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Colonies Development Debacle Déjà Vu With Pending Sale Of RC Flood Land To Builder

By Mark Gutglueck

In a situation remarkably similar, and with multiple parallels, to the events that preceded the Colonies development debacle that cost San Bernardino County's taxpayers \$167 million, the board of supervisors on November 19 considered, but held off on, the sale of 1,252.21 acres of so-called surplus flood control property to a residential developer.

The 1,252.21 acres in

question lie within what is now referred to as the Etiwanda Heights Neighborhood and Conservation Plan Area, contained within the current Rancho Cucamonga City Limits. The property, set amidst what under normal conditions is a dry alluvial creek, during fall, winter and spring rainstorms transforms into a raging river, was used historically by the San Bernardino County Flood Control District to

manage stormwater runoff from the San Gabriel Mountains flowing south into both the Day Creek and Deer Creek streams. Over the past four decades, according to Noel Castillo, San Bernardino County's chief flood control engineer and Terry Thompson, the director of San Bernardino County's real estate services department, improvements made by the San Bernardino County Flood Control Dis-

trict, including the Day Creek and Deer Creek Debris Dam, spreading grounds, and channels, have rendered the property unnecessary for flood management and surplus to San Bernardino County Flood Control District needs.

Nearly 16 years ago, the county board of supervisors, as it was then composed, on February 24, 2009 declared a 1,200-acre portion of the property surplus, there-

after inviting proposals relating to the utilization of the property, preparatory toward the potential sale of the property. At that time, a portion of the flood control property fell within the Rancho Cucamonga City Limits and the majority of the property was situated on unincorporated county land within the City of Rancho Cucamonga's sphere of influence.

The intent as enunciated by the **See P 2**

Wallis Again Outdistances Holstege

In a replay of their 2022 match-up and its results as well as a reversal of the early returns on election night, incumbent Greg Wallis has defeated Christy Holstege in this year's race to represent the 47th Assembly District.

On Wednesday afternoon, November 20 at which point Wallis had taken a 115,639 vote to 110,658 vote lead, Holstege conceded, doing so on her social media account Wednesday afternoon.

The state of the vote tally this week contrasted with what the initial returns showed on election night and shortly thereafter. Holstege held a narrow lead over the incumbent when the votes from both San Bernardino and Riverside counties, over which the 47th District is spread, were counted on the night of November 5. That lead held through the following day, with the California Secretary of State's website showing that Holstege was leading 50.2 percent to 49.8 percent just after 5 p.m. on November 6. Over the next three days, however, Wallis (R-Rancho Mirage) closed the gap and surpassed the challenger.

As was the case in 2022, Holstege won by a respectable margin in the more populous Riverside County portion of the district, but was hopelessly outdistanced in San Bernardino County.

The 47th District covers Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, Cathedral City, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, La Quinta, Yucaipa, Palm Springs, Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage and San Jacinto in Riverside County and Yucca Valley, Yucaipa, Redlands and **See P 3**

It Is Clayton Versus Carvalho In A Fight To The Finish In San Bernardino

The 59.6 square mile, 224,274-population town of San Bernardino isn't big enough, apparently, for Rochelle Clayton and Sonia Carvalho.

Over the next several weeks, the city council as it now exists will partially recompose itself by shedding Fifth Ward Councilman Ben Reynolds, Sixth Ward Councilwoman Kimberly Calvin and Seventh Ward

Councilman Damon Alexander and take on in their places, respectively, Kim Knaus, Mario Flores and Treasure Ortiz. As the calendar progresses into the first weeks and months of 2025 and the latter three acclimate themselves to their positions of authority, either Clayton will be relieved of her current status as acting city manager and be returned

to her original position of assistant city manager or she will be promoted to full-fledged status as the city's top administrator. If, indeed, Clayton is entrusted with the administration of San Bernardino's municipal government, the continuation of Carvalho's now more-than-six-year-long tenure as San Bernardino City Attorney will no longer be tenable. She

will be forced to leave the city, taking her firm, Best Best & Krieger, with her.

On the other hand, if the city council, in the aftermath of an outside consulting firm's ongoing evaluation of the performances of the city manager, city attorney and city clerk, ultimately decides to stay the course with Carvalho, the likelihood that the

city council would elect to permanentize Clayton in the city manager role is virtually nil and, moreover, her remaining in the assistant city manager position from which she rose into the interim manager post she now holds would present such an awkward circumstance that she would probably have to depart the city altogether.

This week's **See P 3**

Squaw Being Removed From 43 State & 4 County Location Names

As the result of what Assemblyman James Ramos considers his most personal, proudest and meaningful accomplishment, the State of California has already renamed a dozen and will change the names on 31 more locations throughout the state that contained the word "squaw."

Assembly Bill 2022,

authored by Ramos was passed by both houses of the state legislature earlier this year and signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom on September 25. It goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2025, and requires the term "squaw" to be removed from all geographic features and place names in California.

There is to **See P 3**

State Staggering After \$165B Budget Miscalculation

By Dan Walters *CalMatters*

History will — or at least should — see a \$165 billion error in revenue estimates as one of California's most bone-headed political acts.

It happened in 2022, as the state was emerging from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gov. Gavin Newsom's Department of Finance, based on one short-term

spike in income taxes, projected that revenues from the state's three largest sources would remain above \$200 billion a year indefinitely.

Newsom then declared that the budget had a \$97.5 billion surplus, although that number never appeared in any documents.

"No other state in American history has ever experienced a sur-

plus as large as this," Newsom bragged as he unveiled a 2022-23 fiscal year budget that topped \$300 billion.

With that in mind, he and the Legislature adopted a budget with billions in new spending, most notably on health and welfare programs and cash payments to poor families.

Within a few weeks, Newsom and **See P 5**

Jury Hits Walmart With \$34.7M Judgment For Badmouthing Injured AV Truck Driver

A San Bernardino County jury has awarded a former Walmart truck driver \$34.7 million, based on what that same jury said was the company's false accusations against him that he had engaged in fraud and was faking the severity of injuries he suffered after he was rear-ended while making a delivery for the retail giant.

The substantial

award, what some in the courthouse on November 19 called exorbitant, came after the jury determined that the company falsely accused the driver of fraud, then firing him while he was on injury leave.

Jesus Fonseca was employed for 14 years as a truck driver for Walmart, operating for most of that time out of the Apple Valley Distri-

bution Center. In 2017, while operating one of Walmart's trucks on I-15, Fonseca was rear-ended by another semi-truck. Fonseca was put on medical leave the day following the accident. After a relatively short time while he was on injury leave, he attempted, according to his lawyers, to return to work for Walmart, but was unable, to engage

in "commercial driving" and further disallowed to engage in "pushing, pulling, bending, stooping and lifting over 5-10 pounds."

Fonseca's lawyers maintain he requested alternate duties at the Apple Valley Distribution Center, including desk work or clerical assignments monitoring the dispatch of trucks, but was not given that

opportunity by Walmart. The company made no effort to match him with tasks which he could perform, according to his lawyers.

When later in in 2017 Fonseca took vacation time to travel with his family, as he had scheduled to do before the accident in which he was injured, Walmart hired a private investigator who shadowed **See P 5**