

Renaming of Central Park

Report from Director Ed Colley

I was asked to serve on an ad hoc committee that considered a proposal from the City to memorialize two children who were victims of the shooting at Saugus High School a year ago. I provide this report. The facts expressed are consistent with my own knowledge; the thoughts and opinions expressed are my own.

I join in the recommendation supported by the majority of the committee to reject the proposal from the City of Santa Clarita to rename Central Park as well as the proposed changes to the signs at the entrance to the park.

The facts are tragic and reveal a strong and supportive community.

On November 14, 2019, a young man brought a handgun to the Saugus High School campus shortly before the beginning of the regularly scheduled school day. He and other children gathered in an open area in the center of campus as they would on any other day to wait for the beginning of their classes. He took out his gun and shot others, cleared a jam, and continued shooting before ultimately turning the gun on himself. He and two other children died, and several others were physically injured. Many children suffered mental injuries, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and similar issues.

In the days and months following the shooting the community has reacted in many ways. In support of the victims of the shooting a large candlelight vigil at Central Park was attended by hundreds of students and community members. A campaign designed to support, memorialize, and aid in healing, titled "Saugus Strong," has had wide support. On-line support is strong and includes a petition that has been "signed" by thousands from across the nation.

Recently the families of the victims have initiated lawsuits against the school district which seek money for what the family perceives as shortcomings in the responsibilities of the school and community to keep children safe.

Central Park is a shared venture between the City and SCV Water.

Several decades ago, the Castaic Lake Water Agency acquired the land that is today Central Park as part of a much larger tract. This land now includes a large water treatment plant, an administration building, two solar power generation facilities along with the park. The water agency determined that it was important to limit development near the water treatment plant, so it retained ownership of the land that surrounded the plant including the valuable land at the lower elevation that is adjacent to Bouquet Canyon Road. Today, this land is leased to the City of Santa Clarita and its use is restricted to those that are consistent with a park. The city provided all of the funds to build the infrastructure for the park. The water agency, now SCV Water, retains the right to approve any changes to the name of the park.

The City has constructed a “Youth Grove” that serves to “symbolize 115 lives cut short in traffic-related incidents.” The Youth Grove has not been supported or opposed by the water agency. The Youth Grove serves the public purpose of raising awareness of the costs of irresponsible driving, especially driving while intoxicated. The grove is expanded every fall to include any relevant losses over the previous year. The life of each child lost is uniquely memorialized by a single small replica of a stump.

At the entrance to Central Park there are two large monument signs. Both signs include the name of the water agency along with the City. These signs are the only indication at the intersection that would suggest to a traveler that the driveway into the park is also the entrance to the headquarters and treatment plant of SCV Water.

The families seek to memorialize their children at Central Park.

The parents of the two shooting victims, and their supporters, have initiated a campaign seeking to rename Central Park and place a memorial within the park. The City Council approved a motion to add to the name of the Central Park the words “In Memoriam of Gracie Muehlberger and Dominic Blackwell” subject to approval by the water agency. Additionally, the City is currently working on a large memorial near the entrance of the park that is envisioned to include two 11-foot-tall obliques and seating. Supporters of these actions have raised money to help offset some of the costs the city would incur. Neither the city nor the family have asked the water agency to assist in funding any of these actions.

The city provided three proposed changes to the monument signs at the entrance to the park. One of the proposals would remove “SCV Water” from the sign completely. Two of the proposals would include “SCV Water,” but the size of the lettering would be greatly reduced. The committee considered a fourth possibility drafted by water agency staff that would include the name of the water agency in smaller lettering near ground level that would nonetheless be larger than any of the City’s proposals. If the additional words were included at the bottom of the sign, the existing plants would have to be removed. The replacement landscaping might be ornamental sod, mulch, or gravel.

The large monument signs serve an important business need for the water agency.

The entrance to the park also serves as the entrance to the water agency. This is not intuitive to many travelers, and it is not uncommon for someone who conducts business at the water agency to have difficulty recognizing the entrance even with the existing signage. It is an important business need for the water agency to have sufficient signage to direct the public to our location. For this reason alone, the majority of the committee rejected all of the City’s proposals – each would either eliminate the inclusion of “SCV Water” or reduce the prominence of the words. Not only is the size and placement of the water agency’s name a concern, but adding seven more prominent words would reduce the chances of a traveler recognizing the entrance to a park as also being the entrance to the water agency.

Renaming the park to memorialize the two victims is not appropriate.

I reached out to the Federal Centers on Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and sought their advice. Their response, quoted here in its entirety, lacks specifics on how best to implement their recommendations. However, it helps to clarify the tension between memorializing the victims of a shooting and encouraging other mentally unstable people from doing similar acts.

Thank you for reaching out to us. We know from research on firearm violence that the effects extend beyond victims and their families. Mass shooting incidents, including those in schools, houses of worship, workplaces, shopping and other areas can affect the sense of safety and security of entire communities and impact everyday decisions. Unfortunately, these effects can also be long-lasting. Some people may continue to show signs of depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress long after the shooting. There is also evidence that even people indirectly exposed can experience adverse psychological consequences.

The best available guidance is to promote healing and avoid the types of things that can further trigger trauma or stigma in the surrounding community or provide an incentive for contagion among someone considering harm to others.

(quoting Email from CDC to Ed Colley dated November 13, 2019.)

The tragedy and magnitude of the loss of two children is universally understood. I, and every member of the committee sympathize with the families of the children lost, those who were injured, and those at the school and in the community who were traumatized by this horrific act of terror.

I and my family have suffered similar losses. My son, Private First Class Stephen Colley, returned from Iraq with a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress (PTSD). Unable to get meaningful medical care or relief from his injuries, he took his own life in 2007. His older brother, Major Alan Colley, was also a combat veteran, and had served as a company commander in Iraq at exactly the same time as his younger brother. Racked with (undeserved) guilt, Alan took his own life in 2017.

Many who have suffered great loss seek to prevent recurrence of future similar losses. I have spoken to thousands of active duty soldiers about suicide and its effects on others. My daughter, Carolyn (also a disabled veteran), serves on a Presidential task force tasked with reduction of suicides in our military. My wife and I are peer mentors with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (T*A*P*S), where we aid others who have lost a son or daughter who served in the military. Other examples in our own community are the parents of the Reynolds brothers who have likely spoken to tens-of-thousands of high school students about the dangers of drinking and driving. The parents of Michael Hoefflin, a young boy who died of cancer, have created a foundation in his name.

I am certain that the mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters of the victims would not want anyone else to ever suffer the loss and depth of pain that is now an ongoing and permanent part of their lives.

Those who survive following the loss of a loved one almost always seek to construct permanent memorials which we hope will serve to keep the memory of those lost “alive.” Thus, we etch into stone the names and brief thoughts into monuments we place into cemeteries. These practices are universally recognized as healthy aids in recovery from tragic losses. There is certainly nothing wrong with those who loved the victims of the Saugus High shooting who ask the community to aid them in the construction of monuments to these children.

But we should balance the community efforts to memorialize the victims with amplification of the message the perpetrator of the terror might have wanted to convey. Those who carry out acts of terror always feel they are aggrieved and most often either seek to convey the level of their concern for the injustices imposed on them or seek to punish others for these perceived injustices.

In the last few decades the frequency of mass shootings has increased in the United States. Some of this increase can be attributed to those who have sought to mimic other mass shootings. One need only look up the “Columbine Effect” on wikipedia.org to better understand the very real dangers from “copycats” following publicity of a school shooting. The danger is not theoretical – it is very real and has certainly cost lives of our children.

This leaves the conundrum of how to best balance the positive healing that comes from memorials and monuments and publicity that might encourage future “copycats.” I propose that the answer lies in balancing the public nature of the memorial against a destination for those who actively seek a place of mourning or remembrance.

As mentioned above, the school shooting has had a deep and far reaching impact on a great many people. As the CDC recognized, the community can and should aid in the healing of these wounds. Thus, the City’s consideration of the erection of a monument is proper. I am very supportive of building a memorial that recognizes the tragic consequences and the pain felt by so many, and aids everyone in our community in healing. The monument is best placed in a location of quiet solitude.

Should the signs at the entrance to Central Park serve as two memorial monuments? No.

The most important reason for not including the names of the victims of the Saugus school shooting is the very real possibility that it would encourage other mentally ill children (or perhaps even an adult) to mimic this tragedy. To the extent that a mass-shooter seeks to make others aware of their grievances or to “feel their pain” any publicity can only serve to strengthen their understanding that such a shooting will serve those purposes. We must work to minimize this risk.

By placing the names of the victims on a large monument along a major public thoroughfare we would ensure that everyone who passes is reminded of the deep pain that is inflicted on a

community by a mass shooting. Someone contemplating a way to redress a perceived grievance could be encouraged to engage in a mass shooting which is almost certainly capable of getting more attention when compared to the healthier alternative of writing a letter to the editor of the local newspaper. Some might argue that the danger I identify is small; I would counter that we can not know how small the danger is, and any future mass shooting would be a tragedy worth avoiding.

The naming of public infrastructure after people, alive or dead, is common. Examples abound in our community including the naming of libraries, parks, bridges, roads, and more after City Council members, first responders, fallen military members, and community leaders. Most, if not all, of the people who have been memorialized in this way have done something remarkable and praiseworthy that is worthy of emulation by others. By placing their name in a conspicuous location in the community, others might be encouraged to lead similar exemplary lives. The message conveyed is positive, and I perceive no reasonable harm that could follow from any message that might be understood by those who pass by.

I recognize that the children lost here were likely too young to have made life decisions that might have led them to lives worthy of great public praise and emulation. Clearly both, like most children of their age in this community, were good people who met their responsibilities and were greatly loved. But the same can be said of most children who lose their lives to such things as cancer or vehicular accidents. The loss of every child is a tragedy, and I decline to rank the loss of any one ahead of another. Quite simply, it is not possible to build enough parks or other infrastructure such that every victim of a tragedy could have their name attached. To the extent that two children are singled out for greater recognition than others, we convey a hurtful message to the families of the children not memorialized – your son, daughter, brother, or sister, and your loss, is less important.

I acknowledge the possibility that Dominic might have grown up and joined the military. He might have gone off to war and saved a dozen other soldiers. He might have won the Congressional Medal of Honor and be buried at Arlington. Gracie might have grown up to be a great medical doctor who finally cured all cancer. She could have won a Nobel Peace Prize. I have no doubt that both would have lived lives that would have made their family proud. But, as is the case with the loss of every child, their story was not yet fully written, and we are all poorer for the loss.

In any case, placing a large monument for these victims along a heavily traveled road fails to provide any important public purpose. It would certainly not be appropriate for a driver to be encouraged to engage in some deeper level of mourning while driving along a heavily traveled road. Clearly, as a matter of public safety, such deep mourning is best done in places of solitude without other distractions. From my own experience, I find more healing in places of quiet solitude in any case. I find that others engaged in daily activities, such as driving or playing ball, to be an unwelcome distraction to my grief and mourning. In my experience, those who grieve seek out relative quiet and solitude to mourn their loss.

Should “permanent” monuments be placed on leased land? No.

The water board is ever changing. For example, in the most recent election three of the six elected are new to the board. While the current board is fully supportive of continuing to have the land in question to be used as a park, future boards may make other decisions. In the past, for example, the City has made plans to place a major traffic artery through the park. In the United States most people assume that monuments will be maintained in perpetuity. Placing monuments on leased land conflicts with this fundamental notion.

The existing signs serve an important public purpose.

As outlined above, it is important to the public and to anyone with business at the water agency to be able to locate us with reasonable ease. Arguably, the current signage needs improvement. Every proposal considered would serve to degrade the traveler’s ability to find the water agency.

Is my vote in opposition to the City Council proper? Yes.

I concede that the primary role of every director on the water board is to provide policy and direction for the proper running of a water agency. The naming of a park certainly does not fit neatly into this task.

But we are elected to represent our constituents to the best of our ability. It is not proper generally for us to fail to fully consider every question brought before us. While the name of a park is not a decision we are normally asked to consider, here we must. Thus, it is no argument to suggest that we should defer to another elected body unless we are not competent to decide. As we, like the city council, have received sufficient information and public input, we are certainly competent to represent our constituents in this matter.

We should be concerned with maintaining a positive relationship with the staff and council members of the city. For this reason, we invited the city to meet with the ad hoc committee. The city manager met with us and provided us information related to the process and results to date related to the city’s response to requests to memorialize the two victims. I hope, and expect, that the city staff and council members will respect our decision and continue to work with us collaboratively to best serve our community.

The issue is super-charged with emotions.

I recognize that any opposition to the wishes of the family will evoke significant negative emotions for both them and their supporters in the community. At least one member of the public who has provided comments on the subject has suggested that we have an obligation to provide anything the family asks for. Presumably, the community owes such a “blank check” to the family because to do otherwise would serve to aggravate their pain. I understand this thought, and it is certainly not my wish to inflict any additional pain.

In formulating my thoughts on this subject, I have made no harsh judgements related to the motives or character of anyone in the families of the children who lost their lives. In my own

journey through grieving the loss of a child I found that as I thawed from what felt like a frozen state in the second year following the loss, both my thinking and emotional pain grew more acute. I encourage the surviving members of the affected families to direct their energies into activities that are most likely to assist all of us in healing, and to the extent possible, make future mass shootings less likely.

On November 14, 2019, our community suffered a great tragedy. Certainly, the families of the children lost suffer the most. Because of the outsized impact on the community as a whole, an outsized memorial is appropriate. It is fitting that the two victims, Gracie and Dominic, be prominent in any such memorial. However, such a memorial would best serve the community if it was in a destination in which the intentional visitor could reflect in peace and solitude. Indeed, I would hope that any such monument be thought of as hallowed ground. Thus, I suggest to the family, city staff and council, as well as the impacted community, that any monument be placed, to the extent possible, away from other activities that would conflict with quiet reflection.

The ad hoc committee briefly discussed the possibility of providing funds to assist in building a responsible (water conserving) water feature in conjunction with a possible place of reflection related to the Saugus High shooting. Many find the sounds of gently flowing water to be soothing and perhaps even healing. Thus, I would support any future proposal to provide reasonable funding for such a water feature were it to be placed where quiet reflection was reasonably possible.

Conclusion.

I concur with the majority of the ad hoc committee that the board reject the City's proposed renaming of Central Park along with the proposed changes to the monument signs at the entrance to the park.

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April Jacobs

From: Stephen Petzold <petz2@icloud.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 13, 2020 6:24 AM
To: April Jacobs
Cc: Stephen Petzold
Subject: Santa Clarita Valley students join national school walkout

CAUTION - EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear April,

Please advise whether you are allowed to print out the pages from this link and include it in the agenda packet for Tuesday's meeting, Item 8.1.

It's relevance is the city proposal to place two 11 foot obelisks near the entrance to the park and the gate giving access to the roadway leading up to SCV WATER.

The plan (drawings) for the obelisks is included in the agenda packet for Item 8.1

Steve Petzold
661-609-1739

<https://signalscv.com/2018/03/santa-clarita-valley-students-join-national-school-walkout/>

Sent from my iPad

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Santa Clarita Valley students join national school walkout

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Valencia High School students march to Santa Clarita City Hall to raise awareness about lives lost as a result of school shootings on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Austin Dave/The Signal

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Hundreds of students throughout the Santa Clarita Valley held multiple rallies, demonstrations and walkouts (https://www.hartdistrictwalkout.org/valencia-high-school) Wednesday to protest against gun violence a month after a school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida.

The on-campus "school safety forums (https://signalscv.com/2018/03/local-schools-plan-walkouts-student-forums/)" in William S. Hart Union High School District began at 10 a.m. and lasted for about 17 minutes as students at nearly all of the Hart district campuses listened to student speakers, held up posters, registered to vote and wrote letters to Congress.

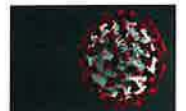
"It's something that I think both sides can rally around and understand that there's an issue in

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A Valencia High School student signs a banner designed to honor lives lost as a result of school shootings during a ceremony on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Austin Dave/The Signal

Other students asked Congress to take legislative action to end gun violence and encouraged students to continue sharing their voices about the topic.

"If this rally is simply not enough to get your voices heard... then I encourage you to do something more," Valencia High School junior Chretien Li said.

Through their demonstrations the students worked to share their demands, which include ending campaign funding from the NRA, implementing a comprehensive assault weapon ban and instituting universal background checks at any purchase of a firearm, according to a website (<https://www.hartdistrictwalkout.org/valencia-high-school>) organizing the demonstrations.



Two Valencia High School students reflect on lives lost as a result of school shootings during a ceremony on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Austin Dave/The Signal

Two Valencia High School students hold signs during a ceremony on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Austin Dave/The Signal



A Valencia High School student speaks to a crowd of peers during a ceremony on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Austin Dave/The Signal

"We will send a message to our district representative Steve Knight, as well as others, so they understand this is not just a request, but a demand of the people," the student website (<https://www.hartdistrictwalkout.org/valencia-high-school>) read. "We're not fighting the teachers, schools or administrators. Rather we're fighting for our lives by making sure they're a priority to our politicians."

The Hart district administration worked with students at each of the school sites to create their own, unique rally and keep the students on campus during their demonstrations.



A black rose sits on one of 17 desks to honor the 17 victims from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High school. The desks were placed in the middle of West Ranch High School as part of the school's on-campus demonstrations on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Courtesy Photos by Phoebe Melikidse



A West Ranch High School student holds up a sign demanding an end to gun violence as part the school's on-campus demonstrations on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Courtesy Photos by Phoebe Melikidse



West Ranch High School students gather at the center of the school's campus to demand safe school campuses as part the school's on-campus demonstrations on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Courtesy Photos by Phoebe Melikidse

Some schools also adjusted their daily schedule by extending brunch times, altering class times or creating a "special schedule" for the day.

At Valencia High School, students released 17 purple balloons into the air honoring the victims from Stoneman Douglas High School. And at West Ranch High School, students placed 17 empty classroom desks on campus with a single black rose on each one.



Castaic Middle School campuses sit outside in the bleac

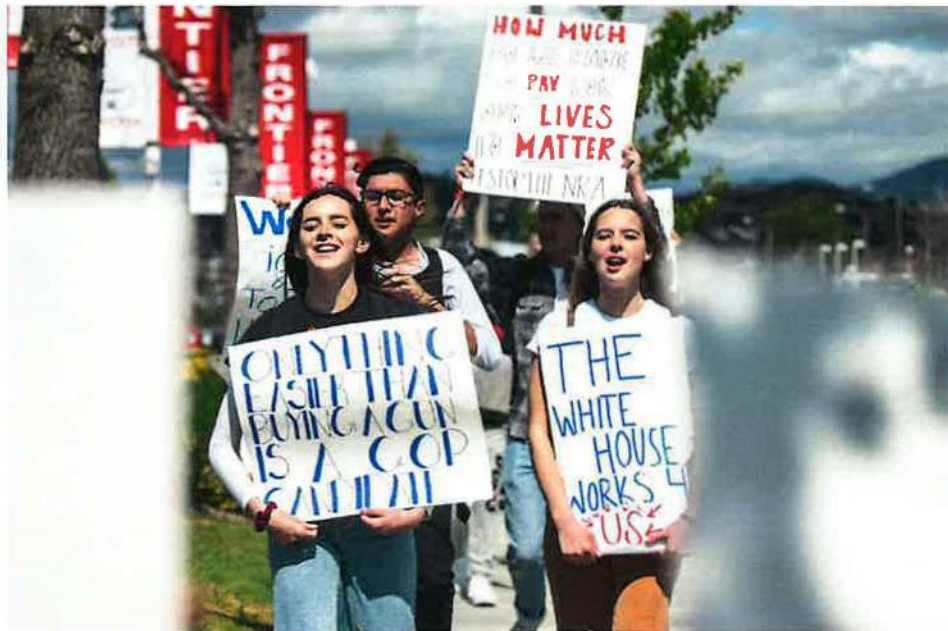
The demonstrations also extended to Castaic Middle School, where about 200 students walked out to the school's football field and sat in silence for 17 minutes.

"After the time was up, they peacefully walked around the track displaying their signs," Castaic Union School District Superintendent Steve Doyle said. "Our future is in good hands... couldn't be prouder of our students."

Campus walkouts

During the day, most students remained on campus, but at **Saugus High** (<https://www.hartdistrictwalkout.org/copy-of-canyon-high-school>) and at Valencia High some students did walk off campus. At Saugus, students reportedly walked across campus for about 15 minutes during their demonstration before returning to the school grounds.

Just before noon at Valencia High School (<https://www.hartdistrictwalkout.org/valencia-high-school>), a group of students left campus and marched to Santa Clarita City Hall to share their thoughts with city officials.



Valencia High School students march to Santa Clarita City Hall to raise awareness about lives lost as a result of school shootings on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Austin Dave/The Signal

"If anyone takes anything away from our actions today, from our march from Valencia High School to the City Hall, is that we want is better school security," senior Kyle Tisdale said. "We wanted to show the world that we stand with Parkland and we stand with all the schools and all the kids across the nation who are scared to be at school."

Through their actions, the students hoped their concerns and demands would be shared with the area's other elected officials at the state and federal level.

"We're going out here and saying we don't want guns to be accessible to those who should not have them, who don't have to fear to go to school," Freshman Cassidy Bensko said. "It's not something that's political, it's not something that's partisan. This is a matter of children dying and the government not doing absolutely anything about it."



A Valencia High School student speaks outside of Santa Clarita City Hall on Wednesday March 14, 2018. Austin Dave/The Signal

As they stood chanting outside of city hall, the students met with the city's communications

officials, as well as Santa Clarita City Councilman Cameron Smyth.

"I think that's a great that you're willing to stand up for something you believe in even though everyone is not going to agree," Smyth told the group of students. "The fact that you're here and wanting to make your voices heard, I really can respect that and appreciate that."

Although their demands are beyond the capacities of the city's officials, Smyth wanted to let the students know, as a parent and as an elected official, that their voices were heard.



Santa Clarita City Councilman Cameron Smyth speaks to Valencia High student Kuno Gutierrez outside of City Hall on Wednesday March 14, 2018. Austin Dave/The Signal

The councilman also gave the students bus money—which they spent earlier on posters and markers—to return to Valencia High School on the city's buses.

The students' choice to leave the Valencia grounds was not approved by the school's administration, and could result in the students receiving absences or other consequences for the day, according to Hart district officials.

"We've already talked to students about consequences if they should walk off campus and miss classroom time," said Dave Caldwell, public relations officer for the Hart district. "It could be truancy, it depends on what they were doing and when they were doing it."

After-school demonstration

Those students who did not want to leave their school campuses during the day decided to meet up in the afternoon at Heritage Park and, once again, hold up signs and march to City Hall.



Students from several William S. Hart Union High School District schools march from Valencia Heritage Park to Santa Clarita City Hall after school to continue their protests and demonstrations on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Johnathan Sanchez/The Signal

"I feel like I need to stand up for what I believe in and stand up for the 17 kids that died and all the Americans that die every single day," West Ranch High School junior Alana Ingram said. "Ninety-six Americans die every day die because of gun violence so I'm walking to end that."

The afternoon rally included students from several Hart district schools and was an extension of earlier on-campus rallies to improve school safety and end gun violence.

"I just want to feel safe in the environment I'm in," West Ranch High School junior Maya Jackson said. "I don't think all guns should necessarily be banned because I understand that's not going to happen, it's an unrealistic goal. But I think assault rifles and unnecessary weapons that no one needs in their house should be banned and I think we need gun control."



Students from several William S. Hart Union High School District schools march from Valencia Heritage Park to Santa Clarita City Hall after school to continue their protests and demonstrations on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. Johnathan Sanchez/The Signal

To see more photos and videos of the National School Walkout in the SCV, [click here](https://signalscv.com/2018/03/santa-clarita-students-join-national-school-safety-movement-video/) (https://signalscv.com/2018/03/santa-clarita-students-join-national-school-safety-movement-video/).

ccox@signalscv.com
661-287-5575
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April Jacobs

From: Stephen Petzold <stephen.petzold@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 14, 2020 5:30 AM
To: April Jacobs
Subject: Public Comment-Items Not on the Agenda 12/15/2020-Written

CAUTION - EXTERNAL SENDER

Dear SCV WATER Directors,

All of the families affected by the Saugus Shooting in November 2019 have my heartfelt sympathy and condolence, especially the Muehlberger and Blackwell families.

I too, have a personal story related to that tragic morning that I choose not to share in this correspondence. I attended both the memorial service for Gracie at Real Life Church, and the community gathering at Central Park. I reside in Saugus, frequently drive past the high school and spend a significant amount of time at Central Park. I am often reminded of that horrific day.

That being said, I feel compelled to address several points that Bryan Muehlberger raised at the SCV Water meeting on October 20, 2020.

First, the City of Santa Clarita did not “disprove “ my allegations of several Brown Act violations and I did not have a meaningful opportunity to raise my concerns during public comment.

The City, as is typical, did not respond to my allegations of Brown Act process violations. An accusation of Brown Act violation requires the complainant to notice the public agency of the violations with a Cure and Correct Letter and wait thirty days for a response. If there is no response after thirty days the complainant can send a letter to the District Attorney within 15 days of the 30 day response allowance.

Because the process for the City petitioning SCV WATER for approval was unfolding at a rapid pace, I decided NOT to send my Cure and Correct letter to the DA’s office for investigation and instead focus my effort at bringing my concerns before SCV WATER.

I will point out the the agenda for City Council on August 25 called for a discussion of four proposals to memorialize the victims of the Saugus shooting. I chose not to participate that evening, assuming that there would be an honest discussion about the proposals that I could monitor, a consensus would be reached, and action to approve would take place a future meeting where I could participate. I should have known better. Mayor Smyth basically conceded my point by saying before the “discussion” that the agenda item was written “intentionally flexible” to allow the council to take whatever action they wanted. The agenda item was written deceptively without notice that any action other than discussion would take place.

Second, Mr Muehlberger seemed to discount my concern of any psychological impact the renaming of Central Park, placing in prominence the words approved by the City on the monument sign might have on the community at large. “Mr Petzold is not a psychologist.....”. That statement is true, I am not a psychologist.

I made the point because I had a brief text conversation with a Hart Board member asking why the Hart District had not proposed a memorial . I was told that in the immediate aftermath of the incident that "shooting experts" had advised Hart leadership in part"No Memorials , it's not healthy" "Should have it's own area off the beaten path"

The City gave no consideration whatsoever to this issue during the public meeting on August 25, so I made the conscious decision to raise it with SCV WATER because I believe it is an important consideration in the approval process.

In the lawsuit filed against the Hart District by the family LA Superior Court 20STCV44103, the complaint notes that the shooter was allowed to skip class and "hang out" by the schools ""Legacy Wall"" for approximately forty minutes, (Page 4-Section 18) This may be a coincidence, but the location and prominence of a memorial should have been a consideration for the city , and should be of concern to you in the decision making process. You have a broad responsibility to serve the public's best interest in this matter.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to clarify issues from my perspective that were raised by Bryan Muehlberger during public comment at the October 20 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Petzold
Open Government Advocate
661-609-1739 mobile

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Steve Petzold
661-609-1739 Cell