



Publisher's Perspective...Endorsements

Farrah Khan for Mayor

Larry Agran & Lauren Johnson-Norris for Irvine City Council

Irvine Community News & Views endorses Councilmember **Farrah Khan** for Mayor in the Nov. 3rd Irvine election. Khan's background in



Farrah Khan

the interfaith community — bringing people together — would be a refreshing change in the Mayor's seat. Khan is challenging unelected, self-appointed and divisive Christina Shea. Because of her extreme views, Shea has become known as Irvine's "anti" Mayor. She is anti-veteran and Veterans Cemetery, anti-immigrant, anti-college students, anti-renters, anti-science and anti-LGBTQ. Enough is enough! **Kahn for Mayor.** [FarrahForIrvine.com]

For City Council, *Irvine Community News & Views* endorses former Irvine Mayor and Councilmember **Larry Agran**. As a public interest attorney, Agran is taking on unelected Councilmember Michael Carroll, who got himself appointed to the Council last year and is now mired in a major City Hall scandal — involving the alleged misappropriation of more than \$70,000 in taxpayer funds

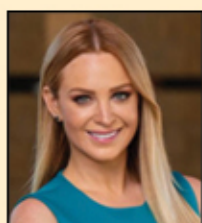


Larry Agran

for unauthorized self-promotional mailers to boost his election campaign. Larry Agran would restore honesty and integrity to the Council. He

has the courage to say NO to developers and stand up for Irvine residents. And Larry Agran can be counted on for local leadership to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. **Larry Agran for City Council.** [LarryAgran.com]

Irvine Community News & Views now adds another City Council endorsement:



Lauren
Johnson-Norris

Lauren Johnson-Norris. An accomplished attorney and Irvine Community Services Commissioner, Lauren Johnson-Norris is a strong advocate for Irvine children and families. A runner-up in her first try for City Council in 2018, Johnson-Norris is looking to fill the seat of current Councilmember Melissa Fox, who is running for the State Assembly. Johnson-Norris supports Larry Agran's "Build It NOW!" Plan for the Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery. And, like Agran, she takes no money from big developers and can be counted on to stand up for Irvine residents. **Lauren Johnson-Norris for City Council.** [LaurenForIrvine.com]

✓ **FarrahForIrvine.com**

✓ **LarryAgran.com**

✓ **LaurenForIrvine.com**

Franklin J. Lunding

Franklin J. Lunding, Publisher and Editor



Investigation Continues into Carroll's Misuse of Taxpayer Funds



\$72,000 in City Hall mass mailings

Appointed Irvine City Councilman Mike Carroll, who now claims the title "Vice Mayor," is under investigation for allegedly misappropriating City of Irvine taxpayer funds for his own personal and political benefit. Carroll finds himself at the center of a growing City Hall scandal involving the unauthorized expenditure of tens of thousands of dollars on mass mailings to Irvine residents, promoting the appointed Councilman and a series of town hall meetings. The City Council never authorized the mass mailings.



Michael Carroll

State Government Code Section 8314 makes it unlawful for any local official to use public resources for "a campaign activity, or personal or other purposes which are not authorized by law." A civil penalty could require payment of up to three times the value of the misappropriated public resources. Penal Code Section 424 makes misappropriation of public funds a felony punishable by up to four years in State prison and includes disqualification from holding any public office.

In an August 30th official letter of

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To: Our Irvine Friends & Neighbors

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→ continued from page 1 → Investigation Continues

complaint, Irvine City Councilmember Melissa Fox addressed her concerns about Carroll’s conduct to the City Manager, Irvine City Attorney, the Orange County District Attorney, and to State enforcement agencies.

The City, pressed by Fox, has released certain requested information about the Carroll mass mailings. What has so far been made public is revealing. In a one-page summary, Deputy City Manager Michelle Grettenberg reported that Carroll, in little more than a year, has sent out a total of 80,000 mailers. Nearly half of them were sent out in July and August at the same time Carroll was preparing to file his papers to run for City Council in the Nov. 3rd election, hoping to hold onto his seat. **The total cost to Irvine taxpayers for all of the Carroll mailers was \$72,000. The postage tab alone was \$45,000.** The balance of the cost was for duplicating, mailroom charges, and envelope charges. According to Grettenberg’s memo, overall postage costs for the rest of the Councilmembers in the past year have amounted to only \$220, in sharp contrast to Carroll’s unauthorized mass mailings.

A former City Hall official familiar with the City mailroom operations, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, “Somehow Carroll managed to turn the City Hall mailroom into a private print shop and mailing house for the unauthorized benefit of just one City Councilmember — himself.”

According to Grettenberg’s memo, “Councilmember Carroll’s CEA [Council Executive Assistant] provided a letter and recipient list to the mailroom for distribution” for the earlier mass mailings. For the larger, more recent mass mailings, “Councilmember Carroll provided letters and mailing lists to the mailroom for distribution.”

Grettenberg’s memo doesn’t disclose how Carroll or his CEA gained access to the mailroom and apparently ordered the mailings in violation of City law. Irvine’s Municipal Code (Section 1-3-109) provides: “The City Council and its members shall deal with the administrative services of the City only through the City Manager ... and neither the City Council nor any member thereof shall give orders or instructions to any subordinates of the City Manager....”

Unanswered questions

At this stage of the investigation, many questions remain unanswered:

- Was the Irvine City Manager or upper management staff aware of the mailings? What did they know and when did they know it? Did the City Manager facilitate the mailings without City Council authority?
- Were mailroom employees bullied, coerced or deceived into preparing the Carroll mass mailings? Much of the mailroom staff includes developmentally disabled men and women who have worked for the City for years.
- What mass mailing lists were provided to the mailroom? Were they from City sources intended to be kept private in accordance with City law? Or, were they voter lists intended for maximum political benefit for Carroll?
- Did Carroll convert these lists or responses to his town hall mailing invitations for his own use, harvesting names and email addresses for political use in his City Council campaign?

and email addresses for political use in his City Council campaign?

- In its preliminary investigation, *Irvine Community News & Views* has confirmed that mailings were sent out in envelopes with first-class postage. Why? Authorized City mailings are customarily sent out at sharply reduced postal rates available to cities and other nonprofit organizations.

Of course, Councilman Mike Carroll could provide answers to these questions. Some of them were raised in Councilmember Melissa Fox’s original letter of complaint. But so far, Carroll has remained silent other than writing a brief letter denouncing Fox’s complaint as an election season political attack. Carroll did not respond to the substance of the Fox complaint. [ICNV](https://www.icnv.org)

For campaign updates, subscribe to *ICNV* online, at: IrvineCommunityNews.org

“Somehow Carroll managed to turn the City Hall mailroom into a private print shop and mailing house for the unauthorized benefit of just one City Councilmember — himself.”

- Former City Official

OPEN FORUM

FREE SPEECH FOREVER!

Voters Beware! Here Come the “Dark Money” Lies and Smears!

by Franklin J. Lunding

It’s election season in Irvine and all across America...and you know what that means: Your mailbox is likely to be full of political campaign mailers. Some of the mailers will be positive, coming from legitimate campaign committees. But more and more of the political mail you receive will be negative, so-called “hit pieces” that come from groups and committees you never heard of, targeting certain candidates with a calculated campaign of lies, smears, and character assassination. Welcome to the world of “dark money” and nasty politics. Here are some questions and answers to help you understand what’s going on.

Question: How is it that certain Mayor and Irvine City Council candidates fund \$300,000 or \$400,000 campaigns promoting themselves and viciously attacking their opponents, when they have only managed to raise \$25,000 or \$35,000?

Answer: The answer is “dark money.” Here’s how the deal works in Irvine: Developer-friendly candidates let it be known that they sure would appreciate some “outside help” for their campaigns to evade Irvine’s campaign contribution limits. With a wink-and-a-nod, certain developers and their allies oblige by donating hundreds of thousands of dollars through layers and layers of political action committees that then spend the money promoting pro-developer candidates — and viciously attacking their opponents in the mail, on TV and online.

Question: Why is it called “dark money?”

Answer: It’s called “dark money” because it’s very difficult to trace where it’s coming from, especially in the middle of a campaign. And it’s hidden behind nice-sounding committee names like Friends of the Great Park or California Homeowners Association or Orange County Freedom Fund. But make no mistake about it, the dark money in Irvine originates mainly from big developers and big corporations that, of course, expect to be rewarded for their “help” when they put their multi-million-dollar projects in front of grateful Councilmembers who got elected because of the huge dark-money expenditures.

Question: Do all Irvine candidates take dark money?

Answer: No. In fact, in the current race for Mayor and City Council, a number of good candidates run their campaigns the old-fashioned way, staying within the strict campaign contribution limits prescribed by the City of Irvine — limiting what an individual donor can give to just \$530 per candidate for Mayor or City Council. Here, below, is a side-by-side listing of leading candidates for Mayor and City Council. The candidates in the left column are “clean money” candidates — they don’t take dark-money help in their campaigns. The candidates in the right column are “dark money” candidates — they do take dark money in their campaigns. And lots of it!



Dark money mail from the 2018 Irvine City election

CLEAN MONEY Farrah Khan	CANDIDATES for MAYOR	DARK MONEY Christina Shea
Larry Agran Lauren Johnson-Norris	CANDIDATES for CITY COUNCIL	Mike Carroll Carrie O’Malley

Source: Campaign finance reports, State of California, Secretary of State, and City of Irvine, since 2016



Franklin J. Lunding is publisher of *ICNV*. He was Chair of the Irvine Transportation Commission and served as an Irvine Planning Commissioner in the 1980s. As an experienced elections attorney, in the 1970s and 1980s, Lunding served as a member and Chairman of the Illinois State Board of Elections, charged with administering and enforcing campaign finance and election laws.

Agran Calls for Newly Seated Irvine City Council to Adopt Two Priority Action Plans:

1 City-Led Strategy to Combat COVID-19

Take a moment to fast-forward from this frantic campaign season to Election Day, Nov. 3. Imagine the election of a new Irvine Mayor and new City Council that includes Larry Agran, himself a former Irvine Mayor and City Councilmember. Then, fast-forward again to January 12, 2021, the first business meeting of the newly seated Mayor and City Council. According to Agran, “If I’m elected to the City Council, at that first business

meeting, I will put two priority items on the agenda for Council action.” Agran continued: “The first will be to create a specific, strong, City-led response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Irvine. And the second item will be to commence, within 20 days, demolition, cleanup, and construction of the Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery at the ARDA site in the Great Park, in accordance with the will of the people of Irvine.”

CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION (NO. 21-01) TO ORGANIZE AND IMPLEMENT A CITY-LED RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Whereas, since January of 2020, it has been evident that the emergence and spread of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) posed a worldwide threat to public health that would require an emergency response at every level of government to control; and,

Whereas, when the COVID-19 pandemic inexorably came to the United States — appearing first on the West Coast and, soon after, on the East Coast — the United States Government was unprepared, lacking a comprehensive strategic national plan to combat the pandemic; and,

Whereas, the City of Irvine was also unprepared, lacking a strategic City plan to protect Irvine’s 300,000 residents and the additional 200,000 daytime workers from COVID-19 through a comprehensive program of testing, tracing, isolating and treating; and,

Whereas, the City has so far failed to use its authority and resources to organize and coordinate a City-led response to the COVID-19 pandemic in concert with UCI, major businesses, School Districts, and County and State agencies to ensure comprehensive programming to control the pandemic in Irvine.

Therefore, be it resolved that the City Council of the City of Irvine does hereby direct the City Manager to prepare and publish, within 20-days, a Strategic Plan which shall include the organization of three new emergency offices, under his/her control:

First, a City Office of Public Health, headed by a Chief Health Officer, which shall include a City public health workforce comprised of public health nurses, school nurses, and other health professionals charged with implementing a comprehensive program of COVID-19 testing, tracing, isolating and treatment of residents and workers in the City of Irvine; and,

Second, an Office of Small Business Assistance, providing financial assistance, protective equipment, and instruction in achieving the highest standards of health and safety in the workplace and in all areas of business open to the public; and,

Third, an Office of Emergency Housing Assistance to help prevent foreclosures on owner-occupied housing and to otherwise assist homeowners and renters in avoiding evictions and homelessness.

Be it further resolved that 10 million dollars (\$10,000,000) shall be made available from the City’s \$53 million “Rainy Day” Contingency Fund to begin immediate implementation of the provisions of this Resolution.

2 Build the Veterans Cemetery NOW!

Agran, a Harvard Law School honors graduate, long-time public interest attorney and former chief legal counsel for the California State Senate Health Committee, drafted the two formal City Council Resolutions, below. The Resolutions include specific directives (indicated in red brackets) that he intends to put at the top of the business agenda for the newly seated Mayor and City Council on January 12, 2021.

The Resolutions are published here for public scrutiny and comment. In fact, *Irvine Community News & Views* is inviting readers to respond to our online Irvine Community Poll to let us know whether you support or oppose adoption of Agran’s two City Council Resolutions. [ICNV](#)

Take the Irvine Community Poll
irvinecommunitynews.org/resolutions-poll

CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION (NO. 21-02) TO COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION OF THE VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK & CEMETERY AT THE CITY-OWNED GREAT PARK “ARDA” SITE

Whereas, beginning in 2014, the people of the City of Irvine have repeatedly and consistently expressed their overwhelming approval and their determination to expedite construction of the Southern California Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery at the City-owned 125-acre ARDA site at the northern edge of the Great Park; and,

Whereas, the will of the people was manifest most recently with adoption of the **Build the Great Park Veterans Cemetery Initiative** — an official citizens’ initiative petition signed by 19,790 Irvine residents — which zones the City-owned ARDA site at the Great Park as the exclusive location for the Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery; and,

Whereas, the Initiative further provides for inclusion of certain features as part of the Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery — preservation of historic structures, such as the aircraft control tower and airplane hangars, and creation of a 2.5-mile perimeter system of trees, trails and memorial gardens to surround the entire ARDA site; and,

Whereas, the features prescribed in the Initiative have been incorporated in the **Build It NOW! Plan**, a plan which calls for expedited construction of the Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery, beginning with City-ordered demolition, cleanup and clearance of the ARDA site, preservation of historic features, and creation of the perimeter system of trees, trails and memorial gardens — with costs to be reimbursed by the State.

Therefore, be it resolved — as a first step in implementing the **Build It NOW! Plan** — that the City Council of the City of Irvine does hereby direct the City Manager to return to the Council within 20 days with a demolition, cleanup and site clearance plan for the ARDA site, including a start-date for on-site demolition to commence on or before January 31, 2021.

Be it further resolved that the City-incurred costs to implement the **Build It NOW! Plan**, estimated at \$15 million, shall be paid from the City’s Great Park Development Fund (Account No. 180), to be reimbursed by the State as part of the negotiated ARDA Site Transfer Agreement with the State of California to complete construction and commence operation by Veterans Day (November 11, 2023) of what will be the State-owned, State-operated and State-funded Southern California Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery.



Child Health & Safety:

COVID-19 — Wrong from the start!

by Phyllis Agran, M.D.

My entire professional life in public health and as a pediatrician has been dedicated to the *prevention* of disease wherever possible, and to delivering appropriate medical interventions whenever necessary. For me, diagnosing and treating an individual patient for a disease is very rewarding. But, even more rewarding for me — and the real payoff for society — is when we institute policies and organize our resources to *prevent* the spread of disease.

Failure

Mindful of the paramount importance of *prevention* in any public health strategy, I find it difficult to express in words just how appalled I am by the utter failure of our current political “leaders.” At both the national and local levels — including right here in Orange County and Irvine — we’ve witnessed a catastrophic failure to prepare for the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, compounded by a failure to take the essential measures to contain and control the virus.

The human and economic cost of this top-to-bottom failure of leadership is almost beyond comprehension. COVID-19 has already killed more than 200,000 Americans. Here in Orange County, we are well beyond 50,000 confirmed cases and more than 1,100 deaths. In Irvine, confirmed cases recently reached more than 1,600. (Unconfirmed cases — many of them asymptomatic “spreaders” of the virus — are estimated at 5,000 or more in Irvine). Mercifully, by the end of September, “only” 12 Irvine residents have died from COVID-19.

According to reliable projections, these horrific numbers in Orange County and in Irvine are likely to double by early next year, unless there is a radical change of public health policy, including the rapid ramping-up of public health resources to implement the changes.

Change begins with frankly acknowledging the failures of the past and charting a new path. Here in Irvine, this means doing now what should have been done in February and March. Let’s be specific.

The biggest failure in Irvine is a continuing one. Even with months of warning, the City has never developed a credible Strategic Plan for effectively combating the Coronavirus. Irvine is now among the top 100 largest cities



The tragic failure of the City’s public health policy

in America — 300,000 people live here, and our workday population swells to 500,000. We are fortunate to have outstanding, world-class institutions in Irvine, including UCI and major biomedical corporations. Yet, our Mayor and City Council have completely failed to organize these community partners to develop a clear, coordinated strategy to protect Irvine residents and workers from contracting and spreading COVID-19.

What could be done

The City itself has failed to invest available resources to create an Office of Public Health, headed by a Chief Health Officer, and staffed with public health nurses, school nurses, and other health professionals to implement all the programs essential to extinguishing the virus. A winning strategy begins with instituting a program of repeated testing at major workplaces, including at all Irvine schools, coupled with careful contact-tracing. Those afflicted with COVID-19 then, of course, need to be quarantined and treated for the disease, and given whatever social and financial support may be necessary.

Full disclosure: In recent months I’ve been working alongside my husband, Larry Agran, who is running for City Council, to put these and other elements of a Strategic Plan into an official City Council Resolution. Larry has promised, if elected, to put this Resolution and its directives in front of the new City Council in January. But, why wait? The current City Council can and should immediately take this Resolution as its own, adopt it, and implement its provisions right away — beginning with an appropriation of \$10 million from the City’s \$53 million “Rainy Day” Contingency Fund—to make sure this vital public health initiative succeeds.

For reasons I can’t understand, Mayor Shea and Vice Mayor Carroll seem completely opposed to investing any City money to combat COVID-19. I think this is just plain wrong. My husband goes further. He recently told a group of residents that the refusal to use the Rainy Day Fund to combat COVID-19 is “unconscionable, even immoral.” He went on to say, “The \$53 million in the Rainy Day Fund are *your* tax dollars held in reserve for *your* benefit in a time of special need. This is a time of extraordinary special need — for you, for your family, and for our entire Irvine community. Now, it’s time to act!”

I agree. It’s time to act!

Phyllis Agran is a practicing Orange County pediatrician, Professor Emeritus at the UC Irvine School of Medicine, and past president of the Orange County Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She was named 2020 “Physician of the Year” by the Orange County chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Dr. Agran is a recognized national expert in pediatric injury control and prevention. She is also a member of the Irvine Unified School District’s Medical Advisory Committee. Dr. Agran can be reached at phyllis@irvinecommunitynews.org

An Open Letter to My Irvine Neighbors

Edward S. Pope
Irvine, CA

Irvine Neighbors —

Back in 2014, my good friend, former Irvine Mayor Larry Agran secured unanimous Council approval for his resolution for a *State-built* and *State-operated* Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery at the Great Park.

Unfortunately for Larry, that was an election year. A billion-dollar developer poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into vicious attack ads against Larry and in support of candidates they knew would replace the Veterans Cemetery project with massive development and traffic. In that fight, the developer won...and veterans and residents lost.

But Larry never stopped working to get the Veterans Cemetery built! He and I, along with several other Irvine residents, formed the **Build the Great Park Veterans Cemetery** committee.

Since 2014, tens of thousands of Irvine residents have supported our efforts by voting, signing petitions, writing emails to elected officials and putting out lawn signs. However, **the current Council continues to refuse to implement the will of the people and begin construction of the Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery.**

Our committee is filled with Republicans, Democrats, and No Party Preference voters. We do not agree on every issue, but we all agree on this one. Larry Agran has the experience, the skills, the vision and the determination we need to make the Veterans Memorial Park & Cemetery at the Great Park a reality!

Thank you!

Ed Pope

Edward S. Pope
Chair, Build the Great Park Veterans Cemetery
U.S. Army Veteran, and 47-year Irvine resident

If you wish to volunteer or donate to help
Build the Great Park Veterans Cemetery, go to:
BuildTheVeteransCemetery.org

Donations by check may be mailed to: Build the Great Park Veterans Cemetery, 6102 Sierra Siena Road, Irvine CA 92603.

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