

Observer Report for League of Women Voters of Beach Cities

Name of Agency or body observed: Redondo Beach City Council		Date of Meeting: 6/21/22		
Meeting type (regular, board, special, etc) or subject: Regular City Council Meeting		Approximate size of audience: Zoom - 40 ish in person		
Name of the Observer: LWV Observer		Date report Submitted: 6/22/22		
	FEATURE EVALUATED	YES	NO	N/A
1	Did the meeting start on time?			
2	Were all members present?	yes		
3	Were all members courteous to each other and to the public?		barely	
4	Was the Brown Act followed?	yes		
5	Was the agenda available in advance?	yes		
6	Did the agenda clearly describe what was to be discussed?	-		
7	Was there adequate opportunity for public input?	yes		
8	Was there the appearance that some action items were discussed in closed rather than in open session?		no	
9	Was background information available to the public?	yes		
10	Additional comments on conduct of meeting?	yes		

COMMENTS on above (Please indicate feature number to which each comment applies):

1. I joined late.

3. Council Member Obaji was shockingly honest about his desire to punish Council Member Emdee and accused her of instigating the recall effort against him. He suggested that his vote on a budget item was motivated by this - thereby also punishing residents of District 5. Council Member Emdee denied she had anything to do with it and other council members chipped in with "we've read your emails". The Mayor told them to "talk about the budget".

When Chief Hoffman gave testimony, Council Member Obaji thanked him for "shutting down the illegal (sic) dispensary."

In the discussion of who should be the Pro-Tem Mayor, Council Member Obaji described Council Member Emdee as "constantly clawing at me, disparaging me"

4. Yes - the council members declared their ex-parte communications which resulted in two budget motions - one from Council Members Nehrenheim and Loewenstein and one from Council Members

Horvath and Emdee. Council Member Obaji had only discussed with the Mayor who had also discussed with Council Member Nehernheim and Loewenstein. He therefore held the balance and read off a wish list to be added. Council Member Obaji had clearly discussed the Mayor Pro tem issue with Council Member Nehernheim.

The young lady from the community garden spoke under Public Comment Non-Agenda items. It is concerning that she did not know the conditions of the MOU she was operating under. Councilor Nerhenheim then asked her a question about a subsequent agenda item.

5 & 6. The agenda was available in advance and there was ample documentation for the public regarding the proposed budget, the response to budget Q&As. Both motions had been submitted in writing to the City Manager before the meeting but were not available to the public before the meeting. However the public comment on non-agenda items made it clear that the public knew that this was the night to ask for budget items - pickleball courts, community gardens etc.

Council Member Obaji shared a poll of his constituents which pitted the pickleball courts vs a pool - that influenced their decision-making as much as the public comment.

10. The "horsetrading" (Brand's words) process was interesting - somewhat democratic if not strictly Roberts Rules, in that it was in full public view and Mayor Brand often asked for public comment.

- The first motion was displayed and discussed in detail with Council Member Obaji adding in his wish list.
- The second motion was then discussed and voted on 2 yes -3 no.
- The first motion was then returned to with Emdee adding in as much of her wish list as they would accept.
- The first motion was then voted on 5-0.

On two occasions Council Member Emdee and Council Member Horvath questioned the process and the length of time given to motion 1.

In the end somewhat surprisingly the 5 Council Members agreed on a budget motion unanimously although with strong reservations from Council Member Emmdee & Council Member Horvath, but they did somehow reach a consensus.

10. At the end of the meeting there was an apparently innocuous agenda item to select the Mayor Pro Tem. This is usually done on a rotation basis and it was Council Member Emdee's turn then Council Member Horvath. Council Members Obagi and Nehrenheim made a motion to select Council Member Nehrenheim instead, which succeeded.

1. Were any issues on the agenda relevant to any LWV local or state program positions? Please be specific.

Issue: Mental Health (Included in Budget Proposal)

A Mental Health Clinician is currently provided by the LA County Department of Public Health to ride along with the police, for RBPD and Manhattan & Hermosa. The proposal is to employ a mental health clinician for the Police Department.

Nehrenheim and Loewenstein instead proposed to share the mental health clinician with Manhattan and Hermosa (who still have the DPH employee) and also that BCHD is interested in funding part of this.

Therefore the final budget only funded the mental health clinician at \$43K rather than the recommended full amount.

Not on the agenda but in comments:

Issue: Homelessness

Several members of the public spoke about a District meeting Council Member Nehrenheim had held that apparently was uncivil. Praise was given to Council Member Nerhenheim for his handling of the meeting but criticism was stated that not enough information was given before the action was taken. Several members of the public were upset about the location of Section 8 housing in their neighborhood and felt that they had not been informed. The issue is a private company Century Housing planning to convert a motel on PCH into Section 8 housing aimed at rehousing the unhoused. It was wrongly characterized as a homeless shelter in a video (allegedly from the Council Member Obaji) It is a private project and not a city project.

Issue: Land use/zoning & aging

Also public comment about the BCHD development plans. The commentator suggested that the proposals violate Measure DD which requires a public vote on change of land use. The commentator suggested the land use was being changed from public to commercial. The property belongs to BCHD a public agency and is currently leased to medical providers, and will be leased to more providers after the development generating more p[ri]vate funding for BCHD.

Issue: criminal justice

Another public commentator suggested that the City was ignoring their public records requests regarding the shooting of an unarmed youth.

Issue: elections (ballot props), election fraud

A public commentator repeated claims that workers were knocking on doors asking people to sign to recall Council Member Obaji by falsely claiming he is trying to shut down the fire department - the implication is that these workers are paid by the disgruntled cannabis dispensary owner who previously "tricked" voters into signing the petition for a ballot initiative on cannabis dispensaries in the city.

2. Do you recommend local League action on any of these issues?

If yes, what action do you recommend?

Recommend to State League to study election spending by businesses in local jurisdictions, control of misinformation and conflict of interest.

Mental health committee/criminal justice should consider the placement of a mental health clinician in the police department using city funds rather than County mental health funding.

3. Other observations?

The city staff are amazing keeping up with all this!

[Agenda](#) and Video when available.

Submit this report to the Observer Corps Coordinator, as soon as possible after your observation. Please attach any agenda or other meeting documents.

Email to Dale Petrusis dale.petrulis@gmail.com to be routed appropriately.

Thank you for being the eyes and ears of the League!