

Tuesday, October 17, 2017

After much consideration we have decided not to attend tonight's council meeting to possibly engage in more futile discussions with the city with regard to the Casino Dock Café lease and/or be present to watch the council hand our business over to another entity. At this point we feel we can predict how it will all end...

However, after 20 years of ownership of the Casino Dock Café, we also could not walk quietly away without leaving our thoughts about this whole experience "on-the-record".

While the city is likely doing us a favor by not granting us the lease to CDC, we never-the less want to state publicly that we have found the process of attempting to negotiate a reasonable lease with the City of Avalon to be exhausting, confusing and endlessly frustrating and we have been amazed over and over again at the ineptitude and lack of leadership we have seen and experienced.

In the past three years (at least!) we have repeatedly invested hours in meetings, engaged in research, writing letters and lobbying individual council members in an attempt to reach a consensus on the CDC lease terms. Over time and with much effort we were slowly able to move the dial slightly in our direction. Through the first RFP process we felt that we made some headway in achieving agreement with regard to the type and length of terms but still we were unable to reach consensus.

What transpired next might be legal yet, somehow, it feels bumbling and unethical. Members of the council seemed so unwilling to further negotiate with us that they called for a second RFP knowing that all of our negotiations and offers were exposed publicly and all any competitor would have to do is best us by just a little. The city made a concerted effort to woo potential bidders by sending a copy of the RFP to all Avalon mooring owners??! and it has come to our attention that members of the city council personally solicited and encouraged possible candidates in town to submit RFPs, erroneously telling them that we were "out of the picture"!

And now all of our years of negotiations and experience have primed the pump so that someone who submitted an RFP just a week or two ago can potentially walk away with the lease to our business.

It doesn't seem right.

Most Sincerely,

Russ and Jenny Armstrong