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You're Gonna Miss Lili...

Bosse Presides Over Final City Council Meeting As Mayor

By Victoria Talbot

It has been quite a year for Beverly Hills Mayor Lili Bosse, who presided over the last City Council meeting of her year serving as mayor Tuesday, ending after 1:30 a.m.

The meeting exemplified the kind of dedication to putting the community first that has made Bosse's leadership so popular.

In one afternoon, the council approved new rules governing lobbyists that give the community, not the applicant, the last word in council debate on items such as land use and development issues; held a Special Meeting to inform the community of an agreement to enhance school security by placing Student Resource Officers on all five campuses for at least 30 days while the school district enhances their security procedures, and spent nearly five hours on testimony related to the hotly contested projects at 1184 and 1193 Loma Linda Drive.

Every parent present was given an opportunity to express their concerns over school safety, every lobbyist and every Sunshine Task Force member who wished to, spoke, and every resident had the opportunity to build their case and rebut every one of the Loma Linda Trust attorneys.

That is Bosse. Boldly, politely and fearlessly pushing the envelope, inviting the community from all points on the spectrum to have a voice in the democratic process. "I hear you," she says passionately. Whatever it takes, says Bosse, every voice that wants to speak will be heard.

Bosse has earned the respect and deep affection of her constituents. She loves them back.

"I'm a hugger," she says upon meeting, immediately putting people at ease and welcoming them into her personal space. "I give out my cell phone number." No pretense, no distance.

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LILI BOSSE

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Her signature comportment is to acknowledge every person who speaks at City Council. "Thank you for coming," she says, regardless of their message.

During Walk with the Mayor, every Monday morning, Bosse meets hundreds of citizens in an informal environment where they can bring their concerns directly to the Mayor of Beverly Hills. On a recent walk, she was joined by former Los Angeles City Mayor and gubernatorial candidate Antonio Villaraigosa, who expressed his admiration for the program with awe.

Bosse proved her mettle by taking problems on directly and fearlessly tackling even the thorniest issues, like parents fearful that their children are not safe in the City's schools.

She confidently moved the City forward with the new Basement Ordinance and a strong Legislative Advocacy ordinance that will bring a great deal more transparency.

Bosse kicked off the year with a new iteration of her Beverly Hills Healthy City initiative, adding two public meditations with author Deepak Chopra, walks with endurance swimmer Diana Nyad, events including Yoga with the Mayor, Bike with the Mayor, and Art Walk with the Mayor. Neon Nights kicked off BOLD

(Beverly Hills Open Later Days) Summer, a massive effort that included the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce, Rodeo Drive Committee and the Convention and Visitors Bureau to keep the shops open extra hours throughout the month of August. The event proved to be so popular that it was extended for BOLD Holidays.

Bosse brought elements of social media, photo settings, food trucks and table-seating to enhance the "linger" vibe, keeping shoppers on the streets and adding buzz and relevance to the City's Golden Triangle at a time when brick and mortar shopping is in decline.

The future is unclear as the mayor's position will rotate March 20 during the annual City Council Reorganization, but for one brief moment her Healthy City plan united all the businesses under one BOLD initiative, and gave voice to everyone who wished to speak.

It is a rare politician who takes the time to really notice each constituent, but Bosse makes it her mission to acknowledge everyone she meets personally. Perhaps it is a legacy of being the child of parents who survived and thrived, after enduring Auschwitz, where no one was human. Bosse says her mother, Rose Toren (Apr. 10, 1923 – Feb. 5, 2015), is her inspiration.

Her mother would have been so proud.