51st KZGN News Talking Points Editorial

Was the first city council town hall effective?

First, a couple comments received about the last editorial titled: Should you have to wait to purchase a gun when you need it for self-defense? Suzy commented: I think the 10-day waiting period is ample time, and I agree, there should be a waiting period. Harry said: A federal court has found that the 10-day waiting period in California violates the 2nd amendment of the constitution. With that said, let me ask you this Suzy: Should law abiding gun owners, who already own hand guns/long guns, have the 10-day waiting period applied to them? If you think the answer is yes, what is the logic behind that? If you need a gun for self-defense, as in the example cited in the editorial, and you are a law abiding citizen of sound mind, what is the logic behind that? It cost this woman her life... As Harry stated, a 10-day cooling off period is useless when a person already owns a gun. The intent of the cooling off period is to stop a person from acting in a fit of rage to go out and buy a gun and come back and kill someone. If they already have a gun, a cooling off period is useless. And as in the example news story in the editorial, here was a woman that did everything she could do in accordance to all the laws, and she wound up dead because of the anti-gun ideology. When a person needs a gun for protection, they should be allowed to get one assuming they are legally allowed to purchase one of course.

Now on to today’s editorial titled: Was the first city council town hall effective? I believe it was a good first step. It was well run by Cedric Knight. It started the discussion with the people. That is what is important, involving the people. While about 60 people attended, we need more. Through the meeting, many ideas and complaints were voiced. Many speakers polled the audience to get a feeling of who was at the meeting. It was pointed out that the Navy at China Lake did not have a representative attending. I don’t know why. This may have been an oversight on the part of the city. Maybe there was a lack of coordination between the city and the Navy. I know in past years, the Navy has, at times, weighed in on things the city was doing concerning economic development. Maybe the Navy didn’t know the town hall was happening. If that’s the case, the mayor must make sure the Navy is invited in all future discussions on economic development. Again, I don’t know if they were specifically invited by the city. If they weren’t, they should be. What was interesting is the poll from a speaker asking: for all those that don’t work at, never worked at, and never will work at the base to raise their hands. The results of that request were surprising. Approximately 75% of the people raised their hands. It shows that there is interest in economic development. Sixty people attending a town hall is a good turnout. But what was lacking was specific ideas for economic development.

I was unable to attend this meeting, but one area I suggest is a focus on making Ridgecrest the center for shopping in the Eastern Sierra. Stu Witt suggested helping existing local business’s, before looking for just new business. This too is a good idea. Economic development has to be multifaceted. There is not just one solution. All avenues need to be pursued, and all at the same time. Bringing in new business is important and necessary to promote diversity. Helping existing business expand and add jobs is important. Promoting tourism to bring in new dollars is important. Attracting shoppers to Ridgecrest, instead of letting them go to other areas to shop is important to helping local business. As a local business owner, I have experimented with this concept. I have brought my research to a number of movers and shakers in the city and just been blown off. I know what works and doesn’t work on a small scale, but now someone needs to step it up and make it a city effort. I know even we do not have everything that shoppers need and can’t compete with large cities. I know for a fact that all the city’s around us, from Mammoth Lakes and Bishop, down to Mojave, to Lake Isabelle, and to Trona, the people that live in these cities do come here to shop. My main emphasis has been getting the people from mammoth and the entire Eastern Sierra region in Inyo County to come down here to shop. They do come here, but the city could do more to encourage these people to come here. When you consider that Bishop and Mammoth north decide to shop here or go north to Reno. We need them to come here, and not go north to Reno. This is not an expensive endeavor, like providing a news business hundreds of thousands of dollars to start up here. I will again try and bring this forward as something for the city to consider. We’ll see what happens.

The only complaints I have to the town hall at this point was calling for a 2-minute limit for speakers. I’d like to hear solution ideas. Not just complaints, but what should be done to solve the problem. While it really wasn’t enforced, discussion of this topic takes time. Sometimes it can take 2 minutes just to lay out a concept, let alone a solution. I would encourage everyone out there, even if you didn’t attend the town hall, you can still contribute. Send Mayor Breeden or the council members an email. Or call any of them. Voice your opinions. Be heard. If you have an idea, now is not the time to just be talking to your fellow workers. Talk to the city. Real solutions are needed.

In conclusion, economic development is important. It is important to the city, the navy, and the people that live here. Stay tuned for the next town hall. And finally, participate. Provide your comments.

I’m Tom Wiknich, and that’s what I think. I’d like to know what you think. If you have any comments about this editorial, or would like to discuss or recommend a topic, I’d like to hear from you. Please email them to info@kzgn.net.