Honorable Mayor and City Council members 4/4/24

I attended the CC meeting of 3/21/24 (agenda item G) in which the Election Processes subcommittee made their first report.

I would like to thank Council Member Davis and Lentz and City Manager Holstine for the presentation of initial discussions and the need to seek additional funds in different stages of the research needed.

Thank you to Council Member Davis for being very clear and very direct to the other Council members that their questions could only be fully addressed with more staff time needed.

A few comments.

What was very concerning to me during the Council member statements was the lack of acknowledgement that the community of Brisbane does want these issues fully vetted -and are by and large -in agreement that change IS necessary.

I will acknowledge that sharing with the public -as you progress- with the research will be critical. For example, that a geographical section of town is not in itself a reason for a district.

Question raised – “Why now”?

My view is that there is a growing community sentiment that in the past few elections there is a lack of candidates, discord with selection of mayor by the Council, and lack of diversity on the Council. There is also a growing movement in all of San Mateo County to address these issues.

We are not alone even due to our size -- there are at least 2 San Mateo towns under 10k population that have District Elections. A simple google search found that for me.

As a member of the San Mateo NAACP Housing Committee, in support of the California Voters Right Act (CVRA) we discussed this at our last meeting in taking a proposal to our Executive committee to make a statement for all cities in San Mateo.

I also found a few comments very disturbing.

A Council Member stated “ to talk about race, (is or feels) ICKY.”

Words matter. CC words are recorded and these are now public.

A Council Member (and I am paraphrasing) ---"look at us, we are diverse. Some people may not like that we are…” The context of this comment may have been completely off topic. This “diversity” comment was never clarified but since we were on the subject of CVRA which is race based ---it came across very strange since all the members are the same race. Words Matter.

Race should be discussed freely and openly with respect. People in our community are proud of their race and want you to acknowledge diversity and the need for representation. The Why is now. A new school board member told me that over 70% of the Brisbane community has at least 1 parent as a person of color. Our future is here.

Term limits, Vote for Mayor at Large and District Elections can shape our future to be more reflective, and representative of all.

Thank you for your dedication to service. We look forward to more dialogue and public input.

Nancy Lacsamana