

H-1 Correspondence – Sandra Cason

From: Sandra Cason [<mailto:consignmore@icloud.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, October 14, 2014 1:16 PM

To: cityclerk; Council District 8

Subject: PBIA Assessment Fee Increase - Opposed

My name is Sandra Cason. I am the owner of Furniture Consignment & More located at 4129 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach, CA 90807 in the Bixby Knolls area. We are a small business. This email is to serve as my comments regarding the annual increase of the PBIA assessment fees. I am not available to attend the 5 p.m. October 21, 2014 public hearing meeting therefore please enter, for the record, this email as my voice and comments.

I would first like to make clear that it is not my intent to be a thorn in anyone's side. I have been very outspoken about my concerns as a small business owner and these specific fees. I have checked other areas and found that there are many businesses that pay association or some type of assessment fees. I have spoken to many small business owners and have yet to encounter one that is happy to pay these fees. But that is a given. Who wants to pay fees? However, some business owners feel that it is worth it for them and some do not. The stance that I am taking at this point in time in regard to the fees imposed upon Furniture Consignment & More is this

I am for improvements in our area. I am for the beautification of our area. I am for safety. I am for area upkeep. I am for salaries of staff and I can even agree with incentive compensation (bonus) for that "WOW" performance. But I am not onboard with an annual increase of \$20 plus CPI for contribution to events and activities that do not impact (one way or the other) my business. Why not just a CPI increase with a 3% minimum and 5% maximum? Why the \$20 plus CPI? I oppose.

During the sharing of my feelings regarding this I have been told "You should have opened your business on Atlantic", "you should have considered your location before you opened your business there", "you can't expect anyone to run or market your business", and my favorite, "the increase is only .20 a day".

Needless to say, careful consideration was taken when deciding on a location to open Furniture Consignment & More. I chose Long Beach Blvd. over Atlantic and I have no regrets. I chose Bixby Knolls over Torrance and I have no regrets. And I certainly do not expect anyone to run or market my business and to be told that because I express a concern is an insult that rubs me the wrong way. And I'm not gonna even comment on the minimizing of the increase to a daily calculation. But I will say this I am given no choice in deciding whether I want to participate in contributions towards events and activities that have no impact on my business. And I can't help but wonder if my concerns would be taken serious if my contribution was voluntary.

Furniture Consignment & More is a NEW small business. Just as we will not always be new we will not always be small. Aside from the business goals of Furniture Consignment & More, I want to see PBIA events and activities that highlight "The Long Beach Blvd." I recognized that it may not have the impact of First Friday's on Atlantic

but nevertheless more heart needs to be put on The Long Beach Blvd. An “earning of our contribution” needs to seriously be considered vs. taken for granted.

I write this letter knowing it will be taken as a continued “thorn in the side from Sandra at Furniture Consignment” but I am hopeful that at some point “The Long Beach Blvd.” will be better considered during the planning efforts of events and activities in Bixby Knolls. Urban Cottage had always been the “go get it force” behind any support in events and activities that The Long Beach Blvd. has had. Now that she is gone the rest of us small business owners will have to step up our game in that regard. But just because we aren’t calling with demands of an event does not mean we should be forgotten nor should it be interpreted that we do not want an event held in our area.

I really wish the assessment increase would be delayed until a better balance of the event and activity dollars is made and The Long Beach Blvd. is seriously considered. Once The Long Beach Blvd. is considered then increased contributions can be made. I can deal with that.

As a small business of our style we face challenges that you may never know. Although the increase in fees can be justified in so many ways on the receiving end, I ask the question of how has the impact of events and activities been measured as it relates to the Bixby Knolls small businesses? And I mean “really measured.”

In closing, I want to tip my hat to Blair Cohn. He is love and respected by so many. And he is about the Bixby Knolls community.

Thank you for your time.

Sandra Cason
LaKhonda Cason



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