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Councilman Perello Calls for a Robust City Communication Plan Regarding the Rules of Engagement for the Upcoming Special Recall Election (January 23, 2018)

Oxnard City Clerk Ascension presented the City Council with Certificates of Sufficiency of the Recall Petition signature on Tuesday, January 9, 2018. That date was the first regular Oxnard City Council meeting date **AFTER** the County Elections Division completed their review and verification of the petition signatures on Friday, December 29, 2017.

On Sunday, January 7, 2018, as I was reviewing my agenda meeting packet for the January 9th City Council meeting, I first became aware of the critical legal and logistical roadblocks that the City of Oxnard faced which keep us from simply combining the Special Recall Election with the June 5th Primary election.

Essentially, due to the different calendar legal requirements governing this Special Recall Election versus the June 5th Primary Election, *it is simply legally and logistically impossible* to combine these two elections to save Oxnard taxpayers' money. *Unfortunately, this will likely result in a cost of **upwards of one-half million dollars** of Oxnard taxpayer dollars to conduct this Special Recall Election, including the cost of verifying the Recall petition signatures.*

On the following Monday, January 8, 2018, I swung into action and contacted the County Elections Division to verify for myself the information which was included in the January 9th City Council agenda packet. Additionally, I met with Interim City Manager Whitney, and Ms. Ascension that afternoon to explore possible options for the City and the County to work together collaboratively to grapple with these serious logistical election coordination challenges.

The following morning I addressed the Ventura County Board of Supervisors as one elected City official to three elected County officials representing portions of the City of Oxnard, and asked for their assistance in facilitating a meeting between County Elections Division and City officials to try and find a practical, reasonable, legal, and hopefully affordable solution to these thorny Recall election challenges. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IA0qMCv4V6Y>

Pursuant to applicable State Law, particularly Elections Code Sections 11240 and 11242, tonight, the City Council **MUST** set the date for the Special Recall Election on a Tuesday no earlier than 88 days (**i.e. April 24, 2018**) nor later than 125 days (**i.e. May 22, 2018**) from the January 23rd City Council meeting.

Unfortunately, due to both the large number of complex election-day setting logistical plates spinning in the air, and the speed at which they are spinning, the City Council is being asked to make this critical election date setting decision with a number of outstanding election logistical planning questions yet to be answered, fully. Questions like:

1. How much has the Recall petition vetting process already cost Oxnard taxpayers?
2. If the City is required to use a private-sector elections services vendor to conduct this Special Recall election, because the County can't do so, how much is that expected to cost Oxnard taxpayers?
3. When will absentee ballots be mailed to roughly 32,000 Permanent Absentee Voters living in 20,000 households?
4. How many precinct polling places will be operational on Election Day and where will they be located?
5. What is the City Clerk's current estimate regarding the total cost of the upcoming Special Recall Election?

Even though tonight we are forced by law and the ticking clock to set the date of the Special Recall Election, the Oxnard City Council **MUST** drill down and get answers to above questions – fast! And it is imperative that the City of Oxnard develop a *clear, cogent, and crisp Communications Action Plan to inform Oxnard voters on the "Rules of Engagement and Key Milestone Dates" for this election.* As one of five members of the Oxnard City Council, and one of four Recall targets, I pledge to continue to step-up proactively and work closely with *Interim City Manager Whitney, and City Clerk Michelle Ascension to ensure that this Special Recall election is conducted legally, openly, fairly, and verifiably.* Hard-working Oxnard voters and taxpayers deserve no less!