



Noe Magaña <noemagana@benitolink.com>

FW: Hollister Guardians - Political Group

3 messages

stacey@ecologistics.org <stacey@ecologistics.org>
To: Noe Magaña <noemagana@benitolink.com>

Sat, Jul 20, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Hello Noe. Thanks for your patience. Here is the email that Ecologistics received from Jonathan Casey. Please let me know if you need anything else.

Stacey Hunt, CEO
Ecologistics, Inc. dba
Central Coast Bioneers
Ecologistics.org
ECOLOGISTICS
805-548-0597

From: Jonathan Casey <joncasey@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 7:34 PM
To: info@ecologistics.org
Subject: Hollister Guardians - Political Group

Hello Ecologistics,

Please share the letter below and the attached flyer with the Board of Directors.

I have been reviewing your web page, associated non-profits, your 990's (Donors), etc.

I think you are doing some outstanding work to support environmental issues and under privileged populations.

Unfortunately, there is one group that I think you should review: Hollister Guardians.

On their website, they post this: **Hollister Guardians is a grassroots group, fiscal sponsored by Ecologistics (501c3)**

This is a semi-political group headed partially by a City Council person, Rolan Resendiz, who is politically motivated to become Mayor of Hollister.

Ecologistics was previously provided the last flyer put out by this political group. It was fact checked by several reporters of the local paper and found to be lacking in fact, common sense, and sought to mislead the public in many instances. The fact check article can be found in the link below. which also discusses Ecologistics role. Whether fundraising or not they are hiding behind your 501(c)3.

[Fact Check: 'Where Did Our Money Go' election flier | BenitoLink](#)

In this new flyer, again, hiding under a banner of "we will not be silenced", there are misstatements of facts, common sense and simple fairness.

The banner for this current flyer (attached) is titled "\$25 Million Easter Gift to Fairview Developers". Here are some facts around this issue. The general developer in the area Award Homes, provided a land use grant to Eden Housing to build 100 units of low-income housing. Average AMI will be between 30 to 50 percent, and "Section 8" vouchers will be accepted for 40 of the units. This is a long term project that has been around almost 20 years. The players have changed a bit. It was originally, 30 units, then expanded to 50, and then expanded again to 100. This qualified for density bonus including three asks of the City. One of these asks was for a discount on two CFD's. Rather than pay approximately \$1,900 per unit per year, they requested to pay \$400 per unit per year with a 3.5% annual inflationary factor. Over 55 years this amount equates to the roughly \$25M they are making the case that this is an immediate impact to the City. The two CFD's in question, one is lighting and landscaping, which Eden will manage in the community anyway (see community map); the second is related to police, fire and other city services.

The City was asked how much of an impact would this have to City services. The City budget is about \$30M. Of that the police, fire and other City services are just over 60% of the budget or \$18M. The first year the reduction in Eden's CFD is about \$153,500 which is 0.86%, not even 1% of those services budget. I think the investment of \$153,500 into the 100 plus families that this housing will impact IS a service to the community. Everyone involved, when it comes affordable housing, kicks something in to get it built and to make the project pencil. In the agenda for the City's resolution is a letter from Eden explaining how this worked for the Community. The aforementioned council member is acting like this is a disaster to the community when it really is a small impact over the next 55 years. Many assumptions are made. A major one is that the CFD's will last in the current form anyway. A 3.5% inflation factor is large for a CFD. The variance in CFD paid by homeowners is all over the place. Many regular property tax owners and CFD payers have no idea how this works and how they are impacted. Many CFD's will convert into property tax as the tax bills become unsustainable. My point is this is not a gift but an investment in

these families. So, I am not arguing with the 55 year number, I am arguing the misinformation, the annual impact, and the fact that we are trying to crush a much-needed affordable housing for political points. There are no Easter Gifts Here!

The second item mentioned is that this housing should be limited to local low-income families. The funding for this housing will be a commercial loan or bond which will be bought out by a tax credit investor. Eden will use one of the two major players that is not creating risk to the housing. In any case, using State tax credits limits how much local influence you can have. The 40 units that are using County Vouchers probably will be local. But I think this is a boondoggle argument. We need affordable housing across the state of California. That a family needs housing in the regional area is NO reason to not build housing here. Again, this Council Member continues to try and thwart and twist misinformation to help his political aims. He has repeatedly stated that we should have a housing moratorium, but this is not possible in the current housing crisis in California, but it gains him political points.

On the backside of the flyer are two issues related to the Hollister sewer and water. The first was a broken pipe that is 15 feet underground. The reason this very rarely used pipe break was found was because of the investigation started by other members of the City council, not Mr. Resendiz. Yes, there are some old pipes in Hollister. The City has over \$46M to resolve issues and fix pipes (they ignore this fact altogether). The connections that are occurring all were approved long ago and the City is honoring agreements. The City is well aware of its sewer capacity and recent upgrades were to replace failing equipment and make sure the system would not be overwhelmed.

The City, for the first time, is looking hard at the causes of any smells emanating from the plant. They are finding a lot of issues and they are getting fixed. The aforementioned Councilmember agreed to the Audit in the previous council and now acts like it was not something he understands (conveniently). The City council gets regular now updates and the plans are easily accessible online.

Hollister has a lot of ground movement. Fixing of water mains and sewer lines will always be a part of life here. However, supporting residents that have continual odors because of the way some of the system was built, was and is a concern and the City is taking action through the current City council. If you would like a copy of the plan, please let me know.

One other issue of note here is that we have an industrial section of the sewer related to tomato processing. Once a year the "sludge" needs to dry out so it can be hauled out to make room for this year's sludge intake. They started early this year because they continue to do upgrades to the system when the plant is in operations (about three months a year). They are putting the water churning under water instead of surface so the fumes are less. They are also putting The problem is that there were rains this year and the sludge got wet again and again and each time it dries out it smells bad. Not sure what we can do except close the plant and move it out of town or down to King City (which has been suggested before). This would be about 300 jobs lost in the summer quarter when the plant is active but that may be a fair trade off.

As you can see, telling only a portion of the story is not reasonable, fair, transparent, and is creating mistrust in the current local leaders. Again, political motivations are in play here not informational learning. This is not silencing anyone but there must be truth and balanced education in the flyers.

I would respectfully request that you look at this organization and determine if it really worthy of your sponsorship and support, especially given their political leanings, which anyone with a 501(c)3 knows is not something you want brought to the attention of the IRS.

Please let me know if you have any follow-up questions that I will be happy to address.


Thank You

Jon Casey

2041 Eldene Dr

Hollister, CA 95023

Note: No AI was used to generate this letter.

 **04112024 HG.pdf**
1040K

Noe Magaña <noemagana@benitolink.com>
To: stacey@ecologistics.org

Mon, Jul 22, 2024 at 8:56 AM

Thank you Stacey!

Support local, nonprofit news! Please consider supporting BenitoLink, San Benito County's public service, nonprofit news. Our team is committed to this community and providing essential, accurate information to our fellow residents. It is expensive to produce local news, and your support is what keeps the news flowing.

Noe Magaña
BenitoLink Co-Editor/ Content Manager
831-801-5846



Support Your Local News!

[Quoted text hidden]

stacey@ecologistics.org <stacey@ecologistics.org>
To: Noe Magaña <noemagana@benitolink.com>

Mon, Jul 22, 2024 at 10:27 AM

You're welcome!

[Quoted text hidden]