



STATE BUDGET AND THE VEHICLE LICENSE FEE “BACKFILL”

By Cydney Holcomb

The State Budget and the vehicle license fee (VLF) “backfill”, are hot issues at City Hall these days. You are probably asking, what does this have to do with our neighborhoods? The answer is . . . plenty! When you pay your vehicle license fee to the State, it is reimbursed to the City or County in which you reside. This represents about \$2.4 million a year in revenue for the City’s General Fund or, for example, about 50% of the annual cost of fire protection services (fire suppression, emergency medical, and hazardous materials) for the City.

The problem began in 1998 when the State, which was financially sound at the time, lowered the vehicle license fee as a tax relief measure. This amounted to a reduction in the amount of revenue flowing back to the Cities and Counties to the tune of about \$4 billion. To compensate for this, the State promised to “backfill” or make up that difference. However, the State is now estimating a \$5 to \$15 billion budget shortfall for 2002-2003, and the fear is that the vehicle license fee backfill will be one of the “takeaway options” used to

solve their budget problems.

Budget watchers know that about 50% of our City’s General Fund goes to support public safety. While those services would not likely be cut, other services surely would be if the City loses the revenue from the vehicle license fee backfill.

Of real concern to RQN is the possible loss of the new Neighborhood Services Technician position, approved by the City Council in the 2001-2003 budget. This person would research, review and prepare nuisance abatement actions against chronic noise, blighted and multiple police response properties. The position was scheduled to be filled later this year. While enforcement should not be the only tool we use, this position is absolutely critical to the effectiveness of dealing with repeat offenders, of which there are now 88 on the books.

The governor has stressed that resources such as the VLR backfill would not be used to balance the State budget, but the Legislature has yet to make their determinations on this matter.

We are asking you to contact our State Legislators to express your opposition to any consideration of using the VLF backfill or any other local revenue source to balance the State budget. If you would like to use a sample letter that has been prepared by the City it can be obtained on the Web at www.slocity.org/whatsnew.asp or by contacting:

Ken Hampian, City Administrative Officer • 781-7125
khampian@slocity.org

or Bill Statler, Director of Finance
781-7114
bstatler@slocity.org

Send Letters to:
Senator Jack O’Connell
1260 Chorro Street, Suite A
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Fax: 549-3400

Assembly Member Abel Moldonado
1302 Marsh Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Fax: 549-3400

CALENDAR 2002

BOARD OF DIRECTORS’ MEETINGS

Midstate Bank and Trust • 2278 Broad Street • 7:00 p.m.
Membership Invited • Every 4th Thursday

BOARD MEETINGS

February	27	May	22	September	25
March	27	June	26	October	23
April	24	August	28	November	27

GENERAL MEETINGS

March	21	May	23	September	26
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ANNUAL MEETING

October 13 • Elk’s Club
Dinner and Candidates Forum

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To Whom It May Concern . . . Our Apology!!

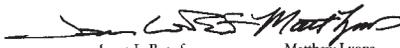
January 22, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

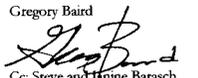
We're writing to apologize for the unnecessary inconvenience that we may have caused our neighbors on January 12th, 2002. A small gathering turned into a large party, when an individual pulled our fire alarm. Authorities had to be dispatched to fix the problem and we're sorry for taking them away from their important work. The disturbance may also have produced excessive noise and other nuisances to people around our house. We're disappointed in ourselves and we now realize the magnitude of our mistake. We can assure you that it won't happen again while we're residents at 814 Meinecke.

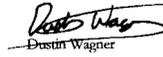
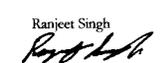
It was not our intention to have such a large group of people at our house. We planned to have a small afternoon get together with close friends, but far too many people attended. We lost control of the situation and we are extremely sorry for our irresponsible actions and lack of judgment. Please accept this apology and keep in mind that it will never happen again.

Sincerely,



Jason LeBeouf Matthew Lyons

Gregory Baird

 Cc: Steve and Janine Barasch
 2602 1st Cerito
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401


 Dustin Wagner
 Ranjeet Singh


Proposed Board of Directors

2001-2002

Chairperson: Cydney Holcomb
 Vice-Chairperson: John Thomas
 Secretary: Carol Winger
 Treasurer: Dotty Conner

Members-at-Large

Ann and Ron Alers
 Al and Elinor Bonin
 Brett Cross
 Denny McKee
 Ray Nordquist
 Leo Pinard
 Richard Schmidt
 LaVerne Storni
 Naoma Wright

If you have any questions or problems please call one of us.

Contributing Members

Membership: Mendi Stubson
 Newsletter Mailing: John Enos
 Newsletter Design: Tawna Eisworth

WORKING TOGETHER

At the General meeting on January 17, our speaker, Tony Aeilts, Chief of Police, Cal Poly University talked to us about Community Oriented Policing . . . that is "working together" as a community. It was an inspirational and most interesting talk. In brief this is the gist of what he said:

What is Community Oriented Policing?

It is a philosophy that concerted partnership efforts by a community, including individuals, organized groups, government agencies, business, etc., is what is needed to focus on the "root" of a community problem in order to eliminate or reduce it. The fundamental concept is that "law enforcement" agencies cannot easily impact deeply rooted problems by themselves. The primary reason for this is that law enforcement can impact the "symptom" but not necessarily all of the conditions which cause the symptoms to exist . . . unless everyone is involved.

For example, impacting alcohol related problems is ultimately a function of various approaches including education, alcohol businesses, neighborhoods, police enforcement, media, etc. which address the numerous dynamics of that social problem. Simple, and routine, police enforcement simply cannot adequately impact the issue without the integration of all of the key resources of the community.

Is it a lot of work? **Yes.**

Have these types of approaches been proven successful? **Yes.**

Submitted by Dotty Conner, Editor

IT'S THE LAW

SLO Municipal Code 9.04.010

States that it is unlawful for any person to consume alcoholic beverages while on any city street sidewalk, alley, roadway, parking lot, publicly maintained place, or any place open to the public.

NEW NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP

A new group "Neighborhoods North of Foothill" was formed in 2001, to respond to the impacts of two Cal Poly Faculty and Staff Housing projects proposed to be built in their neighborhood, and to respond to the overall decline of the quality of life in many areas of their district. Among other things, NNOF is actively advocating for more student housing on the campus, and recently supported RQN at the Planning Commission meeting on our zoning amendments package. They currently have a membership of 120 neighbors. If you live in any of the neighborhoods north of Foothill Blvd. And west of Hwy 1 and are interested in joining, please contact their President **Joan Lynch, P.O. Box 4638, San Luis Obispo, CA 93403 – Telephone 542-9554.**

THE NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES TEAM (NST)

In January 2001, City staff members from Administration, City Attorney, Public Works, Fire, Police, Community Development, Utilities, Parks and Recreation and three RQN Board members (Cydney Holcomb, Carol Winger, and Naoma Wright) attended the first meeting of the "Neighborhood Services Team". This action team was formed to improve city response to neighborhood issues, improve communication, and raise the level of awareness of neighborhood issues within the City government. The team met monthly throughout the year focusing primarily on the legislative amendment package that RQN had submitted to the City Council in the fall of 2000. (The zoning portion of that package was presented to the Planning Commission on January 23, 2002, and the entire package is now on its way to the City Council). Beginning this year the NST will be meeting on a quarterly basis. The written agenda reports prepared and presented by each member at the meetings will be compiled into a mini newsletter for distribution to the public. The February 2002 edition of "Recent Neighborhood Services Efforts", is included with your copy of RQN News.

MORE HOUSING

Plans for more student housing under way . . .

An initial study and negative declaration for a second student-housing project (H-5) was circulated for review by Cal Poly in December 2001. The project consists of a maximum of 714 beds in corridor-style, two-occupant dormitory units, with group restrooms and shower facilities. Also included will be a student residential center smaller study areas located on the existing 3.9 acre R-1 parking lot, east of the North Mountain residential halls. According to the study, this project will not result in a net loss of parking on the site and environmental impacts requiring mitigation are either less than significant or of no impact. RQN did not submit comments on the initial study for this project.

For further information please contact Joel Neel, Facilities Planning, Cal Poly. 756-2581, or jneel@calpoly.edu

Join RQN! 2002-2003

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND DUES

Annual Regular Members \$12

I (we) support the goals and concerns of RQN. Enclosed is our dues payment. Mail to: RQN, P.O. Box 12604, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406.

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail: _____

RQN BOARD ACTIONS . . .

January 2002

- Attended the quarterly meeting of the Neighborhood Services Team. (see: related article)
- Appeared before the Planning Commission to support the zoning phase of RQN's Ordinance Text Amendment package.
- Became a member of the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce
- Submitted letters to the City Council in support of:
 - staff recommendation to modify the boundaries of the Alta Vista Parking District
 - staff recommendation to install three speed tables as traffic calming devices on Augusta Street between Bishop and Sydney Streets.
 - a request to retain an unmarked

surplus City vehicle for the use of the Student Neighborhood Assistance Program (SNAP) through 2003.

Submitted written comments on the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Cal Poly Faculty and Staff Housing Project, H-8 site.

December 2001

- Submitted a letter to the San Luis Obispo Coastal Unified School District opposing the consolidation and closure of neighborhood schools.
- Submitted a letter to the City Council supporting the staff recommendation to expand the Tassajara Parking District.

October 2001

- Submitted written comments on

the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR for the Cal Poly Faculty and Staff Housing Project, H-9 site.

- Submitted a letter to the Planning Commission opposing a request from Sprint PCS to amend the General Plan, Land Use Element to allow telecommunication antennas in all City zones. (note: RQN only opposed installations in residential zones and installations that would be visible from within a residential zone).

September 2001

- Submitted a written response to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Cal Poly Faculty and Staff Housing Project, H-8 site.



Residents for Quality Neighborhoods

P.O. Box 12604

San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

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