

Seniors Next To Protest

Seniors Next To Protest Against Karl Baker

Councilman's Odd Actions Continue

Desert Hot Springs, CA – A healthy group of seniors attended Tuesday night's council meeting protesting the suggested closure of the senior center. They came with protest signs objecting to the closure and with the words, "We Vote." Councilman Karl Baker's off-hand remark caused a ruckus.

A cost cutting proposal floated by City Manager **Rick Daniels** two weeks ago named the senior center closure as one option to balance the city budget. So concerned was the senior group that they organized, made protest signs and showed up in such numbers that they took over an entire section of audience seating.

The city manager explained the subject of closing the senior center was not under discussion, that a list prepared and circulated by him was to show the magnitude of the problem created by the State legislature reaching into city coffers to balance the state budget.

While maintaining stern faces the group backed down, lowering their protest signs they had been holding high over their heads. Remarks by Mayor Pro Tem Karl Baker, however, revived the senior's ire. Having heard the cuts to the senior center will not take place, Baker told the group, "You can all go home now and go to bed."

Amid groans from the audience one woman spoke out, telling Baker the stereotype of seniors was a terrible thing to say.

Despite that brief exchange, the matter rested on Daniels explanation. "The legislature has failed to do its job. They have proposed to take million of dollars from us." He said he had looked at a whole variety of items but the council had since discussed it.

On a 5 to 0 vote, the agenda item was delayed until the next council meeting scheduled for September 1.

The Senior Center on West Drive is one of the most popular city programs with near daily attendance. It costs the city \$150,000 a year to operate. It also serves as a county designated "cool center."



Dean Gray

Publisher and one of the writers for the Desert Star Weekly, the California desert's #1 and only alternative independent weekly newspaper. Dean started in the newspaper business at age nine, delivering the weekly Shopping News in Long Beach, California. He wrote, published and sold ads for his first independent newspapers in 1969 while in high school and has been writing ever since. Art Kunkin, then publisher of the LA Free Press and now of Joshua Tree, was then and remains now his inspiration and a weekly columnist in

the Star. While Dean's "cactus thorns" can be sharp and pointed, he has a passion for art, music, good food and healthy living. See www.desertstarweekly.com/who-we-are for more.

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