

Friday, June 14, 2024 A Fortunado Publication in conjunction with Countywide News Service 10808 Foothill Blvd. Suite 160-446 Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730 (951) 567-1936

## Having Jettisoned Montoya, SB Council Now Mulling Proceeding With Calvin Censure

By Mark Gutglueck

The sharp division on the San Bernardino City Council has not abated despite the temporary consensus that manifested on May 22 with unanimous eight vote decision to terminated City Manager Charles Montoya. Up in the air is whether the council will proceed with its ruling majority's earlier-stated intention of censuring Councilwoman Kimberly

Calvin before she leaves office later this year.

The poisonous political atmosphere which has been brewing for more than 18 months has created tensions which now extend to questions over the continuing tenure of the city attorney and whether the elected leadership will be able to resolve its differences in a way that will allow the city to find an administrator to plan, organize, direct and control mu-

nicipal operations in the county seat for a duration which will allow for stability in the 170-year-old city.

Shortly after Helen Tran's electoral victory in the 2022 mayoral election which saw then-Mayor John Valdivia – a highly polarizing figure – defeated and due to leave office, then-City Manager Robert Field resigned over concerns that his ties to Valdivia would leave him at odds

with the incoming Tran regime. The city council then turned to former City Manager Charles McNeely to serve as interim city manager while a recruitment for Field's replacement was carried out by the Berkeley-based Koff & Associates/Arthur J. Gallagher & Company headhunting firm. In bringing in McNeely, the council made a fateful commitment that at least some would come to regret.

They declared that whoever was to serve in the interim management capacity would not be eligible for consideration in the recruitment of a long-term city manager. Within a few months, McNeely, who had provisionally come out of retirement to take on the temporary assignment, began to warm toward the idea of reassuming the post of city manager on a full-fledged basis. This sparked a **See P 4**

## SBC Sheriff's Deputies Doing A First Class Job Persuading The Homeless To Leave

With the arrival of summer nearing, lower downs in the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department are complying with orders from higher ups to get aggressive with the county's homeless population in an effort to induce them to leave for places elsewhere.

Around the county, the destitute tend to congregate and set up living quarters on sidewalks, in parks, alleyways, in the Mojave River, Santa Ana River or Lytle Creek riverbeds or around them, under railroad trestles or freeway overpasses, hidden in the spreads of chaparral that are a feature of much of the undeveloped land locally or within the landscaping along freeways or state highways.

Since late May, the sheriff's department, which serves as the contract police department in Rancho Cucamonga, has vectored its deputies, working in conjunction with the California Department of Transportation, known as Caltrans, to remove homeless individuals subsisting in encampments. Over the past several weeks, the department received information regarding the encampments located near the Interstate 15 Freeway's intersection with Foothill Boulevard and Arrow Route.

In recent years, the sheriff's department has refined its methodology for dealing with the homeless, having developed a formula that obscures the iron fist being used to squeeze

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## Spurning Lowering Staff Salaries, Yucaipa Passes 2024-25 Budget With \$7.3M Deficit

On June 12, the Yucaipa City Council signed off on its 57,766-population city's 2024-25 spending plan, which is to entail \$7.3 million less in revenue than expenditures in its three operating budgets.

This is the second year in a row that the city is engaging in deficit spending. The revenue shortfall is to be made up by drawing funds out of

the city's reserves.

According to Phil White, Yucaipa's director of finance, it is anticipated that approximately \$35.7 million will flow into the city's general fund from all external sources in the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025. Over the same 12 months, there will be \$40.1 million in expen-

ditures from the general fund. "The net of these budgetary flows is general fund deficit of \$4.4 million," White stated.

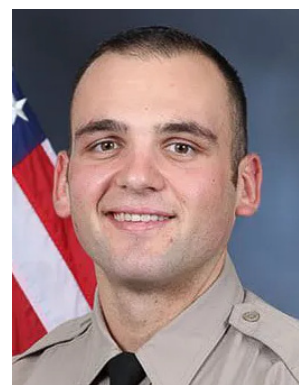
The other category contained in Yucaipa's operations budget is its public safety fund. This coming year, the public safety fund is projected to make total outlays of \$23.5 million. Of that, \$13.6 million is to be consumed by making

good on the city's contract with San Bernardino County for the law enforcement services of the sheriff's department, which serves as the city police department in Yucaipa, as is the case with 13 other county municipalities, those being Adelanto, Apple Valley, Big Bear Lake, Chino Hills, Grand Terrace, Hesperia, Highland, Loma Linda, Needles, Rancho

Cucamonga, Twentynine Palms, Victorville and Yucca Valley. The city contracts with the California Division of Forestry and Fire Protection, known by its acronym, CalFire, for both fire protection and paramedic services. Yucaipa is due to pay CalFire \$5.3 million for fire protection services and \$2.1 million for paramedic services. **See P 2**

## Jury Hangs & Mistrial Declared In Smith-Jones Assault Trial

Corie Smith, the former sheriff's deputy who was presented with two lifesaving awards in 2020 but whose law enforcement career ended in ignominy the following year when he was caught on video kicking a prone and surrendering suspect in the head, this week successfully concluded his and his legal team's three-year battle



Corie Smith

to keep him from being labeled a felon. **See P 3**

## FPPC Postpones Levying Near-Record Election Fund Hiding Fine On Adelanto Councilman Ramos

Less than a month after the California Political Fair Practices Commission put in place what it represented as final preparations to impose on Adelanto City Councilman Daniel Ramos one of the largest penalty assessments ever made against a local officeholder, the councilman has apparently begun negotiations with

the state's official political watchdog agency over how to cure the reporting violations he has amassed over the last six years.

According to the May 16, 2024 agenda for the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC), Ramos, who is currently Adelanto's mayor pro tem, despite numerous notifications and posted

requests that he do so, had not submitted campaign fund accounting paperwork for his unsuccessful 2018 campaign for the Victorville City Council and he had further repeatedly failed to provide an accounting of his victorious 2020 campaign for the Adelanto City Council.

All told, it is estimated that Ramos **See P 3**

## Man Arrested for Placing an Explosive Device Near A Residence in Rancho Cucamonga

A Devore man has been arrested on suspicion of having planted a bomb in a Rancho Cucamonga residential neighborhood. On June 3, 2024, at 4:36 PM, deputies from the Rancho Cucamonga Police Department responded the 9300 block of Lomita Drive regarding reports of a suspicious device near the

roadway. Residents nearby were evacuated as a precaution. The San Bernardino Sheriff's arson/bomb detail responded and the explosive device was disarmed and removed. Residents in the evacuated area were allowed back into their homes at about 10:20 p.m. Through investigation, Detective Derek Brandt



identified the suspect responsible for having planted the device as Brian Carreon, a convicted felon, and believes Carreon is responsible for placing the explosive device at the location. On June 7, 2024, Carreon, 52 of Devore, was arrested for Penal Code 18715, possession of explosives in public. A search warrant at Carre-

on's residence in Devore revealed chemicals and materials consistent with making explosive devices. Chemicals known to manufacture methamphetamine, a stolen firearm, and ammunition were also found. Additional felony charges have been recommended to the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office.