

Alameda Sun

Locally Owned, Community Oriented



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Alameda Sun Almanac

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Today	07:15	19:19
March 20	07:14	19:20
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Council Taps Warmerdam to Succeed City Manager

Michele Ellison
The Alamedan

City Council members have asked Assistant City Manager Liz Warmerdam to serve as Alameda's interim city manager when the city's current manager, John Russo, leaves on May 1.

The City Council voted unanimously last week to offer Warmerdam, who started her municipal career in Alameda and came back as assistant city manager in 2013, the interim city manager's job. The council will vote on a contract for Warmerdam at a date to be announced.

"I'm looking forward to working with Liz Warmerdam in this capacity. I really think it's an opportunity for us to get to know her and to see her strengths," Mayor Trish Herrera Spencer said.

Spencer said it was nice that the council offered Warmerdam the interim job on a unanimous vote. "Obviously she will have the full support of the council as we go into this next chapter," she said.

Russo called Warmerdam "one of the best public servants I've had the opportunity to work with." He called her bright, hard working and principled.

"I'm glad to see that the City Council saw this as an easy decision," Russo said.

Warmerdam said she was honored to be offered the job. "I was honored to be offered the position of interim city manager and feel it's my duty and responsibility to our exceptional city staff and deserving community to provide a seamless transition from now until a permanent city manager is selected," she said. "The City Council is entrusting the steward-

ship of the organization to me, and I pledge to do my best to meet that challenge."

Warmerdam, an Alameda resident, spent five years in the Army, serving in Germany and Korea before being honorably discharged at the rank of captain. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Rochester, where she played on an NCAA Division III championship women's soccer team. She also holds master's degrees in public administration and regional planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



Liz Warmerdam City of Alameda

Warmerdam started her municipal career in Alameda in 1997 as a management analyst for the city's community development department. After a few years in Alameda she moved on to Pinole, where she worked as an assistant to the city manager there, as well as a redevelopment project manager.

She spent almost a decade in Hercules, where she worked as an assistant city manager, a consultant for the city's redevelopment agency, interim finance director and deputy city manager. Her accomplishments in Hercules included opening a public library and adding territory to the city's redevelopment area.

She served as interim finance director in Hercules during a tumultuous time. The city faced major budget deficits, charges that a former city manager had steered millions of dollars in no-bid contracts to a company he owned and a recall election, Warmerdam eliminated a \$6 million deficit through labor

Russo called Warmerdam "one of the best public servants I've had the opportunity to work with."

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Council Quashes Measure A Moratorium

Dennis Evanosky

In 1973 the city amended its charter to prevent multiple dwelling units from being built in the city. In many cases these units replaced the Island's Victorian-era homes. In 1991 the amendment, popularly known as "Measure A," was amended to define the maximum density as one housing unit per 2,000 square feet of land.

Over time developers have asked for so many waivers so as not to comply with "Measure A" that the City Council considered putting a moratorium on granting these exemptions. At its last meeting, however, councilmembers decided not to move forward with this idea.

Instead the city staff will work to clarify the city's rules for granting these waivers. They will also consider ways to ensure developers don't build more homes than the land set aside for development can realistically handle.

The city amended its charter in 1973 to preserve Alameda's Victorian-era persona as represented by this home.



File photo

Former Vice Mayor Enjoys Good Life

Assemblyman files Form 700 with list of 'gifts' received

Dennis Evanosky

Assemblyman Rob Bonta recently filed his statement of economic interest, called a Form 700, as required by the California Fair Practices Commission. On March 4, the state of California released the details of this statement and those filed by other elected officials and those with possible conflicts of interest.

Bonta's statement shows that Alameda's representative in the Assembly and the city's former vice-mayor listed items that include \$400 worth of Golden State Warriors tickets from Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan. Chan represents Alameda on the Board of Supervisors. While Bonta was enjoying the game a Jumbotron message appeared to let his fellow spectators know he was in the house. The Warrior Community Foundation picked up the \$250 tab for the message.

Bonta attended more Warrior games in 2014, one compliments of the Warriors themselves and another of Shawn Wilson, who served as former Alameda County Supervisor Alice Lai Bitker's chief of staff. Wilson paid for a pair of Warriors' tickets for Bonta.

Bonta also enjoyed a Bruno Mars concert on Wilson's dime. Wilson had ties to Alliance Campaign Strategies. The company lists former councilwoman Lena Tam as a past client along with Bonta and Jeff Cambra. Cambra ran an unsuccessful campaign for City Council in 2012.

Bonta also used "gift" tickets to attend a San Francisco '49ers game, compliments of United Airlines, and an Oakland Athletics game with the A's paying the tab. Oakland City Council President Rebecca Kaplan gave Bonta \$314.60 worth of tickets to hear Miley Cyrus belt out "Party in the U.S.A." and "We Can't Stop" up close and personal.

The political-campaign management firm of Duffy & Capitolo sprung for a photo shoot for the Assemblyman at a cost of \$200.

Bonta also received sizable gifts from Yale Law School (\$996.57); the California Dental Association (\$1,889.19) — Bonta shares a seat on the Committee on Appropriations with Jim Wood, the only practicing dentist in the Assembly; and the Filipino organization Gawad Kalinga USA (\$1,250).

Bonta listed his most sizable gift at \$2,290. He stated that, in return, he "made a speech and participated in a panel" — boiler-plate language that allows lawmakers to skirt the \$390 limit on gifts.

"Various exceptions to the gift limit may apply if the official travels to give a speech, or travels on behalf of a government agency or nonprofit organization for a governmental purpose," the California Fair Practices Commission states.

Bonta failed to mention (he was not required to) that he was among more than 24 lawmakers Independent Voter Project (IVP), a San Diego nonprofit, jetted to Hawaii for a weeklong excursion last November. IVP purports to educate citizens and energize "decline-to-state" voters to participate in public dialogue and elections. IVP paid an average of \$2,500 to fete each lawmaker at the Hawaiian junket in 2013.

The annual conferences have become an "unwelcome tradition," Sarah Swanbeck, a legislative affairs representative of California Common Cause told *Los Angeles Times* reporter Thomas McGreevey. Common Cause has called for stricter limits — even a ban — on such conferences.

In a November 2012 story about the junkets that year, journalist Derrick W. Roach wrote that "IVP is the parent organization of a web of subsidiary organizations with officers and directors who are anything but independent."

According to McGreevey, IVP has accepted money from 24 interest groups, each ponying up as much as \$7,500. His research showed interest groups that con-

News Analysis

tribute money to IVP to help the nonprofit pay for the trips to Hawaii include:

- The California Cable and Telecommunications Association, whose members include Comcast
- The California Correctional Peace Officers Association, which represents the state's prison guards
- The California Distributors Association, which represents distributors of tobacco and other products to grocery and convenient stores
- Occidental Petroleum, the state's largest oil and natural gas producer
- The Western State Petroleum Association that, according to its website is currently opposing "any California legislation or regulatory mandates designed to force a 50 percent reduction in the amount of gasoline and diesel California consumers and businesses use by 2030"
- The drug firm Eli Lilly whose website says the company is committed to participating in the political process
- The Altria tobacco firm (which is Phillip Morris Tobacco rebranded), a tobacco company that recently introduced its own e-cigarette.

As a non-profit, IVP is not required to disclose the identity of any of its funding sources. The Internal Revenue Service only requires that the organization disclose its total income. Last October, just a month before Bonta's trip to Hawaii, Gov. Jerry Brown vetoed legislation that would have required nonprofits like IVP doing business in California to disclose their funding sources.

Roach writes that "it is estimated that for every four dollars spent in politics, one dollar now goes through nonprofit organizations, which are not required to disclose donor identities."

Contact Dennis Evanosky at editor@alamedasun.com.

Traffic Briefs

Sun Staff Reports

Harbor Bay Ferry parking discussion next Thursday

The Transportation Commission is set to consider Harbor Bay Ferry parking recommendations.

The Public Works Department has developed these recommendations to alleviate parking on Adelpian Way and Harbor Bay Parkway. Plans include the conversion of 24 two-hour parking spaces on Adelpian Way to unrestricted parking spaces, while keeping seven two-hour parking spaces in place.

Public Works is also recommending adding 25 unrestricted parking spaces to Harbor Bay Parkway. Plans call for prohibiting parking on both streets from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

The commission will meet at 7 p.m., Thursday, March 25, in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 2263 Santa Clara Ave. The meeting is open to the public.

Caltrans Revamping 23rd, 29th Avenues

Reconstruction of Interstate 880's 23rd Avenue and 29th Avenue overcrossings in Oakland will begin on Friday, April 3, and stretch to October 2016. The work will effect traffic using the Park Street Bridge. Caltrans will demolish the existing overcrossings and replace them with new ones.

When work is completed the pair of two-lane 23rd Avenue overcrossings will have single three-lane span. The 29th Avenue overcrossing, which currently has two lanes will also have a three-lane crossing. Caltrans says that the new spans will offer improved bike and pedestrian access.

High Street Bridge remains closed

Work on the High Street Bridge continues. The bridge will remain closed through Monday, April 27, from 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Crews are repairing the bridge's deck and replacing the center lock, which

holds the bridge in place in the down position.

Alameda Point walking tour set

On Saturday, March 28, the developer for Site A at Alameda Point, Alameda Point Partners, will be leading a one-mile tour of the area they intend to develop. To join the walk, gather outside 1800 Ferry Point at 10 a.m.

Transportation for persons with disabilities will be provided, but space is limited. To reserve a spot, email alamedapoint@alamedaca.gov with name, phone number and number of seats required.

For more information on the walking tour, visit the city's website www.alamedaca.gov.

Harbor Bay Celebrates Lunar New Year

Mike Lano

Harbor Bay Intercultural Committee's 17th annual Lunar New Year Festival drew a large crowd to Harbor Bay Landing shopping center last Saturday. Visitors strolled among booths that included landscapers and health-care and dental professionals. A clown provided balloons for the kids while artists demonstrated their calligraphy and fruit-carving skills.

The festival that celebrated the Year of the Ram featured music by the Lincoln Middle School Marching Band. The middle schoolers played songs that included "Happy" and Gershwin's "Strike up the Band." Philippine, Mongolian, and Chinese folk dancers entertained the crowd that also enjoyed children's songs and dances, a lion dance, as well as Tai Chi, karate and fruit carving demonstrations.

Proceeds from the "Wheel of Luck" game raised \$400 and awareness for the Alameda Food Bank. Booth donations and auctions of fruit carvings raised \$200 for Alameda Meals on Wheels.



Mike Lano

A martial arts demonstration on the lagoon was just one of many performances at this year's Lunar New Year Festival. For more images from the festival, visit the new gallery at www.alamedasun.com.