



Written by

[Colin Atagi](#)

The Desert Sun

Desert Hot Springs City Council says no to 'get-along' consultant

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Desert Hot Springs — The City Council, which had developed a reputation for being contentious, opted Tuesday not to hire a consultant to teach them how to get along with each other.

City leaders instead decided to try harder to work together and not let personal disputes affect the way they run the city.

“I think we just had our ‘Kumbaya’ meeting here, I hope,” Councilman Russell Betts said.

The city had considered spending \$17,500 on hiring Napa-based Mathis Consulting Group to work with city leaders and staff.

City Council members and residents alike did not think it was the best move.

“You don’t have the right to ask citizens to pay for your anger management therapy,” resident Philip Gittelman said.

“You have substance for a great act from ‘Saturday Night Live.’ (But) it’s not very funny,” he said

A particular incident that was discussed was when Mayor Yvonne Parks was overheard calling Betts a “son of a bitch” during the Jan. 5 meeting.

She initially refused to apologize, but did so during Tuesday’s discussion.

Betts accepted her apology.

Parks said she thought it would be a good idea to hire the consultant, but added “team building is only good if everyone wants to participate.”

Councilman Adam Sanchez, however, was concerned a poor message could be sent if the city decided it needed help developing an amicable relationship among officials.

“If we can't do this ourselves, we're in a lot of trouble,” he said.

Resident Joe McKee stressed earlier in the night that the council didn't need to exactly get along.

“But we just care you work professionally together,” he told city leaders.

Councilwoman Jan Pye acknowledged buttons have been pushed.

“But our buttons have nothing to do with running city business,” she said.

In other news

A Desert Hot Springs woman publicly announced her and others' intention to recall three City Council leaders.

“Can't we all get along? Apparently not with our present mayor and two council members,” Pamela Berry said during the meeting's public comments period. “You're the reason there is trouble in Desert Hot Springs.”

Following her comments, she served recall intentions to Parks and council members Scott Matas and Jan Pye.

Berry needed 25 registered voters' signatures to serve an intention, and she had 30, she said.

Among other steps in the recall process, supporters need another 2,500 signatures to get it on the Nov. 6 ballot.

A chorus of boos and cheers erupted in the council chamber after Berry spoke.

VIEW COMMENTS (14)



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[Bill Effinger](#) · [Principal](#) at [New Century Consulting](#)

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Recall? What a concept! Let's see, will that be the fifth or the sixth recall in the last 20 years? I do believe recalling the mayor and two Council members would set a precedent for Desert Hot Springs however. So why not? A little more turmoil for the city will just add a few more laughs to Comedy Central of Coachella Valley for everyone's enjoyment.

There comes a time when a community should wake up and smell the roses. Until the more reasonable and intelligent members of the Desert Hot Springs community step out of the shadows (and there are many) to vote and take part in an attempt to lift the city out of the idiotic morass it finds itself in, Desert Hot Springs will remain the armpit of the desert. If that means one more recall, then so be it.

I remain in favor of diincorporation and a merger with one of its neighbors assuming they would even be welcome.



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[James Barrett](#)

What makes you think that if the voters made bad choices with this council that they would do any better the next time around?

"You can lead a voter to the polls, but you can't make them think." JGB



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[Gary Siebert](#) · Top commenter · [Palm Springs High](#)

Here is a bit of T.V./Movie wisdom for you, coming from Leonard Nimoy as Spock in the Star Trek T.V. Series and Star Trek Movies, "The Needs Of The Many, Outweigh The Needs Of The One" or in this case the individual agendas of city council members of any city in the U.S.. Do what is best for those you are being paid to represent and not fellow politicians and promises made to them, as well as any financial benefit to yourselves. WOW, what a concept!!! Try it, everyone else might like it.



- [Lyle Kellogg](#) · Top commenter

Good for them! They learning how the word No works.



- [Robin Thomas](#) · [Desert Hot Springs, California](#)

I think the city is worth saving, but has suffered from a disaffected electorate and a history of amateurish government. The newer voices on city council, especially Mr. Betts, are hopeful signs for the future. I'd rather see us pay closer attention to regularly scheduled elections than run to the recall petitions every time we get mad. If we can put a competently managed government in place through good old democracy, we can enjoy our beautiful views, easy way of life and the general weirdness of this part of the desert while working to solve our many problems.



- [Darel Propst](#) · Top commenter

How about "get-along" on out of town Parks, Matas and Daniels. DHS will remain dysfunctional so long as these three are here pulling the whole city down. Sign the recall initiative. Parks and Matas have to go. Daniels needs to be fired for incompetence and with no contract buy-out.



- [Alannah Kern](#) · [University of British Columbia](#)

Let's see how many outstanding prejudices we can come up with Mr.Effinger...If you come from Palm Springs you are gay. From Palm Desert you are right wing religious. From Sun City you are over ninety. From Indio and Coachella you are in jail.l Armpit of the desert...how boring can you get!



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[Ken Houghton](#)

If it looks like an armpit, smells like and armpit, it's probably an armpit! By the way, those are not "prejudices", they are stereotype.



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[Bill Effinger](#) · [Principal](#) at [New Century Consulting](#)

Alannah: I am none of the above. I am however, a former resident of Desert Hot Springs and absolutely delighted that I can say former. Now I can watch the crazies from a long distance and it is far from boring. Better than what the comedy store has to offer.



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[Randall Reynolds](#) · [Stanford Law School](#)

Alannah, you have to understand.....ole Billy there is the idiot that wrote the throw away book on DHS.



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[James Barrett](#)

So does this mean that the chair can still silence a fellow councilmember when she doesn't like the message he is delivering? SSDD



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[Alannah Kern](#) · [University of British Columbia](#)

Oh and btw...Our city council is no more ridiculous than any other city council...just a little more "out there" ...



[Mary K. Stephens](#) · [Accounting Manager](#) at [Las Casuelas Nuevas](#)

Good decision council.



[Gary Whitehead](#) · Top commenter

Well at least this is a positive step in the right direction. I think at this point a lot of us would volunteer to help the brats get along with some real individual counseling.