

P.G. council \$\$\$ to be on June ballot

By KELLY NIX

PACIFIC GROVE voters will have a chance in June to decide whether to give members of the city council a pay raise, the council decided Wednesday.

The council voted unanimously to hold a special election June 2 to allow residents to decide whether to increase the monthly stipend from \$420 to \$987 for council members and from \$700 to \$1,645 for the mayor. If it passes, the change will cost taxpayers more than \$59,312 annually.

At the meeting, resident Inge Lorentzen Daumer questioned how the council could be "fiscally responsible" when a special election is "going to cost way more" than putting the raise before voters on the Nov. 3 general election ballot.

"I think it's about time you actually show this for what it is — immediate greed," she said. "Our city is struggling."

Mayor Nick Smith noted that the increase is "not immediate" and "is actually written" to go into effect "at the beginning of a councilmember's next term." The council last received a raise in 1998.

Former Mayor Bill Kampe advocated for the increase, saying the idea contains a "number of important things for the city," such as potentially expanding the pool of candidates for council, including younger candidates.

"Citizens who would suffer a financial cost for serving on the council will at least have some compensation for their efforts," Kampe said.

Collecting signatures

In May 2025, councilmembers decided to give themselves a 130 percent raise. In response, former city council member Luke Coletti's group, Transparent Pacific Grove, led a successful referendum effort to allow citizens to decide on the stipend increase. However, the council repealed the pay-raise ordinance several months later.

On Feb. 3, Coletti filed a ballot initiative to amend the city's charter, which can be done through a vote, to place the authority for pay increases and benefits in the hands of residents. The item is set to be on the Nov. 3 ballot.

FIND THE FACTS ON 'BRAIN BOOSTERS'

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

THE CARMEL Foundation will present a talk on "Separating Fad from Fact: How to be Savvy About 'Brain Boosting' Products" Wednesday, Feb. 25, at 2:30 p.m. in Diment Hall at Lincoln and Fifth. The talk is free and open to the public.

Stanford graduate Quinn Kennedy, a research psychologist with a Ph.D. in psychology and postdoctoral training in cognitive aging, will cover some of the perils of conducting internet searches for "brain boosting" supplements and will then offer a hierarchy of reputable sites for such queries.

Kennedy is the director of aging research at neuroFit and an advocacy ambassador for the Alzheimer's Association's Monterey chapter.

Her 20-plus years of research in adult aging has been recognized through multiple awards, grants and peer-reviewed journal publications.

The Carmel Foundation serves members 55 and older by offering a lunch program, low-income housing, homebound meal delivery, free mobility equipment loans, a lending library, Saturday movies, and more than 65 weekly classes and activities. Visit carmelfoundation.org for more information.

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