

Committee Meeting of
August 13, 2012

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

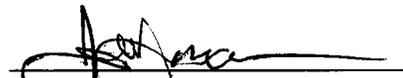
City Council Citizen Development
and Enrichment Committee
City Council Chambers
Torrance, California

Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: Community Services – Supplemental Information on the Madrona Marsh

Staff have received e-mails from the public regarding the Madrona Marsh and are attached them for your review.

Respectfully submitted,



John Jones
Community Services Director

CONCUR:



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

Attachment:

A. E-mails

JJ:AO:evp/restricted/commission/CityCouncilCommittee/reviewofsubsidyitem8.13.12

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 8:46 AM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh Nature Preserve

From: Kathleen Roquemore <kroquel@aol.com>
Date: August 11, 2012 5:13:34 PM PDT
To: "Scotto, Frank" <FScotto@TorranceCA.gov>, "Brewer, Tom" <TBrewer@TorranceCA.gov>, "Barnett, Gene" <GBARNETT@TorranceCA.gov>, "Furey, Pat" <PFurey@TorranceCA.gov>
Subject: Madrona Marsh Nature Preserve

Dear Mayor Scotto and Councilmen Brewer, Barnett and Furey:

I just read the article in the Daily Breeze about your meeting this Monday to review the budgets of some city programs, notably the Madrona Marsh.

I don't usually write letters of this kind but felt compelled to do so now. I am not affiliated with Mr. Arrowsmith nor the marsh, but am a life-long citizen of Torrance.

I know the budget is a horrific task to do in today's economic times. I am confident that you will discuss this thoroughly and not jump the gun on cutting important funds of this program. So many benefit from the marsh. Even those of us who don't frequent it, but drive by it daily. I can't tell you how many times I've driven by where I've thought how amazing it is our city has something that is educational yet relaxing. Many, many students have learned valuable lessons there. And, the nights where you can meet there to gaze at the stars? What a fun evening!

So please be clear in your thoughts and remember what a landmark, so to speak, our marsh is.

Thank you for your time.

Kathleen Roquemore
Torrance, CA 90505

John Jones

Community Services Director

City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 9:00 AM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: Jim Evans [juji23@verizon.net]
Sent: Friday, August 10, 2012 9:26 AM
To: Furey, Pat
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Greetings Mr. Furey,

I wanted to write you to urge you not to cut funding to Madrona Marsh. Growing up, our children were frequent visitors to the marsh. We often took them there and they have many great memories of roaming around this place of nature tucked away in the middle of the city. And now, with the nature center programs it has become a wonderful educational visit for kids as well. I currently visit fairly regularly to bird. It's not uncommon to see 40+ different species on a trip there. It would be a tragedy to lose this city treasure.

We currently have so few places like this in our city. I often visit my brother in Orange and am amazed at the foresight their city planners had to incorporate so many green spaces. It is sad in comparison. Please don't cut funding and reduce one of the few bright natural spots we have in our city.

Thank you,
Jim Evans
21017 Annrita Ave.
Torrance

John Jones
Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice |
310.781.7502 fax | JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 9:00 AM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Support Madrona Marsh
Attachments: bestFinch0108Low.jpg

From: Antonie Churg [achurg@socal.rr.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2012 9:45 PM
To: Scotto, Frank; Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom; Furey, Pat; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Support Madrona Marsh

Dear Mayor Scotto and Council Members,

It has come to my attention that the Torrance City Council is considering cost-cutting measures to reduce support for Madrona Marsh. Whenever I drive by the Marsh - navigating the ugly congestion of Sepulveda Blvd, I look toward the Marsh as a sanctuary from blight. As the attached image suggests, I'm a bird-watcher, too. What's happening with Madrona Marsh? Are they going to convert it to condos? If you let support for the Marsh slide, that's what will happen. I will study the Torrance budget over the next few days and try to come to the August 13 Council meeting with constructive suggestions for continued funding of Madrona Marsh at the current levels.

Sincerely,

-
Antonie K. Churg, Ph.D.
25802 Skylark Drive
Torrance, CA 90505-7314
(310) 539-6506
achurg@socal.rr.com

John Jones

Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
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Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 8:59 AM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: William Shanney [wshanney@verizon.net]
Sent: Friday, August 03, 2012 6:56 PM
To: Furey, Pat; Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom; Scotto, Frank; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Madrona Marsh

I'm sending this email in support of Madrona Marsh. It is very special having a natural place in our city and I would like it kept open. I find it relaxing to hike around the Marsh and photograph there. The educational programs for our children are also very important to myself and my family.

I would also like to voice my objection to putting an electronic sign at the corner of Madrona and Sepulveda. It would be an eyesore I do not want in my city.

Thanks you for your attention in these matters.

Sincerely,
Bill Shanney
19313 TomLee Ave
Torrance

John Jones
Community Services Director
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Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 8:53 AM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: david berman [drdberman@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 3:02 PM
To: Furey, Pat; Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom; Scotto, Frank; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Madrona Marsh

David W. Berman M.D., Inc.
23600 Telo Ave.. Suite 130
Torrance, CA 90505

August 4, 2012

Dear Mayor Scotto,

As a Pediatrician, I often recommend that my patients visit Madrona Marsh Nature Center and Preserve. This wonderful area of natural beauty in the heart of Torrance is easily accessible and provides respite from the city for Wildlife and People. It provides a safe space for families to exercise and learn about nature. I like to go during breaks and walk around the marsh or enjoy the garden. I like to take pictures at different times of the day and the year. I am impressed by the hard work of the dedicated volunteers and the Friends of Madrona Marsh. As a business and property owner in the city, I urge you to please continue to fund this vital resource.

Sincerely,

David W. Berman, M.D.

John Jones

Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 8:54 AM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Protect Madrona Marsh

From: Christopher Boyd [monkus_boyd@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 11:58 AM
To: Scotto, Frank; Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom; Furey, Pat; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Protect Madrona Marsh

Dear Mayor Scotto and Torrance City Council members,

I just received the very disheartening news via Bob Shanman of Wild Birds Unlimited that the Torrance City Council is considering a major reduction in funding for Madrona Marsh, and possibly even closure of the marsh. As a Torrance native and nature enthusiast, I implore you to reconsider these actions. Madrona Marsh is the last vernal marsh in all of Los Angeles, as well as a natural haven for those of us who wish to escape the concrete jungle that the South Bay has become. The marsh also provides a place for the education of thousands of students every year. In short, it is a treasure.

I have always loved my home city of Torrance, but if the council takes this action, it will damage the area forever and possibly open up a natural treasure to development. Torrance is already covered in asphalt and buildings. To take away the last piece of open space would be a travesty.

I would happily open up my own pocketbook to help keep Madrona Marsh open. As a member of both Audubon and The Nature Conservancy, I do have hope that one or both of these organizations can step in and try to persuade city leaders of the marsh's importance. If, as with many elected officials, the most important thing to you is money, perhaps environmental organizations and individuals like me can make up the difference that a shortsighted council refuses to fund.

In closing, I hope what I've heard is a major exaggeration and that Torrance's elected officials will do the right thing by keeping Madrona Marsh open and fully funded. But in these times of financial difficulty, I know it is easy for leaders to make rash decisions that work in the short term but rob future generations in the long term. I'm counting on you to make the wise choice.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Christopher Boyd
Redondo Beach, CA

John Jones

Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 8:52 AM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: callmecath7@yahoo.com [callmecath7@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2012 9:46 PM
To: Furey, Pat
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Hello There!

What is the budget for Madrona Marsh's upkeep? What is the breakfast meeting / lunch meeting budget of your City Council?

My guess is that there are Many OTHER superfluous budgetary expenditures that could and Should be cut for your city that Far exceed keeping the Marsh open.

I'd Looooove to pull a "Dave as President" style balancing of Torrance's budget to Find the hidden assets!

Feel free to call me & I'll Find ALL KINDS of Wasted money!

Sincerely,

Cathy Pearson
A Lifetime South Bay Resident
2101 245 Street, Front House
Lomita, CA 90717
callmecath7@yahoo.com
310-975-4757

John Jones

Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.781.7502 fax |
JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 8:59 AM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: Harry Squires [groenendal@roadrunner.com]
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2012 3:55 PM
To: Furey, Pat
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Dear Councilmember Furey,

I am writing to ask you not to cut funding for Madrona Marsh. I understand that this is a time of difficult funding choices. But your decision affects not only your town but all the surrounding towns that use this area as a resource—for education and for recreation. It is a treasure whose existence impacts our entire County.

Please keep this precious ecological system healthy.

Harry Squires
Redondo Beach

John Jones
Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice |
310.781.7502 fax | JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 8:54 AM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: Susan Roughen [sroughen7@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 05, 2012 10:01 AM
To: Scotto, Frank
Cc: Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Sutherland, Bill; Brewer, Tom; Furey, Pat
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Dear Mr. Mayor,

I am writing to express my strong feelings about not cutting any funding to the Madrona Marsh. This marsh is important not only to me individually, but to the whole community of Los Angeles. Being the last vernal marsh in Los Angeles County, it provides a natural habitat which provides a laboratory for children and adults. The programs offered in this habitat are special to all involved, and it would be a great loss if any funding is cut.

The marsh provides a unique habitat for many animal and plant species and helps purify our environment. Many community members and other Los Angeles area residents visit to learn about and photograph nature. If our children will be deprived of this opportunity to observe nature and study science, the whole community will lose. The adults with a passion for nature, science, and photography will also be deprived.

I strongly urge you to consider the importance of the Madrona Marsh and continue to fully fund all programs, upkeep, etc.

Sincerely,

Susan Roughen, resident of Marina Del Rey

John Jones

Community Services Director

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JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:41 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh
Attachments: 013.jpg

From: Heather Baer [mailto:hbaer420@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:08 PM
To: Scotto, Frank
Cc: Rhilinger, Susan; Furey, Pat; Numark, Cliff; Brewer, Tom; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Mayor Scotto and Council Members,

It has come to my attention that you are considering cutting funding to the Madrona Marsh. As a resident of Torrance and a regular visitor of the marsh, I strongly request that you banish this idea from your thoughts. This marsh is a gem in the South Bay. Not only do residents enjoy it, but schools use it as a resource as well.

The workers at the marsh have brought so much education to our local community. My family lives nearby on Maple Avenue. I chair a landscape committee where I live. Because of the education we have received from the employees at the marsh, our complex is working hard to plant drought tolerant plants and we are trying to conserve water.

My husband and I take our 4 1/2 year old daughter on walks at the marsh throughout the year. She has developed so many wonderful memories there. I have attached a picture for you to see who will really lose out if funding is lost. I now have a son, who is 5 months old and cannot wait until he is old enough to walk through the grass at the marsh and enjoy the ducks and other city wildlife.

Part of the reason my husband and I decided to raise our family in Torrance is because of the strong commitment the city has to its residents. We enjoy the many events/services offered throughout the year including: the craft fairs, the Plunge, the parks and their summer programs for kids, the libraries, the Farmers Market, and many more. But, most of all, we enjoy the marsh. People who live in Torrance are proud to be residents. However, when the idea of cutting funding or closing down services/locations comes to fruition you end up chipping at the very soul of our community.

Please reconsider this idea of cutting the marsh's funding.

I thank you, on behalf of my family, for your time and dedication to your jobs with the city. I also appreciate you taking the time to read this email. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me at 310-328-3491.

Sincerely,
Heather Gasparo

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:42 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: Jeannette Littlebury [mailto:jeannettelittlebury@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 1:58 PM
To: Rhilinger, Susan; Furey, Pat; Numark, Cliff; Brewer, Tom; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Dear City Counsel Members,

With the utmost respect, I am beseeching you not to cut any funding from the Madrona Marsh.

I have lived here since 1962 when my parents moved to Torrance. My children and all my grandchildren have enjoyed and experience this wonderful natural education right here at our footstep's. These Marshes (including ours are dwindling!

My whole family still lives in Torrance.

I so enjoy it still myself, I go there often and just peacefully enjoy the nature that is right here in Torrance! I take my grandchildren to the classes offered there to educate them in nature and how it all works.

We have lost the fireworks at Wilson Park I understand, however please do not cut any funding from this wonderful natural teaching environment that is so beneficial to our children and their children.

Please find another way!!

Sincerely,

Jeannette Littlebury

1745 Maple Ave.

Torrance, CA 90503

(310) 328-2166

John Jones

Community Services Director

City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance, CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice | 310.721.7502 fax |

JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:42 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: Lisa Chakrabarti [mailto:lisatatsu@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 1:51 PM
To: Scotto, Frank
Cc: Furey, Pat; Numark, Cliff; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom
Subject: Madrona Marsh

Dear Honorable Mayor Scotto:

I am a resident of Koreatown. It was recently brought to my attention that there is a possibility Madrona Marsh might lose funding. I hope my letter will help prove how beloved this nature preserve has become, including for those like myself who willingly travel across town to enjoy its wild beauty and the gentle creatures its habitat supports.

The Marsh is a jewel, a local treasure. It is a way-station for migratory birds and home of countless species of small reptiles and amphibians. This affords first-hand learning opportunities for both young and old - anyone who appreciates the natural world of Southern California. The Madrona Marsh has personally been an inspiration for me, and I dearly hope it will continue.

Thank you for your attention,

Sincerely,
Lisa Chakrabarti

cc: Torrance City Council members

Sent from my iPad. Visit me on the Web at www.clouddragonart.com and on Facebook at Lisa Chakrabarti, Fine Artist.

John Jones
Community Services Director
City of Torrance | 3031 Torrance Boulevard | Torrance CA 90503 | 310.618.2937 voice |
310.781.7502 fax | JJones@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:43 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Madrona Marsh

From: Arch McCulloch [mailto:arch_mc@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 10:59 AM
To: Scotto, Frank; Numark, Cliff; Barnett@torranceca.gov; Rhilinger, Susan; Brewer, Tom; Furey, Pat; Sutherland, Bill
Subject: Madrona Marsh

I know you have received many emails on this subject, so I'll keep it short.

Please do not reduce funding for Madrona Marsh, and do not close the nature center there. My entire family enjoys this open natural space in the center of Torrance.

Thank you for your patience, and for the opportunity to comment.

....Arch McCulloch
Nelda McCulloch
Laurel McCulloch
Lindy McCulloch
5514 Palos Verdes Blvd. Torrance, CA 90505

John Jones
Community Services Director
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jjones@torranceca.gov | www.torranceca.gov

Jones, John

From: Jones, John
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:46 PM
To: Jones, John
Subject: FW: Citizen Development & Enrichment Budget Meeting

From: Bill & Fran Arrowsmith [mailto:TheArrowsmiths@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Monday, August 13, 2012 2:33 PM
To: Scotto, Frank; Brewer, Tom; Furey, Pat; Barnett, Gene; Rhilinger, Susan; Numark, Cliff; Sutherland, Bill
Cc: Drake, Tracy; Brunette, Richard; Jones, John; Fran & Bill Arrowsmith
Subject: Citizen Development & Enrichment Budget Meeting

August 10, 2012

Dear Mayor, Chairman Brewer, and members of the CD&E Committee and Council,

The recession out of which we are climbing has placed great stress on all of us, in particular the leaders of our nation, states and cities who are tasked with stemming the tide of reduced revenues and righting the governmental ship. As the leaders of Torrance, you have done, and continue to do an admirable job of marshaling our resources. The current close examination of the budgets of City departments by the Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee and others is exactly the right approach to better understanding what our expenses are in order that we obtain a firm grip on the magnitude of current and future problems.

This is also an excellent opportunity to, in a spirit of cooperation with the units involved, discover areas that can be improved -- e.g., through more efficient methodology or elimination of unnecessary or wasteful operations. As a 32-year citizen of Torrance as well as a long time supporter of Madrona Marsh, I understand what you are doing and heartily approve. And I realize that it's almost like asking parents to choose from among their children who will receive food from a dwindling supply.

I have been associated with, and active in, the Friends of Madrona Marsh since its inception, 40 years ago. I have been privileged to work very closely with Preserve Manager and Naturalist Tracy Drake and Community Services Director John Jones for the last ten years, and with Tracy's more recent supervisor, Rich Brunette for the last several. In a word, they run a tight ship. I am sure your review of their budget will show that, especially as you discover the full extent of what Tracy and her staff provide to the citizens of Torrance.

Tracy has designed and implemented, with the assistance of the Friends, a truly remarkable array of environmental programs and opportunities for the citizens of Torrance and all visitors to the Preserve -- from tots to tweens to seniors -- the Preserve and Nature Center offer rich educational experiences in the classroom of the outdoors as well as the laboratory and classroom.

Tracy has been an inspiration to all of us, and works extremely long hours, and weeks, to make it all happen. Although she has a sparse staff of part-time employees, Tracy always manages to get the job done. The staff itself is extremely talented and efficient, and includes retired school teachers we could not possibly afford, but for their desire to volunteer their services to the Preserve.

When Tracy has had particular staffing problems, as she did with a staff cut in 2006, the Friends have stepped in to help. At that time, we provided volunteer workers for the front desk, thus freeing up her staff for tasks we were not qualified or able to do. The Friends have continued to help, as greeters at the front desk; as docents for school tours, as leaders of children's programs and as assistants in restoration programs. The thousands of hours of volunteer work by the Friends and others, combined with Tracy's expert leadership, make the Preserve and Nature Center the biggest bargain in the City's Recreational Program.

Since his arrival as the Groundskeeper for the Preserve a year or two ago, Ed Vandever has proven to be a valuable addition to the team. Like Tracy, he has a very strong work ethic and appreciation for what needs to be done. Although the maintenance of the Preserve is quite different from the City's other parks, Ed has dived in to learn how to care for this large, and sometimes fragile, wildlife preserve. His enthusiasm and ability to work well with others has multiplied his effectiveness. He is a bargain many times over.

The Friends and I look forward to working with the Committee and Council to help the City through this period, and am confident we will emerge stronger in the process.

Your fellow citizen,
Bill Arrowsmith

President, Friends of Madrona Marsh