

**17. INFORMATION RECEIVED AFTER THE AGENDA WAS POSTED**



## Cotati City Council Agenda Staff Report

**Item type:** INFORMATION RECEIVED AFTER THE AGENDA WAS POSTED  
**To:** City Council  
**Subject:** INFORMATION RECEIVED AFTER THE AGENDA WAS POSTED  
**Date:** October 8, 2024  
**Written by:** Kevin Patterson, Deputy City Clerk

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### **Recommendation**

Information or written comments pertaining to this meeting, and which was received after the agenda was posted, is attached below.

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Pursuant to City Council Policy 2023-01: City Council Rules section IV A., written Communications, interested persons or their authorized representative may address the Council by written communication on any matters concerning the City's business, or any matters over which the Council has control.

1. To be considered for inclusion in the agenda packet, such written communication shall be delivered to the Deputy City Clerk no later than 11:00 a.m. of the Wednesday the week preceding the regular Council meeting for which such written communication is intended.
2. If received after the above date and time, but no later than noon the day before the meeting, written communications received by the Deputy City Clerk shall be posted on the website by the end of that day and notification provided to the electronic Agenda mailing list by the end of the day. All written communications received by the Deputy City Clerk by 5 pm on the City Council meeting day shall be made available to the City Council and public at the City Council meeting.

City Council Policy 2023-01 is available at the online meeting portal at [www.cotaticity.org](http://www.cotaticity.org) or by request from the Deputy City Clerk at 707-665-3622 or [kepatterson@cotaticity.org](mailto:kepatterson@cotaticity.org).

This information was received after the agenda was posted and is made available to the public pursuant to California Gov't Code Section 54957.5(c)

**From:** Marlina Eckel [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Sunday, October 6, 2024 1:39 PM

**To:** Laura Sparks <lsparks@cotaticity.org>; Ben Ford <bford@cotaticity.org>; Susan Harvey <SHarvey@cotaticity.org>; Sylvia Lemus <slemus@cotaticity.org>; Kay Rivers <krivers@cotaticity.org>

**Cc:** Kevin Patterson <kepatterson@cotaticity.org>

**Subject:** Please support opposition to Measure J

**CAUTION:EXTERNAL SENDER**

If suspicious, do not click on links, open attachments, or provide credentials and report it by using the "Phish Alert Report" button.

NO on Measure J!

Thank you to the Cotati City Council for bringing back the issue of a stance on Measure J. I urge you to join the other councils in our county to take a stand against Measure J.

Measure J is dangerous to our county livelihood and food security. We enjoy access here to a bounty of organic and healthy food. It is a very important aspect to me of living in Sonoma County. I am proud of our food production and organic heritage. We are a role model to the nation. We are a farming community...with a good track record. A role model for the nation. Reducing this much needed food supply would increase reliance on the models of food production found at Harris Ranch on the 5, for example. Why would we want to do this? People are not going to stop eating animal products just because some people wish for this. Do not threaten the animal farming systems that is currently in place in Sonoma County.

The young man that came to my door, after driving up from Hayward(!), to talk to me about his Yes on J stance stated clearly that the reason they are here is because they think this will be an easier county to win, after we banned Roundup in the past. This measure, if passed, would then start the domino effect to shut down farms across the country.

The measure allows for retraining for employees and farmers displaced by the measure. I ask you, what job is more important or even equally important to food production? And who pays for this? Us, the taxpayers. Keep our food producers on the job, supplying FOOD for our county and the rest of the US.

I wholeheartedly request that the Cotati City Council take a stance to oppose Measure J.

Healthy Regards,

Marlina Eckel

This information was received after the agenda was posted and is made available to the public pursuant to California Gov't Code Section 54957.5(c)

**From:** Judy James [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 7, 2024 10:33 AM  
**To:** Laura Sparks <[lsparks@cotaticity.org](mailto:lsparks@cotaticity.org)>; Ben Ford <[bford@cotaticity.org](mailto:bford@cotaticity.org)>; Susan Harvey <[SHarvey@cotaticity.org](mailto:SHarvey@cotaticity.org)>; Sylvia Lemus <[slemus@cotaticity.org](mailto:slemus@cotaticity.org)>; Kay Rivers <[krivers@cotaticity.org](mailto:krivers@cotaticity.org)>  
**Cc:** Kelly Betts <[kbetts@cotaticity.org](mailto:kbetts@cotaticity.org)>  
**Subject:** No on Measure J

**CAUTION:EXTERNAL SENDER**

If suspicious, do not click on links, open attachments, or provide credentials and report it by using the "Phish Alert Report" button.

Dear Mayor Sparks and Councilmembers,

As Cotati residents, we strongly urge you to oppose Measure J. It poses a serious and unnecessary threat to our county, endangering multi-generational family farms, jobs, and housing for farmworkers. The ripple effects of this misguided measure will extend beyond targeted farms, driving up costs for smaller farms and harming local businesses like feed stores and veterinary services.

Sonoma County's farms are already leaders in sustainability and regenerative agriculture. Measure J is an unnecessary burden on taxpayers and part of a broader effort to end animal agriculture in Sonoma County!

Please stand with us in opposing this harmful and misguided measure.

Thank you,

Judy and Jeff James

Cotati

This information was received after the agenda was posted and is made available to the public pursuant to California Gov't Code Section 54957.5(c)

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Monday, October 7, 2024 1:25 PM

**To:** Laura Sparks <lsparks@cotaticity.org>; Ben Ford <bford@cotaticity.org>; Susan Harvey <SHarvey@cotaticity.org>; Sylvia Lemus <slemus@cotaticity.org>; Kay Rivers <krivers@cotaticity.org>; Kevin Patterson <kepatterson@cotaticity.org>

**Subject:** Please support opposition to Measure J

**CAUTION:EXTERNAL SENDER**

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Dear council members,

Please join the other city councils in Sonoma county and take a stand and say NO to Measure J!

I can understand the motivation for the Measure J proposal. Clean agriculture and food supply are not only a noble idea but also a necessity for our future. However, this measure seems to target the wrong county.

Sonoma County already leads the way in the organic food movement, banned cultivation and growing of GMOs, and family farms generally apply responsible practices in harmony with land and animals.

An underlying theme from Measure J proponents seems to be the effort to convince people towards veganism, which in turn could lead to a threat to human health as well as safe food supply.

It's impossible to find a society that existed strictly on a vegan diet and veganism is no proven guarantee for long term health. Neither is it a guarantee for ecological and economical success as the move towards mono culture and centralized agriculture/farming bears many environmental/health risks and fosters dependence on an energy hungry distribution system.

Measure J would jeopardize what Sonoma County had previously fought and worked for and what it stands for with a reputation of a green, progressive, environmentally conscious, and responsible community.

Regards,  
Christian Miedler

This information was received after the agenda was posted and is made available to the public pursuant to California Gov't Code Section 54957.5(c)

**From:** Robin Husen <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Monday, October 7, 2024 1:30 PM

**To:** Laura Sparks <[lsparks@cotaticity.org](mailto:lsparks@cotaticity.org)>; Ben Ford <[bford@cotaticity.org](mailto:bford@cotaticity.org)>; Susan Harvey <[SHarvey@cotaticity.org](mailto:SHarvey@cotaticity.org)>; Sylvia Lemus <[slemus@cotaticity.org](mailto:slemus@cotaticity.org)>; Kay Rivers <[krivers@cotaticity.org](mailto:krivers@cotaticity.org)>; Kelly Betts <[kbetts@cotaticity.org](mailto:kbetts@cotaticity.org)>

**Subject:** NO on Measure J

**CAUTION:EXTERNAL SENDER**

If suspicious, do not click on links, open attachments, or provide credentials and report it by using the "Phish Alert Report" button.

Dear Mayor Sparks and Councilmembers of the City of Cotati,

As residents of Cotati, my husband and I ask you to please take a position on opposing Measure J. Measure J is such a big threat to our entire county today. If passed, it will force long standing family farms out of business. Jobs will be lost, and housing provided for farm employees and their families. It won't only be felt on the farms that meet the animal population of the proposed ordinance, but the rest of the farms in Sonoma County will struggle. Smaller farms that are able to take advantage of bulk pricing on account of supply and demand, will find their feed and input prices increase; this at a time when viability is already in question. Other businesses will close, including feed mills, feed stores, and livestock supply stores. Veterinary services may still be available, but at a higher price and less availability. Prices for goods normally sold from these farms will go up for consumers. Us.

As taxpayers, we should not have to endure cuts in the county budget to pay for this unnecessary program should Measure J pass. The dairies, farms, and ranches in Sonoma County practice sustainability, and are leaders in regenerative agriculture and climate-smart practices. This measure is simply part of a larger agenda to end animal agriculture. Please take a position on opposing Measure J.

Respectfully,

Chris and Robin Husen

[REDACTED]

Cotati, CA 94931

This information was received after the agenda was posted and is made available to the public pursuant to California Gov't Code Section 54957.5(c)

**From:** Dayna Ghirardelli <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Monday, October 7, 2024 2:26 PM

**To:** Laura Sparks <[lsparks@cotaticity.org](mailto:lsparks@cotaticity.org)>; Ben Ford <[bford@cotaticity.org](mailto:bford@cotaticity.org)>; Susan Harvey <[SHarvey@cotaticity.org](mailto:SHarvey@cotaticity.org)>; Sylvia Lemus <[slemus@cotaticity.org](mailto:slemus@cotaticity.org)>; Kay Rivers <[krivers@cotaticity.org](mailto:krivers@cotaticity.org)>

**Cc:** Kelly Betts <[kbetts@cotaticity.org](mailto:kbetts@cotaticity.org)>

**Subject:** Comment on Agenda Item 13.B October 8th Meeting

**CAUTION:EXTERNAL SENDER**

If suspicious, do not click on links, open attachments, or provide credentials and report it by using the "Phish Alert Report" button.

Dear Mayor Sparks, Vice Mayor Ford, Councilmembers Harvey, Lemus, and Rivers, and City Manager Patterson,

I regret that I am unable to attend the City of Cotati's Council meeting tomorrow, October 8th to offer comment in person on agenda item 13.B Consideration of a Resolution Opposing Sonoma County Initiative Petition Measure J. I attended the August 27th Cotati City Council meeting when the resolution was initially brought forward. I provided public comment at that time encouraging you to pass the resolution to oppose Measure J. Please accept this email, in my absence tomorrow, as official comment.

As mentioned in my previous comment on August 27th, Measure J does nothing to protect animals or the environment. It is a stepping stone to a larger effort to eradicate animal agriculture by limiting the number of animals a farm/ranch/dairy can have without any other considerations.

The US EPA's definition of a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) is in effect today and is overseen by the North Coast and Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Boards. All farms are in compliance. The US EPA does not limit a farm's size, but ensures the efficacy of water quality protection. Under Measure J, many of today's farms would be unduly prohibited which will lead to their closure, inhibiting critical mass and diminishing economies of scale resulting in additional farms and other Sonoma County businesses

closing. Measure J does not set a standard, it sets a limit; nor does it improve upon animal welfare standards in any way. The term "factory farm" is being deceptively used synonymously with the term CAFO, when in fact, there is no quantifiable definition of a "factory farm." It is subjective.

Sonoma County farms are steeped in sustainability and animal husbandry and care. Most Sonoma County dairies and poultry farms are third-party certified for animal welfare practices, so they are verified by trained professionals to determine that their animals are well taken care of! In addition, most are organic which also has an animal welfare component embedded in its rules and production laws, as well as natural resource and environmental elements.

If Measure J passes, it will put multi-generational family farms out of business, resulting in lost jobs, as well as housing for farm employees. It will diminish our local food supply and drive up food prices.

Based on our long and diverse list of endorsements to oppose Measure J, it is quite clear that Measure J is bad for Sonoma County! I hope that you will join every Sonoma County federal, state, and county elected representative, the other eight cities in Sonoma County, hundreds of local businesses and organizations, and thousands of residents in opposing Measure J.

Respectfully,

Dayna Ghirardelli

**Dayna Ghirardelli** | *Executive Director*

**Sonoma County Farm Bureau**

Dear Mayor Sparks and Councilmembers of the City of Cotati,

As a resident of Cotati, I urge you to take a position to oppose Measure J. Measure J is the biggest threat on our entire county today. If passed, Measure J will force multi-generational family farms out of business. In doing so, several jobs will be lost, as well as housing in that these farms providing housing for employees and their families. However, the effect of Measure J will not be felt solely on the farms that meet the animal population of the proposed ordinance, but the rest of the farms in Sonoma County will struggle due to the loss of economies of scale. Smaller farms that are able to take advantage of bulk pricing on account of supply and demand, will find their feed and input prices increase; this at a time when viability is already in question. Other businesses will close, including feed mills, feed stores, and livestock supply stores. Veterinary services may still be available, but at a higher price and less availability.

As taxpayers, we should not have to endure cuts in the county budget to pay for this unnecessary program should Measure J pass. The dairies, farms, and ranches in Sonoma County practice sustainability, and are leaders in regenerative agriculture and climate-smart practices. This measure is simply part of a larger agenda to end animal agriculture. It doesn't look like Sonoma County is going to fall prey to this tactic and I urge you to join us in opposing Measure J.

Respectfully,

Cindy Bordessa

**From:** Michael Benedetti <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 7, 2024 5:20 PM  
**To:** Kelly Betts <[kbetts@cotaticity.org](mailto:kbetts@cotaticity.org)>; Laura Sparks <[lsparks@cotaticity.org](mailto:lsparks@cotaticity.org)>; Ben Ford <[bford@cotaticity.org](mailto:bford@cotaticity.org)>; Susan Harvey <[SHarvey@cotaticity.org](mailto:SHarvey@cotaticity.org)>; Sylvia Lemus <[slemus@cotaticity.org](mailto:slemus@cotaticity.org)>; Kay Rivers <[krivers@cotaticity.org](mailto:krivers@cotaticity.org)>  
**Subject:** Cotati Resolution - OPPOSE Measure J

**CAUTION:EXTERNAL SENDER**

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Dear Mayor Sparks and Councilmembers of the City of Cotati,

I am a resident of Santa Rosa, not Cotati, but my grandfather Gene Benedetti was a staunch Cotati resident as are many of my friends and family.

**I am writing to urge you to take a position to oppose Measure J.**

This misguided ballot measure, initiated by outside activists, will not implement any animal welfare requirements or strengthen any environmental protection rules. What it will do is close some of the finest humane-certified, multigenerational, organic dairy farms in the nation. This will cost jobs, irreparably harm our local food supply, and hurt our Sonoma County economy.

As the Sr. Director of Quality, Regulatory, and Sustainability for Clover Sonoma, I have the privilege of visiting and inspecting our 28 family dairy farms and seeing them in action throughout the year. If you'd like to hear from our farmers themselves, here is a quick 5 minute collection of their comments and some of their achievements (solar panels, no-till planting, rotational grazing, generational stewardship of land and animals). <https://youtu.be/UGKgLv9KvsU?feature=shared>

I am proud that over 24 years ago Clover recognized that humane standards and third party certification were important to dairy lovers - and our dairies in Sonoma County have been humane certified by the American Humane Association since the year 2000!

**I stand with the Sonoma County Family Farmers Alliance, the Sonoma County Supervisors, a diverse group of organizations, and a broad coalition of Sonoma County residents who oppose this measure. I proudly support our local family farms and the role they play in sustainably managing the land while providing our communities with locally sourced vital nutrition and economic opportunity.**

Sincerely,

Michael Benedetti

**From:** John Dell'Osso [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, October 8, 2024 8:36 AM

**To:** Laura Sparks <lsparks@cotaticity.org>; Ben Ford <bford@cotaticity.org>; Susan Harvey <SHarvey@cotaticity.org>; Sylvia Lemus <slemus@cotaticity.org>; Kay Rivers <krivers@cotaticity.org>; Kevin Patterson <kepatterson@cotaticity.org>

**Cc:** Damien O'Bid <dobid@cotaticity.org>

**Subject:** Regarding Measure J deison for tonight

**CAUTION:EXTERNAL SENDER**

If suspicious, do not click on links, open attachments, or provide credentials and report it by using the "Phish Alert Report" button.

Kevin, please share with the Mayor and Councilmembers. Thanks, John

Dear Mayor Sparks, City Council and staff, I am writing to you as a constituent with an opinion on your upcoming vote on Measure J this evening. During my 14-year span on the Cotati City Council, I always tried to give the citizens options for making their own decisions where possible. I have familiarized myself with both sides of this issue and have agreements with points from both sides. However, I feel it is not in the City's best interest to agree with the proponents of Measure J for one reason. If someone is opposed to factory farming in Sonoma County (which I have not seen clear evidence of this with all ag operations), then their most powerful step would be to buy plant-based food items.

I can't predict the long-term economic impacts nor impacts to workers in the industry, but I do wonder about the unintended consequences should this measure pass. What impacts would be seen at local grocery stores when all of a sudden, they no longer sell local meats and would have to import them from further away? I would assume costs to the consumer would rise. I'm not sure anyone in politics would want that stigma attached to their vote.

I am not a vegetarian, however, I purchase plant-based "meats" on a regular basis along with animal-based meats. The decision should lie with the consumer and I would encourage you to vote no on Measure J.

Thanks for your time in listening to me. As always, thanks for your service to the community. Best of luck on your decision.

John

John Dell'Osso

**From:** Liz Bell [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 8, 2024 8:42 AM  
**To:** Kevin Patterson <kepatterson@cotaticity.org>  
**Subject:** Oppose Measure J

**CAUTION:EXTERNAL SENDER**

If suspicious, do not click on links, open attachments, or provide credentials and report it by using the "Phish Alert Report" button.

Good Morning. My name is Liz Bell and I am asking for your support to stand up against the Coalition to End Factory Farming and show your support for No on J. As a resident of Sonoma County and a small rancher here in our community, it is imperative that you stand up for our local farmers. I have lived in Sonoma County for just over five and a half years. I grew up in Upstate, NY, surrounded by family farm operations. The Agriculture that exists here in Sonoma County, was one of the main reasons I have chosen to call this place home. I have had the privilege to work for some of the highest quality wineries in Sonoma County. I have very close friends who own restaurants here that rely on products produced by some of the most caring and thoughtful farmers in the state. I have friends in hospitality who work at these restaurants and wineries that utilize products that our family farms produce. My wife and I own a small ranching operation in Sebastopol, producing quality beef and lamb. Both of us are first generation farmers. We started our business during the pandemic when the cards were already stacked against us. We chose to get into farming because we wanted to have a better understanding of where our food comes from and how to raise animals in the healthiest and most humane way possible. We care for our animals. We treat our animals with respect and kindness. Health and quality of our animals is top priority. Farming in itself, is not an easy task. It requires patience, kindness, and often times putting your personal life on hold. Farmers are the backbone of our communities. We provide a product to our communities. It can sometimes be a thankless job. If this Measure passes, it will be a slap in the face to those families who have been feeding our communities for hundreds of years.

The folks who have brought forth this measure are not members of our community. These folks do not even live here. Most are based in Berkeley. They came into our community like a plague and have turned everyone's world upside down. From breaking and entering, trespassing, violating privacy of the families who raise and care for these animals, and most importantly violating the safety of our animals by spreading disease. There was a

news story covered by ABC News 7 back in April that stated there was evidence to show that the spread of Avian flu could have been from their careless actions. Link to this story is included below. The toll these people have taken on our mental health has gone far beyond what any person who provides goods and services to our communities should ever have to go through. I am asking you, today, as you revisit taking a stand on this measure, please support our farmers. Stand up for our farmers, restaurants, and other community members whose businesses will be affected by this measure, if it were to pass.

<https://abc7news.com/california-state-department-of-food-and-agriculture-investigation-finds-activists-may-have-spread-avian-flu-sonoma-county-2023/14738288/>

Thank You,

Liz Bell

This information was received after the agenda was posted and is made available to the public pursuant to California Gov't Code Section 54957.5(c)

Voicemail Message Received

Dear **Kevin Patterson**,

A new voicemail message from **WIRELESS CALLER** [REDACTED] was received in your voicemail box.

Date/Time Received: 10/08/2024, 12:33:10 PM (PDT)

Duration: 00:00:53

**Voicemail transcript:**

A hi, my name is Marty cush, cuba. I was attempting to get a message to all the council members. And I didn't know if I had to You know, call each of them. I'm wondering if someone can forward a message for me. I simply want to say, I think it's important to not let other counties railroaded into taking a position on jay. I think it was very wise to say that the voters, the side. So I hope when they revisit this issue, they would not take a position but say, let the voters decide. I think that's very wise. Thank you very much. If you can pass that on. Thank you.

**From:** Janice Piehoff <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Monday, October 7, 2024 10:33 PM

**To:** Laura Sparks <[lsparks@cotaticity.org](mailto:lsparks@cotaticity.org)>; [Vbford@cotaticity.org](mailto:Vbford@cotaticity.org); Susan Harvey <[SHarvey@cotaticity.org](mailto:SHarvey@cotaticity.org)>; Sylvia Lemus <[slemus@cotaticity.org](mailto:slemus@cotaticity.org)>; Kay Rivers <[krivers@cotaticity.org](mailto:krivers@cotaticity.org)>; Kelly Betts <[kbetts@cotaticity.org](mailto:kbetts@cotaticity.org)>

**Subject:** Potential Fraud Support No on Measure J

**CAUTION:EXTERNAL SENDER**

If suspicious, do not click on links, open attachments, or provide credentials and report it by using the "Phish Alert Report" button.

Dear Mayor Sparks and Councilmembers of the City of Cotati,

As a 3rd generation local resident of Cotati, I urge you to take a position to oppose Measure J. Measure J is the biggest threat to our entire county today. If passed, Measure J will force multi-generational family farms out of business. In doing so, several jobs will be lost, as well as housing in those farms providing housing for employees and their families. However, the effect of Measure J will not be felt solely on the farms that meet the animal population of the proposed ordinance, but the rest of the farms in Sonoma County will struggle due to the loss of economies of scale. Smaller farms that are able to take advantage of bulk pricing on account of supply and demand, will find their feed and input prices increase; this at a time when viability is already in question. Other businesses will close, including feed mills, feed stores, and livestock supply stores. Veterinary services may still be available, but at a higher price and less availability.

As taxpayers, we should not have to endure cuts in the county budget to pay for this unnecessary program should Measure J pass. The dairies, farms, and ranches in Sonoma County practice sustainability, and are leaders in regenerative agriculture and climate-smart practices. This measure is simply part of a larger agenda to end animal agriculture. It doesn't look like Sonoma County is going to fall prey to this tactic and I urge you to join us in opposing Measure J.

Warm regards,

**Janice Piehoff**



**PROCLAMATION**  
**OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COTATI**  
**PROCLAIMING THAT THE SECOND MONDAY OF OCTOBER IS INDIGENOUS**  
**PEOPLES DAY AND THAT THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2024 SHALL BE NATIVE**  
**AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH**

**WHEREAS**, the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, a federally recognized Tribe, is comprised of Southern Pomo and Coast Miwok people, and the lands now occupied by the City of Cotati are the ancestral lands of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cotati community acknowledges the Southern Pomo and Coast Miwok tribal histories, culture, contemporary issues, and the contributions of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria to Sonoma County are vital to the understanding of our origins and rich heritage; and

**WHEREAS**, the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria maintain a harmonious relationship with the ecology of this area, including knowledgeable and respectful harvesting of animals and plants; and

**WHEREAS**, the traditional cultural and ecological knowledge of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria holds important values for our community; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cotati community will benefit from more active and visible input of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED** on this day of October 8, 2024, by the City Council of the City of Cotati that the second Monday of October (October 14th) is Indigenous Peoples Day in Cotati and that the month of November is Native American Heritage Month to honor the native Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, comprised of Southern Pomo and Coast Miwok people, and the City Council encourages business owners, educators, artists, and all our citizens to participate in making this an occasion for joy, learning, collaboration and prosperity.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor