

WEST COVINA NEIGHBORS STOPPING THE TAX GRAB

SALES TAX INCREASE FACTS

Measure WC is **NOT** about “Rebuilding West Covina” . . . It’s about leadership . . .
It’s about West Covina’s unions grabbing more power and increasing our taxes!

- **What does Measure WC really do?** Measure WC is the tool that gives the police and fire a 9% bonus and an additional 4% raise. Together with the original 12% raise, the total increase is 25% or an average of about \$60,000 extra into the pocketbook of each police and fire employee. An additional 3% (worth \$9,000) or so is likely July 1, 2020 due to a provision that says the pay will be increased every time pay is increased for other cities so that West Covina will permanently be in the top 25% of surrounding cities—regardless of the city’s budget.
- **Who is behind the sales tax increase?** Measure WC is not, as the proponents want you to think, sponsored by a group of West Covina residents who are just care about our city. The unions are the sponsors of Measure WC. Glenn Kennedy, a resident who works for the police officer association (POA) as a consultant, filed the “Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition” that started the process. The POA then hired professional signature gatherers to collect the 5,200 signatures needed to get their measure on the ballot. The signature gatherers lied throughout the signature gathering process.

The bottom line: It is police and fire, not the residents, who benefit if Measure WC passes because if Measure WC passes, the overwhelming majority of new taxes goes to expensive pay and benefits for police and fire the city council just promised. There is very little left for the proponents “promised” wish list.

Mayor Tony Wu was correct in 2018 when as a councilmember he stated:

“We don’t have a revenue issue. We have a spending issue. Our expenditures are our major issue. No matter how much money you give the government, they spend it.”
(City Council Special Budget Meeting, July 2, 2018)

If this city council believed additional revenue was needed, they, not the unions, should have sponsored the sales tax increase as city councils in other cities have done. Since this city council chose not to sponsor this tax increase, neither should we!

Here’s why: In October 2019 and November 2019, the City Council approved Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the police and fire unions that gives them a huge 25% increase in pay, bonuses, and pension benefits—when the city gets new revenue. Measure WC is the tool that makes the second 12% raise and retroactive raises happen.

The City Council approved the MOUs with the whopping increases despite:

- The city balancing its budget by making deep cuts, privatizing some services, and laying off several employees this year. This is the second year those actions occurred.
- The State Auditor releasing a report in October 2019 ranking West Covina as the 17th highest financially challenged city in California. West Covina was rated as at high risk for Pension Obligations, Pension Funding, Pension Costs, and Future Pension Costs.
- Audit Committee member Jim Grivich telling the council the increased salary projections were wrong because overtime and pension were not included. Finance Director Robbeyn Bird acknowledged those costs were left off.

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- City Manager David Carmany acknowledging the salary increases were not fully funded. The city manager simply stated, as the SGV Tribune reported, “I’ll find it in the current budget hopefully without asking for a budget amendment just through good economy and efficiency measures.”
- The city council and elected treasurer’s reaction to learning the costs the salary projections are drastically underestimated was silence.
- The city council and elected treasurer’s reaction to the huge salary increases was “they deserve it.”

What this means: The proponents and sponsors of the new taxes want you to believe Measure WC will “make our community safer, healthier, and a better place to raise a family and open a business.” They call it “Rebuild West Covina.” Those are nice sounding words but it can’t happen because the city council has already agreed most of the new tax will go into the pockets of police and firefighters. That means there will be very little new monies left to fund additional paramedics, replace fire equipment, or enhance parks and services for our youth and seniors—the promises the proponents are making.

What to expect: West Covina’s police and fire unions want this tax passed. The police and fire unions are so determined to get this sales tax increase passed, they have set up and are funding special political action committees. As of December 10, 2019, the police and fire unions’ required campaign disclosure reports show the three special political action committees (PACs) they set up to get their measure on the ballot spent more than \$170,000 in monetary and non-monetary expenditures to get their sales tax initiative on the ballot. They will spend even more to get it passed. The unions would not be spending that much money on getting a sales tax increase passed if wasn’t going to benefit their members.

**IN THE MARCH 3, 2020 ELECTION,
JOIN FOUR FORMER MAYORS
- Fred Sykes, Forest Tennant, James Toma, and Ben Wong -
AND SAY “NO” TO HIGHER SALES TAXES!**

VOTE “NO” ON MEASURE WC!

QUESTIONS? EMAIL US AT: westcovinaneighbors@gmail.com