



“CONSTRUCTING A WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE”

ECA NEWSLETTER

JOHNS SOAPBOX



Here is the normal disclaimer-I am not espousing the opinion of the ECA or any member firm in this Soapbox-these are my own tortured opinions. Only mine.



What Does It Mean?

According to Me, one of the main job duties I have is to represent the ECA, its members, and the industry we work in. As one of those job duties I have is to advocate on behalf of the ECA and its membership.

When I see something that is going to affect the ECA membership either positively or negatively, I try to bring it to the attention of our members. I also bring it to the attention of other “influencers” that are in collaboration with the ECA (usually!), like the NCBE, the Sonoma County Alliance, the Sonoma County Farm Bureau, the NorthBay Leadership Council, the Santa Rosa Metro, Save Our Sonoma County Roads, and NORBAR.

Last week, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors were discussing and voting on their annual budget. The process is each department writes a summary report and submits it, then goes in front of the Supervisors to vocally present their case for funding their department.

The Sonoma County Public Infrastructure group did just that-their Department Head, Johannes, Hovertsz, wrote a summary report that asked for a certain funding from the overall budget, and requested an increase due to several reasons:

1. As the road rehabilitation continues into its multiyear plan to fix the most well-travelled roads first, the other roads needing to be repaired become geographically farther out from the population centers and it becomes more costly to get crews and equipment and materials out to those areas -thereby they cost more.
2. As time goes on and these outlier roads have not gotten repaired first, they have continued to deteriorate and the “fixing” is more involved- thereby they cost more.
3. Following the ridiculously misguided policies of the current administration, inflationary impacts to gas prices, oil prices, and other materials have been realized as the administration continues to push for the destruction of the gas and oil industry due to “climate change” issues affect material prices needed to fix our roads- thereby they cost more.
4. Labor rates haven’t changed much, but over the past few years there have been some adjustments that are results of a tight labor market increasing costs for hourly workers, and salaried workers- thereby they cost more.

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1. Continued and increased regulations and taxes also have impacted on our general contractors and suppliers' ability to keep their bid prices low-thereby they cost more.

All this seems obvious to you and I and should seem obvious to public staff and elected officials, but keep in mind they are inundated with lots of requests to increase funding. Some requests are for homelessness problems, housing problems, public pension liabilities, etc. etc. So, it is a great reminder to them that an increase in costs to repair our infrastructure should be discussed and considered from time to time. That is just what Johannes did last week with his request to increase the annual funding from the County General Fund from 2% to 5% per year.

When I received a copy of the Summary Report, I sent a request to our other association friends to write a letter of support to the Supervisors to approve the request for increasing funding for our roads and bridges. I also sent a personal letter (on our Letterhead that has our Board of Directors listed as well as our Sustaining Members listed) to each Supervisor "advocating" for them to approve the request for additional funding. Several of our friends were able to write to the Supervisors, and along with our ECA advocacy letter, allowed the Supervisors to see the level of support for increasing the funding for roads that is out in the community.

It made a difference.

Not only did our supervisors vote to increase the spending from 2% to 5%, but they also voted for a one-time \$5million increase to be spent on roads!

These things positively impact all of us. Even if you are not employed directly by one of the firms that get to perform the work on those road projects, if you live and work in Sonoma County you benefit as follows: safety and emergency vehicles can get to you quicker on better roads, there are less accidents to begin with on smoother roads, your fuel mileage increases on smoother roads, transportation of goods is easier and quicker and prices do not increase from better roads, and better roads and bridges lend themselves to better property values and more tourism that all helps the local economy.

For all those reasons, it makes sense to advocate for those road dollars to be spent. And those that advocated for that action, saw results-the Supervisors voted 5-0 for increasing those road budgets.

So, one of the reasons we give an award at Public Officials Night for a Bridge Award (remember this year the Sonoma Public Infrastructure Group won that award for their recent work in awarding and administering millions of dollars in road reconstruction in 2022), is to foster relationships with those that make the decisions to help our community and help ECA members. It is good business to have someone advocating for you.

You may not agree with everything the ECA does for your dues and sponsorships and attendance at our events, but there is no mistaking what advocacy means when our oxygen supply of project dollars goes up.

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What it means to be an advocate-Webster definition- a person who speaks or writes in support or defense of a person, cause, etc.

Thank you to all of you for your continued support of the ECA. The organization continues to get results from our advocacy efforts!

That's All Folks!

John

NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. On July 18, 2023, the County Board of Supervisors will be presented with a new Project Labor Agreement to consider for their public works projects. The County has been in close contact with the City of Santa Rosa PLA process, and whether you like or hate the City of Santa Rosa PLA that will go into effect July 1, 2023 on all new contracts in excess of \$500,000, the fact is the City of Santa Rosa heard from nobody (no contractors, no suppliers, and no organizations other than organized labor) during their committee discussions and during their public meeting in October of 2022. There is one opportunity for suppliers and contractors and citizens and local workers to influence the County PLA, and that is on July 18, 2023. The week before the meeting I will post the information in the newsletter on when, where and how to participate. In the meantime, you can always write to your supervisor of choice and their contact information is on our website www.nceca.org.
2. Port Workers Strike is Devastating to Supply Chain- Stalled West Coast Ports' Labor Talks Threaten Global Supply Chains the Washington Post reports that "labor strife has snarled operations at some of North America's busiest ports, with dockworkers and port operators hung up on wages, and the Biden administration scrambling to contain work stoppages that could undercut global supply chains." According to the Post, "Portions of the ports at Los Angeles, Long Beach, Oakland and Seattle – main gateways for Asian imports – have intermittently shuttered or slowed in recent days as the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and Pacific Maritime Association, which represents port operators, try to reach a deal." The Post notes that President Biden "became personally involved in mediating a dispute among railway workers last year."
4. Two insurance industry giants have pulled back from California's home insurance marketplace, saying that increasing wildfire risk and soaring construction costs have prompted them to stop writing new policies in the nation's most populous state. [Link](#)
5. Granite to Widen Highway 1 near Santa Cruz-[Granite wins \\$29M Highway 1 project | Construction Dive](#)
6. New 60 acre development Hannah Boys Center-[Details of the new 60-acre development planned by Hanna Center on Agua Caliente Road \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)

We want to highlight a member each week. What we need from you is a short paragraph on what is happening at your company. New employees, new logo, a new move, exciting new equipment! What ever you want to share about your company with our members.

Email mary@nceca.org with your spotlight information and send in photos if you have them!



Click [HERE](#) for more information on the Tractor Pulls!

COMMITTEE NEWS & INFORMATION

Car Show-the Committee did a great job and yesterday's 28th Annual Show and Shine Car Show was arguably the best ever. Certainly, we saw a tremendous increase in attendance and some of that might have been a result of President Antonio Mencarini doing social media plugs for the show, along with radio spots by our newest Sustaining Member the Sonoma Media Group (who had radio spots advertising for us with Walt Turner doing a great job touting the event!). All in all, the Committee got some great suggestions to consider to make this event even better in 2024, and they will consider all of the suggestions. For now, let's thank our volunteers from yesterday: Walt Turner, Casey Wood, Kristi Pruett, Tony Mencarini, Corinna Fernandez, Paul Stathatos, Jeannine Clary, Stephen Knuttel, David Whitehurst, Robin & Dave Weller, Mary, Robin, Megan Turner, Josh West, Michael Bryan, Ruthann McDaniel, Ryan McDaniel, & Cheryl Saucedo. Ghilotti Bros Inc. & Ghilotti Construction guys came to help set up, park the cars and clean up. I hope I didn't miss anyone. We appreciate all the help and couldn't do it without our volunteers!

The ECA Golf Tournament The ECA Golf Tournament Committee with Victor McKnight and Dave Weller (along with the ECA Exec Committee), has reached capacity. WE ARE SOLD OUT! Sponsorships are still available so please jump in and support the event whether you can play or not. — [Sponsor Flyer](#)

The ECA Days of Wine and Dozers Auction Committee has been busy and is gearing up for the auction night on Saturday, September 16, 2023. We need auction items, and we thank you for those that have stepped up and donated a vacation rental or dinner or special ECA item like "Blast and Brews". We need those items, and we need you to invite some friends to attend that have a checkbook!

Thank you to Engelke Construction Inc. for their Gold sponsor! To sponsor click [HERE](#)!

ECA 2023 UPCOMING EVENTS

Father's Day "Show & Shine" Car Show, Julliard Park

We had a great show on Sunday! Thanks again to all of our sponsors!!!

Platinum Chevrolet—Showcase Sponsor

Sonoma Media—Media Sponsor

North Bay Petroleum—Raffle Sponsor

Ghilotti Bros Inc.—Raffle Sponsor

Engelke Construction Inc—DJ Sponsor

Herc Rentals Trench Solutions - Donation

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Garton Tractor - Donation

RCX Inc. - Awards Sponsor & Donation

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Best Hot Rod & Peoples Choice - Walt Lander - 1952 Henry J
Best Truck - Thomas Kenney - 1940 Ford Pickup
Best Motorcycle - Dale and Michelle Johnson 2018 Harley Triglide & 2012 Cam Am Syder
Best Stock - Jerome Koveen - 1967 Chevelle
Best Rat Rod - Everardo Sierra- 1946 International KI
Best Flames - Mike Doyle - 2001 Corvette Roadster
Best Engine - Steve Johnson - 55 Chevy
Lowrider - Marlo Fink - 1964 Chevy Impala SS

Friday, July 21

ECA Golf Tournament

Windsor Golf Course, Windsor, CA —[Sponsor Flyer](#)



Thank you Sponsors!

Argonaut Constructors—Showcase Sponsor

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Ghilotti Bros. Inc—Cigar Sponsor

BoDean Company - Golf Cart Sponsor

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BKF Engineers—Beer Cooler Sponsor

Herc Rentals Trench Solutions - Beer Cooler Sponsor & Tee Sponsor

J.M. Turner Engineering, Inc.—Tee Sponsor

RCX, Inc—Cigar Sponsor

Saturday, September 16,

ECA Wine & Dozers Dinner & Auction—Graton Rancheria

Thank you to sponsor: **Engelke Construction Inc—Gold Sponsor**

To sponsor click [HERE!](#)

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

Worker's Compensation Endorsement By ECA-

HELLO!!! HAVE YOU ASKED YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES PERSON TO CHECK OUT THE WORKERS COMP PROGRAM ECA HAS ENDORSED? Everybody likes to save money, don't they? Doesn't cost you a thing to consider this as an option! Jeff Okrepkie at 707-360-4338.



George Petersen Insurance Agency

FIRE CLEAN UP LIST:

The Sonoma County Environmental Health Department, Transportation and Public Works, and James Gore's office are utilizing the ECA as a resource for debris testing, and debris cleanup for fire victims from the Kincadee Fire. Please review the list that has been provided to the fire victims and the County, of ECA Firms that are interested and listed in various categories as being helpful in the fire aftermath. This is another benefit for ECA members and if you want to be included on the list, and are not, please contact mary@nceda.org. There is no charge for this. You can access the list by clicking [HERE](#)

EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANUAL

The updated 2023-2024 Emergency Response Manual is now available online!

In the event of an emergency, we have put together this manual to help our community receive quick service from our members.

Thank you to our sponsors for helping to get this manual completed. It is sent to city and county agencies in case of an emergency so they will know who to call for services, equipment and materials.

Click [HERE](#) for the manual.

IMPORTANT INFO:

Get Prepared Now! Here are some very useful tips from CalFire to get your own house/property "in shape" for fire season. [link](#)

Pocket Guide for CALOSHA For Contractors: Click [here](#) for the pocket guide you all need!

Roadwork in Sonoma County - Check out the County website for road info [here](#)



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From the Desk of Jim Persons

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS

An accident investigation is required whenever a serious incident happens on the job.

The less time intervening between the accident and the investigation, the more accurate the information that can be obtained. Facts are more accurate because people have not had time to become biased by the opinions of others, memories are clearer, and more details are remembered.

Click [HERE](#) to read more



Expert COVID-19 Safety info Available at a Discount

The Shelter in Place Orders issued by County Health Officers in Sonoma, Napa, and Mendocino - as well as the Governor, have highlighted for the building industry the need for all contractors to have an up-to-date written COVID-19 Exposure Control Plan.

This should be an addendum to your IIPP and safety meetings for COVID-19

Jim Persons, SafetyPride, an ECA member who serves as a consultant and safety instructor for ECA, is offering his services to our members and they will receive a 40% discount on his regular rates if you are a current member of ECA.

Contact Jim if you are interested in getting his help on COVID-19 related issues or other health and safety programs. email: jimpersons@safetypride.com or phone: 707-889-0881

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SPECIAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

The ECA met with the City of Santa Rosa on June 15, 2023, to discuss how to make Public Works projects go to bid quicker, get bid and awarded faster, and get built and completed quicker. We met with Maraskeeshia Smith (City Manager for Santa Rosa), Jason Nutt (Assistant City Manager for Santa Rosa), Tracy Duenas P.E. (Supervising Engineer for Santa Rosa), as well as Andrew from Material Lab and Lisa from Contracts and Lori from Capitol Projects. On our side we had comments from Team Ghilotti, and attendance from Dan Giordani of Argonaut, Dale Mahoney from Ghilotti Construction Company, Troy Simning from Ghilotti Brothers, Inc., and Josh Cleaver and Dean Soiland from BoDean. I thought the meeting went well and discussions were held as to what we felt the city does well, with some suggestions on where they might improve and get better pricing in the future. Most of the suggestions were around asking the materials lab to consider standardizing some of their requirements to conform to Caltrans specs, asking the City to name CM's prior to bid, requesting the City speed up the timeline from bid opening to Notice to Proceed from 4 months to two months, and some consideration of letting GC's do more of their own "means and methods" like design fit of handicap ramps simply being shown as a certain standard and allowing the GC to fit them to existing surrounding conditions. Many other items were discussed, and it was a productive meeting. Thanks to all who participated!



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