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### Complaint filed against Hanson by Bosworth

**Cindy Uken**

The Desert Sun

May 15, 2005

Desert Hot Springs City Councilman Gary Bosworth has filed a complaint with the Fair Political Practices Commission alleging that City Manager Jerry Hanson has violated the Political Reform Act.



The complaint centers on an allegation that Hanson has a conflict of interest in owning 10 acres of land near a major residential development planned in the city; the City Council last month asked for a grand jury investigation into the same allegation. Bosworth wants all bases covered.

Hanson has denied any wrongdoing. He disclosed his ownership on a statement of economic interest filed June 24 at City Hall. Some City Council members knew about his property and it did not stop them from supporting the project; at least two council members, Bosworth and Will Pieper, say they didn't know about the land. Hanson did not mention his land holdings when the council voted on the project.

Bosworth, who is seeking re-election to a fourth term this fall, says he is aware of the criticism that his actions are politically motivated.

"I'm doing it because it's the right thing to do," Bosworth said. "As a public servant I have a fiduciary responsibility to do what's right no matter how people might react."

This isn't the first time Bosworth has requested an outside investigation. In February 1999, he wrote to the grand jury because he had concerns with then-City Manager Robert Wilburn; the City Council eventually fired Wilburn.

The FPPC acknowledged receipt of Bosworth's complaint and said it "will advise (him) of the ultimate disposition of this matter."

Palm Springs City Councilwoman Ginny Foat last week delivered an estimated 200 downtown business owners a questionnaire in an effort to get her arms around their concerns.

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The survey asks merchants their opinions on everything from the homeless population and parking to the sign ordinance and police/fire service. The survey also asks their opinions about service from Downtown Development Director Jerry Ogburn, who is at the center of a firestorm. Downtown merchants are circulating a petition asking the city to put Ogburn's services out to bid for the first time in his 15 years with Palm Springs.

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Foat, who is conducting the survey on her own - but on city letterhead - said it is impossible to address a situation without information.

"I'm just one City Council member on a fact-finding mission," Foat said. "We have the most unique downtown in the valley and nobody can come up with a reason as to why it's not thriving except for blaming the Fashion Plaza, but that's only part of the problem."

She said she did not advise any of her colleagues except Councilman Steve Pougnet. Foat said she wanted an "impartial" review of downtown businesses - and didn't want it to be "official city business," hoping it would be less intimidating.

Foat said she will share the results of her survey with the rest of the City Council.

"We need the input of people who have their life savings invested downtown and have their lives on the line," she said.

Foat is seeking election to the City Council in November; she was appointed to the City Council in 2003.

Mayor Ron Oden is not amused in the least. Though Foat has done nothing illegal, the mayor said she has created a "negative, hostile environment."

"It gives the impression, although unintended, that we are not together," Oden said.

If she is willing to communicate the results of the survey after the fact, the mayor said she should have been willing to communicate before she did it as well.

Roxann Ploss, a 34-year resident of Palm Springs and a recently retired High School Social Studies teacher with the Palm Springs Unified School District, is hosting an invitation-only party this evening.

According to the invitation, the evening event is being held "In the name of unity - to protect our valley and its people we can still have a hand in our future. Let's do it together."

Don't be surprised if Ploss announces her candidacy for the Palm Springs City Council at the event.

Gary Bosworth, vice chair of the Democratic Party for Riverside County, wants to set the record straight - this time with regard to Cathedral City politics.

Bosworth says newly elected Cathedral City City Councilman Chuck Vasquez can't seem to make up his mind which party he wants to be affiliated with - if any. Bosworth said Friday that Vasquez has not been a "longtime" Democrat as he has portrayed himself.

Bosworth said last year as the Democratic Party was deciding whom to endorse, he researched candidates' affiliations, including Vasquez's. In 1992, Vasquez registered as a "decline to state;" he did not register as a Democrat until May 2004 "when he was trying to get Democratic support," according to Bosworth. Vasquez also wanted to put up a booth at a communitywide Democratic Flag Day celebration June 14 in Cathedral City but would not have been able to if he wasn't a Democrat, Bosworth said.

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