

OPINION

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What's your opinion? Did Russell Betts and Adam Sanchez chase Rick Daniels out of town?



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Did Russell Betts and Adam Sanchez chase Rick Daniels out of town? Desert Hot Springs City Manager Rick Daniels has submitted his resignation after six years on the job. The news comes out the week when the council was scheduled to discuss Daniels charges that councilmen Betts and Sanchez have been bullying him with emails in the middle of the night, creating a hostile work environment. The investigation of those charges has already cost the city more than \$77,000.

Daniels has held significant public and private positions in the Coachella Valley for 30 years, including president and CEO of the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership, executive director of the Salton Sea Authority and leader of the campaign to turn Eagle Mountain in a regional landfill – a campaign The Desert Sun historically supported because of the potential for jobs and economic growth.

Daniels has always been one of the most accessible and quotable public officials in the valley. He often answers his own phone, unlike many city managers who filter calls through their assistants. Former Desert Sun Managing Editor Jim Kelly once quipped that, "Daniels was unavoidable for comment."

Mayor Yvonne Parks released a statement Wednesday listing the city's accomplishments under Daniels' tenure, including the opening of the Community Health and Wellness Center and the soon-to-be open Borrego Community Health Foundation Clinic. She doesn't mention the biggest embarrassment, blowing \$250,000 on the Wellness and World Music Festival, which never took place.

Despite the progress, expenses still outweigh revenue in Desert Hot Springs. The City Council is expected to take \$2.3 million out of reserves to balance the budget. **To his credit, Daniels took a 10 percent pay cut to help the cause.**

Coincidentally, another city manager of a struggling is leaving the valley. Andy Hall, who had led Cathedral City for just seven months, is leaving to become city manager of Imperial Beach. His last day is Aug. 16.

Daniels is considering a city manager job in Needles. No matter where he lands, I wish him the best of luck.