

Communication "A" - June 9, 2011 Special Calistoga City Council Meeting

Kathleen Guill
72 Holly Drive, Calistoga, CA 94515

CITY OF CALISTOGA
City Clerk

Date: June 08, 2011

To: Honorable Mayor Gingles and Council Members
Richard Spittler, City Manager

JUN 9 2011

Subject: Budget Study Session
Item E) General Government
1) Planning & Building Budget - Department Reorganization

RECEIVED

As you would likely suspect, my initial response is personal. The proposed elimination of the Planning and Building Administrative Secretary "P&B Admin" position will eliminate the position that I have proudly held for almost eight years and I have developed a strong connection with the community I serve. Of course the approval of this recommendation will influence my personal economic status; however this is not the basis for my objection.

I implore you to please give serious consideration to the obvious void that will be experienced with the loss of the "P&B Admin" services. The budget staff report (reference page 12) summarizes "Major Department Goals for FY 2011-12" and the very first bullet speaks to:

- *Core Services: Maintain FY 2010-11 level of service with reduced staffing level.*

Reality is the P & B department's day to day functionality and performance will be dramatically reduced. I would be amiss if I didn't applaud staff members Ken MacNab and Erik Lundquist because they already produce an enormous amount of work and have directly elevated the perceived credibility of our department, but the mission of maintaining the existing level of service will be impossible for them to achieve. They are definitely the "wheels" in the department, but the Admin is the "axle" that keeps everything going for the customers and the team.

The P & B Department as a whole has already experienced serious reductions. Earlier this year the Director position was vacated and the work load was absorbed by the existing planning staff. The full time Building Official position has been replaced with a contract Building Official that is available to our community twelve hours per week, a wide variety of the communications, scheduling, drafting, processing has been absorbed by or delegated to the P&B Admin.

The P&B Admin accepts, initiates and/or issues planning applications, building permits, code enforcement complaints, records requests, responds to zoning questions, issues burn permits for the Fire department, aids walk in visitors with directions, and occasionally accepts water bill payments for finance when

Re: 1) Planning & Building Budget - Department Reorganization

June 08, 2011

Page 2 of 2

needed. The Admin is the appointed Planning Commission Secretary, prepares agenda's, meeting packets, legal noticing, prepares minutes and maintains the department web pages.

This is my attempt to not only justify the need for the position, but raise the awareness that this is a key role within the department as well as cross departmentally. It is ludicrous to suggest department personnel can absorb the responsibilities and interruptions and still "*Maintain FY 2010-11 level of service*".

Our department has worked hard to attain a level of service the community deserves and we can be proud of.

Please consider other remedies for reductions that could be experienced across the board with a reduced affect to the community and staff. Staff members have voluntarily negotiated concessions in the past. Please look at all possible options before any single department becomes dysfunctional.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Guill".

Kathleen Guill
Planning and Building Administrative Assistant