

Dear Lea-

I know it is quite unusual for a candidate to contact another candidate during the filing period, but this is too important not to discuss. You and I have corresponded before in a very friendly and constructive way, so I come to you in that spirit right now.

Let me start by saying I respect how much you care about the dunes, and that you want to do everything in your power to help get the park back open and protect it. I would not ever pretend that I have the same views as you, but I do want you to know that I not only support them reopening, but I had my letter read by the Chamber of Commerce president at the Coastal Commission against closing the park. We are not enemies.

I know from your online posts that you find me at least partially at fault for putting Council Member Paulding on APCD. That is not a meeting I can attend because I work full time, but I get that's not your concern. You want the seat. It's important for you to know that if you win, the seat is not automatically yours, nor was it mine.

But here is the really important part. IF you were to win for mayor, and IF the council voted to put you on APCD, you would have to step down and leave the room for any vote on the dunes because your business is financially tied to it. We are not allowed to vote on issues we could financially benefit from. This is straight-up California state law. So the one reason you are wanting to run is to get on APCD and make a difference, and you absolutely cannot do that. It is not likely the council would vote to put you there if you couldn't fully participate, which you cannot, due to Freedom Ropes.

I know I have a vested interest in talking you out of running, so I understand you may not trust me here. But as Mayor, I absolutely have to say this next part, on behalf of the taxpayers.

Right now, no one else has filed for mayor or council seats. You would be the only challenger. If you do not run, we will be able to cancel the election, and that would save the taxpayers approximately \$28,000. (You can ask the City Clerk, Kelly Wetmore to verify this). If you qualify tomorrow, there is no backing out, and we spend that during this very difficult Covid 19 time where we are all hurting. That decision to spend \$28,000 of taxpayer money is entirely yours.

Lea, I honestly respect your willingness to step up to the plate and do something. Most people don't have the guts to do that. I really want you to know that says a lot about you in a good way. But there are more effective things you can do in order to support the dunes, and running for mayor simply won't get you there. You won't even be able to do it. So you'll go through all the ugliness of the election, put your kids and husband through that, air out all your dirty laundry for everyone to see and attach to your business, and all so you can't vote on APCD if you even get there. Mother to mother, wife to wife, I just can't sit back and not say anything to you as you make your final decision.

Again, it's totally unusual for us to talk during the filing period, but I think this \$28,000 gamble with taxpayer money for a seat on APCD that you cannot have is just not responsible, and won't get you the outcome you want. It will put you and your family out into the ugly world of politics, which I assure you is nasty beyond your wildest dreams. Believe me, I've lived it for a long time.

Please feel free to call me tonight if you'd like to talk more as you make your decision. It is my sincere hope that you'll reconsider, on behalf of the taxpayers and to make you the most effective activist you can be, but in a different way. My number is .

Best wishes,

Caren Ray Russom