



NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, August 26, 7:00 PM

bit.ly/BeachCitiesDemocrats
At the next Beach Cities Democrats meeting, we will consider some endorsements for the upcoming election.

We will consider endorsements for:

- Congress
- Assembly
- Superior Court Judges
- Local Beach Cities School Boards
- Manhattan Beach City Council
- Beach Cities Health District

And, we will consider two special endorsements, one in the neighboring 64th Assembly District and for Tustin City Council*.

We hope to hear from local elected officials with a report from the Convention.

We look forward to you joining us.

*Why Tustin: one of the candidates for city council is our former Beach Cities Democrats President Lee Fink.

Here are some ways you can help Democrats in 2020

Two local groups that serve our area:
<https://sisterdistrict.com>
<https://www.fieldteam6.org>

Help send text messages to voters in important races:
<https://www.openprogress.com>

Get a bird's eye view of what is going on near you at SoCalBlue
<https://socalblue.org>



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jessica
Accamando
President,
Beach Cities
Democrats



I'm writing this article just moments after watching Michelle Obama's speech on the first day of the Democratic Convention. Incredible right?

If you watched, you're likely feeling the same nostalgia I am feeling. Oh how we have missed poise and class in the White House. Michelle's disinterest in politics is obvious as she speaks candidly on issues she feels in the heart, and somehow that makes her an even better orator and inspiration. When Michelle speaks, we listen. She's not selling us anything, she's educating us.

There were two parts of Michelle's speech that I want to remind us to highlight and amplify through the end of this election cycle. The first is about empathy.

"Empathy: that's something I've been thinking a lot about lately. The ability to walk in someone else's shoes; the recognition that someone else's experience has value, too. Most of us practice this without a second thought. If we see someone suffering or struggling, we don't stand in judgment. We reach out because, 'There, but for the grace of God, go I.' It is not a hard concept to grasp. It's what we teach our children."

It's what we teach our children. It's true. Even for the people I know, on the other side of the aisle, they are people who teach their children empathy. And yet, when it comes to national policy, values, and leadership, half of this country tends to forget the importance of

caring for others. Why?

Let's remind them. We need to remind people how important empathy is to lead. My second favorite part was Michelle further defining how to "go high."

"When others are going so low, does going high still really work?"

Michelle goes on to say, "Going high is the only thing that works, because when we go low, when we use those same tactics of degrading and dehumanizing others, we just become part of the ugly noise that's drowning out everything else. We degrade ourselves. We degrade the very causes for which we fight."

But let's be clear: going high does not mean putting on a smile and saying nice things when confronted by viciousness and cruelty. Going high means taking the harder path. It means scraping and clawing our way to that mountain top. Going high means standing fierce against hatred while remembering that we are one nation under God, and if we want to survive, we've got to find a way to live together and work together across our differences."

With this detailed definition, Michelle reminds us that we can fight like hell for November 3 and our country but still carry ourselves in respectability and class. While it's easy to get ugly, it's not good for ourselves nor for creating community.

Anyone who knows me knows that I love to remind people, "What would Michelle do?" or "be Michelle" because of her inspiring composure and class. So with that, I want to remind you, Beach Cities Democrats members...

Keep going high, but be fierce. Don't be afraid of the battle, but show up with empathy and patience. Let's all channel our inner Michelle.

July Recap

President Jessica Accamando called the meeting to order and Vice-president Tony Hale placed the agenda on the screen. Jessica asked for a motion to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Jessica welcomed our visitors: Nicole Burke from Hermosa Beach and John Gran, Redondo Beach City Councilman.

Announcements included the JFK Profiles in Courage Award Ceremony on July 25, and "By the Light Event" by Field Team 6.

Dency said that the DMV has extended by one year all seniors' driver licenses which need 2020 renewal.

Andrea Valcourt asked that members contact California Assembly and Senate members to support AB 3030, which would conserve 30% of California's lands and waters by 2030. It is co-authored by Senator Ben Allen and Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi.

Jessica then introduced our guest speaker, LA County Assessor Jeffrey Prang. Jeffrey said that his office does not collect taxes, which is the job of the Treasurer and the Tax Collector. He is one of three elected County officials.

His office has 1,400 employees and a \$200 million budget. When a property is bought, they assess it and update the records. Their work spans all LA County property including planes, boats, and personal property. He said property taxes grew by 5.9% last year. His office pays county services including firefighters and teachers.

They are expecting a decline in property tax revenues because the pandemic has caused a slowdown in buying and selling. More information can be found on their website, <https://assessor.lacounty.gov/>

Many homeowners are unaware that they can save money by filing for a Homeowner Exemption.

He described the Split Roll Ballot Measure, Prop 15, which is a Constitutional Amendment on the November ballot. It would change the

assessment of commercial property the same way homes are assessed, by using the market value. It would take approximately two years to adopt.

Proposition 19 will also be on the ballot. It would allow homeowners 55 and over to take their tax rate anywhere in the state. The rate can be transferred up to three times for seniors or disabled persons.

Connie Sullivan asked in Prop 15 passes, would this create a huge tax bill. It takes about five years to train a new assessor, so they will not be assessing homes during that period. However, Disneyland gets reassessed every time changes are made, so their taxes are not as low as people think. It was mentioned that Prop 58 allowed properties not to be reassessed when passed on to children. If Prop 19 passes, it will require a child to live in the house, and the \$1 million exemption cannot be used.

Ken Petrus then said that the other half of the proposition is that the exemption can be used in all counties. Dency said we should support Prop 15; Connie said that it would help seniors stay in their homes, and Tony mentioned that Jeffrey Prang has been a champion for animal rights and is recognized by several humane groups.

Jessica then gave the President's report: she is working with Mark Drabkin and Tony to improve our message about how to join.

Treasurer's Report

Edna Murphy gave the Treasurer's Report :

Federal PAC	\$1,765
State PAC	\$5,344



L: Joey Apodaca, Ted Lieu's Field Representative.

R: County Assessor Jeffrey Prang



Next, we heard from Congressman Ted Lieu's Field Representative Joey Apodaca. He said they have seven staff members, and their casework has helped 7,000 people deal with Federal agencies including the VA, Social Security, and the IRS.

He talked about the presence in Portland of unidentified federal agents working there without the consent of local authorities. Lieu will introduce a bill with Oregon Congressman Blumenthaler to restrict US marshals from deputizing other federal employees including ICE.



Congressman Ted Lieu

Two of the Congressman's amendments to the Appropriations Bill passed. One requires the Department of Defense to report foreign relations on Saudi Arabia as it relates to the conflict in Yemen. The other one allows the State Department to support efforts by states to engage in deals with other countries.

Lieu has introduced a bill to prevent hunting on US Wildlife and Fish lands when using lead bullets, which can contaminate water and kill wildlife.



Redondo Beach City Councilman John Gran

Next, we heard from John Gran, Redondo Beach City Councilman. He said the city has had to reduce its budget by 2% or \$12 million. They had to let two people go, and have now instituted a hiring freeze. The \$9.8 million TOT is down by 70% and sales tax by 12%. He has been working with other beach cities on the COVID-19 response, including closing of beach areas. Manhattan Beach has enforced a mask law, and Redondo Beach has seen few violations.

Redondo mail delivery came up, and Joey said that the Post Office problems have been problematic, but Congressman Lieu's office has been at work to resolve them. While the Post Office has lost some staff due to the virus, people can contact Ted's staff for help.

Hermosa Beach City Council Report

Next we heard from Hermosa Beach City Councilman Mike Detoy. He said that the city is taking down the volleyball nets because that sport is now illegal and draws crowds. The Council has taken action to increase outdoor dining. The city has not yet introduced a fine, but that is under discussion.

Jessica remarked that at a recent meeting, people were defiant about wearing masks; there are not enough police officers to enforce the rule. Mike said that everyone on his crew except for him tested positive after working on the July 4th weekend. Tony said that it would

be good to have Code Enforcement Officers to help the police. Ashley said that she has seen some of the Hermosa Beach police without masks, although they have also been seen handing out masks.

Mark Drabkin said that he has tried to talk to people about wearing masks and they sometimes become belligerent. Gran said that in all the stores, masks are required. Connie said that in her family's business, they are a requirement.

Tony announced that Judge Berger can return next month to seek our endorsement at the August meeting. There will also be other candidates seeking our endorsement. It gives us a good opportunity to meet candidates before the November election. Dency mentioned that Victory Starts Today and the Westside Democrats Headquarters have a list of activities to support Democratic candidates.

Tony said that the California Party's Executive Board meeting is the coming weekend. There will be a hundred resolutions and by-law changes to consider. The County Party is reorganizing with their executive elections, which happen every four years. Dency announced that the male delegates for Biden are Tony Hale and Al Muratsuchi, and the female delegate is Nicole Boxer.

With that, Jessica asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, and it was seconded and passed.

From Congressman Lieu

As you may know, the Trump Administration is attempting to undermine the United States Postal Service (USPS), which millions of Americans rely on—especially during the pandemic. Postal workers deliver lifesaving medication, paychecks, Social Security, ballots and other essential items. House Democrats have been working to protect the USPS, which is why we included \$25 billion in funding to save the Postal Service voting measures such as vote-by-mail so

Americans can vote safely from home without risking exposure to COVID-19. Unfortunately, Republicans in the U.S. Senate have yet to take up this legislation and their coronavirus relief proposal does little to address these issues.

If you tested positive for COVID-19, you should expect a call or text from a county public health specialist as part of an effort to contact trace and contain the spread of the virus. They are not law enforcement officers and will not ask about immigration status. Please be aware that scammers are posting as contact tracers in LA County in an attempt to steal personal information. Contact tracers will never ask for your financial information, so if you receive a call from someone asking for your Social Security number or bank account number, hang up immediately. If you tested positive for COVID-19 and have not yet heard from a contact tracer, please call 1-833-540-0473.

The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us about the importance of ensuring state and local governments have adequate resources to address the needs of their communities. As of August 6th, the census self-response rate in California's 33rd District is only 58.9%. In order to get an accurate count in the 2020 census, every resident of our community must respond to the census. Please remember to complete your census form, either online or by phone at 844-330-2020, or by mail to help our community receive its fair share of federal resources to benefit our schools, roads, hospitals, emergency preparedness plans and more.

LA County Supervisor Janice Hahn and the LA County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs are hosting a free webinar for renters and landlords looking for more information on the countrywide eviction moratorium and other rent-related topics. The webinar will take place on Tuesday, August 25th. If you'd like to help protect renters and homeowners in your community, apply now to serve as a commissioner on the LA County Rental Housing Oversight Commission.



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Health Plan Information

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Covered California opened a special enrollment period to help those who are uninsured enroll in quality affordable health care plans. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 open enrollment period, more than 155,000 Californians have signed up for health care coverage. Any person who is uninsured and eligible can enroll in a health care plan that works for them by going to CoveredCa.com.

A Recommendation

Our Secretary recommends keeping the pressure on to protect our postal service because the Post Master General has said he would pause the changes he made, but did not say he would reverse any actions already taken. Please call Senators in other states, starting with Mitch McConnell, as well as our own. Senators do not require a zip code. You can call in the off hours and leave a brief message.

News Flash!

Our past President Michael Deto has just been promoted to Captain at the Riverside City Fire Department! Congratulations, Mike!

Please note:

Attached are the minutes of the July meeting as recorded by our Secretary and which will be formally adopted at our next virtual meeting. If you have any corrections or changes, please address these in an email to info@BeachCitiesDems.org or bring them up at our next meeting.

Dems Meeting
July 22, 2020

Jessica Accamondo, President, called the meeting to order and Tony Hale, Vice President, put the Agenda on screen and then the Flag as we pledged allegiance to our flag.

Jessica asked for a motion to approve the June Minutes. Irene Guimrea so moved and Tony gave the second, and it pass unanimously.

Jessica then welcomed our visitors: John Gran, Redondo Beach Councilmember, Nicole Burke and Sarah from Hermosa Beach, and Ashley Tull. Next came the announcements.

July 25, the JFK Awards Ceremony

July 26, Be the Light Event by Field Team 6 with US Representative Adam Schiff

Andrea Valcourt asked that the members contact California Assembly and Senate members in support of AB3030, which would conserve 30% of California's lands and waters by 2030. It is co-authored by Senator Ben Allen and supported by Al Muratsuchi and the NRDC. There will be a vote either August 3 or 12.

Dency Nelson said that per Al Muratsuchi's newsletter, the DMV has extended all seniors' driver licenses, which need 2020 renewal, by one year. Thereby, eliminating the need for seniors to go to the office in person.

Next, Jessica introduced Jeffery Prang, LA County Assessor, to describe what his Assessor's office does.

Jeffery thanked us for the invitation and said first off, his office does not collect taxes. That is the Treasurer's and the Tax Collector's job. He is one of three elected County officials. Before being elected as Assessor, he was on the West Hollywood City Council.

The Assessor's Office has 1400 employees, of which most are assessors, and a \$200 million budget. When a property is bought, we assess it and update the property's tax assessment. The department is responsible for assessing all LA County property, which includes planes, boats, personal property, and which amounts to \$17 trillion. Property taxes grew by 5.97% last year. If we don't do our job, nothing else can happen because the assessments pay the County's bills such as fire fighters and teachers.

We estimate we will see a decline in property taxes because people are not buying and selling properties during the Covid-19 epidemic. There will probably be a lot of challenges to assessments as people believe their property has lost value. Assessments are based on the sale price, plus 2% per year that you owned the property. You can see more information on our website and you can also sign up for our newsletter. (Note: Type the following into your browser. <https://assessor.lacounty.gov/>)

Many homeowners are not aware that they can save money on their property tax by filing for a Homeowner Exemption. It reduces the assessed value by \$7,000 or \$70.00 per year. It's not a lot, but it adds up and you only have to apply once.

People should be aware that when a property owner dies, certain forms must be filed within a specified time. Filing on time saves you fines, increased taxes, and the headache of reversing these actions.

Trusts can also cause problems, so be very careful when having them prepared. See the Assessor's Guide for more information.

My office does not determine if an addition is illegal or not, we just assess its value. It's up to state and local governments to do that.

The Split Roll Ballot Measure, Prop 15, is a constitutional amendment on the November ballot and will change the assessment of commercial property the same way homes are assessed, by using the market value, instead of the original purchase price. It will affect commercial and industrial assessments, but not those on commercial agricultural properties. It will change how we do business and will take approximately two years to adopt it and to hire the additional required staff. It will be very complicated. (Editor's note: The proposition calls for a phased implementation, starting with the 2022-2023 fiscal year and ending in 2025 – 2026 fiscal year. There are exceptions and other rules that would apply. Read the proposition carefully.)

Prop 19, a constitutional amendment, will also be on the November ballot. It would allow homeowners 55 and older to take your tax rate with you anywhere in the state and to a more expensive house. The rate can be transferred up to three times for seniors or disabled persons. The rate must be increased, if an inherited home is not used as the primary residence. Finally, any increase in revenue or savings from this proposition will be used for wildfire agencies and counties.

These changes will affect local budgets and will require some changes to the Assessor's duties. It too is a complex change. The law is meant to allow a home to stay within a family, but not to have it become a revenue source.

Connie Sullivan asked, if Prop 15 passes and it takes two years to fully implement, will we see a huge tax bill at the end of those two years?

It takes about 5 years to train an assessor. During this period, we will concentrate on assessing the commercial properties. Because I'll be short-staffed due to the training process and others hiring away my staff, we will not assess homes. Instead, we'll use software, which is about 65% accurate. I expect to get appeals and these are a top priority.

Someone mentioned Disneyland. Jeff answered that Disneyland gets re-assessed every time they make changes. So, their taxes are not as low as you might think.

Ashley said that Prop 58 allowed properties not to be re-assessed when passed to their children and allowed for a \$1 million exemption. Jeff answered that if Prop 19 passes, the child must live in the house and the \$1 million exemption cannot be used.

Ken Petrulis stated the other half of the proposition is that the exemption can be used in all counties, not just the 10 currently participating counties. Prop 19 allows you to buy a property of any value.

Dancy Nelson said that we should vote yes for Prop 15 because it doesn't affect homeowners. Prop 19 would still give a child some protections.

Jeff replied that he thinks we'd agreed that it is good to close the loopholes, which allows homes to be being rented. The downside is that the revenue will stagnate and rural communities can lose revenue.

Connie said that this proposition was supposed to help seniors stay in their homes. Adding, helping children and grandchildren makes me oppose it.

Tony stated that Jeff Prang has been a champion for animal rights and has been recognized by several humane groups. This is near and dear to me and I thank you, Jeff.

Irene mentioned that she gets the Assessor's newsletter and it is very helpful.

Jessica thanked Jeff for speaking to us and then gave her Officer's Report and asked for others. I welcome any communications. I'm working with Mark Drabkin, our Webmaster, and Tony to improve our communications and change our how-to-join feature on our website. I'm also creating a Private Group on Facebook, so we can share amongst ourselves. I want folks to feel free to attend and to not be required to post card or attend Zoom fundraisers.

Dency added that anyone can attend our meetings; they don't need to be a member.

Tony said that our organization has been called a club, but it is actually a chartered organization within the Democratic Party. Calling it a club doesn't represent its serious nature and that it is an entry point into the Democratic Party. We've all been watching the news and this election is a turning point for our country. While you don't have to be a member, the revenue helps fund our election work.

Edna Murphy gave the Treasurer's Report, for which Tony made a motion to accept it and Jessica seconded it. It passed unanimously.

Then, Jessica asked for the Electeds' reports.

Joey Appodopolis for Ted Lieu

Currently, we have seven staff members, who meet with district members and groups and advise Ted. Constituent Services and Congressional Casework has helped 7,000+ people interface with Federal Agencies such as the VA, Social Security and the IRS. There are delays with tax refunds, stimulus checks, and small business loans. We can help with all these things and more. Call us.

There's a constitutional crisis in Portland with unidentified Federal agents working there without the consent of local authorities. Ted will introduce a bill with Oregon Congressman Blumenauer to restrict US Marshals from deputizing other Federal employees such as ICE, Customs and Border Protection and federal prison officers to act for the Marshals. There would be an exception to allow state and local authorities to request help from the Marshals.

Two of Ted's amendments to the Appropriations Bill passed. One requiring DOD to report foreign relations on Saudi Arabia as it relates to the Yemen conflict. The second one allows the State Department to support efforts by States to engage in deals with other countries. These deals can be good for the US and the other country. The State Department would be required to create an office to support this work.

Ted introduced a bill to prevent hunting on US Wildlife and Fish lands, when using bullets containing lead. The bullets can contaminate water, thereby killing wildlife. This would protect 95 million acres.

John Gran—Redondo Beach Council Member

Redondo had to reduce its budget by 2% or \$12 million. Fortunately, we only had to let two people go and put institute a hiring freeze. The \$9.8 million TOT is down by 70% and sales tax is down by 12%. It's been great working with the other beach cities on the COVID-19 response and coordinating beach closures. We're getting a lot of calls regarding masks. Manhattan is enforcing its mask law. Redondo doesn't have that many cases, but we're taking cases from other cities to help.

Someone asked a question about mail delivery in Redondo Beach.

Joey said that the Postal Service has been problematic and we're trying to get cases resolved.

Unfortunately, they have lost staff due to the virus. Ted has asked to be briefed on the Redondo issues and you can hand off your cases to our office.

Mike Detoy—Hermosa Beach Council Member

Hermosa is trying to enforce the most recent public health rules by taking down the volleyball nets because that sport is now illegal and draws crowds. We've seen 50 - 60 people partying on the beach. The council has taken action to increase outdoor dining. Mask enforce is on next week's agenda. Manhattan is enforcing mask wearing with a fine. In Washington DC, the fine is \$1,000. The council has been working on art show permits, which we expect to finalize next week.

Dency said there's a discrepancy between Hermosa and Manhattan, which has implemented a warning and then a \$100 fine. You can see the difference in behavior between the two on social media. I think Hermosa really needs to have a fine as well.

Mike replied that he hates to institute a fine, but people are getting out of control, not following the rules. We'd do a better job fighting COVID, if we would all wear masks.

Jessica remarked that there was a meeting last week and people were definitely defiant about wearing a mask. We were out last weekend and there was no police presence in downtown Hermosa. Mark said he assumed that the police don't have the staff to enforce wearing masks in the stores.

Mike stated that many paramedics that he knows don't believe the facts about the virus, even though we are treating these people and taking them to the hospital and some of them die. Everyone on my crew, except me, tested positive for the virus after we worked the July 4th weekend. We need to wear our masks and keep a 6 foot or more distance. It can keep people from getting sick and perhaps dying.

Someone commented that the police need to represent Hermosa. The City needs to give them a script and follow their directions, even if they don't believe the virus is real.

Mike replied, if you want to re-open the economy, you need to wear a mask and bend the curve down everywhere.

Tony noted that it would be great to have Code Enforcement Officers enforce the mask requirements. It would follow defunding the police.

Ashley said that she doesn't believe the HBPD doesn't have the funds. I've seen them stand around and not circulate and give tickets. The police aren't even wearing masks themselves. Sarah Moll added that she saw police handing out masks. Maybe, we could get citizens to do it too.

Mark said he's tried to say something to people and they get belligerent and walk away. John said that the stores have to enforce mask wearing. Connie stated that she runs a business and our employees wear masks. This issue causes so much stress.

Jessica said that there are so many people not wearing masks that I don't want to go out. The businesses are going to lose revenue, when people like me stop spending in the stores.

Mike replied that if we don't improve our numbers, we're going to have to lock down again.

Tony made an announcement that while Judge Berger attended tonight, he can come back next meeting and seek an endorsement. We will have other candidates besides judges. It's a good opportunity to meet candidate before voting in November. It is especially good to have judges speak, since we often don't hear about them.

Dency stated that Victory Starts Today and the Westside Headquarters have a list of activities to support democratic candidates.

Tony said that the California Party's Executive Board meeting is this weekend. We have a hundred resolutions and by-law changes to consider. The County Party is re-organizing with our executive elections, which happen every four years. Therefore, not a lot is happening right now.

Dency said that the male delegates for Biden are Tony Hale and Al Muratsuchi and the female delegate is Nicole Boxer. RG Wong is the Sanders delegate. Our district was overwhelmingly for Biden, we got the alternate position as well.

Jessica then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dency so moved and Ray Waters seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.