

Hello All ~

I received **very good news** from Supervisor Zach Friend's assistant on Friday.

Our recommendations have been placed on the Consent Agenda of the **May 10th** Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting!

Supervisors Zach Friend (4th District) and John Leopold (1st District) are the co-authors of this list of **proposed policies and directives** and are exactly what we wanted! It is **Consent Agenda Item 45.2** and this is the text of the letter from Friend and Leopold that introduces the item to the full Board of Supervisors:

Over the last few years, our offices have received an increase in constituent correspondence surrounding the use of illegal fireworks in our community. Complaints range from worries about the noise to fire and environmental concerns. While they are particularly problematic in the summer, peaking during the July 4th holiday, we have seen these calls become a nearly year round activity. Not only have we seen an increase in the number of days this activity takes place but over time, it has expanded from beach centric to one that occurs in our urban and rural neighborhoods throughout the county as well.

The illegal use of fireworks often impacts our

community by traumatizing pets, disturbing neighborhoods, and poses a significant fire hazard during the dry times of the year. As the problem has grown, we have worked to increase the fines and enforcement but the issue continues to burden our residents and public safety agencies. Each year our Sheriff's Department and local California Highway Patrol office work hard to protect citizens and visitors from this illegal activity at great expense and cost to the community.

We believe there is an opportunity to take a more comprehensive approach to address the current problem of fireworks in the county. Working with local community groups and the Sheriff's Office, we have come up with a set of policies and directives to address the increasing impacts fireworks are having on our communities and our burdened County resources. The approach is threefold: improved tools of enforcement, better education locally, and outreach to neighboring jurisdictions that sell fireworks.

Therefore, we recommend the Board take the following actions:

1. Direct the Planning Department to write a letter to all vacation rental permit holders that clearly articulates that fireworks are illegal in Santa Cruz County and citation of a vacation rental occupant for violations related to firework use is grounds for permit revocation proceedings.

2. Direct the Planning Department to return with language that would require vacation rental owners to notify occupants that fireworks are illegal in Santa Cruz County.

3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to return with a proposal to implement permanent triple fines for fireworks and other key county violations on July 4th and other holiday periods.

4. Direct the Chair to write a letter to State Parks for improved and increased enforcement on state beaches and parks during July 4th and other peak times.

5. Request the Sheriff's Department work with local schools to reiterate to the children in our community that fireworks are illegal.

6. Increase visibility of fireworks enforcement through the use of expanded digital signage near appropriate neighborhoods.

7. Direct the Chair of the Board to write letters to the Mayors of Watsonville and Salinas explaining that the sale of fireworks in their respective jurisdictions is contributing to illegal activity in the County of Santa Cruz.

8. Direct the CAO to work with the Public Information Officer to develop a media outreach and education campaign and return to the Board for approval.

9. Request the Sheriff's office to return to the Board with a report on the effectiveness of these increased measures no later than September.

This is more than I expected!! Let's all show support for this response from Supervisors Friend and Leopold on behalf of residents of Santa Cruz. Here is how you can help assure that the items above are accepted by the full Board of Supervisors, plus express your gratitude for this initial sensible list of actions. Do one or both of the following:

- Attend the BOS meeting!! These meeting start at 9 am and the regular oral communications is scheduled after the Consent Agenda, so it is best to be there at 9:00 am sharp!
- If you cannot attend the meeting, please send an email stating your support of Consent Agenda Item 45.2 as well as gratitude for such a comprehensive list of recommendations from Supervisors Friend and Leopold. These men were listening to us! **Put Consent Agenda Item 45.2 in the subject line of your email.** Send your emails to both Zach.Friend@santacruzcounty.us and John.Leopold@santacruzcounty.us -- one email can be used for both or if you prefer, send only to the supervisor of your district. If you do not know in which district you reside, you can check by clicking [HERE](#).

- Spread the word by sharing this newsletter with family and friends!

We worked hard for this first major step by our Supervisors. Let's let them know how much we appreciate their efforts on our behalf. I hope to see some of you next Tuesday (5/10) at the meeting. We can give ourselves some high fives. We're on a roll and let's keep up the momentum!

Jean

<http://freedomfromfireworks.weebly.com/>

P.S. Welcome to three new Supporters, who are now receiving this newsletter. We're at 152 now!

**Board of Supervisors
Regular Meeting
5/10/2016 9:00 AM
Governmental Center Building
701 Ocean Street Room 525**