

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [BPAC Communication](#)
Subject: 1/10/23 meeting agenda item 5 (Non-agendized -- Selection of Council member)
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To: Mountain View City Council

From: Joel Dean, [REDACTED]

The process of appointing a new City Council member is excessively hasty, and is off to a bad start. The agenda for the January 5 meeting was not posted on legistar till late on Tuesday the 3rd. That left very little time for the public to respond, especially with most people concerned with the oncoming rainstorms and residents of Rex Manor and vicinity subjected to two lengthy power outages. This morning (Monday the 9th) I received an email from the City Clerk informing me that the agenda for the meeting on the 5th was now available. If that is typical of what other people are experiencing, Council's appointee will have a credibility problem from Day 1.

The democratic system which governs Mountain View is particleboard-and-veneer rather than solid oak, The city is run by unelected public employees and their even less elected consultants, reporting to an unelected City Manager. Rigorous oversight by City Council is necessary to ensure the staff is responsive to the will of the public, which only works if the Council itself is responsive. All of the current Council members and the departing member have shown themselves to be out of touch with public sentiment on at least one major issue -- either by supporting the odious attempt to subvert the CSFRA, or by opposing the Narrow Streets ordinance. That does not inspire confidence in Council's ability to appoint a member representative of the majority of the people.

Some of the arguments against holding a special election are pretty feeble. (1) *Special elections have low turnout.* How many voters turn out for an appointment process? (2) *Special elections are expensive.* They cost less than the \$2.5 million needed to fix the blunder in the design of the utterly worthless \$20 million Shoreline reversible bus lane, or the \$4 million to turn the Shoreline Pathway into a slalom run, or the \$1 billion for the hallucinatory AGTS. (3) *Council needs seven members ASAP.* Why? All members are elected at large, so no area of the city would be short-changed. In fact, having one fewer member from Old Mountain View is a step toward leveling the playing field.

The arguments in favor of the appointment process boil down to hacking through a thicket of regulations as expeditiously as possible. Choosing this alternative ensures that government of the red tape, by the red tape and for the red tape shall not perish from the earth.

Thank you for your attention.