

Director name: Gary Martin
Meeting attended: VIA Virtual Series with Mayor Cameron Smyth
Date of meeting: October 13, 2020
Location: Virtual
SCV Water Board meeting to be presented at: October 20, 2020

On October 13th I attended the VIA Virtual Series with Mayor Cameron Smyth. Following introductions by the MC Ed Masterson, Mayor Smyth gave a brief update on recent issues and accomplishments in the City, followed by questions from the attendees and the Mayor's responses.

Points of interest:

1. Despite the difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mayor Smyth cited the following accomplishments by the City of Santa Clarita:

- Opening of the new senior center.
- Opening of the new fire station.
- Opening of 3 new parks; Canyon Country, Plum Canyon, and the bike park at the Sports Complex.
- For 2021, there will be the new Sheriff's station and the new community center in Canyon Country.
- The City purchased the Ice Station.
- There were no staff layoffs in the City.
- The City has begun looking into the possibility of creating its own public health department, or public health official.
- The City has re-instituted the human relations round table to help address recent social issues.

2. With regards to the exploration of forming the City's own public health department, the Mayor made the following points during his presentation and in response to questions from attendees:

- Santa Clarita not having its own public health department just doesn't make any sense, given the major differences between the SCV and the rest of LA County.
- Creation of our own public health department is consistent with the City's original goal of becoming autonomous, with respect to LA County.
- Three cities in LA County have their own health departments – City of LA, Long Beach and Pasadena.
- The challenge will be the investment required, whether it be a department of just a public health official.
- A bond measure may be necessary to fund the new department.
- The two largest employers in the SCV, Magic Mountain and Princess Cruises have been basically shut down because of the pandemic and Governor Newsom has stated that he is no hurry to reopen theme parks.

3. With regards to decisions and directives coming from the Governor during the pandemic, Mayor Smyth stated that Sacramento had abdicated its responsibility as a co-equal branch of state government, and he is concerned about the erosion of local control, especially during the pandemic.

I found the program to be interesting and informative and I appreciate being able to attend.