

**For Immediate Release**

July 22, 2014

**Press Contact:**

**Marti Brown, CfV Board Member**

**Phone: 707-704-2688**

**Email: [marti@martibrown.com](mailto:marti@martibrown.com)**

**Citizens for Vallejo strongly oppose Mayor Osby Davis's "Strong Mayor" ballot initiative: It's overreaching and irresponsible**

**VALLEJO, CA** (July 22, 2014) – With only one week to thoroughly evaluate the proposal, Mayor Davis's 'Strong Mayor' ballot initiative is irresponsible and disrespectful to his colleagues, staff and the public. The ballot language has to be submitted to the Registrar of Voters by August 8 to be considered for the November 2014 election. Citizens for Vallejo (CfV) strongly oppose this proposal and encourage the public to do the same.

"It's completely reckless to propose a ballot initiative with only one week for city staff and the council to fully vet and consider this policy direction. Let alone the public," said Karol Heppe, CfV Board President.

Allen Wildermuth, former City Charter Review Committee Member, was surprised to hear the news and thought this issue had been 'put to bed' back in 2008: "Strong Mayor was one topic we considered over several months of review, and it was overwhelmingly rejected by a 14 to 2 vote, because it was deemed inappropriate for Vallejo. It places too much power in one person's hands. Besides, there's no other city of our size in the State of California with a 'Strong Mayor' form of government further demonstrating that it's not a good fit for small cities."

Outraged Anne Carr, CfV Board Member, added, "Rewriting the City's Charter is a major undertaking, one that entails meaningful public input, not just a hastily-called Council meeting to ratify a last-minute ballot measure. This is the kind of thing dictators and tyrants do. It has no place in the turn-around Vallejo is making, with our strong City Manager, and so many good initiatives, like Participatory Budgeting, and the clean-up of North Mare Island."

Under a 'Strong Mayor' form of government, an administrator will still need to be hired to run much of the city's day-to-day operations. This will result in two highly paid individuals running the city with a total compensation package that will certainly exceed the current City Manager's compensation.

"Spending \$100,000 on a ballot measure does not seem like a wise use of funds with the city just exiting bankruptcy. If voters approve the measure, ongoing costs will also increase as the city will still need a highly paid administrative officer in addition to a more expensive Mayor," commented Paul Norberg, retired Chief Financial Officer and CfV Board Treasurer.

Reflecting on Mayor Davis's numerous ruminations on the city's impending future deficit; CfV Board Member Stephen Hallett had this to say, "The Mayor recently stated that the city will face further service and employee cuts due to our looming budget deficit. Therefore, it is unconscionable for him to now ask for approximately \$100,000 to place this measure on the November ballot as well as demand a massive pay raise. While we make sacrifices, he wants a substantial increase in his salary and benefits clearly demonstrating a lack of leadership and concern for Vallejo citizens that are struggling every day to make ends meet."

CfV urges the citizens of Vallejo to oppose this initiative by [signing its petition](#) and voicing their concerns at the Vallejo City Council meeting on Tuesday, July 22 meeting at 7:00 pm in council chambers, 555 Santa Clara Street.

For more information about CfV, check out its [website](#), [Facebook page](#), and follow it on [Twitter](#).

####