

From: Adreana Langston <AdreanaLangston@calalum.org>
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 7:03 PM
To: CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>
Subject: Please add my public comment to the Tues 10/03/2023 agenda

-EXTERNAL-

This is public comment for a non agenda item UNLESS it ends up that Council will be discussing a potential contract with Meet Long Beach as part of the agenda, in which case the comment should be under whatever that agenda item is.

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Dear City Council Members,

The purpose of this correspondence is to express how strongly I think the City of Long Beach should NOT sign a contract with Steve Goodling's newly formed Meet Long Beach to do the things the City of Long Beach currently contracts with the city created Long Beach Visitors And Convention Bureau to do. It would be a bad look, bad management and a bad idea all around.

As I read in the [Long Beach Post](#) the auditors hired by the City Of Long Beach found that *"Auditors for the firm, Macias, Gini & O'Connell, further found that Goodling's Convention and Visitors Bureau had circumvented city rules, making "unauthorized" purchases for which there had been no defined budget or strategic plan.*

The firm said ASM's bookkeeping on the fund fell so short of industry-standard accounting practices that it was "difficult to evaluate" whether money actually was being spent and tracked properly. More definitive answers, the firm said, would require a more extensive "forensic inventory" of all purchases and their whereabouts."

And after all that lavish spending Goodling did you guys decided it would be too expensive to actually do a forensic inventory. How foolish are you going to look if/when someone produces evidence of some of those pricey furnishings being located at a property owned by Goodling himself, or a property owned by someone with whom Goodling is romantically involved, or, and this would be really bad, in one of your properties because he gave it to you as a gift without telling you its provenance. I wouldn't even be surprised if some of those expensive objects are in the possession of the people in charge of signing contracts with the Long Beach Convention Center to hold events there. It wouldn't surprise me at all if Goodling had given people expensive gifts in the form of kickbacks for bringing convention business to the city. This is all wild speculation I know but until you know where every single one of the objects is it is speculation that will continue to sow distrust in the minds of the public concerning the fiduciary oversight skills of all you City Council Members.

Right now on Nextdoor voters are chattering that the reason you guys did not want the forensic inventory is that you already know some of those fancy furnishings are sitting in properties you own. I don't believe that you would be foolish or greedy enough for that to be the case with your knowledge.

But if you agree to Goodling's plan to have an entity he created separately from the Bureau be the entity with which the City of Long Beach contracts going forward, it would make you guys look soooooo corrupt I can't even tell you. Whether or not it is 100% accurate, the *Long Beach Post* story has voters thinking that the only reason Goodling came up with this Meet Long Beach plan is to avoid public scrutiny of what he is doing with tax payer dollars. No one is buying his "competitive advantage is the reason for our secrecy" schtick.

Do not sever the contract the City of Long Beach has with the Bureau . Keep Goodling and his doings under intense scrutiny seeing as how the auditors the City of Long Beach hired already determined he was a rule breaker and that ASM, the organization Goodling (effectively) runs keeps shoddy books. That alone should have generated action on the part of all City Council members to have Goodling replaced. Who gets to keep their job after being audited and having a finding that says a) you broke rules by spending money FIRST then asking for reimbursement later rather than asking for purchase authorization first b) You oversaw an organization that kept shoddy books? The answer, in the eyes of the Long Beach electorate, is going to be "People who give lavish gifts to City Council members, that's who."

Not only should the City Council approve doing the forensic audit, the Council should ask the City Manager to find a vendor that provides NFC or RFID tagging and tracking plus the software to help institutions know exactly where all of their inventory is be it Convention Center chairs or Convention Center chandeliers. There shouldn't be ANY publicly owned object in the Convention Center, save consumables, that doesn't have an NFC or RFID inventory control tag attached to it. Goodling could be as honest as the day is long in regards to wanting to buy those furnishings and whatever else strictly for the purposes of making the Convention Center more accommodating to potential clients. But he'll drag you all into "bad look" territory if it ends up many of the objects over the years have "walked away" from the Convention Center simply because the people who took them knew inventory management was lax or non existent.

If you sign a new contract with Meet Long Beach to provide the services the Bureau now provides, you'll be making a huge mistake and not looking out for the best interests of the residents of Long Beach.

Adreana Langston

<http://bit.ly/AdreanaContact>