

MORRO BAY MATTERS

Volume 1, Issue 8

February 5, 2023

DEDICATION

We dedicate this issue to Marie Catanesi. From its inception, she walked every issue to so many doors in town. Her insight and humor is sorely missed. R.I.P.

SEWER PLANT (WRF)

The City's Public Works Department announced a one-afternoon-only public tour of the sewer plant for Thursday, Feb. 23, 1-4pm. The invite directs people to park on Teresa Drive, the frontage street of the senior housing facility, and then walk uphill into the facility.

Even those with handicap stickers? With limited afternoon hours on a week day, what audience is the Department trying to attract?

"Reserve your tour time slot by Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023" at morro-bay-water-resources-center-eventbrite.com

Last year's massive mud runoff resulted in the Regional Water Quality Control Board determining the City violated its permit due to inadequate erosion control. This winter's predicted January storms found the facility, once again, ineffectively prepared. Contrary to its Pollution Plan, mud flowed into the storm drain dumping into the National Estuary.

The Water Board charges the City with **preventing** pollution, not **reacting** to it. The concrete ditch employed to catch the runoff was inadequate for the task. The landslide area had not been covered with straw nor hydroseeded.

The inevitable change order(s) resulting from the storms' destruction should be paid by the builders, since the keys to the plant have yet to be turned over to the City.

POWER PLANT SITE

At the **June, 2022**, public EIR (Environment Impact Report) Scoping meeting, residents were told that the draft EIR for the power plant site would be completed by the end of the year, 2022.

In **November, 2022**, the City reported the draft EIR would be out in the Spring, 2023.

Now, in **February, 2023**, the draft EIR has been pushed to at least Summer, 2023. The writers of the EIR are awaiting technical studies from the power plant owner.

Meanwhile, locals (Morro Bay, Los Osos, Cayucos) formed a group, **Citizens for Estero Bay Coastal Preservation**. The **Citizens'** goal is to uphold the City's *General Plan* and to promote citizen involvement in city council meetings. *Plan Morro Bay* is the nickname for the *General Plan*. Its Introduction states, "use *Plan Morro Bay* to understand the overall community consensus on how the city should continue to develop and evolve as a place to live, work, and invest." **Citizens** support the visitor serving commercial designation for the power plant site as proposed in the new *Zoning Ordinance*. It states, "Waterfront and Harbor Area Districts 17.11.010 Purpose C. Preserve the attraction of the City as a tourist destination with visitor-serving facilities, shopping and amusement areas, recreational amenities, and public parks and beaches, but still retain the City's small-town 'fishing port' character."

CAL supports the efforts of Citizens for Estero Bay Coastal Preservation. Their contact is: preserveesterobay@gmail.com

FORD BORDERING ON CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

City Council Member Ford has accepted a fulltime job with Assembly Member Addis as her Senior Field Representative.

According to the job description, Ford "will represent the Assemblymember at local government, community, and private interest group meetings, producing reports describing key issues discussed and making recommendations for action on significant issues."

In addition, she "will enhance the Assemblymember's relationships and presence in the community, oftentimes making presentations at events on behalf of the Assemblymember."

Assemblymember Addis sits on the Natural Resources Committee (which includes green energy) and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Joint Committee. Ford's salary range is \$57,600-\$136,800 plus health benefits. The combination of her boss' interests, her responsibilities to her boss, and her healthy income gives the appearance of a conflict of interest on significant votes anticipated before Morro Bay's City Council this year.

Ford began her city council career with conflicts of interest. She recused herself from voting 9 times in her first 9 months. In the last 6 months of 2022, she did not recuse herself. These recusals were due to conflicts of interest with her local marketing clients and her own contracts with the City.

Recusals are legitimate. When they become routine, voters have to wonder if they are receiving full benefit from their elected representative. Watch for an up-tick in recusals now that Ford must influence locals publicly and privately on behalf of her boss' positions, as well as produce reports with recommendations on key issues to her boss.

OCEAN WIND FARMS AND REACH

Once the ocean tracts were awarded in December to 3 companies, information on the proposed wind farms has been fairly quiet.

Next steps include environmental studies, logistics of production and bringing it to shore, and the cost of construction.

Rather than have fixed turbines, the turbines off our shore will be floating, due to the depth of the Pacific Ocean.

According to [CAL MATTERS](https://calmatters.org/), "The turbines are hundreds of feet tall with blades that are bigger than a football field."

<https://calmatters.org/>

A self-appointed group called REACH suggests in their white paper that both Avila and Morro Bay be considered as support locations.

Curiously, only in December, 2022, when REACH's white paper on the subject was released, did the town learn about the City's involvement spanning the last 2 years.

Without coming to the City Council in public, the City contributed \$25,000 to the writing of the REACH white paper. In addition, Mayor Heading, Council Member Ford, Harbor Director Endersby, and Chamber of Commerce President Crawford officially represented the City to REACH without public knowledge.

Read more about REACH here:

<https://reachcentralcoast.org/offshore-wind/>

Read the full report by copying and pasting:

<https://reachcentralcoast.org/wp-content/uploads/Waterfront-Infrastructure-Report-121522.pdf>

MORRO BAY MATTERS is brought to you by Citizens For Affordable Living (CAL) to inform Morro Bay citizens regarding current City issues. CAL welcomes contributions in the form of ideas, distribution, and printing. Contact CAL and to view past issues at: <https://calmorrobay.wordpress.com>