



AGENDA

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.

Members:

Mayor Paul Fadelli

Mayor Pro Tem Gabe Quinto • Councilmember Janet Abelson
Councilmember Lisa Motoyama • Councilmember Tessa Rudnick

Join Via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85658740356?pwd=TGQxR3YvdGcyK2Yrb0VmOHMrQ0MvZz09>

Meeting ID: 856 5874 0356 **Password:** 940634
or Dial in: 1-408-638-0968

The City Council may continue to meet by teleconference, consistent with the Brown Act as amended by AB 361 (2021). Under the amended rules, the City will not provide a physical location for members of the public to participate in the teleconference meeting.

This meeting will not be broadcast or livestreamed online. Members of the public may join to provide public comment using the Zoom meeting information listed above. Following public comments, the City Council will convene to closed session and the meeting will be closed to the public.

Public Comments may be submitted one of two ways and are **limited to items on the special meeting agenda only:**

- Via Zoom using the “[Raise Hand](#)” icon to request to speak. If joining by phone, dial *9 to "raise your hand", and when prompted by the host, *6 to unmute/mute.
- Via email to cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us. Email must contain in the subject line **Public Comments – agenda item #.**

To ensure City Council receives your written comments prior to taking action, they must be received by **2:30 p.m. the day of the meeting**. All written comments received by this deadline will be provided to the City Council and posted online in advance of the meeting.

Comments received after the deadline will be provided to the City Council and included with supplemental materials **after the meeting. No written comments will be read into the record.**

5:30 PM ROLL CALL - CONVENE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

1. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

All persons wishing to speak should sign up with the City Clerk. Remarks are typically limited to 3 minutes per person and to items on the special meeting agenda only.

2. CLOSED SESSION CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6

Agency Designated Representatives: Karen Pinkos, City Manager; Glenn Berkheimer, Labor Negotiator; Sky Woodruff, City Attorney; and Alexandra Orologas, Assistant City Manager.

Employee Organizations: Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1021; El Cerrito Police Employees Association; United Professional Firefighters Local 1230; Public Safety Management Association - Battalion Chief, Fire Chief, Police Chief, and Police Management; and Management and Confidential Employees.

Contact: Sky Woodruff, City Attorney, City Management

3. CLOSED SESSION CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL- POTENTIAL LITIGATION

Significant Exposure to Litigation Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2)

4. ADJOURN SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City of El Cerrito serves, leads and supports our diverse community by providing exemplary and innovative services, public places and infrastructure, ensuring public safety and creating an economically and environmentally sustainable future.

- Copies of the agenda bills and other written documentation relating to items of business referred to on the agenda are on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the City Clerk, at the El Cerrito Library and posted on the City's website at www.el-cerrito.org prior to the meeting.
- In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk, 510-215-4305. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).
- **The Deadline for agenda items and communications** is eight days prior to the next meeting by 12 noon, City Clerk's Office, 10890 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA. Tel: 510-215-4305, email cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us
- IF YOU CHALLENGE A DECISION OF THE CITY COUNCIL IN COURT, YOU MAY BE LIMITED TO RAISING ONLY THOSE ISSUES YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE RAISED AT THE COUNCIL MEETING. ACTIONS CHALLENGING CITY COUNCIL DECISIONS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE TIME LIMITATIONS CONTAINED IN CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE SECTION 1094.6.
- The City Council believes that late night meetings deter public participation, can affect the Council's decision-making ability, and can be a burden to staff. City Council Meetings shall be adjourned by 11:00 p.m., unless extended to a specific time determined by a majority of the Council.



SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA MATERIALS PUBLIC COMMENT INDEX

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING October 25, 2021

The following Public Comments were **received by 2:30 p.m. 10/25/2021**, were provided directly to City Councilmembers in advance of the meeting, and were posted online as supplemental materials at www.el-cerrito.org/CouncilMeetingMaterials

Public Comments – Closed Session

1. Sandra Chapek
2. Monica Kortz
3. Lisa Hirayama
4. Larry Carr
5. Bruce H. Nelson
6. Steve Bonini
7. Scott C. Kirkland
8. John F. Dougery
9. Shawn Maples
10. David R. Gibson
11. Chery Mosby
12. Robert De La Campa
13. Michael J. Bond
14. Joseph Grupalo
15. Candice Emert
16. Kathryn Halligan
17. Donald Crumpacker

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments -Agenda Item #1
Date: Friday, October 22, 2021 5:14:27 PM

October 21, 2021

**Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
City of El Cerrito**

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers:

I was recently informed that the City of El Cerrito is considering depriving retirees of a benefit that was specified in Union contracts and has long been in place.

During the late 60s or early 70s, El Cerrito bargaining units sought paid retiree medical, which was common in many jurisdictions at the time. Paid retiree medical gave those jurisdictions a decided edge in attracting quality employees and in retaining them in their workforce.

The effort to obtain paid retiree medical was unsuccessful during El Cerrito negotiations. However, the bargaining units were given the benefit of remaining in the City's pool for medical with all current employees. This benefit is deemed as an incentive for employees to remain with El Cerrito until retirement.

The benefit, which has been in place for all these years, should be considered a vested right of those receiving it in a court of law. Removal of the benefit is both ethically and most likely legally in error. It would seriously disadvantage some of the retirees, many of whom served the City well for numerous years, and could lead to a class-action lawsuit.

It is my sincere hope that the City Council will give serious consideration to retaining this benefit and avoiding the likely negative effects of elimination.

Yours truly,

**Sandra Chapek
Former Employee Services Manager**

From: [Monica Kortz](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item #2
Date: Friday, October 22, 2021 5:27:54 PM

Dear Mayor and Members of the El Cerrito City Council

My name is Monica Kortz and I am the former Recreation Director. Recently, I was informed by a retiree that the City of El Cerrito is considering increasing our Retirement Health Benefit by 42%. I am honestly saddened by this action and the lack of communication by the City to retirees.

I worked for the City of El Cerrito for 25 years. I gave my heart and soul to the City of El Cerrito and many times I was asked to work or volunteer doing extra activities. I was always willing to go that extra mile right along with my fellow colleagues. During my tenure, the City of El Cerrito faced many financial strains and many auditor reports. Yet as I sat in 25 years of bargaining sessions, where the message was delivered that retirees, survivors or retirees and survivors of deceased employees would be permitted to remain on the city health plans, at the city rate. This was negotiated in all the bargaining agreements as in incentive and in lieu of paid medical.

Even in the auditors report, the City was provided examples on how to deal with Retiree Health Care Benefits. (See below). For your convenience, I have cut and pasted the auditors quote.

Retiree Health Care Benefits El Cerrito's policy of allowing its retirees to remain in its health insurance plan increases the plan's overall cost to the city. The city allows its retired employees to retain their health care benefits upon retirement if desired. It requires those individuals to pay their own premiums, which are the same rates as those charged to active employees. However, health care costs for retirees are generally higher than those of current city employees. When determining the premium amounts, the city's health insurance plan pools the costs of both current and retired employees, resulting in the premium for current employees being higher than if the retirees' costs were excluded. Because the city pays current employees' premiums, it is essentially subsidizing the premium rates for retirees by bearing the additional cost. **El Cerrito has various options that it could consider to reasonably address the additional costs incurred by its decision to allow retirees to remain in the city's health care plan. For example, the city of Beverly Hills offered its current employees a one-time payment to voluntarily terminate their eligibility for retiree health care benefits, and it discontinued its policy of providing such benefits to newly hired employees. These two actions significantly reduced Beverly Hills' projected liability for retiree health care costs. Alternatively, the city of Chula Vista determined the additional costs pertaining to the higher premium rates for retiree participation in its health plan and established an agreement with its employee bargaining groups in fiscal year 2011-12 to require new employees to pay those costs if they choose to remain in the plan upon retirement. Chula Vista later eliminated this benefit entirely for subsequent new hires.**

I am hoping that you will take serious consideration and not move forward with this action. I am afraid that following through would likely cause a negative impact and provide a lack of trust in the city by retirees and current employees.

Sincerely,

Monica Kortz
Retiree

From: [L & L Carr](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #2
Date: Saturday, October 23, 2021 8:38:25 AM

The City of El Cerrito City Council
City Hall
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Dear Mr. Mayor & Council Members:

As the wife of retired El Cerrito Battalion Chief Larry Carr, I am shocked and dismayed to learn that the City of El Cerrito is reneging on their medical agreements for retirees. Unlike many other cities, El Cerrito does not provide medical coverage upon retirement, but knowing that we could at least still pay the group coverage premium rate made this burden a little more palatable.

I would like to understand how El Cerrito can just decide to change the way they have done business for decades. I understand if new hires today are told that they will not be able to buy into the City sponsored health plan in 30 years, but every current Public Safety employee has been told they can buy into the City health plan if they choose to upon retirement. The City of El Cerrito formally accepted that position over 50 years ago when this benefit was negotiated in to contracts in good faith. The City's position was that employees could plan and save their own money and pay their medical costs at the employee rate. To change this benefit now requires bargaining procedures that, in this case, have not been performed.

Larry and I planned and saved knowing that we would be on a fixed income upon his retirement. Both of our children are in college and still on our medical coverage, so to find out that our premiums will be increasing 42% within two months is outrageous. It appears that current City Administration may not care about bargaining in good faith, about breach of contract or about vested rights. It's very possible that City Administration has developed an anti-retiree sentiment which is an even sadder statement on how the City Manager values the City's

employees.

Larry dedicated 32.5 years to the City of El Cerrito to only now be stabbed in the back. Public Safety employees are the first in and last out in every emergency situation. They put their lives on the line every day on every call for every citizen. They can suffer medical issues after a lifetime of breathing smoke and the affects of PTSD. To be notified that their medical coverage costs will now be increased 42% which would make it more expensive than purchasing it on the open market is just plain wrong after their dedicated years of service. Every Council Member who wants to vote to take away the only retirement medical benefit from an El Cerrito First Responder knows that when they call 911, a First Responder will arrive to care for, comfort and administer life saving procedures for them regardless of how the City Council may have failed that First Responder.

Please vote against this price hike and taking away the ONLY retirement medical benefit for Public Safety employees.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hirayama

[REDACTED]

Napa, CA 94558

October 23, 2021

The City of El Cerrito City Council
City Hall
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Mr. Mayor and City Council:

I urge you to reject the City Manager's plan to cut the long-standing procedures for administering retiree medical coverage.

I know that many retirees have sent in letters outlining the history of this benefit -- for me it will suffice to say that the procedure has been in place at least four decades, prior to my 32 years of service to El Cerrito.

While the City Manager would like to give the impression that the "no cost to the City" clause includes a contrived differential between young, currently working employees vs. older, retired members, it was always recognized by City Administration that the "no cost" clause does not mean there is zero cost.

Rather than face a collective bargaining issue with benefit termination, the CM has chosen to twist the auditor report in a way that makes it look like this is a surprising increased cost not covered by the wording of the benefit.

"No cost" means that the health care premiums would be borne by the retiree, as they have been for decades.

Please make no changes to this benefit.

Larry Carr

Retired Battalion Chief

[REDACTED]

Napa, CA 94558

From: [Bruce Nelson](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Cc: [Paul Fadelli](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Gabe Quinto](#); [Lisa Motoyama](#); [Tessa Rudnick](#); [Karen Pinkos](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENTS AGENDA ITEM #2
Date: Saturday, October 23, 2021 8:02:28 PM
Attachments: [ltr.retired.employee.medical.coverage.2021.10.23.docx](#)

Mayor Fadelli and city council members. I would normally have just sent the attached letter to the city clerk to be included in your council packet. However, I was only notified of your upcoming Monday meeting today and wanted to be sure you had an opportunity to have access to the historical information I have provided to you in the letter.

Bruce H. Nelson

Proprietor
Heibel Ranch Vineyards, LLC

www.heibelranch.com

Heibel Ranch Vineyards ... from Dirt to Bottle!

BRUCE H NELSON
[REDACTED]
Saint Helena, CA 94574

October 23, 2021

City of El Cerrito
Mayor Paul Fadelli
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

RE: Retired City Employee Medical Coverage

Dear Mr. Fadelli,

My name is Bruce Nelson and I write to you today to discuss information I possess regarding the retired city employee medical coverage benefit that I understand has become a recent issue. As background, I am a retired city employee. I was a member of the El Cerrito Police Department from May 17, 1967 until my retirement on June 1, 1997. During that time, I served in virtually every position in the Police Department. From 1980 through my retirement, I held the rank of Police Captain as was second-in-command of the department. Over those 17 years I served as both Acting Chief of Police and Interim Chief of Police for extended periods. I grew up and lived in El Cerrito from 1953 until 1996. My youngest daughter and her family are third and fourth generation residents of the city and currently own the home originally purchased by my parents. While I no longer have a stake in the issue at hand, I do have a continuing stake in the city, its employees and certainly its retired employees.

During the late 1960's and early 1970's I represented the El Cerrito Police Employees Association during meet and confer negotiations with city representatives. During that time, we and other employee groups presented proposals to the city asking for paid medical insurance for retired employees which was a benefit that most other cities in the area were providing or beginning to provide as part of their benefits packages. Then, as now, the city was not in the best of financial health and was unable to provide this benefit. However, the city did agree to allow employees to remain in the medical coverage plans provided they paid both the employees' and city's share of insurance premiums. The wording "at no cost to the city" or words to that effect were placed in the Memorandum of Understanding. While not explicitly stated, the intent of this wording was intended to mean that the city was not providing paid medical coverage to retired employees. The city agreed to pick up any administrative costs, this was also not explicitly stated but that was certainly the understanding.

During the 17 years of my tenure as Police Captain, I was responsible for drafting the department budget. At times, I was tasked with drafting 3 different budgets to anticipate various levels of financial shortfall due to the city's financial outlook. I'm sure that during all those years there were financial audits conducted and I was never made aware of any concern about the issue of the medical coverage provided through multiple Memorandums of Understanding with the

Police Association and the other employee groups. There is no doubt that I would have been made aware of any such concern.

It is my understanding that a state auditor brought up this issue as a result of a recent audit. I find it difficult to understand how this benefit survived for 50 years or more with no one ever questioning it. It is also my understanding that the city manager is recommending an increase in retired employee payments that could amount to as much as 42% for some individuals. I understand the justification is that older insured individuals have more medical issues which increase insurance costs. That is certainly true in my case and probably most others as well.

The purpose and intent of allowing retired employees to remain in the city sponsored medical plans as provided in every Memorandum of Understanding with every employee group for the last half century is exactly because older individuals need the benefit of coverage in a pool of individuals. Changing the methodology of how payment for this benefit that is provided in Memoranda of Understanding with your current employees for their retirement years is unconscionable. In addition, it has the appearance of an attempt to make up a small amount of city financial deficits on the backs people who served the community and its residents for their working careers. One could also make a very good argument of age discrimination in the city's treatment of older former workers.

I urge you to reject this and similar proposals. I would be happy to discuss this matter with you and appear before the City Council if you so desire. I can be reached at the above address or on my mobile phone at [REDACTED].

Yours truly,

Bruce H Nelson

cc: Council Member Abelson
Council Member Quinto
Council Member Motoyama
Council Member Rudnick
City Manager Pinkos
City Clerk

From: [Steve Bonini](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Puic Comments Agenda Item #2
Date: Saturday, October 23, 2021 8:09:33 PM

Good Evening:

Beginning in the 1970s, the City of El Cerrito and public safety bargaining groups negotiated the ability for retirees to buy medical coverage after retirement. The City of El Cerrito has never, nor currently does it offer a medical after retirement benefit.

Having been part of several contract negotiations, this negotiated benefit has always been held up every time public safety tried to get a medical after retirement benefit. Employee groups were told by many City managers, retirees can buy coverage at the current rate. Accepting this for many retirees, the current City manager touted this arrangement when questioned about budgets. She stated in City council meetings the City does not offer a medical after retirement benefit and she said the retiree can buy in at the current rate for employees.

We never heard her talk about some sort of subsidy. Additionally the attempt to change this outside of contract negotiations is inappropriate. Like the examples cited in the State Auditors report, the benefit was dealt with in contract negotiations.

This attempt to re-wrote the contract outside of negotiations is wrong and does not match past pattern and practice.

Respectfully,
Steve Bonini - retired lieutenant, former Police Employee Association President, former President Public Safety Management Association.

From: [Scott Kirkland](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); [Gabriel Quinto](#); [Janet Abelson](#); [Lisa Motoyama](#); [Paul Fadelli](#); [Tessa Rudick](#)
Subject: lance maples, Paul Keith
Date: Sunday, October 24, 2021 10:12:41 AM
Attachments: [Letter to El Cerrito City Council 10 23 2021.pdf](#)

Good Morning.

On this raining Sunday morning I am hoping that you will have the time to read the attached letter. The letter is written as a result of the current City Managers attempt / desire to raise Medical Premiums by forty-two (42%) for retirees and provides a history of the benefit for the past sixty years.

Thank-you for your time.

Respectfully,

Scott C. Kirkland

October 23, 2021

Honorable Mayor

Members of the City Council

10890 San Pablo Avenue

El Cerrito, California 94530

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council,

Greetings. I hope that this letter finds you well. We have not had the opportunity to meet except for one, Janet Abelson. I had the opportunity to work for the City of El Cerrito for over thirty years starting in May of 1979 and ending that portion of my career in June of 2010. Even though I did work across the street from City Hall, 10900 San Pablo Avenue, I always tried to meet Council Members so they could have a better understanding of issues that the Police Department faced. Also, to address issues that were brought to the attention of the Council Members.

While employed by the City I was lucky enough to have served in various roles. Those positions allowed me personal and professional growth. In the 1980's I was fortunate to have been elected as the President and in some years the Vice-President of the Police Employee's Association. Negotiations were difficult in those years as the City imposed many contracts on the Association. But, one thing was made very clear in the Memorandum of Understanding's throughout my career was that retirees, survivors of retirees and survivors of deceased employees would be permitted to remain on the city health plans, at the city rate. This was an incentive and in lieu of paid medical.

The dedicated men and women who worked for El Cerrito knew that El Cerrito was not the highest paid City to work for but the City was sound financially and the biweekly deposits were made into our respective checking accounts. It was not until the Ralph Anderson Survey was instituted that El Cerrito agreed to have their employees at the median range of total compensation. Prior to that survey being implemented and agreed upon by the city, El Cerrito was one of the lowest paid in the survey cities.

So, I am chagrined, baffled, and disappointed that after over sixty years that now the current City Manager states that the past practice was misinterpreted and now retirees will have their medical rates raise in the vicinity of forty-two (42) percent. Still being in my chosen profession I have to

wonder, is the current City Manger going after retirees, people who dedicated countless years to the City, because they are not represented? There voices are not heard from? That is so so sad.

I have worked with many City Managers in my thirty plus years with the city. That being Mr. Brown, Mr. Creagh, Mr. Pokorny, Mrs. Westman, and Mr. Hanin. They understood the commitment to their most valuable asset, the employee. Even after retirement.

Having worked with Council Members over the decades, I know that they appreciate the work that employees do and would never consider going against over a sixty year past practice, never.

I have read the solution to this issue by the two cities named. But is that the proper solution? Good, dedicated employees are coveted in today's world. In the 1960's and 1970's it was common for Police Departments to give entrance exams and over one hundred people would show for possibly one to two positions. But, due to the news media and the various laws that have been implemented, the once sought-after positions are difficult to recruit and retain quality candidates.

If this benefit is eliminated, what benefit are you willing to provide to attract and maintain positions not only in the Police Department but throughout the city? The cost of the current benefit is nominal compared to the cost of one law suit. That much I know and can attest.

Even though I do not know you except for Mrs. Abelson, I know from the ethics, the consideration, and appreciation of city workers from past Council Members that you will thoughtfully consider this issue.

I thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott C. Kirkland", with a large, loopy flourish extending to the right.

Scott C. Kirkland

Retired Chief of Police

May 2000 to June 2010

From: [John](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - Agenda Item #2
Date: Sunday, October 24, 2021 10:28:43 AM

Begin forwarded message:

From: John <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Retiree Medical
Date: October 24, 2021 at 10:26:55 AM PDT
To: jabelson@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, gquinto@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us,
pfadelli@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, lmotoyama@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us, trudnick@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

Greetings Council Members and Mayor Fadelli.

I'm writing to you as a retired Battalion Chief of the El Cerrito Fire Department. I served the El Cerrito community from 1991 to 2012.

It has come to my attention that the City is trying to realign health care benefits to retirees, and I must speak out on behalf of those retirees as well as future retirees of ECFD and the City of El Cerrito.

In my role as BC, Chief Mark Scott introduced me to the administrative side of ECFD by including me in City meetings, budgetary discussions and City Council meetings in order to be fully informed as to how the City managed itself. In preparation for his retirement, Chief Scott wanted to assure the City that his Battalion Chiefs understood the business of the City. Throughout these meetings with City Manager Scott Hanin and Assistant Manager, Karen Pinkos, it became evident, on some side bars, that Karen Pinkos thought all fiscal issues could be solved on the backs of retired and current employees.

As I approached retirement and knowing that Karen Pinkos would eventually become City Manager, I opted out of the City health care plan for myself and my family. Sadly, my suspicions of her future intentions have materialized. This has been a long term goal of Karen Pinkos, and to blame the previous administration is not an appropriate solution.

I have great faith that the City Council will do what it's always done ... look after its employees, past and present.

Respectfully,

John F. Dougery

From: [shawn maples](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: City of El Cerrito Retiree Medical Concerns Public Comment
Date: Sunday, October 24, 2021 12:31:12 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: shawn maples [REDACTED]
Date: Fri, Oct 22, 2021, 7:00 PM
Subject: City of El Cerrito Retiree Medical Concerns
To: <jabelson@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>, pfadelli@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us <pfadelli@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>, <lmotoyama@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>, <trudnick@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>

To: Paul Fadelli, Janet Ableson, Lias Motoyama, Gabriel Quinto, Tessa Rudnick

From: Retired Police Sergeant Shawn Maples (1987 to 2017)

Topic: The City of El Cerrito's decision to raise the cost of medical for retired employees by 42%.

Greeting to all of you.

I am taking a few moments to reach out to you and ask that you all take a few minutes to think about and discuss the current situation that's has recently become public. I learned that the City intends to raise the medical costs of retired employees by an unbelievable 42%, having not even attempted to notify or negotiate the changes with the involved retired employees.

I have a long history of service to the City of El Cerrito and I am one of a very small number of employees to actually retire after 30 years of service. I chose to work in the City for several reasons and to remain with the same city for my entire career. Some of those reasons were the fact that a large portion of my family was born, raised and lived in the City for many years and I was proud to protect and serve not only my family but the citizens of El Cerrito who also call this Beautiful city home.

Over the many years that I was employed, I witnessed many of the positive accomplishments of the city leadership and would like to say that I had a hand in making the city a better, safer, more prosperous place to live and raise a family. I also witnessed and worked through some very difficult times for the city during financial down turns and economically challenging hardships that affected the city and at times the entire state. The one consistent value that was always present during good times and trying times was the fact that the city leadership always had the best interest of the City, the Citizens and it's employees first and foremost.

During the last few years of my career I started to see a significant change in the direction of the City leadership and a marked disconnection with concern of the overall well being of the city and those who call it home. It started becoming clear that people were being elected, hired and/or groomed for advancement that were overly concerned with personnel agendas, pet projects and personnel advancement utilizing the City as their private training ground and personnel check book for their own causes and a personnel gain.

Now skip ahead several years and the city finds itself in an extreme financial hardship resulting from, in my opinion inexperienced short sided leadership in numerous positions on both floors of city hall. There are numerous factors contributing to the current situation that need to be addressed immediately if the city ever hopes to recover. The feeling of family that once existed among the management and employee groups appears to be gone and now it seems that the City Manager has a complete disrespect and contempt for the retired employees who dedicated their lives to serving the city.

The ability for employees who retire from the city to remain on the city medical plan (at their Cost) was a negotiated benefit that was put in place long before I started my employment and has continued to be a benefit for employees up until recently. It appears that the City Manager believes that she can simply ignore the past pattern and practice of providing a negotiated benefit and make drastic changes to the cost without ever having a single minute of dialog with the involved people that it impacts the most. It is becoming increasingly clear that the city can no longer be run by an absentee City Manager who delegates a significant portion of her responsibilities to an inexperienced staff with little to no understanding as to the longevity of the negotiated benefit. The disrespect being shown towards this employee group is unacceptable. My main concern is what might be the next move that the City Manager will make in an attempt to solve the budget problems on the backs of the employees who have given the most.

A very telling symptom as to how the city is being run with little to no thought about the citizens or the employees is the constant exodus of both tenured employees and an overwhelming number of new hires leaving. This signals a lack of leadership and exposes a feeling by employees that there is no safety, security or support within the city leadership. As far as the concern for the citizens goes, one must simply look at the current condition of the city itself, the level of criminal activity is visible daily and increasing. The quality of life issues and concerns have deteriorated at a pace that has never been experienced before. It

only takes a person a few minutes of driving, walking or cycling around town to see the deterioration of the community. During my 30 years of service I can tell you that at no time would anyone of the City Managers I worked for allow the city to fall into such an unsightly graffiti covered, homeless infested state of insistance.

Please start the dialog and give this topic the necessary attention it deserves, the employees, the citizens and the city deserve better leadership than what is currently in charge in El Cerrito.

Thank you for your attention to this issue and for your service to the City of El Cerrito.

Shawn Maples

David R. Gibson
[REDACTED]
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

October 25, 2021

City of El Cerrito Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

RE: PUBLIC COMMENTS – AGENDA ITEM #2

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers:

My name is David Gibson and I am recently retired as a Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal for the El Cerrito Fire Department after serving 35 years. At the time of my retirement in December 2020, the State Audit was ongoing and I have come to understand that the City of El Cerrito is considering significantly increasing our Retirement Health Benefit by as much as 42%. I profoundly share the sadness, frustration and sense of betrayal that my fellow retirees and I are feeling in the wake of these discussions to significantly increase our Retirement Health Benefit and I hope you see fit to reverse this course and honor your commitment to your retirees.

I was dedicated to the City of El Cerrito for 35 years and I gave my heart and soul to the City of El Cerrito, the Community of Kensington and most importantly the citizens. During my tenure, I served in an array of positions within the Fire Department including 11 years as the President of the El Cerrito Professional Firefighters Association. During those years the City of El Cerrito faced many financial challenges and we understood that in the lean years there would be less and in the better years there would be more. The greatest thing about those days was knowing that we were in it together! We were family and we had mutual respect, trust and appreciation for each other!

During our many bargaining sessions over the years this important topic was addressed and discussed. However, the City was always unwilling to provide paid medical for retirees, but agreed that retirees, survivors or retirees and survivors of deceased employees would be permitted to remain on the city health plans, at the city rate. Ultimately the ability to remain on the city health plans, at the city rate was agreed upon as an incentive and in lieu of paid medical. The retirees respectfully request that you continue to honor your commitment to your dedicated retirees and stand behind our previous agreements regarding Retirement Health Benefits.

Respectfully,

David R. Gibson
Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal (RET)

October 24, 2021

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
City of El Cerrito

Dear Mayor and City Councilmembers:

I recently became aware that the City of El Cerrito is considering separating early retirees from the city's current employee medical plans, so that they can reduce their medical expenses. This move would include a projected 42% increase to the retiree health premiums of which the retirees pay 100%. I am very disappointed that the city would even consider such a move to save what would likely be but a nominal financial benefit to the city, while an excruciating – if not life altering blow to personal budgets – myself included. As you might imagine the medical premiums that employees assume upon retirement account for a significant portion of the retirees monthly outgo - to impact that cost so significantly smacks of an immoral and uncaring character, effectively depriving retirees of a benefit that is specified in union contracts and has long been in place and practiced. Furthermore, should this proposal manifest, any long-term current employees who may now, or in the near future, be considering retirement, may well decide to postpone same so as not to incur the exorbitant costs that heretofore were not anticipated. Consequent of that scenario the city would lose the ability to replace said employee(s) who represent the highest personnel cost to the city for a new-hire who represents the lowest personnel cost relative to position/classification.

I worked for the City of El Cerrito from 1986 until 2019, 30 years of that time in the Human Resources division. My position required me to be knowledgeable of all of the bargaining unit benefits. I oversaw the retiree medical benefits enrollments and correspondence to retirees regarding premium adjustments. I also worked with current employees nearing retirement when they were figuring out their expenses in to retirement. This increase, as stated, could seriously affect the lives and budgets of many. As a personal example, I obtained a part-time job after retirement to cover my medical and dental premiums, which with this increase would now not cover.

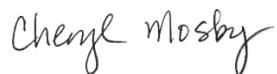
At a time when many cities offered paid retiree medical El Cerrito's bargaining units negotiated several times for this benefit but were unsuccessful. The bargaining units were given the "compromise" of

early retirees being able to remain in the City's pool for medical with all current employees. The intent was to give early retirees the ability to maintain medical insurance at the group rate rather than having to pick up insurance as an individual.

My long tenure at El Cerrito was due in large part to the "El Cerrito Family" feeling that we all felt - a sentiment that was often extended by city management throughout the course of my career. As one who enjoyed that working environment I personally recruited others to become part of the "El Cerrito Family". I am truly saddened to hear from current El Cerrito employees that this warm culture no longer exists. Considering the above I can only assume that this proposal (money-grab) while being represented as a financial benefit to the city, is in fact intended to abandon the tenets of prior city administrations, rescinding the notion and practice of a working "El Cerrito Family", effectively launching an attack on employees and retirees.

It is my hope that the City Council will give serious consideration to retaining this benefit for the retirees and retirees to come who served the City of El Cerrito for many years.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Mosby
Retired City of El Cerrito Human Resources Specialist



From: [Rob DLC](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Fwd: Communication regarding retiree health plan inclusion
Date: Sunday, October 24, 2021 9:45:18 PM
Attachments: [City of El Cerrito City Council Medical Issue.pdf](#)

City of El Cerrito

Please add this attachment to the city council packet.

Thanks

R De La Campa

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Rob DLC [REDACTED]
Date: Sun, Oct 24, 2021, 8:49 PM
Subject: Communication regarding retiree health plan inclusion
To: <pfadelli@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>, <jabelson@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>, <gquinto@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>, <lmotoyama@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>, <trudnick@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us>

EC City Council Members:

Please read the attached PDF regarding the issue before your next meeting.

Thanks

R. De La Campa

City of El Cerrito City Council

Robert De La Campa



Pinole, CA 94564

October 24, 2021

Dear: Janet Abelson, Gabe Quinto, Paul Fadelli, Lisa Motoyama, Tessa Rudnick

As a retired employee of the City, it has come to my attention through communications from fellow retirees, that the City intends to raise the amount that I pay for my health benefits by 42%, effective January of 2022. My initial response is that having received no official notice from the City explaining the increase and likewise no documentation that the rate paid by current employees has risen by 42%, I found it to be unprofessional and most likely spiteful in nature.

As a former president of the police employee association of three years, and as an active member of the management of the department for over a decade, it was always the practice and working condition that retirees are allowed to stay on the medical plan, as part of the employee group, at their own expense. For the entire time I worked for the City and for many years before that, this has been the agreement. If a condition is changing after being in place for decades, a reopening of negotiations and or at minimum 6-months' notice seem appropriate.

I understand that in today's environment, some think is a lavish benefit. Yet as a career municipal government worker, I assure you that it is minimal at best and realistically woeful when compared to many of the agencies in the 16-city survey that the City uses to compare our pay and benefits. Fellow retirees, friends of mine from other agencies within a 5-mile radius of El Cerrito, remind me frequently that they remain covered by their agencies even in retirement. Meanwhile I, and many other ECPD retirees have gotten new jobs just to pay for the benefit.

Reasonableness and factors out of everyone's control often become part of resolutions. A normal increase in costs from Kaiser passed on to all members of the plan could be in order but I have not seen documentation that Kaiser raised its rates by 42%. The auditors wrote that this is a cost to the City though they offered no evidence of it. Some think that is because of retirees' ages. I point out that current city staff have a CalPERS plan that has them retiring at the age of 62, so how are retirees under that age raising costs? Is it not Kaiser's practice to add more members to lower costs? That is a common business plan in the insurance and health care pool industries.

As someone who actively recruited and hired most of our police employees over a 14-year period, I assure you that this message is loud and clear to the retired, current and even future employees of the City. Long term commitment is not valued. Our employees and applicants can find several agencies in the Bay Area who value their employees' service and offer retiree medical, and who do not pay "near the median" but far above it. I remind you that not all Bay Area agencies are part of the CalPERS system nor our survey group.

I hope that you can disprove the belief that I and other retirees hold, that this is a part of an anti-retiree sentiment as opposed to passing on actual cost increases of 42%. Again, if such an increase is being proposed by Kaiser, I would like to see documentation of that. I also hope that if I am incorrect, you can set the record straight and convince the employees, current and future that they have a good reason to dedicate their career lives to the City of EC as many of us did.

From: [Michael Bond](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments Agenda Item - 2
Date: Sunday, October 24, 2021 11:26:46 PM

Dear Mayor Fadelli

It truly saddens me to feel the need to write this letter to you in regarding the City of El Cerrito's Notice of Intent to Change Retiree Medical Rates upwards of 42%. When I came to work for the El Cerrito Fire Department, I was quickly informed city employees did not have a post-retirement medical coverage plan. But we could continue to purchase post-retirement healthcare through the city. Fortunately, when I retired, I was able to have healthcare provided through another source and do not rely upon the city for healthcare coverage. However, I feel the pain and anguish every retiree and current employee of the city must be feeling now.

Throughout most of my career with the El Cerrito Fire Department, I was going to be dependent upon and trust the good faith of the city to allow me to purchase this coverage at a particular rate. Life plans and monetary calculations for retirement were largely based upon healthcare costs. This is the same for many retired and current city employees today. This unexpected and unplanned for cost will drastically and dramatically diminish their standards of living. Especially the lower wage earners within the cities current and retired work force.

When I think about the faith and trust I and every other city employee placed in the city to fulfill the cities longstanding obligations to allow us to purchase post-retirement healthcare at a set cost, I feel we are being abandoned by the city. A sense of trust and cooperation is essential in maintaining high standards and morale within a community and workforce. By enacting this increase, I believe the city will create an environment of mistrust and low morale. Please VOTE NO!

In closing, I want you to ask yourself this question. If this vote was affecting your parents, your children, would you abandon their trust in you, by voting for this unfair increase in retiree healthcare costs?

Very Respectfully,

Michael J Bond

From: [Joe Grupalo](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public Comments - agenda item "Special City Council Meeting - Oct 25, 2021"
Date: Monday, October 25, 2021 8:34:34 AM
Attachments: [Letter to City Council Oct 2021.pdf](#)

Good Morning Holly

Please confirm receipt and that I've submitted properly for review and comment.

Thank you.
Joe

Created with [Scanner Pro](#)

Sent from my iPhone

Joseph Grupalo

██████████
Emeryville, CA 94662
██████████

October 25, 2021

Dear Mayor Fadelli, Mayor Pro Tem Quinto, Councilmembers Abelson, Motoyama and Rudnick:

I am writing to you today concerning the City's desire to increase retiree's healthcare costs.

While I do not know the particulars of the current city budget restructuring, I am very aware of the continued efforts to improve the overall health of the city's financial situation. Based on data presented during past City Council presentations, Town Hall discussions and in the CA State Audit report, it seems reasonable a complete restructuring of the City budget was needed to prevent a catastrophic financial collapse.

However, the sentiment during these previous Town Hall meetings and City Council presentations was never pointed at retiree benefits. Learning about increasing retiree healthcare costs was disheartening to say the least.

I have always respected the current City Management and the tough job they've been challenged with over the past few years concerning budget reforms during pandemic conditions. But I cannot support discussions and/or decisions that are aimed at a retiree's benefits. While this does not affect me directly, (as I elected not to participate in the retiree medical benefit plan), this does leave me thinking about the uncertainty of the promised pension benefit. What was once a joyful realized benefit from dedicated years of service now feels like an underlying layer of unnecessary stress wondering if there is any security in the pension benefit at all.

Starting the process of "take-a-ways" from fixed income retirees is a bad idea. One that will surely undermine all of the past goodwill and support from trusted and loyal employees. I urge the City Council to reconsider any and all discussions relating to both short and long term impacts to retiree benefits.

Sincerely,



JOSEPH GRUPALO

From: [Candice Emert](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENTS - AGENDA ITEM #2
Date: Monday, October 25, 2021 10:04:44 AM

Dear Major Fadelli, Mayor Pro Tem Quinto, and Councilmembers Abelson, Motoyama and Rudnick,

My name is Candice Emert and I am a member of the El Cerrito Fire Department. I am writing in regards to the notice of intent to change retiree medical rates. This news was incredibly disheartening to hear to say the least. My hope is that during the closed door session that you will take EVERYTHING into consideration before moving forward with such a decision.

Myself, and many others before me, have given so much to the city only to have a benefit taken from us without any negotiations with the various labor groups.

Regards,
Candice Emert

October 25, 2021

The City of El Cerrito City Council
City Hall
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Mr. Mayor and City Council:

I urge you to reject the City Manager's plan to cut the long-standing procedures for administering retiree medical coverage.

I know that many retirees have sent in letters outlining the history of this benefit -- for me it will suffice to say that the procedure has been in place at least four decades, prior to my 29 years of service to El Cerrito.

While the City Manager would like to give the impression that the "no cost to the City" clause includes a contrived differential between young, currently working employees vs. older, retired members, it was always recognized by City Administration that the "no cost" clause does not mean there is zero cost.

Rather than face a collective bargaining issue with benefit termination, the CM has chosen to twist the auditor report in a way that makes it look like this is a surprising increased cost not covered by the wording of the benefit.

"No cost" means that the health care premiums would be borne by the retiree, as they have been for decades.

Please make no changes to this benefit.

Kathryn Halligan

Retired Fire Engineer

[REDACTED]

Petaluma CA 94954

From: [June Crumpacker](#)
To: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Public comments/Agenda item #2
Date: Monday, October 25, 2021 2:15:54 PM

Mayor Fadelli
Karen Pinkos, City Manager
Alexandra Orolagas, Assistant City Manager

When I retired from El Cerritos fire department after 30 years of service, at times endangering my own life, it was with the understanding that I could pay the city the same amount current employees were paying, and maintain health insurance. Many other California fire departments actually pay for their retirees health insurance, I chose to stay loyal to El Cerrito & work to retirement age. The cost of medical insurance over the 19 years I have been retired has increased by more than 60%. Now you are telling us that next year it will increase another 42%? And you are just now figuring out that it costs the city this much to pay for the retirees? This seems drastically unfair and unjust. (And possibly incorrect) Is this really how you feel employees who have very literally risked their health & life for the city of El Cerrito should be treated? I very firmly reject any additional cost to retirees for medical insurance.

Sincerely,

Donald Crumpacker
Sent from my iPhone