



Legislative Advocacy Forum
March 24, 2020
Agenda

Chair: Melanie Vollbrecht
8:00 AM – 9:00 AM, Zoom

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| I. | Call to Order | Melanie Vollbrecht |
| II. | Self-Introductions | Melanie Vollbrecht |
| III. | <u>Legislative Updates</u> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Senator Feinstein• Congresswoman Brownley• Congressman Garcia• Senator Stern• Assemblywoman Valladares• Supervisor Huber• City of Simi Valley• Rancho Simi Recreation & Park District• U.S. Chamber of Commerce• Southern California Edison• Simi Valley Unified School District• Metropolitan Water District of Southern California• Calleguas Municipal Water District• California State University Channel Islands• Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Geneva MonteleoneMegan BlandCharles NavarroNicholas GainesJavier ReyesJoel AngelesSamantha ArgabriteElaine FreemanVartan DjihanianRudy GonzalesJason PeplinskiJacque McMillanDaniel DruganCelina ZacariasSamantha Shapiro |
| IV. | Other Business | |
| V. | Adjourn | |

Next meeting: April 28, 2021 – 8:00 AM

Disclaimer: The Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce Legislative Advocacy Forum is a committee of the Chamber of Commerce. The Committee acts as a forum for discussion about legislative activity and provides the Board of Directors with recommendations for decisions. Comments made at committee meetings do not represent the views of the Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce or the Board of Directors.

Present: Samantha Shapiro, Melanie Vollbrecht, Jill Haney, Dan Drugan, Harry Van Dyck, John Tolson, Jacque McMillan, Charles Navarro, Rudy Gonzales, Josh Gray, Mike Nolan, Samantha Argabrite, Kathi Van Etten, Dr. Jason Peplinski, Geneva Monteleone, Karen Troop, Mike McCaffrey, Charles Navarro, Nick Gaines, Adrienne O'Reilly, Elizabeth Zachary, Amy Corneau, Robert McDonald, Maral Kirakosian, Javier Reyes

Call to Order – 8:02 AM

Approval of Minutes:

- Jacque McMillan made a correction to state that she is recommending a presentation be made to the group (instead of she would like to make a presentation)
- Kathi Van Etten made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Harry Van Dyck seconded the motion. All in favor. The minutes were approved.

Legislative Updates:

Senator Dianne Feinstein: Reported by Geneva Monteleone

- The COVID-19 relief bill is expected to pass before March 14th; it will include some form of small business relief, aid to state and local government, vaccine funding, and the \$1,400 stimulus checks
- The Senator will be introducing the Affordable Housing Redevelopment Act and the Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act. They have not been introduced yet so there are no current bill numbers. (Last congress, the Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act was introduced as S.923).

Congresswoman Julia Brownley: Reported by Robert McDonald

- The Congresswoman introduced the climate resiliency transportation act
- They are working on service academy nominations currently within the district. They are hoping to host an information night on April 29th and applications are being accepted currently
- They have launched the Congressional Art Challenge for students in the district. Winners will have their art displayed in the Capitol.

Congressman Mike Garcia: Reported by Charles Navarro

- They will be hosting an event with the chief engineer of ingenuity, the helicopter that is on Mars. This is a chance for individuals to hear more about the project and for students to learn more about STEM programs and areas that can lead to careers.
- Regarding the COVID relief bill, the breakdown of funding looks like: \$510B toward state and local bailouts, \$12B for foreign aid, \$160B for vaccine distribution and testing, \$325B toward arts and humanities, \$422B toward stimulus, and \$471B toward additional policies, job development and growth
- The Congressman would like to make sure that the funds already allocated and not yet used can be accessed for relief opportunities.
- They are also heavily involved in appropriations right now, with the congressman sitting on two different appropriations sub committees.

Senator Henry Stern: Reported by Nick Gaines

- The legislature passed and the Governor signed SB 87 which establishes 2.1B in grants for small businesses and certain nonprofit organizations; chambers of commerce are eligible for these grants
- The application process will be online quickly; the grants are in effect immediately with the Governor's signature
- This is a separate program from the existing CA grant program, and will most likely have a separate application process
- The state school reopening plan discussions are ongoing

Assembly Member Suzette Martinez Valladares: Reported by Javier Reyes

- The Assembly Member worked with Senator Stern on Sb 287 to open up the grant program for businesses
- The Assembly Member wants to focus this year on working together to find real solutions to the issues facing businesses
- They are working on the PSPS issue and the impact on everyone in the district
- The Assembly Member is establishing a "business advisory committee" application and will distribute to the chamber to share once it is approved

City of Simi Valley: Reported by Samantha Argabrite

- City council has approved funds for emergency street lights to assist with outages due to PSPS events, as well as authorized bids for generators for certain city buildings to keep them in operation during these shutoff events. The existing generator for the city is not large enough for the space so they will be fixing that problem.
- The city is in the process of updating its website and has created a survey for community members to offer their feedback on the current website
- The free clinic celebrated its 50 year anniversary serving our Simi Valley community
- The City and the Chamber will be hosting the State of the City on March 16th in a virtual address; more details to come

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District: Reported by Josh Gray

- The Board met on February 18th
- There was an incident at Berylwood Park impacting two RSRPD employees on the late evening of 2/18. There is an active investigation ongoing for the incident including two staff members who were attacked. SVPD is handling the issue and working to resolve it.
- The parks district has opened beekeeping licenses in open space
- The district will be purchasing a showmaster mobile stage that will be available for the community to rent for events once that is approved
- The new updated trails guide will be released soon
- On 2/27 there will be a drive thru girl scout cookie sales event
- There is a story walk set up in Lemon Park currently

Southern California Edison: Reported by Rudy Gonzales

- There was a hearing on 1/26 with the public utilities commission where many local representatives provided comments
- SCE is very aware of the issues that the community has faced with the PSPS situations and are listening
- They are in the process of identifying ways to minimize the impact on communities during these PSPS events; Simi Valley has been identified as a high priority area

- They hope that with this new process around 60% of those previously impacted will be eliminated from future impact.

Simi Valley Unified School District: Reported by Dr. Jason Peplinski

- The district is concerned with SB 86 as it relates to the reopening of schools plan, specifically the two requirements related to cadence of testing and vaccine requirements. It is not feasible for the school district to provide the testing that is being discussed, and the requirement of teachers being vaccinated prior to returning would not allow for schools to reopen until late 2021.
- The Board of Trustees has voted to move middle and high school students back to in person learning once the state approves it. The school district is ready to “turn on a switch” and get students back on campus whenever it is approved.
- They are also looking at other bills including:
 - AB 101 – ethnic studies requirement (support)
 - SB 70 – kindergarten requirement (support)
 - Any social and emotional mental health support bills: the district is supportive of any of these efforts so long as there is a funding source to implement the requirements
 - AB 312 – exemption for teacher credentialing (strongly oppose)
- The district has accelerated the work of the Measure X bond funds and has been able to renovate a lot of the school campuses much quicker due to the shutdowns of many campuses

Metropolitan Water District: Reported by Jacque McMillan

- MWD is still looking through the list of bills and will have more updates at next meeting
- This is set to be a very dry year; there was no rain in February
- It looks to be the second driest year on record
- Most of the reservoirs are below the historic average; Shasta is full
- They do not suspect any cutbacks on water usage at this time

Calleguas Municipal Water District: Reported by Dan Drugan

- They are hoping for more rain in March
- Only 2 of the last 10 years have seen above average rain fall
- They encourage looking into water rebate programs now such as turf removal and other things
- They will put together topics for a water presentation and come back to the group

Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce: Reported by Samantha Shapiro

- The Chamber hosted their Salute to Excellence last week and had a great turnout
- There will be a webinar hosted on 3/2 with Karen Gabler of LightGabler on 2021 Employment Law updates
- The Chamber continues to host the mask distribution twice weekly; masks donated by Adventist Health SV. If businesses need larger quantities, they can get in touch with John at the Chamber office for that
- Signed on to an opposition coalition regarding COVID-19 mandated paid sick leave; we are of the position that if there is a new mandate, it needs to come with funding and should not be passed on to the employer
- We were happy to see the Governor signed the Golden State Stimulus package including the small business grants and the waiver for 2 years of ABC licenses for restaurants and cosmetology/barbering.
- Other bills we are looking into are AB 91 reducing franchise tax fees, fee relief bills including AB 259 and SB 285, and Ab 95 regarding an extension of bereavement leave

Adjourn – 9:12 AM