D

May 15, 2024 - Comment on Agenda Item 6A



THE CITY OF CAPITOLA cannot afford a new department.

The city has been out of step with employee compensation for over a decade and has left the carrot on a stick for too long so that it has become rotten.

It has become impossible to retain quality employees in essential service departments and the news that rec will again be receiving the lions share of increased compensation has sent a shockwave through personnel. Creating unrest the likes of which this city has never seen. Key employees are looking to leave if this goes through, with better paying jobs well within reach.

Public works employees have been forced to live further and further out of town. With increased gas prices and other expenses, savings are nonexistent and debt stacks upon debt.

These are the people that respond to the dangerous storms, battle the flood waters, and keep people out of danger. Protecting lives and property.

These are the people that keep your city clean, these are the people that take care of the parks, build the beach for the junior guards and the tourists, maintain the lagoon, set up and staff every event.

These are the people that are called anytime night or day to respond to anything from toxic spills, broken sewer lines, power lines down, or any natural disaster.

These essential workers are the people that when Covid shut down the city and other departments, and the rec center got paid to be at home were still required to come to work. Faced with uncertain dangers, the crew showed up, and kept the city running.

These are the people that maintain the fleet of vehicles, with specialized skills, saving the city 10s of thousands of dollars.

These are the people responsible for taking visions and creating reality. The Library, Wharf, the new rec center.

These are the people entrusted to protect the environmental standards, ensuring a beautiful, clean future for generations to come.

The city has conducted two studies in the last three negotiation cycles. Capitola's compensation is amongst the lowest. Each negotiation's workers are given cheap talk of the desire to get the workers up to median, while the reality of bad spending habits continue to make that impossible. This period the absurd notion that the hardest working employees should tie their future to a ballot measure, while the city creates a new perpetual expense is a slap in the face to all city staff. This typical rob Peter to pay Paul is how compensation has gotten so low.

The City Council and City Manager have put recreation above essential services and so the city crumbles. The PD and Public works remain understaffed, underpaid, and stretched to the breaking point.

It's not hard to understand why you can see the cracks in crumbling streets and if you take the time to look, you can see it in the employees faces as well.

Public Works, The PD, Finance, and Building are needed to keep this town as nice as it is and must be taken care of first before the city can afford recreation.

Comment on Agenda item #6A for the May 16th, 2024 City Council Meeting

To: Capitola City Council

From: Disappointed Employee



Mou negotiations are going well, In an unprecedented move, we have been offered a cost of living increase of 3% and if all of the stars and planets line up correctly and measure F passes we will get an equity adjustment to bring our salaries to 5% below median. It is really exciting not knowing if you are getting a salary increase or not, whether your quality of life increases or can actually afford to qualify for a mortgage loan. Did I mention that the quality of work or attendance will not decide whether we get a salary increase, we have to hope that ballot measure F is approved by the voters. So as the cost of living increases exponentially at a rate of 4 to 6% yearly we get a 3% offer and if the measure passes, we will still be falling behind neighboring cities. Last year in an agreement signed by management and the MOU, they said they could not give more than 3% cost of living increase until they do a comprehensive salary study of 8 local jurisdictions. They did the study, and the employees that worked into the late hours after our high water events, we are the lowest paid out of all 8 jurisdictions. We were not asking to be the highest paid, we asked to be brought up to median, average, right in the middle, so far we have been offered packages that not only does not bring us to median, we slide farther behind, our quality of life goes down, and so does morale. Our demeanor might not be as friendly. The salary study showed every employee how far behind median(middle not top) on the pay scale their position is as of this year. The percentages range from over 15% to 8% to 3% below the median of salaries. We have been told that there is no money to bring us with 5% of our peers, perhaps we should take a harder look at the budget. Maybe some tough choices need to be made, do you want the Esplanade to be ready and open for business the next day after a high water event or do you want more afterschool activities. Maybe I'm soft, I have taken for granted the fact that I eat on a regular basis and live indoors. Just remember you don't miss anything until you don't have it anymore.

May 15, 2024

Dear Council,

In Lew of the recent announcement about the Capitola Recreational Department changes, I think that everyone in the community will feel much better if the Financial Director will go on the record to say that this financial commitment is a good idea for our city funds.

Thank You.

Concerned Citizen

