

Valdivia's Future Electoral Hopes Dim As Political Consultant Jones Pulls Plug

By Mark Gutglueck
San Bernardino Mayor John Valdivia's political career is headed toward a dead end, with virtually no chance that he will be able to gain reelection in 2022 despite his superior fundraising position at present, a former politician who was one of the mayor's key political backers in 2018 told the *Sentinel*.

A factor central to Valdivia's unraveling is that Chris Jones, the political consultant who was the architect of Valdivia's 2018 electoral victory over then-incumbent Mayor Carey Davis, is abandoning the embattled mayor.

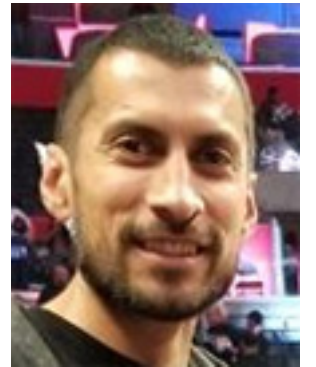
Valdivia's once seemingly promising political career hit a major snag in January when three members of his staff abruptly left their positions of employment at City Hall. One of those

— his field representative Jackie Aboud — was fired. The two others — his resident services representative Mirna Cisneros and his mayoral office assistant Karen Cervantes — quit. In February, Cisneros and Cervantes, represented by Attorney Tristan Pelayes, filed claims against the city and Valdivia, alleging he had put the make on them, sexually harassed them and then created

a hostile work environment when they failed to yield to his requests to be sexually accommodated. Parenthetical to those charges of sexual harassment contained in the claims was that Valdivia had engaged in other improprieties and illegal activities, which included bribetaking, misappropriation of public funds and the illicit use of public resources for partisan political purposes.

Aboud also retained Pelayes, and in her claim she echoed the charge that Valdivia had sought to induce her to have a sexual relationship with him, and that after she refused to do so, he maltreated her and then fired her. Subsequently, two of Valdivia's male staff members — his chief of staff Matt Brown and his field representative Don Smith — likewise retained Pelayes **See P 2**

Miranda Says His Aim Is To Question The Status Quo In Montclair



Oscar Miranda

Oscar Miranda said, "My drive to become a member of Montclair's city council is fueled by my desire to improve the engagement and transparency between our city government and Montclair's residents. I would like to promote the importance of local governance to our residents and increase local awareness of city, state, and federal policies. By being on the city council, I might have a better opportunity to not only discuss local matters with Montclair residents as their representative, but also be in a position to give a voice to the residents who lack the time to research all the local policies that are affecting them directly."

In discussing his relative qualifications to hold the position of city councilman, Miranda said, "I hold no belief that I am qualified or unqualified. I am simply a person who has a track record of successfully completing the tasks I'm presented with. And while one should never assume he is going to succeed in one venture simply because he was successful in another, one can get a perspective on the amount of work and dedication required to simply have a chance at success through past experiences. So, in the category of **See P 3**

Despite Massive Protest, Deadlocked Adelanto Council Stands By GEO ICE Expansion

Adelanto Councilman Ed Camargo's girlfriend's employment by the GEO Group proved crucial last week in allowing that company to augment the Adelanto ICE Processing Center, a 1,940-bed illegal immigrant detention center it operates on behalf of the federal government within the 35,000 population, 56-square mile

city, with the 750-bed Desert View Modified Community Correctional Facility it previously ran proximate to the site. GEO's proposal was to convert the smaller correctional facility, which until February held inmates for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, into an annex to hold the ever-greater number of

illegal aliens the federal government wants to house in Adelanto.

GEO, in a move that its corporate officials said would preserve 150 existing jobs and provide the federal government with the capacity to meet a burgeoning immigration law offender population burden, said it wanted to convert the facility into an annex for or ex-

tension of the detention center. That expansion, the company said, would entail an economic boost for the community as a whole, as it would increase the annual salaries of entry-level detention center employees from \$34,474 to \$60,788.

Since the onset of the Donald Trump administration in 2017, federal immigration law, its en-

forcement and the detention of immigration law offenders have been issues of considerable controversy. GEO and its Adelanto operation have been caught up in that contretemps.

After federal officials carried out a series of surprise inspections, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector **See P 4**

Unwillingness To Quit Sets Her Apart, Adelanto's Diaz Maintains



Jacqueline Diaz

Jacqueline Diaz is seeking one of two positions up for election on the Adelanto City Council this year, she

said, "because I believe Adelanto has the potential to be a great city and outstanding place to live once it has been built up to the standards of endless possibilities."

She is qualified to serve in the capacity of city councilwoman, she said, as a result of her station in life, character and willingness to take on challenges.

"I have built myself up from the **See P 5**

Hesperia Candidate Dundon Says Stagnation & Aimless Leadership Prompted His Council Run

Saying "Hesperia has suffered through aimless leadership and stagnation long enough," Mark Dundon indicated his impatience with the status quo has formed the basis of his effort to displace current Mayor Larry Bird in this year's election.

"So, I am running for Hesperia City Council because I have a comprehensive plan of specific steps to bring many



Mark Dundon

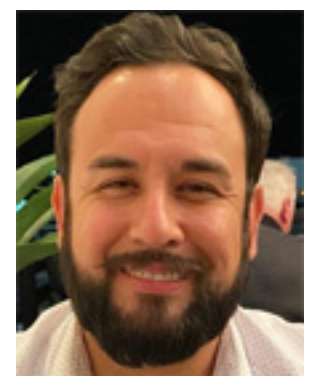
jobs to Hesperia, pave more roads, and improve our safety with more police officers and fire-

fighters, as well as traffic measures that will reduce stop sign running," he said.

For the first three decades of its existence as a municipal entity, Hesperia held at-large elections. But under threat from Hispanic voting rights advocates, the city adopted by-district voting in 2018. That year the council held elections in the Second, Third and Fourth districts. **See P 5**

As Councilman, Rhoades Would Rule With The Community's Least Advantaged In Mind

Anthony Rhoades, who is one of three candidates in the first electoral contest ever in Hesperia's District 1, said he is "running to give a voice to the most disadvantaged in our community. Our children, seniors, and veterans need a voice during this tumultuous period of time. Our future depends on the ability to get the story out and protect them



Anthony Rhoades

from administrative evil, which can be classified as the status quo.

We need new blood, new ideas, and innovation to ensure the stability of the future of this country."

In 2018, after Hesperia had for the first 30 years of its existence as an incorporated municipality held at-large elections, it transitioned to by-district elections.

That year, contests were held in Districts 2, 3 and 4. This year, the residents of Districts 1 and

5 are to elect their representatives on the council for the next four years. In District 1, incumbent Councilwoman Rebekah Swanson is seeking to remain as a member of the council, challenged by former Councilman Mike Leonard and Rhoades.

Rhoades ran for city council previously, in 2016, when the city held its last at-large election.

He is as qualified to hold the position of city councilman as any of the members of the city's Old Guard, Rhoades said.

"As a former candidate, I have learned from experience what it takes to hold the position," he said. "I am not perfect, but believe life has prepared me for an elected position though humility and the goal of **See P 9**

For Nearly Six Months Valdivia & His Political Entourage, Including Jones, Successfully Stonewalled Charges At The Heart Of The Burgeoning Mayoral Scandal *from front page*

and filed claims of their own, alleging abusive behavior by Valdivia and corroborating some of the details in the Cisneros, Cervantes and Aboud claims. Smith related further incidents of political corruption. Brown disclosed an effort by Valdivia to spur false charges and create a falsified record against Cisneros and Cervantes to counteract the prosecution of their claims and the eventual legal action they foreknelled. Adding to Valdivia's difficulties was that Alyssa Payne, whom Valdivia had appointed to the Arts and Historical Preservation Commission and the San Bernardino Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission, retained Pelayes, as well, asserting that Valdivia had engaged in predatory behavior with her on the order of what Cisneros, Cervantes and Aboud had described.

For nearly six months, Valdivia and his political team engaged in a strategy of denial, dismissing the claims and their accusations as a politically motivated attack. In seeking to map his way out of the scandal and remain in office, Valdivia had turned to Jones, whose guidance had proven impeccable in getting him into office. And indeed, Jones had a vested interest in maintaining Valdivia in office and perpetuating his political career.

Jones bears similarities and dissimilarities to other political consultants.

Like virtually all others in the political consulting arena, Jones has cultivated an expertise in how to get a candidate elected, using a variety of stratagems, from finding a perfect catchphrase or slogan for a political campaign to creating handbills, brochures and mailers to tout a candidate and his qualities; from devising radio, television and newspaper ads to printing yard signs

and securing billboard space; from identifying those voters most likely to vote and concentrating a major portion of a campaign's effort on them rather than squandering resources appealing to those unlikely to show up at the polls to discerning differing voter types and taking steps to ensure that a campaign is variegated enough and selective in its targeting so properly calibrated brochures or mailers go exclusively to the voters those specially-focused electioneering appeals are designed and intended for; from designing hit pieces to attack the opponent or opponents of the candidate he is working for to creating or having at the ready an independent expenditure committee that can maneuver around limitations on donations that can legally be made to a candidates and which can take responsibility for those hit pieces attacking a politician's opponent without the attack being associated with the politician the attack is benefiting; and having connections with those entities or operations sending out slate mailers recommending or endorsing candidates so that his clients can secure through payments those endorsements.

Jones, nonetheless, is unlike most other political consultants in one respect. Whereas nearly all other political consultants await the candidates to approach them to engage their services and then charge a handsome price for the assistance they render, Jones is known to take a survey of an upcoming race and the field of candidates in it and to then approach a candidate he feels has potential. Jones will accordingly offer that candidate not just his services in running his or her campaign but will offer his fundraising capability as well. Jones has developed a considerable list of po-

tential campaign donors to whom he can appeal to back the candidates he represents. Built into this arrangement is what is tantamount to a guarantee that the candidates Jones works for will be well-funded, which thus translates into a substantial payday for himself. The evidence of this mode of operation on Jones's part is the tremendous commonality among the donors to the candidates Jones represents. Inherent in these arrangements is the understanding that in return for their donations to the politicians that Jones is consulting to, the donors will have access to and influence over those politicians they are monetizing. In this way, Jones, in addition to advising candidates on what they need to do to get elected, remains as an informal advisor to those politicians if and once they succeed in getting into office, suggesting to them how they should vote, particularly when a vote will have an impact on a campaign donor. An examination of the body of campaign donors Jones over the years has succeeded in getting to support his clients shows that virtually all of them are in the position of needing the help of government to further their business or monetary interests.

Moreover, Jones' continuing connections to the candidates who employ him after they have assumed office makes for the creation of a network among politicians, including politicians serving on the same decision-making panel, which provides for a cohesiveness and coordination with regard to policy that ultimately redounds to the benefit of the army of campaign contributors Jones has assembled to support his clients.

The predominate number of politicians Jones works for are Republicans.

In the immediate aftermath of the accusations pouring in against Valdivia, the mayor was being advised by Jones on how to weather the storm. Dozens, indeed

scores, of campaign donors, a large number of whom had been vectored to Valdivia by Jones, had a lot riding on the mayor remaining in power in San Bernardino, which, in addition to being the county seat, is the largest city population-wise in San Bernardino County.

Upon his election in 2018, Valdivia seemed to occupy the catbird seat in 218,000 population San Bernardino. The mayor had a strong political bond with Sixth Ward Councilwoman Bessine Richard, who had also retained Jones as her political consultant. On a majority of substantive issues, Valdivia was likewise aligned with Fifth Ward Councilman Henry Nickel, with whom he had served on the council for five years at that point. Upon acceding to the mayor's position in December 2018, Valdivia could also claim as allies the two members of the council who had been newly elected in the 2018 contest, First District Councilman Ted Sanchez and Second Ward Councilwoman Sandra Ibarra. Jones was Sanchez's political consultant on his 2018 campaign. In the 2018 Primary Election in the Second Ward, Valdivia had backed his then-council ally, incumbent Benito Barrios. But after Barrios had finished third in that contest, forcing a runoff between Ibarra and Cecilia Miranda-Dolan in the November election, Valdivia supported Ibarra, which included bringing Jones in to assist her in the final stages of the campaign. In the initial days, weeks and months of Valdivia's tenure as mayor, the only opposition he had on the council consisted of Fourth Ward Councilman Fred Shorett and Seventh Ward Councilman Jim Mulvihill, which thus endowed him with a 4-to-2 ruling coalition. Because his mayoral victory had come while he yet had two years on his council term representing the city's Third Ward, Valdivia was obliged to resign as councilman, and the city

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called a special election, held in May 2019, to fill the gap on the council. Valdivia endorsed and campaigned on behalf of Juan Figueroa, transferring money from his campaign account to Figueroa's, which was used to partially defray payments made to Jones, who served as Figueroa's campaign consultant. Figueroa prevailed in the Third Ward race over Treasure Ortiz. This gave the Valdivia political juggernaut an even more solid 5-to-2 lock on the council.

With the advent and then the advancement of the mayoral crisis precipitated originally by the Cisneros and Cervantes claims, the Valdivia-led coalition began to fray. Valdivia sustained the first tangible blow to his grip on the council on March 3, 2020 when Mulvihill, Richard, Nickel and Figueroa needed to stand for reelection in this year's California Primary Election. Richard lost outright to Kimberly Calvin. While Richard is to remain on the council until December, she is doing so as a lame duck. Gradually, over the last seven months, the defection of Ibarra, Nickel and Sanchez from the Valdivia political camp has become more and more apparent. At one point, Ibarra publicly called upon Valdivia to resign if the accusations contained in the claims lodged by Cisneros, Cervantes and Aboud were true.

Well into June, Valdivia and members of his team, which yet

included Jones, were confident that the mayor would be able to stand down or stonewall the accusations being made against him, and that he was capable of wielding the power, position and authority that the voters of San Bernardino had vested in him to employ the machinery of municipal government to protect himself and discredit his accusers.

For a time, Valdivia and his entourage, which had grown to include his legal representative, Rod Pacheco, effectively, or so it seemed, held off the mayor's detractors. Pacheco, like Valdivia, is a rare example of a Hispanic Republican who achieved substantial political success despite the consideration that the vast majority of Latino politicians in California and Latinos in general throughout the Golden State identify as Democrats. In 1996, when Pacheco was victorious in his run for the California State Assembly, he became the first Hispanic Republican elected to the California Legislature in more than a century. He was elected Leader of the Republican caucus, marking the first time in the state's history that a Latino had served in that capacity.

With panache, Pacheco asserted that Valdivia was a hard-working politician committed to rejuvenating San Bernardino and its sluggish economy after a serious erosion of the municipality's financial condition led to it having to declare bankruptcy in

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Fontana Police Chief Green Resists Being Inveigled Into Fielding Tough & Leading Questions

By Carlos Avalos

On July 14, 2020, Mt. Zion Church of Ontario lead by Pastor Brian Eric Kennedy and the Ontario Police Department held an online community forum with prominent public service professionals in San Bernardino County. San Bernardino County Sheriff John McMahon, San Bernardino County District Attorney Jason Anderson, Ontario Police Chief Derek Williams, Upland Police Chief Darren Goodman, Fontana Police Chief William Green, and Chief Investigator Eric Hopley of the San Bernardino County District Attorney's office were all in attendance. The topic was "Change From The Inside Out in Local Policing."

From May 25, the

day George Floyd was murdered by the Minneapolis police, until now, criminal justice reform, police brutality, and people taking to the streets to voice their concerns about policing have been major issues at the forefront of American society. All the parties mentioned, who are some of the most influential and powerful people in the county, wanted to jump out ahead of what is happening nationally and convey to the people of San Bernardino County a simple message. This was conveyed by Fontana Mayor Acquanetta Warren, who said, "We are reading your emails and messages. We hear you."

This online community event started off with each person stating his name, position,

and his law enforcement stance. Routinely, as usually happens, up and down the line they all condemned the actions of the Minneapolis Police Department. Most of the panel admitted or alluded to the fact that minorities, specifically African Americans, are not treated fairly when it comes to the criminal justice system. This is at every level of law enforcement, and at every stage of the criminal justice system, from arrest, conviction, to sentencing, they collectively acknowledged. There were three or four specific topics discussed before the question and answer part of the symposium took place. The topics were the typical we care/there's a problem/we are with you type of talk. When the live questions

started pouring in, observers remarked that the symposium on behalf of S.B County law enforcement officials, rather than the Mt. Zion Church, was being done for show rather than as a forum for the discussion of serious reform.

Softball questions were answered. After the participants had warmed up, some real hardball questions were posed, ones that were directed mostly to William Green, the Fontana Police Department's police chief, and San Bernardino County District Attorney Jason Anderson. Some residents sought to impose upon Green a question about Ismael Banda, David Michael Tyler and Fermín Rincon, three men killed in a span of five months while in Fontana

police custody, all by the same group of officers. One of those was Obie Rodriguez, who retired prematurely after press reports on the incidents. Chief Green was accused of excessive force many times over the course of his career. In 2003 Green and the Fontana Police Department's so-called SMASH unit, the anti-gang detail known as the San Bernardino Movement Against Street Hoodlums, were sued by attorney Dale Galipo for the in-custody deaths of the three minorities. To clear Green and the other SMASH officers, FPD hired a team of experts to investigate the deaths, which were all eloquently explained away. All of the involved officers were promoted and soared upward in the organization, including

Green, who is now chief. A question was submitted that inquired into a rumor that one of these men was thrown off of an industrial building, which had proximately led to that man's death. This question was not asked of William Green by the panel.

William Green's demeanor changed after the first hardball question was submitted to the panel by a member of the public. A video of the symposium shows the subdued and quiet Green looking off into space most of the time. Upon being confronted with the first aggressive question, the Fontana police chief's body language and facial expressions changed notably. While questions

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Challenging The System Will Enhance Montclair's Way Of Operating, Miranda Says *from front page*

engagement and dedication, I have no doubt these skills will serve me well to better my odds of being a positive representative for my fellow Montclair residents."

Asked what distinguishes him from his opponents for the position on the council he is seeking, Miranda said, "While I don't like to compare myself to my 'opponents,' speaking only about my accomplishments could lead one to believe that I have a fair amount of experience in various fields. I am a disabled U.S. Air Force veteran, which could help me to understand the needs of citizens who may require assistance in their daily lives. Serving in the military also gave me a perspective into putting the goals of the group ahead of one's own personal desires. Another experience that displays my work ethic comes from the time I spent at Cal State University Long Beach while com-

pleting my bachelor of science degree in business administration. While doing so, I often took twice the workload of the average student, eight to ten courses per semester, to stay on track to complete my degree within a two-year window once I transferred in. The only way I was able to accomplish this was by focusing on the task at hand and limiting any outside distractions. After completion of my degree, I started my own business that I grew with increased profits year after year while employing unionized workers who were well compensated in pay, benefits and a pension funding."

Miranda said, "One of the most vital issues that will be facing the City of Montclair as well as many other municipalities in the State of California will be the increased cost associated with the pension funding for the California Public Employees Retirement System. This has been a growing issue and has already started to impact every other program Montclair oversees. It has become an issue that has put stress on the city's financials while taking a predominant role in all city budget-

ing workshops. Without addressing this issue, it will continue to hinder many conversations concerning other city programs and agendas."

Miranda said the problem is a daunting one.

"I don't know how to remedy the continued underfunding of the California Public Employee Retirement System pension program," he said. "There are several approaches by other municipalities that can be examined; however, those options don't seem to bring about a resolution without negatively impacting the community and its city employees. It is a problem that will require numerous individuals working together to find a creative resolution as soon as possible because without one, Montclair as well as most cities in California will have a difficult time continuing to fund a program that continues to financially stress our city budget."

Miranda weighed in on the city's current efforts to come to terms with its financial challenges.

"Unfortunately, the current city council has decided to place the funding burden on the

citizens of Montclair and our surrounding neighbors by seeking a sales tax increase though a tax measure placed on this November's ballot," he said. "While I disagree with the means by which the city will go about in informing the public as to why the additional funds from the tax are needed and will be utilized, I cannot disregard the need for such funds based on a number of financial shortcomings the city will be facing in the near future. The only thing I can say is that my access to all available funding options is currently limited, so I cannot comment on whether all available options were genuinely considered prior to the city council's decision to seek funding through a tax measure."

In sizing up what previous experience relating to government he possesses, Miranda said his company's articulation with government agencies at various levels provided him with practical knowledge of how the government works and carries out its function in conjunction with the private sector.

Miranda created and expanded a company that did street and road sweeping and cleaning

in connection with road and freeway construction projects.

"My company subcontracted for many companies who were contracted on federal, state, and city projects," Miranda said. "This is relevant because it has given me an understanding of how work is accomplished in the public sector. Most people wonder why certain things like placing a speed bump on your street can take so long. Well, I no longer wonder about that because I understand the various obstacles such a small project can entail. I have also been able to navigate many programs that helped to increase the working opportunities for my former company. Having this experience will help me in both the short and the long term of any of my decision-making as a city representative."

Miranda has lived in Montclair for more than six years. "I purchased my home in Montclair in the middle of 2014," he said.

Miranda grew up in Los Angeles and went to high school in Boyle Heights. He has a bachelor of arts degree in business administration from California State Univer-

sity Long Beach.

Miranda told the *Sentinel*, "I am currently enjoying semi-retirement after selling my company that I started in 2011. At present, I am helping my wife, who is an occupational therapist, to establish her company, Playhouse Therapy Center, Inc., that will work in the advancement of children with special needs. With nothing else on my plate, I will dedicate the remainder of my free time to helping to improve upon the infrastructure, social, and educational programs and opportunities of Montclair."

He and his wife have two children, ages two and one.

Miranda said, "My candidacy is focused on challenging current systems in place in an attempt to improve upon the present programs. I am not going to try to change things because I foolishly believe I know better than the current council, but simply desire to question the manner in which things are now being run in order to try and maximize the efficiency by which Montclair conducts its business."

-M.G.

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San Bernardino County **Sentinel**

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Councilman Camargo's Girlfriend's Employment By GEO Led To 2-To-2 Vote That Sustained GEO's Illegal Immigrant Prison Expansion *from front page*

General in 2018 issued a report which said that the Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and GEO had engaged in "improper and overly restrictive segregation, and untimely and inadequate detainee medical care" at the Adelanto facility. Advocates for the inmate population have called upon the federal government to dispense with contractual detention facilities altogether and the shutdown of the Adelanto facility specifically. Litigation that has been launched since the advent of the COVID-19 crisis seeks to severely limit the population inside the Adelanto facility to head off the spread of the virus within the captive population. Last year, the California Legislature and Governor Gavin Newsom touched off an intensive legal battle over immigration policy when the legislature in October 2019 passed and Newsom signed Assembly Bill 32, which phased out private prisons and detention centers, effective on January 1, 2020. In a ploy to overcome that restriction, the Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and GEO, in December before Assembly Bill 32 became law, entered into a 15-year contract to expand the Adelanto ICE Processing Center from 1,940 beds to 2,690 beds, essentially on the

basis of folding the Desert View Modified Community Correctional Facility into the processing center.

GEO joined with the U.S. Department of Justice in suing the State of California, Newsom and California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, contesting the legality and constitutionality of Assembly Bill 32, and asserting it improperly intrudes upon federal prerogatives and the legitimate function of the Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Taking a second bite at the apple, California's political establishment, including Newsom, Becerra and Democratic members of California's congressional delegation, decried the manner in which federal officials were entering into deliberately-drafted last-minute contractual arrangements with California-based providers of private detention services to "evade" the law. Thereafter, protests by groups militating and advocating on behalf of immigrants reached a crescendo.

Thus, the matter relating to the Adelanto ICE Processing Center put the Adelanto community at the forefront, the epicenter and ground zero of the bitter national debate over immigration policy.

On February 19, the Adelanto Planning Com-

mission on a 4-to-1 vote, with Commissioner JayShawn Johnson dissenting, approved GEO making the expansion. Immigrant rights organizations, including the San Francisco-based Immigrant Legal Resource Center and the Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice appealed that decision, placing the authority over the ultimate fate of the plan by the federal government to hold ever larger numbers of those detained for having come into the country illegally and attempting live undocumented among both the native, naturalized and legally documented populations into the hands of the city council. The removal of the decision into the province of the city council presented a dilemma. Councilman Ed Camargo for years has steered clear of any issues relating to GEO because his girlfriend/fiancee, Regina Duran, is employed by GEO. Mayor Gabriel Reyes, whose commitment to economic development and the creation and maintenance of financial activity within the city outruns his sensitivity to and willingness to comply with the wishes of those protesting against the private prison on the basis of social causes such as that relating to the federal government's treatment of immigrants, placed him on GEO's side of the issue. For him, that GEO is the city's major employer and a provider of more than \$960,000 in mitigation payments and administrative fees to City

Hall is reason enough to be positively receptive to GEO's expansion plans. By allowing the expansion to proceed, Reyes knows, the 450 workers employed at the Adelanto ICE Processing Center will soon be joined by the 150 GEO employees who stood to lose their jobs with the closure of the Desert View Modified Community Correctional Facility in February. He is backed in his support of GEO by Councilwoman Joy Jeannette.

Councilwoman Stevonna Evans, who is active in Democratic political circles including the San Bernardino County Democratic Central Committee, and Councilman Gerardo Hernandez not only found the position taken by those advocating liberal immigration policies persuasive, but were among those making a case against the Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Thus, the council found itself in a 2-to-2 deadlock on whether to grant the appeal of the planning commission's February approval of the expansion.

After twice delaying a vote on the matter, the city council last week, at last considered the matter in a meeting that began on Wednesday, September 9 but which lasted into the wee hours of Thursday morning, September 10. The meeting was held by means of a teleconference, owing to the danger of the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

Some 91 members of

the public weighed in on the matter through a queue of phone calls to the number 1-415-655-0001, with the lion's share seeking to persuade the council to block GEO's expansion plans. Some of those calling in were identified by name if they chose to give it and some were identified only by a numbered designation.

One caller, a man with the designation 626347, said, "The GEO people came on board under false pretenses with bribes, and I don't know what else they did." He said the pay rate for the jobs to be added was not what it was represented as being, and would range from \$10.79 to \$12.43 per hour. "It's not going to take people out of poverty," caller 626347 stated. "It's just going to take them off welfare. This is oppression. What side of history is the council of Adelanto going to be on in 20 years? Right now you're creating some kind of containment place to house people that are there for just wanting to look for a better life."

Caller 626347 said there had been one suicide and three attempted suicides at the facility.

A woman caller designated as number 626482 said, "From listening to the GEO counsel, it sounds like there is a pay-to-play situation going on or a corrupt arrangement between GEO and the City of Adelanto. There are just too many questions that are not being answered. It is outrageous that the volunteer work program

going on within Adelanto only pays detainees one dollar per day for the same work that a staff member would make somewhere between \$12-and-\$22- per hour. How can GEO justify such negligible wages to detainees when GEO's total revenue in 2019 was \$2.48 billion? What kind of city council would want to be in cahoots with a corrupt organization like GEO? The only reason that GEO wants to expand the detention center is they want to reap more profit off the backs of the detainees. Please overturn the decision to expand the detention center. It's the only acceptable and humane decision you can make."

A woman caller identified by the nomenclature 760792 said she was "an employee of GEO Group ...for over five years. They are an awesome company to work for. They pay very well. I'm actually trying to purchase a house in Adelanto to further expand the economy and the community. But unfortunately, if this expansion does not go through, not only myself but many hundreds of employees that work for GEO will be out of jobs, will not be able to support the economy, will probably have to move out of the city. Talking about the treatment of the detainees: I work in the visitation department. Actually, they are treated very well. I have had family members thank me that we're not cruel and inhumane towards them.

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Dundon Says Current Council Violated The 4th & 15th Amendments In Removing Brosowske From Office *from front page*

This year, the city is holding elections in its First and Fifth districts. Hesperia does not directly elect a mayor, but rather follows a tradition of elevating one of the council's five members to serve one-year terms as mayor.

Larry Bird, elected to an at-large council position in 2016, was appointed mayor in December 2018 and reappointed to that honorific in December 2019. As a resident of District Five he is now standing for election. Dundon is opposing Bird.

Dundon said he is qualified to hold the position of city councilman. "My education includes a bachelors' degree in business and a masters' degree in administration," Dundon said. "As a business owner, I have run my own real estate and tutoring businesses. As a leader, I have served the Hesperia Unified School District as a governing school board member and clerk for two years. As a professional educator, I have served in several leadership positions where I have learned to very effectively collaborate with people to find our shared need to be successful and steer us toward making the best decisions possible in every situation." Dundon said, "There are two major distinctions between myself and my opponent. I am a strong supporter of our Hesperia businesses and will streamline the business and building departments to greatly reduce the burden on our local business owners. To grow our bedroom community into the city it was always meant to be, I will create a business enterprise zone along the freeway corridor with tax incentives and advertising to encourage high paying job growth that will generate the tax revenue we need to improve our safety and pave our roads. There will be no increase in taxes, period."

The second distinction, Dundon said, consists of the fashion in which Bird involved himself in removing former City Councilman Jeremiah Brosowske from the city council in September 2019, ostensibly on what Bird and councilmen Bill Holland and Cameron Gregg maintained were residency violation grounds.

"I hold our U.S. Constitution and the rights it establishes as our most consecrated guarantees in our American way of life," Dundon said. "My opponent, our mayor, led the charge with two other Hesperia city councilmembers to vote to overturn the results of the 2018 Election and eject a duly elected councilmember, which violated the 4th and 15th Amendments to our U.S. Constitution and the California Constitution. At the same time, I consider this a crime against our American values, for elected officials to violate their oaths of office and violate the rights of 1,688 Hesperia voters. All Hesperians are victims of this crime that deeply offends me and disrespects our serving military and veterans. I will protect all of our rights, whatever it takes."

Dundon said Bird, Holland and Gregg "appointed their political ally who lost the election. It is time for the Hesperia City Council to quit playing petty political games and seriously work to improve our city in meaningful ways." Dundon said Bird, Holland and Gregg "appointed their political ally who lost the election. It is time for the Hesperia City Council to quit playing petty political games and seriously work to improve our city in meaningful ways."

In enumerating the major issues facing the city, Dundon cited "the skyrocketing crime rate in certain parts of Hesperia, up to a 300 percent increase; few local jobs; stifling, burdensome overregulation of our local businesses; bad road conditions in many parts of Hesperia; corruption within Hesperia operations and leadership; complete disregard for our Constitutional Rights to vote and enti-

tlement of due process of law, including disregard of the voice of the people in election results."

Dundon said, "All of these issues will be completely resolved if I am elected because I am so frustrated by the continued failures of the Hesperia City Council that are only getting worse and more dangerous. To alleviate the undue burden on our local businesses, I will work to revamp the Hesperia business and building departments to streamline their processes and reduce fees to stimulate our economy immediately. I will work to create a priority list and schedule the funding of public safety improvements and road paving. To transform our city to a prosperous balance of city and suburb, I will work to create a business enterprise zone to entice higher wage businesses to open and expand into Hesperia. In order to accomplish this, I will work to annex more land along the I-15 Freeway corridor, rezone it for business use, and offer tax and other incentives to bring economic prosperity to our community."

Dundon said, "I know I can do this because I have done it before. As a Hesperia school board member, I added 50 percent more police officers to protect our schools and invested in our infrastructure. I will bring order, mutual respect, problem-solv-

Her Passion & Perseverance Will Keep Her Involved In Adelanto's Affairs, Win Or Lose, Diaz Says *from front page*

ple's unwillingness to get involved in the upkeep of the community. I believe these issues can be addressed by creating business contracts that will help provide more resources and employment as well as providing opportunities for community involvement. I propose that the city appoint a team that seeks out business contracts that contribute to the development of the community, and not just the city. I am also advocating for the city making multiple and even redundant applications for governmental grants for certain projects that will serve to redress some of

ashes of poverty and disadvantages so I am very well aware of what it takes to fight through a struggle," she said. "What distinguishes me from my opponents for this position is my passion and unwillingness to give up."

Diaz said, "I consider the major issues facing the city to be lack of employment opportunities, community resources and structure, and peo-

ing, and respect for our U.S. Constitution back to Hesperia City Hall to serve our people by delivering prosperity to everyone in a balanced manner that preserves our way of life.

"To correct the corruption within operations and leadership, I will hold all council members responsible for any inappropriate actions and statements as well as replace any city staff who are not willing to perform their duties objectively and by the book," Dundon continued. "To correct the wrongs of violating a council member's and 1,688 Hesperia voters' Constitutional Rights, I will completely obey and cooperate with the coming circuit judge's ruling on the lawsuit brought forth by the wronged council member that has been ratified by the California State Attorney General."

In addressing how he proposes for the city to pay for the solutions he suggests, Dundon said, "The growth and expansion of Hesperia's business tax base produced by the streamlining of the Hesperia business and building offices and the Hesperia Business Enterprise Zone will," he said, create a revenue stream with "which to sufficiently fund Hesperia's growing needs in a proper and quality manner."

He has sufficient previous experience relating

to government to be able to carry off the strategy he is advocating, Dundon said.

"For two years, I have served on the Hesperia Unified School District's governing board," Dundon stated. "For five years, I served as president or an executive officer for a local chapter of the Association for California School Administrators, in support of government and school-based programs. From Cal State, San Bernardino, I have earned a master's degree in school and public administration to expand upon what I learned in earning my bachelor's degree in business."

Dundon has lived in Hesperia for 22 years. He attended Cal Poly Pomona, where he achieved a bachelor's degree in business, with heavy course work in finance, real estate, and law. After obtaining his first teaching credential at the University of Redlands, he later added five more teaching credentials and two master's degrees in school and public administration and spe-

cial education from Cal State San Bernardino. His teaching credentials are in the areas of mild-moderate special education, moderate-severe special education, multiple subject and single subject in the disciplines of biology, geosciences, and social sciences.

He is currently employed as a teacher and a business owner of a tutoring service.

"I am happily married for 23 years, with 3 children who all attend Hesperia USD schools, including one at Victor Valley College," he said.

Dundon said, "Throughout my life, I have always felt the need to do meaningful things to help people in significant ways. That is why I became a family man, a teacher, and a school board member. Now, I want to help all the people in our city by improving their quality of life with less crime, more employment, less commuting, more good roads, lower taxes, and more safety for the sake of all of our families."

-M.G.

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the issues affecting the financial difficulties Adelanto is currently experiencing."

Diaz openly acknowledges that "I have no previous experience relating to government," which at least some observers of Adelanto politics see as a plus rather than a drawback.

Diaz has lived in Adelanto for 3 years.

"I did not attend high school in Adelanto," she said. "I attended high school in the city of Bellflower. I graduated vocational school for training as a licensed practitioner nurse, but have not yet taken the state board for licensure. I also graduat-

ed from Long Beach City College where I received my phlebotomy certification and licensure. I have been employed with my current company for 5 years, handling Medicare claims."

Diaz is a single mother who has raised four children.

"I want the *Sentinel's* readers to know that I have decided to plant roots here for my family and will continue to fight for the improvement of this community, no matter if I am elected or not," Diaz said. "Keep an eye out for me. My passion doesn't start or stop with this election."

-M.G.

Confirmation Of Accusations & Valdivia's Inability To Control Himself Convince Smith It Is Best That He End Their Relationship *from page 2*

2012 and remain in that state until 2017. Valdivia, Pacheco asserted, was under political attack by Democrats resentful of his Republican affiliation and the effective manner in which he was guiding the city toward firm financial footing. The false accusations being heaped upon Valdivia by Cisneros, Cervantes, Aboud, Brown, Smith and Payne were cheap Democratic tactics, Pacheco insisted.

Simultaneously, Jones was working furiously to salvage Valdivia's political career. The barrage of negative publicity about Valdivia's comportment had reverberated around the community, exposing cracks in the foundation of the Republican political establishment of which both Jones and Valdivia are a part. When members of that establishment began to speak among themselves and then more openly about their observations of Valdivia's behavior and parallels with the actions Valdivia was accused of in the claims filed by those Pelayes was representing, Jones leapt into the breach, seeking to convince those once within the mayor's circle who were badmouthing him to desist. At that point it was yet Jones' hope that Valdivia would be able to survive the challenges that Pelayes and his clients were throwing at him, maintain control or at least substantial control of the city council and continue to meet the expectations of the political donors who had bankrolled his political rise by ensuring that their projects or their contracts to provide goods and services to the city were given approval.

As spring advanced fully into summer and now as summer is about to give way to fall, however, the ground beneath

Valdivia's feet began, and has continued, to give way. Foremost, perhaps, in the mayor's declension was the outcome of an investigation the city council, at the recommendation of City Attorney Thomas Rice and Deputy City Attorney Sonia Carvalho, commissioned to examine the allegations made against Valdivia in the Cisneros, Cervantes and Aboud claims. Ultimately, the city council retained Los Angeles-based attorney Carla Barboza to look into the matter, paying her \$68,000 to conduct interviews and examine evidence relating to accusations leveled at Valdivia. The lion's share of Barboza's analysis dwelt on what the city defined as the incidents of sexual harassment allegedly perpetrated by Valdivia, though Barboza's examination extended to other elements in the Cisneros, Cervantes and Aboud claims.

According to the executive summaries of Barboza's investigations of the three claims, the one filed by Mirna Cisneros could be reduced to 43 separate and distinct accusations; that filed by Karen Cervantes comprised 44 allegations; and the claim filed by Aboud boiled down to 29 accusations. Barboza encountered some rough sledding in trying to cover the entirety of what had been alleged against the mayor and ascertain the truth and validity of those accusations. Cisneros, Cervantes and Aboud, advised by Pelayes that the city's investigation was angling toward a preset conclusion, declined to be interviewed by Barboza. Valdivia likewise refused to be interviewed. With only a few exceptions, Barboza did not identify in her executive summaries of the Cisneros, Cervantes and Aboud investigations the witnesses she interviewed. Each of the executive summaries mentions that 17 witnesses in total were interviewed, which would suggest that she was referencing the same 17

witnesses throughout her investigation of each of the claims. Barboza was limited, it appears, in the documentation she was provided. In the executive summaries, she states that the Cisneros, Cervantes and Aboud claims were the only documents available to her containing the specific allegations relating to Valdivia. This would suggest that the city itself withheld from Barboza the reports that Pelayes maintains Cisneros, Cervantes and Aboud filed with Valdivia's chief of staff, Matt Brown, the city's human resources department, Human Resources Director Helen Chan and City Manager Teri Ledoux prior to Cisneros's and Cervantes' voluntary and Aboud's forced departures from the city in January.

Nevertheless, despite those limitations, Barboza indicated she was able to make a thorough enough analysis to derive conclusions as to the truth or falsity – the overall validity – of the multitude of accusations leveled at Valdivia. According to Barboza, she used what she referred to as the “preponderance of the evidence standard,” in making her analysis of all three claims, which she explained as being a conclusion “whether it was more likely than not that the complained-of action or conduct occurred.”

According to Barboza, her analysis of the allegations, the available evidence and the statements of witnesses led her to conclude that 20 of Cisneros's 43 accusations relating to Valdivia and his conduct could be substantiated; that 13 accusations of the 44 allegations in Cervantes' claim could be fully substantiated and some though not all of the elements within another one of Cervantes' allegations were verified; and that three of the 29 accusations lodged against the mayor by Aboud could be substantiated.

Despite the accusations of sexual harassment against Valdivia having garnered the lion's share of the pub-

licity in the early public exposure of the scandal, Barboza was unable to find sufficient backing to establish that Valdivia had engaged in most of the sexual harassment incidents he was accused of which involved overt sexually-tinged comments or suggestions. Of Cisneros's 21 allegations of such patently sexually-based transgressions on the mayor's part, Barboza found seven substantiated and 14 unsubstantiated. Of Cervantes' allegations against the mayor, 10 related to direct sexual comments, requests, suggestions or references and his attempt to ply her with liquor. Barboza said nine of those were unsubstantiated, finding only one to be, in her parlance, “partially substantiated.” Of the 29 allegations against the mayor in Aboud's claim, 15 related to him sexually pressuring her. One passage in Aboud's claim said what she experienced while serving as the mayor's field representative consisted of Valdivia having “told her that she needed to ‘develop a personal relationship’ with him and that she also needed to spend more time with him ‘outside of work’” and Valdivia telling Aboud “he would ‘terminate’ her if she did not develop this ‘personal relationship’ with him.” Aboud's claim also stated that “Valdivia's intention for compelling claimant to develop a personal relationship with him was to date claimant and advance Valdivia's sexual desires on claimant.” Barboza found all 15 of those sexually-based allegations unsubstantiated.

Despite Barboza's determination that most of the accusations relating to sexual harassment by the mayor could not be substantiated, she sustained as verifiable numerous accounts, particularly ones emanating from Cisneros, that Valdivia had engaged in improprieties with regard to taking money, gifts and favors from questionable sources in ways that bordered on or crossed the line into the

province of bribery, and that Valdivia played fast and loose with regard to the rules relating to filing the reports, certified under the penalty of perjury, required of public officials relating to the reception of those gratuities. Barboza also sustained other accusations that Valdivia had falsified his travel and expense vouchers for activity he engaged in while junketing or traveling on what was supposed to be official city or government business. Moreover, Barboza found credible reports that Valdivia used the authority of his office and public assets, facilities and personnel, to engage in political activity, which is strictly forbidden under the law.

Barboza said her investigation substantiated an allegation by Cisneros that Valdivia pressured his staff members to participate in what was scheduled [but later canceled] to be a campaign event for him on opening day of the 2020 baseball season at Dodger Stadium in April; that Valdivia attempted to force Cisneros and another female co-worker [identified by the *Sentinel* as Mayoral/City Council Secretary Renee Brizuela] to work on the reelection campaigns of two of his council allies, Juan Figueroa and Bessine Richard, running in the March 2020 election; that Valdivia had accepted a \$900 bottle of wine gifted to him by an ambassador without reporting the gratuity on his statement of economic interest as required by California law; that Valdivia had stated he was constantly receiving gifts he did not properly report; that he had instructed Cisneros to be “vague” in filing Valdivia's request for reimbursement for hotel accommodations and meals from the San Bernardino International Airport Authority, of which he is a board member, when the activity he carried out on that particular trip apparently related to his having met with donors to his campaign fund;

that he was the recipient of free travel, including flights in a Gulfstream, from a particular businessman or businessmen; and that Valdivia told Cisneros that he had an inside contact at the district attorney's office who was delivering to him information relating to any investigation or investigations that office was conducting relating to his activity.

Even prior to the public release of the executive summaries of Barboza's investigations of the three complaints on September 8, there were indications that Jones, who was so assiduously committed to keeping the viability of Valdivia's career intact just a few months ago, has come to view Valdivia as more of a liability to his political consulting kingdom than an asset.

According to one well placed individual within the Jones organization, Jones for some time has been concerned with the manner in which Valdivia has defied the advice given him on how he should conduct himself both publicly and privately, but did not consider the relatively minor flare-ups Valdivia's behavior caused to be an issue that compromised the potential Valdivia possessed in both an immediate and future political context. More recently, however, with the emergence of information and evidence that Valdivia has engaged in arrangements involving monetary exchanges with individuals with business before the city, taking in what otherwise might have been justified as political donations if they had been reported as such but which were never cataloged in Valdivia's campaign finance documents, it has become clear to Jones, the *Sentinel* was told, that Valdivia is running the risk of being indicted on bribery and political corruption charges. Given the fashion in which Jones' services to his various clients already skirts the boundary of pay-to-play politics, re-

Continued on Page 12

The Time Is Now For A New Direction In Hesperia's Leadership, Rhoades Says *from front page*

reducing the divide we currently experience. The moral compass that exists inside me has a responsibility and accountability to be the voice of the people with a goal of reaching the veil of ignorance and the original position suggested by philosopher John Rawls, which consists of conceptually placing oneself in the least advantaged position and making decisions with the mindset of knowing that at any moment in time I could be in that position and would want representation to fight as well."

In giving a practical example of what he has

contributed to the community so far, Rhoades said, "As former chair of the Public Safety Commission, I advocated for safer intersections. Researching the traffic light interval and the process the City of Hesperia used to determine the method helped reduce traffic accidents in problematic intersections."

Asked what distinguishes him from his opponents, Rhoades responded, "Each person has their unique abilities to contribute to society. Both candidates have served in different capacities in the City of Hesperia, and it's time for a new direction of leadership that can bring new opportunities to the community and empower the youth. Millions of Americans are out of work, and we need

to open new industries that economically enable our dollars to channel other places instead of the same corporations and technologies that are outdated."

The major issues facing the city, Rhoades said, are "financial shortfall, greed, public safety and the lack of social interaction and the suppression of public opinion."

Rhoades said those issues can be redressed through "managing budgetary concerns by reducing unnecessary spending and quid pro quo contracts, by increasing awareness of special populations and advocating for federal tax dollars to serve those populations. That will assist in better service for the city overall. Electing new members to the council with new ideas

will enhance services to our constituents. In addition, I intend to host remote council meetings in different areas of the city where as a councilman I can participate with the public, with provided food and amenities that will make for a family night involving younger generations enjoying the festivities."

The solutions he is suggesting, Rhoades said, can be paid for through donations from civically-minded individuals. "Public-private partnerships can bridge the gap between government needs and societal desires while adding little to no cost to the city," he said. "For instance, enforcement on homelessness costs taxpayers through law enforcement and jail, yet we can re-allocate funding to be preventive in place of

reactive-style enforcement. This will alleviate the taxpayer burden through service providers and make tax dollars more efficient."

He has previous experience relating to government, he said.

"I was appointed to the City of Hesperia Public Safety Commission by former Councilmember Jeremiah Brosowski," Rhoades said.

He has live in Hesperia for 22 years and attended Hesperia High School. He obtained his bachelor's degree in political science from the University of California at Riverside in 2014 and his master's degree in public administration from Arkansas State University in 2019. He is on a trajectory to receive his doctorate in public administration from California Baptist University in 2023.

He ran and sold a business, Arrive GPS Solutions, and is in the midst of transferring the assets which were sold to another corporation. He is currently involved in contract consulting and substitute teaching with the Adelanto Elementary School District.

Unmarried, he is a single father to a 14-year-old son.

Rhoades said, "I'm here to listen and bring the voices of the people to the forefront. Equating public service to military service means that the position should provide services without self-interest and provide service to the people with the intention of running it where others can make money on their schedule while confirming to Assembly Bill 5.

-M.G.

Illegal Immigrant Advocates To Argue 2-To-2 Council Vote On Appeal Did Not Sustain Planning Commission's Appeal of GEO ICE Prison Expansion *from page 4*

Most of us are minorities that work with them. So, it's their own people who are here. I'm a minority myself. We are watching over our own, and making sure that nothing horrible is happening to these guys, because we do care, because everyone is human at the end of the day."

When the council got around to voting on the matter sometime shortly after 3 a.m. Thursday morning, they were unable to come to a consensus. They approached the vote from different angles. Mayor Gabriel Reyes and Councilwoman Joy Jeannette

put forth a motion to deny the appeal and allow the expansion. That approach failed, with Hernandez and Evans evening the score with two votes against it. Camargo did not participate in the matter, having recused himself from taking part in the decision.

Equally futilely, Councilwoman Stevonna Evans and Councilman Gerardo Hernandez floated a motion to uphold the appeal and deny GEO's expansion plan. That failed 2-to-2.

Based upon the planning commission's approval of the expansion proposal involving the conversion of the Desert View Modified Community Correctional Facility into an augmenting wing to the Adelanto Ice Processing Center, City Attorney Lloyd Pilchen said the planning commission's February vote remains intact, such that

GEO is now eligible to proceed with the expansion.

The legal team representing the appellants, in particular Grisel Ruiz with the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, is propounding the novel theory that the tie vote by the council on the appeal nullifies the planning commission's original vote, which runs contrary to custom, law, tradition and precedent, which holds that unless an appealed decision is clearly overturned, it remains in place. Ruiz has suggested that because a majority of the council failed to either deny the appeal or approve the expansion, adequate authority for the city – by means of a council decision – to give passage to GEO's request for expansion has not manifested. Indications were that a legal challenge of the project will now ensue.

During the course of the meeting, Councilwoman Evans referenced what she suggested was collusion or a "pay-to-play" circumstance that had arisen when the GEO offered last year to continue its bed tax payments to the city as well as an additional annual payment of \$50,000 for "facilitating the inter-governmental services

agreement" that exists between the city and the federal government relating to the prison even while the Desert View Modified Community Correctional Facility remained shuttered.

Meanwhile, the federal government and GEO, which have been limiting the number of inmates being located into the facility to the

point that it is now functioning at well under 50 percent capacity, are on the brink of loading the prison full of prisoners in light of their inability to get clearance to add 1,400 beds to GEO's immigrant holding facility in the community of McFarland in Central California earlier this year.

-Mark Gutglueck

Crowd At Forum Sought To Bait Current Fontana Police Chief With Questions About Former Police Chief's Tattoos *from page 3*

came in from members of the public participat-

ing in the forum, and the questions were then displayed to those watching the forum, the hosts had ultimate discretion as to which of the incoming questions were to be posed to the panelists. Though Green was given a reprieve from having to actually field some of the more pointed ques-

tions relating to his department, he could see them coming in as the participants logged in.

Green was asked about former Fontana Chief of Police Edward Stout. One question intended for Green related to reports that Stout had swastikas tattooed on his forearms, which

several members of the department had seen on occasion. The questioner sought to determine whether former Fontana Police Sergeant Darren Robb had indeed testified about Stout's tattoos during depositions. The question was not asked of Green by the panel.

Another set of related questions intended for Green consisted of whether he was familiar with the Jimmy Burleson murder case handled by the Fontana Police Department in which the victim's corpse was desecrated by a Fontana police official and whether the incident was ever investigated and if he would at this point call for an investigation into this crime. The question dwelled on Fontana Mayor Acquanetta Warren's alleged knowledge of what had occurred and that she had turned

a blind eye to finding out the truth because of the bad publicity. The panel elected not to ask Green that question.

Another question a *Continued on Page 10*

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Event Organizers Prevent Hostile Crowd From Taking Verbal Shots At Fontana Police Chief *from page 9*

a problem with racial disparity. Those hosting the forum decided not to put Green on the spot by pressing him on that matter.

District Attorney Jason Anderson was asked if he saw a conflict of interest in allowing law enforcement agencies to conduct investigations into incidents wherein those agencies became involved in the use of force. Anderson replied that doing it any other way would involve what he said would be re-inventing the wheel. Deflecting the question's suggesting that the current arrangement involved an inherent conflict of interest, he sought to substitute a reference to the community input concept he had championed during his successful 2018 election campaign. He spoke

about the community commission he intends to create composed of community leaders from each of the county's five supervisor districts. Anderson's thought process behind this, he indicated, was to "better inform the community about how the criminal justice system works, and get their feedback on ways to use the offices' resources." Anderson indicated he had no problem stacking the commission with members of the political establishment hand-picked by the members of the board of supervisors with a final look over by the district attorney's office. In his response, Anderson seemed more fixated on propounding the appearance of community involvement, seemingly unconcerned that the question pertained to the shooting of the disenfranchised members of the community whose interests are far afield, indeed contrary to any fake community commissions and yes men and women the county's most powerful

personages are willing to appoint. Anderson was not pressed as to whether he considered whether those who supported him in his run for San Bernardino County district attorney did so believing he would substitute a commission chartered to deliver a whitewash of police activity for accountability.

Anderson also touched on his creation of a team/taskforce which is to respond to cases in which officers or deputies use force, one which is comprised of deputy district attorneys and investigators. In a 2019 article Anderson stated that "it would benefit everybody to have a professional team that is going to make the right decision. We are the final arbitrators. Why aren't we out there getting into it at the beginning?" When citizens participating sought to question the district attorney as to whether he agreed that it would be better for those who police the police to originate from an outside unbiased agency or

entity, the question was killed as dead as certain San Bernardino County residents who have had fatal encounters with various police agencies.

The topic of police officers and their agencies being held accountable for breaking the law to the same standard applied to common citizens came up in the discussion. Anderson claimed that his office is not blinded by color, agency, or political party. If someone breaks the law, police officer or not, he said, the officer will be prosecuted. When members of the public in response suggested that Anderson be asked how many times the district attorney's office has filed charges against police officers as well as how many civil cases for racial discrimination or police brutality have ever been successful within the County of San Bernardino, the panel considered it to be impolite to ask the district attorney those questions.

The only question vaguely approaching the

characterization of hardball that the panel consented to to ask Green concerned the remodeling of the Fontana Police Station. He was asked why the department opted, in its choice of décor, for exhibiting old photos from civil rights protests, which showed police and police dogs surrounding black people as well as photos of police officers detaining and arresting minorities.

Green first responded by adamantly saying that was not true. Green went on to say that there are no pictures of officers surrounding minorities during the civil rights protests, and that the pictures in the station only show officers performing their duties. This contradicted multiple retired and current police officers who informed the *Sentinel* that in fact the Fontana Police Station did have that type of décor, backed up by a dozen photos taken at various locations within headquarters, both downstairs and upstairs.

After his initial de-

monstrably false statement, Green conceded that "Pictures of arrests will show more minorities in Fontana because the city is comprised of mostly minorities."

Over the years, little has changed within the Fontana Police Department with regard to diversity. Photos taken at the inception of the Fontana Police Department in the 1950s show virtually no officers of what today is referred to as protected minorities under U.S. Law – African Americans, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, Asians. Currently, Fontana's police department remains the least diverse police agency in the Inland Empire. In answering the one question set that was passed on to him by the forum's panel, Green characterized as hyperbole and misinformation suggestions that the policing profession in America originated for the purpose of capturing runaway slaves.

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San Bernardino County Coroner Reports

Coroner's Report #702007372 On Thursday, September 3, 2020, at 5:32 PM, a 911 call was received reporting a submerged vehicle in the Colorado River, approximately 1/2 mile east of Coors Island. Divers from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department were able to see a female body inside the vehicle. The vehicle was recovered from the river on 09/04/2020, at 9:41 AM. The person inside the vehicle was believed to be a 66-year-old resident of Bullhead City Arizona. The name is being withheld until the identification is confirmed. The Marine Enforcement Division of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department is investigating the incident. [09082020 1420 GB]

Coroner's Report #702007419 On Sunday, September 6, 2020, at 8:26 am, a 911 call was received reporting a motorcyclist was struck by a vehicle on southbound 395, south of mile marker 40, in Kramer Junction. The motorcyclist, James Rodgers, age 71, a resident of Fallbrook California was traveling south on 395 when a vehicle that was also traveling south on 395 veered off the roadway and back onto the roadway striking Rodgers as he was passed. Rodgers was transported to Victor Valley Global Medical Center Emergency Department where he was pronounced dead at 9:37 am. The California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident. [09072020 0923 GB]

Coroner's Report #702007415 On Sunday, September 6, 2020, at 6:32 am, a 911 call was received reporting a vehicle in a dirt field, west of Sheep Creek Road and south of Sandstone Road in Phelan. The vehicle was occupied by a single person and appeared to be traveling north on Sheep Creek Road and veered off the roadway into the dirt field and rolled over multiple times ejecting the driver from the vehicle. The driver of the vehicle was Mario Rodriguez, age 30, a resident of Bloomington. San Bernardino County Fire Department paramedics pronounced Rodriguez dead at 6:46 am. The California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident. [09072020 0923 GB]

Coroner's Report #702007387 At 4:36 PM on September 4, 2020, a 911 call was received reporting a two-vehicle traffic collision on the southbound U.S. Route 95 near mile marker 19 north of Vidal Junction. Emergency personnel responded and declared the driver of one of the involved vehicle, a 63-year-old male, deceased on scene. The name of the decedent is being withheld pending notification of next of kin. The Needles office of the California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident. [09052020 0521 JL]

Coroner's Report #702007385 On Friday, 09/04/2020, at 1:42 PM, a 911 call was received reporting a motorcyclist was struck by a vehicle on N. State Street and W. Darby Street in Muscoy. Emergency personnel responded and transported the motorcyclist, Jose Madrigal, a 26-year-old resident of San Bernardino, to the Arrowhead Regional Medical Center Emergency Department, where he was pronounced dead at 2:15 PM. The California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident. [09042020 2128 JL]

Coroner's Report #702007358 On Thursday, September 3, 2020, at 3:06 PM, the California Highway Patrol Dispatch received a 911 call regarding a traffic collision involving an SUV and a semi-tractor and trailer at El Mirage Road and Sheep Creek Road in the El Mirage portion of Adelanto. Emergency personnel were dispatched to the location, and upon arrival 41-year-old Jie Zhao-Willsey of Highland, the driver of the SUV, was declared dead on scene by American Medical Response paramedics. [09042020 2049 JL]

Coroner's Report #702007193 On Friday, August 28, 2020, at 9:08 PM, a 911 call was received reporting a single vehicle rollover near mile marker 119, on the eastbound lanes of Interstate 40, near Needles. Jake Huewe, age 26, a resident of Anaheim CA was driving the vehicle and was pronounced dead at the scene. His passenger was flown to a Las Vegas area hospital. The Needles office of the California Highway Patrol is investigating the collision. [08292020 0735 GB]

Coroner's Report #702007152 On Thursday, August 27, 2020, at 9:02 AM, a vehicle was found in a desert ravine behind residences on the 11400 block of Wintergreen Road in Pinon Hills. Inside were the remains of Josiah Hollaway, a 37-year-old resident of Phelan, who had been reported missing in early August 2020. Examinations will be conducted to determine the cause and manner of death. The California Highway Patrol is investigating. [08292020 0735 GB]

Coroner's Report #702007125 On Wednesday, August 26, 2020, at 12:57 pm, paramedics and law enforcement personnel responded to a solo vehicle traffic collision at the intersection of Del Norte Drive and Las Piedras Drive in the City of Victorville. They found the driver, Angel Gabriel Perez, age 27 from Victorville with injuries at the scene. He was pronounced dead at 1:06pm by paramedics. The Victorville Police Department, Traffic Division is investigating the collision. [08292020 0735 GB]

Coroner's Reports #702007092 & #702007104 On Wednesday, August 26, 2020, at about 1:36 AM, a shooting was reported on the 900 block of Carlson Ave., Redlands. Redlands Police and Redlands Fire personnel arrived on scene to find that three victims had been shot; two women and a male. Kenneth Allen Lee, a 54-year-old Compton resident, was pronounced dead at the scene. Kavina Madison Brooks, a 39-year-old resident of Redlands was transported to Redlands Community Hospital where she was pronounced dead in the emergency department at 2:06 AM. The incident was under investigation by Redlands Police Department Homicide Detail. [08292020 0735 GB]

Coroner's Report #702006934 On Friday, August 21, 2020, at 12:08 am, a 21-year-old white female was driving a Honda Accord east on San Bernardino Avenue in Fontana. The vehicle collided with a concrete structure. The female was pronounced dead on scene. Identification is being withheld pending notification to next of kin. California Highway Patrol Inland Division is investigating the incident. [08212020 1100 JK]

Coroner's Report #702006839 On August 18, 2020, at 3:23 PM a 911 call was received reporting a truck collision on Interstate 40 near mile marker 130, rural Needles. The driver was pronounced dead at the scene. The name of the driver will be released when identification is complete and his family is notified. The Needles office of the California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident. [08192020 0700 JK]

Coroner's Report #702006760 On Monday, August 17, 2020, at 11:50 am, deputies with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department responded to a multiple vehicle collision at the intersection of Village Drive and Llanada Avenue in Victorville. A driver, 50-year-old Maria Lourdes Mora of Adelanto was transported to Victor Valley Global Medical Center and pronounced deceased in the emergency department at 12:46 pm. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department is investigating the collision. [08182020 1000 JK]

Coroner's Report #702006688 On Friday, August 14, 2020, at 10:57 AM, a head-on collision was reported along Central Road in Apple Valley, between Klickitat Avenue and Ramona Road. A southbound blue 2000 Toyota Camry struck a pick-up truck. The driver of the Camry, Jaymar Williet Bryant, a 25-year-old resident of Apple Valley, was pronounced dead at the scene at 11:10 AM. The collision investigation was conducted by San Bernardino County Sheriff Department. [081620201045 GB]

Coroner's Report #702006491 On Tuesday, August 11, 2020, at 1:36 AM, officers of the California Highway Patrol were dispatched to State Route 210 near Campus Avenue in Upland, in response to a multi-vehicle traffic collision. Upon arrival, they found David Jackson, age 49, a resident of Monrovia, CA, the driver of a Ford Fusion, had been ejected from his vehicle and was lying on an embankment. He was pronounced dead on scene at 1:55 AM. The California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident. [081620201045 GB]

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Grace Bernal's

California Style

Zip It Up And Go



the new season. There is a lot going on. One is the dress and with this gar-

The fashion beat is happening now because it's time to jump into autumn clothes. Now that the temperatures are cooling off, it's time for the fabulous things people will be wearing for



ment comes a back zipper. It is looking great. This shows that women aren't fooling around with fantasy: they're getting down and zipping it up. What a fun way to begin the work

week. Labor Day is long gone and this definitely encouraged women to start looking into their autumn wardrobe. The one piece dress is the backbone for women and

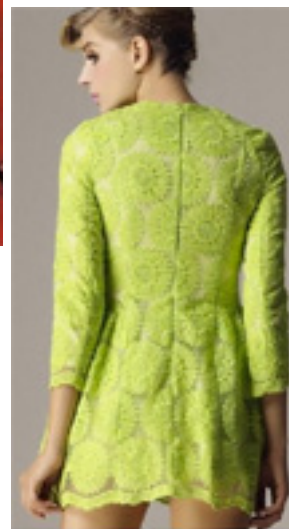


fashion. Make yourself perfect for work in this classic piece. The best thing about the one piece is it's easy to put on. Besides, it looks phenome-



"Your dresses should be tight enough to show you're a woman and loose enough to show you're a lady." -Edith Head

nal. Separates look great, too, but the solid classic one piece is traditional and fun. So let's zip it up and get into autumn with style.



Valdivia Now Employing Botello As His Main Political Advisor/Consultant from page 8

maining associated with Valdivia appears to have grown too dangerous for Jones.

As of June 30 of this year, the John Valdivia for Mayor 2022 campaign fund had an ending balance of \$70,509.73, an impressive head start that would seem to favor Valdivia with regard to his effort to stay in office, which will be tested at the election now scheduled for June 7, 2022. The vast majority of the money in that campaign account was accumulated with Jones' assistance. Since that time, a \$5,000 contribution from Michael Armada, the owner of Armada

Towing, a \$1,000 contribution from AAJ Management, doing business as Town Lodge Motel in San Bernardino, and a \$2,000 contribution from Gil Botello's campaign fund for his current effort to be elected to the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District Board have been made to Valdivia's electioneering fund. Though that \$78,509.73 may be sufficient to ward off some who might consider challenging Valdivia for reelection in two years, there are indications that a few ambitious politicians and would-be politicians are intent on vying for San Bernardino mayor themselves, convinced that the incumbent is vulnerable.

Word came to the *Sentinel* last week that Jones will not be serving Valdivia as his primary advisor/campaign

consultant when 2022 dawns. A former holder of multiple elected offices who was himself within the Jones political camp told the *Sentinel*, "John may run, but he will not win. He has some money, and he still has a few backers, but his sources of money are drying up. You didn't hear it from me, but Chris is done with John."

There is another unmistakable sign that Jones and Valdivia are parting ways. Valdivia has hired Gil Botello to serve as his campaign consultant. In the campaign report that Valdivia's committee was obliged to provide showing fundraising and expenditure activity during the first six months of 2020, it was reported that Botello was paid \$850 to begin serving as Valdivia's campaign consultant at the tail end of June.

Botello's credentials as a campaign consultant are questionable. As a candidate for the San Bernardino City Council in the First District in 2018, Botello lost to Ted Sanchez, who was supported by Valdivia and who employed Jones as his consultant. More recently, Botello, who is currently running for the seat representing Division 2 on the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District Board, was outmaneuvered in his bid to capture the Democratic Central Committee's endorsement in that race. While the San Bernardino County Democratic Central Committee panel interviewing candidates vying for election this year initially recommended to the entirety of the central committee that Botello be given the party endorsement over the incumbent, Gil

Navarro, when the entire central committee considered information brought forth connecting Botello to Valdivia, the full body voted to endorse Navarro over Botello.

Despite Valdivia's support of Sanchez in his run against Botello in the 2018 election, the alliance between Valdivia and Sanchez has dissolved. This became apparent in October 2019, when Valdivia moved to appoint Botello to the city's Personnel Commission, which was widely seen as a slap at Sanchez. Botello and Valdivia have grown ever closer, with Valdivia now, it appears, employing him as his main advisor and political consultant, supplanting Jones. According to several San Bernardino city officials and employees, Valdivia is allowing

Botello to work out of Valdivia's office on the third floor of the Vanir Building, which is now serving as the interim City Hall in the aftermath of the shuttering of San Bernardino City Hall because of seismic instability considerations.

Valdivia providing Botello, who is engaged in political activity on the mayor's behalf, with office space within the city's governmental premises is illegal. Valdivia's calculation that his position of power will prevent any enforcement activity with regard to misuse of government facilities, while likely correct, is an example of the errors in judgment and risk taking on the mayor's part that has convinced Jones that it is best that he end his professional relationship with Valdivia.