

Lehrer, Gary

Q2 - Public Comment

From: [Gary Lehrer](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [John Hamon](#); [Chris Bausch](#); [Fred Strong](#); [Steve Gregory](#); [Sharon Roden](#)
Subject: Refund Form
Date: Sunday, February 18, 2024 12:51:10 PM

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[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

I am sorry to inform the City Council that I find the suggestion that people fill out a form to get a refund for parking fees and citations to be woefully inappropriate. I have studied computers and programming at three junior colleges, tutored Cobol and written databases in Access. I have some experience with SQL and mySQL database management systems. I have worked with sophisticated databases including medical practice management. You are telling me that the City does not have access to data where refund checks can be made quickly and efficiently? Really?

Under Ty Lewis we have seen parking go from the first two hours free and then the vote to start charging from the first hour, which was an egregious and blatant violation of the Brown Act. I was perfectly willing to negotiate something that was more to the liking of the Downtown Merchants when I figured out that the Brown Act was violated. I was really hoping that we could resolve this quickly and amicably. But then I was informed that the DMV code was violated and saw that the California Constitution was violated. I felt that everything that was collected while the parking program was not correctly formulated should be paid back. And this latest requirement to fill out paperwork is the last straw. Frankly this all could have been avoided if Mr. Lewis had been able to find a more equitable solution. Not being a seasoned city manager I believe is the reason this has gotten completely out of hand for the city and you are looking at a possible lawsuit, maybe even a referendum and recall if the money can be raised. Not a great track record.

Here is the link I am referring to <https://pub-pasorobles.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=2889> . Everyone knows this is ludicrous. Even people with a passing knowledge of computers would assume that all of the records are stored and capable of being accessed with a simple query. No one will sign the waiver who has paid for previous years and I am instructing people not to sign the waiver. People see this as a heavy handed attempt to avoid responsibility and intimidate the average citizen. This is frankly a PR disaster for the city.

So due to a failure to negotiate and find out what it would to stop pursuing this issue we have gone from just wanting to have a program that would be acceptable to Downtown to wanting the whole program disbanded, wanting all of the money back and asking for the termination of the employment of the City Manager. People have asked me now to look into all the aspects of the program, the contacts with the vendor, how they sold the system to the city and if any improprieties were conducted. I have been asked to look into other possible conflicts of interest and further violations of government codes in the handling of the spaceport. People want to know again how vendors were selected, including City Legal Counsel. I have heard complaints about the Planning Department as well. Homelessness and Crime has also been brought to my attention. The trajectory under this leadership has not been good and has really backfired in terms of the image of the city and how it is run. The City Council would be wise to address this. If you can't manage a simple parking program how are you going to handle a litigious homeless problem as evidenced by San Luis Obispo. I think at this point you need to

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begin the process of looking for someone who knows how to handle these issues and not getting on the job training at taxpayer expense.

My very first class in Political Science we were taught that government and politics is a serious business and many people get involved and then find out it is not going to be as fun as they thought. Sorry Mr. Lewis but you have to be prepared for being called out. I'm sorry to have to write an email like this but I see a lot of dissatisfaction, suspicion, outrage and discontent in the short time I have been involved. Citizens feel alienated and cut off and their concerns are not being addressed.

Frankly I see a real failure to manage the parking program properly, a failure to properly manage the opposition and the latest idea that we need to fill out paperwork and sign a waiver is just the last straw. Paso Robles deserves much better than a first time City Manager and a first time Parking Program Coordinator. There is too much at stake, this is a major central coast city and the Downtown merchants deserve much better from the City.

Again, and especially to Mayor Hamon I apologize for having to write something like this. But I cannot remain silent when I see what has happened in the few months I have been involved. I think it is in the best interests of both the City, the Mayor and the Council to consider deeply what I have presented.

Thank you

Sincerely

Gary Lehrer
Templeton, CA