Benicia has been “taken hostage”

By Nikki Bash Davis

Our small quaint town has been “taken hostage”. A large corporation (Valero) and other interested parties are strong-arming our elections with smear campaigns, excessive funds, (over $120,000), a push poll and postings of attack ads on internet sites. All are ugly and unfounded, and directed at Kari Birdseye who is the most qualified candidate on our ballot, being the one who held community service positions and is now serving as chair for Benicia Planning Commission.

Valero’s candidate supported Valero’s desire to bring dangerous crude oil by rail through our town. He was also paid $40,000 in 2016 by the tobacco industry for helping them fight proposition 29, a tax bill on cigarettes, the funds of which were to be directed to cancer research.

These parties are violating our town campaign finance ordinance and are unlawfully conducting push pull phone calls. They have no interest in Benicia and its residents. They support the candidate who they know will be loyal to them when payback time comes around.

Valero is strongly opposing a reliable monitoring system that will, hopefully, protect us from a reoccurrence of May 2017 events and their aftermath. They also hope to renew their plans to bring cheap crude oil via our train tracks. It’s all about money, not the welfare of Benicians. The $4.2 billion profit Valero accrued in 2017 was not quite enough.

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