

In The News



Caring, Commitment, Community Vote Tolbert for Tracy Mayor

EVELYN TOLBERT CARES ABOUT THE ENVIROMENT

“A Look to the Future”

The Tracy Press
February 19, 2008

The City Council set out its policy priorities Tuesday, and a balanced budget and healthy reserve fund are at the top of the list. Tracy will try to have a balanced budget within five years with no layoffs and maintain a reserve of 15 percent of its operating budget. Those seemed the key targets the City Council set during a Tuesday afternoon discussion of its goals for this year and next.

But Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert also convinced her colleagues to hire someone to study how the city impacts the environment and to suggest ways to promote green policies to lessen damage and promote sustainability. The council, at her prodding, also decided to hire on a contract basis a grant writer to bring in more money for the city.

Council members told administrators they would like to see a balanced budget and 15 percent of the city's roughly \$70 million operating budget going to reserves in five years, and it would like to get there without layoffs.

“Local Group Thinking Green”

The Tracy Press
February 5, 2008

High school activists, developers, educators and local politicians have started to meet to think up ways to make Tracy green. **Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert spearheaded the group** that calls itself the Sustainability Committee, which met for the first time last year and presented its case to the City Council in December.

The group talked about a variety of future actions, including pushing the city to adopt incentives to encourage green builders and compiling ways for local teens to educate their younger peers about how to recycle and save energy. The committee's first meeting late last year drew more than 30 participants, mostly from local school districts, the city and nearby colleges. There were also four or five developers.

Tolbert recruited people from various walks of life to join the team, because it would be less effective, she said, to single out one group to come up with everything. "We're all in this together, and we all have something to contribute, whether it's carpooling or constructing solar panels," she said. "We have all got to do something, because we are all causing a problem."

Making the shift to a green city makes economic sense, too, Tolbert said. "Someday, these energy-saving technologies, recycling and other things included in green development, it pays for itself," she said. "It just makes sense to think about heading in that direction." Other ideas Tolbert suggested the committee think about are placing recycling bins in more businesses and schools and pushing for more solar panels on homes.

Because the group is all-volunteer, there should be no change in the city's budget, unless the City Council approves a city employee to act as adviser or liaison.

EVELYN TOLBERT CARES ABOUT ISSUES AFFECTING WOMEN

“Tutu Coming To Tracy”

In The Tracy Press,
February 20, 2008

Nontombi Naomi Tutu, daughter of South African Archbishop and Nobel Prize-winner Desmond Tutu, will visit Tracy to speak at the 10th annual Women’s Forum March 14. **Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert founded the Women’s forum in 1998 to inspire and inform local women.**

“I was running around town for so long and one day I realized that I was coming in contact with so many neat women of all colors, races, educational levels and economic background,” Tolbert said today. “So I thought, wouldn’t it be neat to have all these women in the same room?”

“This attracts a lot of support, and I’m hoping for another fantastic year,” Tolbert said, “because this is about women supporting women — we’re really talking about friendship.”

“We have excellent resources right here in Tracy,” said Mudd, Sutter Tracy Community Hospital spokeswoman. “This is a lot about the camaraderie with other women and a place to see old friends and meet new ones.”

NOTE: The Tracy Women’s Forum Association, founded by Evelyn Tolbert to plan and conduct the Tracy Women’s Forum each year is a non-profit organization which operates totally independent of government support. Emphasis is placed on maintaining a high level of diversity in the Presenters and entertainment. The Tracy Women’s Forum is applauded throughout the community by the women of Tracy.

EVELYN TOLBERT CARES ABOUT EDUCATION

“Tracy Closer to Getting College”

Tri Valley Herald
January 19, 2007

The Tracy City Council unanimously authorized staff to move forward with a consortium college campus concept to bring higher learning to south county residents.

Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert said the college plan is an idea she’s been interested in since it first surfaced 18 months ago. She called the idea “fantastic”. “This is exactly what the children need and this is what the residents need” Tolbert said. “I’m excited to no end about this”.

The project, officially titled The Tracy Educational Consortium, could be overseen by an ad hoc educational committee – possibly comprised of two council members and representatives from site partners and the community – for approval of layout and development. With every member of the council wanting to be on the committee, it may take a couple of meetings before the city’s appointees are known.

NOTE: Evelyn Tolbert has been actively involved in building support for the creation of this Tracy Educational Consortium since the beginning. Because of her dedication and commitment to this idea, Evelyn Tolbert was named to a two-person subcommittee to continue her efforts within the community, with the contractual Master Developer, and directly with colleges and universities to help insure the Tracy Educational Consortium becomes a reality.

EVELYN TOLBERT CARES ABOUT OUR YOUTH

“Forum to Focus on Support for Troubled Youth”

The Record
January 17, 2007

Residents and nearly 80 representatives of social service agencies, churches, and local governments will meet at a public forum today to form a network designed to connect troubled youths with assistance that can keep them on the straight and narrow. The forum, the first step in the creation of the Mayor's Community Youth Support Network, will offer insight into why some youths become disconnected, identify services available to help them and highlight gaps in those services, Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert said. Youth are malleable and can fall prey to influences that can keep them from their potential. **That's where the Mayor's Community Youth Support Network can step in, said Tolbert, whose idea for such a network led to today's forum.** "Youth are just trying to find out who they are, and some of them get lost and disconnected along the way, Tolbert said. That disconnection encompasses students who act out in school for attention or respect, those with high truancy rates and others who may begin dabbling with drugs or alcohol, Tolbert said. Tolbert said she envisions having school officials refer students to support services in the network – from churches with anti-drug programs to organizations that offer academic assistance to job assistance centers. Efforts to do so have been bolstered by a recently passed state law allowing school districts to share a greater amount of information on troubled students with city governments, Tolbert said. Helping troubled youth now can keep them from entering gangs later, Tolbert said. While Stockton has about 2,000 documented gang members, Tracy has only around 200. The councilwoman said she hopes the network will keep Tracy's figure low. "Some people say we don't really have a gang problem; I agree with them. We don't need a gang problem – so now's the time to act, Tolbert said.

NOTE: The first meeting of the "Mayor's Community Youth Support Network" was held with a full room at the Tracy Community Center as Evelyn Tolbert revealed her vision. This vision was actually presented to a number of elected and appointed officials and staff members months earlier, The program was not made public because Evelyn Tolbert was a candidate for re-election to the Tracy City Council and did not believe an effort of this importance should be made into a "campaign issue" Following the public debut of Evelyn Tolbert's vision, it was unanimously adopted by the City Council and subsequently funded unanimously by the City Council in the 2008 – 2009 budget for \$1,000,000.

"Tracy Meeting Called To Solve Gang Problem"

The Tri Valley Herald
January 17, 2007

They're bringing together representatives from across the spectrum in hopes of combating threats to local youth. **Tracy City Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert, who has been coordinating the event for the past few months,** said more than 80 groups have confirmed they were sending representatives to the meeting, including a dozen state and local government agencies, 15 community-based organizations, either school-related programs, three faith-based organizations, 21 other local groups, two business groups, elected officials and local commissioners. "It's amazing the resources that are there and we're going to tap into the," Tolbert said. The goal – which won't be achieved after just one meeting – is the prevention, intervention and suppression of gang activity in Tracy. Tolbert said the major emphasis is keeping children from 'even considering getting off the beaten path.'" Since planning for the meeting began, Tolbert said she's learned of other cities with similar, and successful, programs. "San Jose has been able to do beautiful things and they had a full-blown problem, Tolbert said. "I have to believe it was a heck of a lot more difficult for them than its going to be for us. The meeting is led by a committee comprised of Tolbert, Tracy's Interim Assistant City Manager Maria Hurtado, Tracy Police Chief David Krauss, San Joaquin County Supervisor Leroy Ornellas, Tracy Mayor Brent Ives and Tracy Unified School District Superintendent Jim Franco. "I don't care who gets the credit," Tolbert said. "We want the community to know it's a focused priority with us and we're really serious about it. This one has our attention."

EVELYN TOLBERT CARES ABOUT COMMUNITY GIVING

"The Bright Stuff – More Need Brighter Christmas This Time Around"

The Tri Valley Herald
November 28, 2007

Brighter Christmas volunteer and City Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert said the residents of Tracy have a long tradition of giving, but is concerned the public doesn't understand the severity of the situation this year. "I can tell you the need is deeper, broader and larger than many people realize," she said. "And economically some of the businesses that have been our largest donors have also been hit hard this year, so they are only able to give a

fraction of what they have done in the past.: Tolbert said it is crucial that the community “step up to the plate” to make sure there are no hungry children this season. Those looking to heed Tolbert’s call and make a donation of either cash or canned goods are encouraged to contact Brighter Christmas at 209-833-3309.

NOTE: Evelyn Tolbert is a long time, active member of the Brighter Christmas effort. Known as the “Turkey Lady”, Evelyn Tolbert participates in various aspects of the Brighter Christmas effort and culminates her yearly activities by heading up the distribution of turkeys to low income families.

EVELYN TOLBERT CARES ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

January 20, 2007

“Council Develops Plan for Housing”

Tri Valley Herald

The Tracy City Council directed its staff to take developing an affordable work-force housing program strategy a top priority as they implement the new General Plan. **Council woman Evelyn Tolbert provided a memo, included in the staff’s report to the council, listing 11 steps to creating the affordable housing plan, and serves as the basis for staff.** “The structure I set up ...does involve hiring a consultant on for the first few steps,” she said, “I think those are the steps that can be taken up by a consultant quite adequately and without burdening staff if they are doing other things.”

NOTE: The City Council adopted the “Equitable Affordable and Work Force Housing Program” proposed by Council Person Evelyn Tolbert. Subsequently funds were approved and allocated for the hiring of a Consultant to head up this effort. The contract for services by the selected Consultant is expected to be approved during the month of April, 2008.

Tolbert said those economic goals were great but asked that the council also set sustainability as another goal, with the aim to ultimately put Tracy at the forefront of policies that do as little harm as possible to the environment. She was against slapping the public with regulations, however, such as forcing builders use solar energy in construction. The council agreed to pay a consultant to help guide the city along. "It’s also a moral issue," Tolbert said. The council also decided to pay someone to write grants, though it probably won’t be a full-time hire.

ACTION NOTE: The RFP to solicit resumes and applications for a Sustainability Consultant will be issued during the month of April, 2008. The Sustainability Project Team (Committee) has suspended formal meetings until the Sustainability Consultant is on board to provide further leadership to its efforts.

EVELYN TOLBERT CARES ABOUT UNDER SERVED RESIDENTS

“Despite Slow Start, S.N.A.P. is Important”

The Tracy Press

November 14, 2003

Launched in September, the city of Tracy’s Special needs Activity Program has just begun to reach the first of about 2,000 Tracy adults who could use its services.

A recent assessment by the city’s recreation staff found that there weren’t any recreation programs specifically geared toward mentally disabled adults, except for those attending the adult school program. The findings confirmed a complaint about a lack of services first made by City Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert several years ago. Today, Tolbert is worried that S.N.A.P. might be canceled because the way participation numbers are applied by the city to determine success or failure of a recreation program. “I firmly believe that our neighbors with limited abilities of all kinds should have the access to enjoy and share fully in our community,” she says.

NOTE: The Special Needs Activity Program was proposed by Evelyn Tolbert and implemented by the City of Tracy. This program is still on-going; serving its population of citizens who are not accorded specific services in other venues.

EVELYN TOLBERT CARES ABOUT TRACY BUSINESSES

"Tolbert wants to give Businesses an Edge"

The Record
November 27, 2004

City Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert is proposing to give local companies more preferential treatment when bidding for city contracts. The city now allows Tracy-based businesses a 1 percent advantage over outside companies. If a local company is not the lowest bidder on a particular contract, but is within 1 percent of the lowest bid, it wins the contract. Few companies have succeeded in winning Tracy city bids within the small margin, Tolbert said, which is why she has recommended raising the advantage to 5 percent.

"We need to be good stewards of the taxpayers' moneys, and such rules are designed to provide the public protection from a number of possibly untoward results," she said. "But this rigid rule has resulted in a situation that is not in Tracy's best interest." Tolbert made her proposal at Tuesday's council meeting. The matter is under review by city staff.

NOTE: The increase from a 1 percent preference to a 5 percent preference as proposed by Evelyn Tolbert was adopted by the City Council and has been working to the benefit of local businesses since implementation.

EVELYN TOLBERT CARES ABOUT OUR DOWNTOWN

"New Growth Cap boundary Includes Slab Of Empty Land"

The Tracy Press
April 2005

The Tracy City Council on Tuesday approved a compromise on the city's growth cap that will add land for nearly 170 new homes while clearing the way for building on smaller parcels scattered around town. **Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert said she is confident city officials will focus on developing vacant parcels in town rather than on the outskirts. "Measure A has some positive elements to it," she said. "It puts us in a position to more readily get what we want from builders in this town."**

"Bowtie Development A Knotty Problem"

The Record
July 2005

City officials have long debated what to build in Tracy's vacant Bowtie section, but residents in the X-shaped district say no one has asked them. Councilwoman Evelyn Tolbert said she doesn't think a committee is necessary but does feel the city could do a better job of listening to the public's suggestions. **Tolbert has compiled many of those suggestions into a composite proposal. The ideas include designating the area as a brown fields revitalization property - polluted land eligible for government grants to pay cleanup costs - and building three-story structures for residential and business use.** Contamination issues have slowed development of the Bowtie. Tolbert's composite plan also includes a suggestion for building the city's proposed aquatics center there. "Why put a pool in where people already have pools? She said. "Why not do it where people's backyards are too small for pools."

NOTE: As of this writing, a Downtown Specific Plan is being prepared by City staff for presentation to the City Council. Evelyn Tolbert will be actively participating to insure that Bow Tie soil clean-up is also a part of that Plan.