



City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

GW Feedback

1 message

Thomas Sullivan <trsullivan77@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 10, 2021 at 10:56 AM

To: francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Councilman Estrada,

I have never written to you before so I will start off thanking you for the service you are providing to your district and the community as a whole. With that said, I am not sure your vote to move the GW statue was a reflection of your district. I, along with many in my diverse neighborhood were in support of the statue staying where it was. I believe that was reflected as well in the survey that was circulated. During this divisive time, transparency is needed so much more. My neighbors include retirees, 2 instructors from Cabrillo, an Assistant DA, a Probation Officer, 2 school teachers (public/private), childcare workers, a custodian, a nurse and even a farm owner. We have discussed this issue at length. Although compromises are expected did you personally reach out to your constituents about your vote? If so, how? None of us have heard from you directly since you were campaigning a few years ago. Why do a few loud voices always get the FULL attention of our City Council. The community was asked to complete a survey. Many did. Why wasn't this taken into consideration by the Parks and Rec Commission nor the City Council at least that was not clear. Were there signatures that the opposition submitted reflecting their stance? If not, what was the point of the survey? In the future, it is strictly my opinion, but when hot button topics like this arise on the agenda, could you find a way to reach out to your constituents to solicit their voice so that your vote can be a true, transparent reflection of your district. Thank you so much for your time. My family and I will continue to support you!



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

READ at MTG: George Washington Bust Item on Agenda 2-9-21 READ

1 message

linda orosco <linda_orosco@hotmail.com>

Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 7:53 PM

To: "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>, "cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org" <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

Good Evening, City Council Members.

Please read this comment during the meeting on 02/09/21.

I am writing in support of the removal of the George Washington statue from the Watsonville Plaza.

This proposal of removal was also supported and put forward as a recommendation from the City Parks and Recs Commission.

This Council is NOT considering this recommendation from its own Commission or the citizens who brought up the issues in the first place. (People of Color in response to the growing WHITE SUPRELIST TERRORISM that is sweeping our county in full view and force!)

THIS COUNCIL, is proposing a plaque be added to explain the COLONIAL and WHITE SUPRELIST history of this President, in the same week it is proposing a Black Lives Matter Flag be placed in the Plaza every February.

THIS COUNCIL seems to only want to placate to the WHITE SUPRELIST by keeping the bust (with its RACIST/GENOCIDAL White Washed history), at the same time appease the BLM supporters with YOUR half- hearted, hypocritical façade of caring about the People of Color in our Community. The same people that have been asking for the removal of this Bust for almost a year!

DO YOU SEE THE HYPOCRACY?!?!?! The COGNITIVE DISSONANCE?!?!?! I Do!!!!

This Figure does not represent the Community or Watsonville.

This FIGURE represents the erasure and GENOCIDE of the Indigenous People of the Land from time immemorial.

This FIGURE represents the BRUTAL and EVIL SLAVERY that was committed against Black People.

This FIGURE represents White Supremacy and White Christian Terrorism that is directly running amuck in our Nation and in our Nation's Highest Government, as well as in Watsonville. Nazis!

We just saw these same people try to overthrow our GOVERNMENT and abolish a free and fair democratic election.

Keeping this bust, but adding "HISTORY" is a sham! Whose History will be written on the plaque?

The Community has spoken that this BUST needs to be removed from the plaza. It does not represent the future of the Nation or of Watsonville. It definitely does not represent progress for Black Lives Matter.

Take a STAND and DENOUNCE WHITE SUPREMACY!!!

REMOVE THE BUST!!

Respect,

Linda Orosco

linda_orosco@hotmail.com

144 Zils Rd.

Watsonville, CA 95076



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Removal of George Washington bust

1 message

Emily Halbig <corporateswine@gmail.com>
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 5:48 PM

Good evening City Council members,

I am a Language Arts and Social Studies teacher at Cesar Chavez Middle School. This month I have been leading my students through a series of history lessons in honor of Black History Month. Each day we build on the prior's day knowledge with the idea that we will cover slavery through the civil war, reconstruction, the civil rights movement, and finishing off with a celebration of a few of the many Black Americans who have contributed in a positive way to our national culture.

George Washington was a slave owner who promoted genocide of the Native Americans and honoring him through a bust in our city's plaza is contrary to one of the most important ideas I promote in my classroom - that of equality and justice for all students.

Please do the right thing and remove the bust.

Thank you,
Emily Halbig



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Read out Loud: Public Comment, Item 6A & Item 11A City Council Meeting

1 message

Sam Bleisch <sbleisch@ucsc.edu>

Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 5:02 PM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

To whom it may concern,

Hello, my name is Sam Bleisch, and I am a community member of Watsonville writing to encourage the council to strongly consider moving forward the Pajaro Valley Arts building across from the library.

As councilmembers, you understand the importance of positive community involvement that will foster trust and collaboration in our community. On top of youth involvement, the possibilities for senior involvement will allow community members to come together to enjoy our arts and culture. This is what community is made of--building jobs that help preserve and reimagine aspects of our unique cultures and skills--not opening new restaurants that are overpriced and do not serve the interests of the actual community, but rather gentrifying business owners.

Please invest in youth and build the Pajaro Valley Arts building.

Additionally, I would like to remind the council about the ironies of allowing the George Washington Bust to remain in our community plaza while flying the Black Lives Matter flag. This does not make ANY sense considering that George Washington was a proud slave owner and genocidal American president. Strongly consider the image this paints as it represents two conflicting American histories--a monument for a slave owner while honoring Black lives is not only ahistorical, but insulting.

This council should know that a part of the community building process is listening to the actual voices of Watsonville that are telling stories of historical trauma related to slavery and racism. Please hear us and understand the importance of honoring Black lives in ways that are genuine and NOT performative. Respectfully, the ONLY way to do so is to remove the bust.

Thanks for your time.

Sam Bleisch
she/her//they/them



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Letter in Support of the Relocation of the George Washington Bust

1 message

Jenny Sarmiento <jtsarmiento831@gmail.com>

Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 3:39 PM

To: "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org, Francisco Estrada <francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org>

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

We, Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club, respectfully submit a letter in Support of the Relocation of the George Washington Bust.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jenny T. Sarmiento, Co-Chair

**WCity.GW.Relocation.docx.pdf**

136K



Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club

The PVCCDC is an official Democratic Club that works to promote the goals and objectives of the Democratic Party and to increase the participation of Latinos in the party by endorsing candidates, registering new voters, and by providing political education in our region. The PVCCDC has been dedicated to empowering our community and making positive changes for our families since 2004.

February 9, 2021

Mayor and City Council Members
City of Watsonville

Re: Support for the Relocation of the George Washington Bust

Dear Watsonville Mayor and Councilmembers:

As local community members, public officials and members of the Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club, we understand the difficult choices that local policy makers must make when controversial issues are brought to your attention and decision. We wish to express our support for the relocation of the George Washington Bust to a more appropriate place such as the Watsonville Library.

Most of us have been taught an arid, fragmentary, and misleading account of American history. We hope that by relocating the bust to the library, we'll have an opportunity to offer a more vivid and content-rich account of our unfolding history. A history that has been dominated by racism and oppression of people of color, yet resilient enough to correct its trajectory. Now more than ever, young people are more aware and outspoken of the injustices and atrocities against people of color by our founding fathers and people in power. We cannot change history but we can build a better community that acknowledges, respects and supports the struggles of underrepresented community members.

The Watsonville Plaza is the heart of our community where thousands of people come to celebrate the Strawberry Festival, Cinco de Mayo, Fiestas Patrias, Independence Day, the Pride Festival, International Women's Day, Black Lives Matter, and so many other events that celebrate the diversity and richness of our community. Keeping the bust at the entrance of the plaza is not welcoming to the very people who visit our plaza.

This moment requires that you make a bold decision. We urge you to relocate the George Washington Bust to the Library.

Respectfully,

PVCCDC Executive Board

Jenny T. Sarmiento, Co-Chair

Ray Cancino, Vice Chair

Tony Tapiz, Treasurer

Felipe Hernandez, Co-Chair

Rachel Williams, Secretary

PVCCDC General Membership



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

City Council Meeting today, February 9, 2021: Public Comment

1 message

Sondra Geyer <sondrageyer@gmail.com>
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 11:40 AM

Regarding Agenda Item 11.a. Washington Bust

Tonight the council will be considering a resolution authorizing and directing city staff to keep the George Washington bust in its current location in the City Plaza and add a bilingual plaque on the podium of the bust that outlines a broad historical perspective about George Washington. I am strongly in support of this resolution.

I do not believe in trying to erase history, as those who ignore it are destined to repeat it. We need to learn from history – good and bad. I would rather see us embrace our history and add to it. There is nothing I would like more than to see statues/busts on every corner of the Plaza, commemorating people and events that have shaped us.

Cordially,

Sondra Geyer

[628 Peartree Dr, Watsonville, CA 95076](#)



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Community member comments on the George Washington bust in the plaza1 message

Jen SH <95076mom@gmail.com>

Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 11:02 AM

To: cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org, citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Cc: eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org, lowell.hurst@cityofwatsonville.org, francisco.estrada@cityofwatsonville.org, rebecca.garcia@cityofwatsonville.org, jimmy.dutra@cityofwatsonville.org, ari.parker@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Watsonville City Council Members,

Thank you for considering the public's input on what course of action to take regarding the George Washington bust in the city plaza.

There are two important issues to consider here. One is the subject of the bust: George Washington is a controversial figure whom some revere as one of our country's founding fathers and some see as a slave owner who perpetrated and perpetuated the abuse and oppression of people of color. The second issue is the history of this particular statue: it was commissioned and installed in the plaza only 20 years ago at the whim of one wealthy older white man, and as a piece of contemporary art has no historical significance. I have read many arguments from community members saying that we should leave the bust where it is because it's part of our history. What historical value does a 20 year old statue have? Why should one person get to dictate what public art is displayed in our community plaza just because he had the privilege and wealth to be able to donate \$100,000? Perhaps 22 years ago, when it was approved in 1999, this statue was considered uncontroversial by the city officials who chose to accept the donation and have the statue commissioned, produced and installed, but now as a society we are more informed and can make a better choice. George Washington was not a hero to everyone, and seeing his statue in the plaza is offensive to people in our community who are working toward racial justice and social equity. To quote poet Maya Angelou: "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." I urge you all as our city's representatives to do better and make the ethical choice to remove this statue from the plaza because it does not represent our community.

Thank you,
Jen Salinas-Holz
District 7 Resident



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Washington Bust Statue Should Remain with New Plaque

1 message

Angel Hess <angelhess@santacruzlegal.net>
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 9:03 AM

The George Washington bust should remain. He remains the founder of our nation. However, to clarify history for the dispossessed, a plaque could be set in front of the bust saying "As the founding father of the United States, George Washington is (whatever positive thing you want to address since there are many historical deeds that fit in here). George Washington was also a white man also owned black slaves even after a law was past that allowed slave owners to free them. Even though ownership of a human being is a known atrocity today that society shuns, at the time Washington lived, many white slave owners did not free their slaves under the new law. The fact is, a lot of white slave owners thought their slaves would suffer more if freed because people at the time did not see black and brown people as equals to heir white counterparts." And that is the reality.

We are talking a out a time before black, brown and asian peoples were able to educate white people. White people thought, really believed, that because the skin color was different, the other humans must be a different species. It was racism engrained in ignorance. Rewriting history and fighting racism with education is the answer. Not eliminating it.

Every hero has his/her flaws. Even Jesus lost his temper in the bible. Wiping out all memory of good to balance out a negative trait will destroy our ability as a society to admire people who are worthy of admiration but failed in other aspects of their being.

Sincerely,

Angel L Hess

Sent from my iPad



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

JUST SO YOU KNOW.....

1 message

steve trujillo <cruztbone@yahoo.com>

Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 8:53 AM

To: "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>, "citymanager@cityofwatsonville.org" <citymanager@cityofwatsonville.org>, "mayor@cityofwatsonville.org" <mayor@cityofwatsonville.org>

My compromise proposal as to what to do with the GW statue appears in the Pajaronian today.

I intend to speak to it again this evening.

I believe it is the best alternative to both extreme views expressed in recent months.

I am neither friends with Manny Solano nor the group from UCSC who have diametrically opposed views regarding GW.

Both sides would benefit from reviewing US history and US presidents based on FACT, NOT EMOTION.

I am hopeful, now that, like you, I am also an elected official, to be taken seriously.

I make the proposal in good faith. I want to remind you: sometimes it takes someone who is NOT wedded to Watsonville's past

to see the issue clearly, without being influenced by partisans of either side. that would be me.

I think I have proved my love for Watsonville. that is why I make this proposal.

by the way, I celebrate my 6 year anniversary in Watsonville next Monday.

Steve Trujillo



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Remove Washington Bust

1 message

Yan Banales-Garcia <yanbanalesgarcia@gmail.com>

Tue, Feb 9, 2021 at 1:26 AM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear City of Watsonville Council:

As a local resident and Cabrillo student, I have grown up in Watsonville all my life. The utmost biggest eyesore I have ever seen in our city has to be that abomination of a bust. Washington was a cruel slave owner who supported the destruction of Black people and the genocide of Native people. The statue does not belong in our predominantly Mexican farm working community. Instead, we should replace Washington with a statue of an Ohlone person or Cesar Chavez, who was a civil rights leader who fought for farm workers' rights and is a historical person who has a lot more significance for our farm working community. Keeping the bust in the plaza is a nod to white supremacy and the glorification of violence and racism. The bust is offensive. Thank you for taking my opinions into consideration.

Sincerely,

Yan Banales-Garcia

[72 Alisa Circle](#)

[Watsonville CA 95076](#)

(831) 319-3226



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

George Washington Bust1 message

Jaime Sanchez <jaimelo_3@yahoo.com>

Mon, Feb 8, 2021 at 10:08 PM

To: "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>, "cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org" <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

February 8, 2021

Dear Watsonville City Council member,

I am writing to ask you to vote for the relocation of the Washington bust. There is no excusing who Washington was and what he did- both good and bad. What does that have to do with our Plaza or our library?

Washington was a white man who enslaved black people; therefore, he practiced racism(white supremacy). What does that have to do with our Plaza or our library?

Washington was the first president of the USA, his image is on the dollar bill, there's a giant white phallic monument in his honor in Washington DC. There's also a state named after him. What does this have to do with our Plaza or our library?

Many people argue that Washington was a kind slave owner and that his slaves had it good. What does this have to do with our Plaza or our library?

Washington used up his slaves for his entire life and decided to free them when he died because he would no longer need them because he would be dead. What does this have to do with our Plaza or our library?

Nobody wants the Washington bust but everybody wants our Plaza. Who is "nobody?" -the people who don't have to see the bust every day. Who is "everybody?" -the people who realize that the plaza is a spectacular place for civilized interaction for residents and visitors world wide. Who is "our?" -The People.

No proper display of a Washington monument can go without all of the names of his enslaved people. To fail to display the names will be to fail to recognize the evil and danger of racism(white supremacy) then; and, in so doing- excuses the racism(white supremacy) that continues today. To fail to display the names would be keep those people enslaved into obscurity. This entire conversation is failing to honor the people who were enslaved by George Washington. Display all of the names. Every. Single. One.

I am calling on you to take a stand for truth, justice and correctness.

I call to immediately remove the Washington bust and temporarily replace that space with a bench. Move the bust into storage until a proper plan of display with all the names and a reasonable installation location is achieved.

-Jaime Sanchez
Lifelong Watsonville resident and Veteran, Marines 98-02
Freedom, CA



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Keep the Washington Bust in the Plaza

1 message

tomandgerianne@aol.com <tomandgerianne@aol.com>

Mon, Feb 8, 2021 at 8:14 PM

Reply-To: tomandgerianne@aol.com

To: "citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org" <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>, "Cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org" <Cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

To the Members of the Watsonville City Council,

I am writing to ask that you please honor the communities wishes and majority of vote of 59% to 35% to keep the bust of President George Washington in our city Plaza. As was started almost a year ago with the petition to remove the bust and counter-petition to keep it as is, I believe that many people are missing the simple intent of its existence; it was the heartfelt wish of a proud immigrant to honor not only his adopted country but also his adopted and beloved city. It was commissioned and then accepted by the city for placement in a prominent location, that being our beautiful and historically recognized plaza. Many have passed by it all these 20+ years, including the members and their families of the group who wish to remove it and yes, even city officials without a note or word of concern for what some believe may be the hidden past of the individual represented. Why do you think that is? Maybe because there was never a hidden intention but just a recognition of our countries first President, simple as that. As has been written in history books for over two hundred years, President Washington was not immune to his time. He did, as we all know, partake in practices that are now looked upon as unacceptable but please remember many in not only this country but in the countries of our ancestors did partake in the exact same practices. We as Americans have evolved and are continuing to evolve in making things better but we still have a long way to go. We are not perfect but we must learn from our mistakes in history; hence the reason the first President is in our plaza. He stands as a reminder that we as Americans are human, we make mistakes but we learn, overcome and strive to be a better people because of it. If we erase reminders of history, we erase the lessons learned and taught to the next generations.

Our current and unsettled times have brought forth questions of doubt, skepticism, mistrust, anger and hatred by some towards our government and even our own friends and neighbors. Some want to look for ways to express those feelings by finding targets that stand in our parks and plazas and to fight against them. I honor ones right to Freedom of Speech, the right to peacefully protest and to make ones voices heard. I do not condone the belief that you can do it by intimidation. You don't silence someone's voice by making them feel any less important then you. You rise people up by respect and education; teaching them that what has come before us is really that, a "teaching moment" and we in the present time have the opportunity to right the course for the future.

Mr. Alaga was just a man who wanted to honor a leader he admired. He hoped and was told that others also felt that way and would welcome his gift(s) so there it now stands. Please allow it to remain and represent a man, soldier and statesman who was the guiding force for the rights we all now enjoy and appreciate.

Thank you,

GeriAnne Solano-Simmons

Lifelong resident of Watsonville and the Pajaro Valley



City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

Removal of Washington bust whoever brought this up parks and rec is nothing but a bunch of socialist 3rd world anchor babies that are trying to take over our country not to mention nepatism in the employment of our city of watsonville jobs you need to defund sanctuary cities and obey the law.

2 messages

julio morales <tequila1934@yahoo.com>
To: eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Mon, Feb 8, 2021 at 12:33 PM

Sent from my iPhone

Beatriz Flores <beatriz.flores@cityofwatsonville.org>
Bcc: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Mon, Feb 8, 2021 at 1:09 PM



Beatriz Vázquez Flores, MMC

City Clerk - (831)768-3040 or (831)768-3042

275 Main St., Suite 400, Watsonville CA, 95076

beatriz.flores@cityofwatsonville.org

Business Hours: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday - Friday.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **julio morales** <tequila1934@yahoo.com>

Date: Mon, Feb 8, 2021 at 12:33 PM

Subject: Removal of Washington bust whoever brought this up parks and rec is nothing but a bunch of socialist 3rd world anchor babies that are trying to take over our country not to mention nepatism in the employment of our city of watsonville jobs you need to defund sanctuary cities and obey the law.

To: <eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org>, <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

Sent from my iPhone



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

George Washington bust removal

1 message

pamela sexton <pamelabeth.sexton@gmail.com>

Mon, Feb 8, 2021 at 3:38 PM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear Mayor Dutra and City Council Members:

We have attached a letter which explains reasons why we support the removal of the George Washington bust from the Watsonville Plaza. We tried multiple times to send this to you via the comment section in the agenda on the City's website, but there seem to be technical problems with the website. This is our first time making comment on this issue because we missed the survey which was organized last year; we imagine many others also missed that.

To summarize from our letter, we wish to see the bust removed because:

1. Washington led inhumane and genocidal military actions and policies against Native peoples.
2. George Washington bought and owned slaves and benefited from this inhumane practice throughout his life and the argument that he was a man of his time doesn't stand up: the 2nd U.S. President Adams and John Locke, the intellectual father of the Revolution, never owned slaves and were opposed to slavery.
3. Washington has no direct time/space connection with Watsonville and there are so many other options for art that connect to this place and represent our community better.
4. When the donation was made to the City years ago, there was no discussion with the public or within the council. As a core central space in our City, what gets placed there matters and should have community support!
5. We are at a moment where we need to be intentional and thoughtful in what symbols and what art to have in our public spaces, particularly the City Plaza which is like the heart of our community. Last year, there was a rally to save the bust at the Plaza, where individuals showed symbols clearly related to white supremacy.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to support moving the George Washington bust from the City Plaza.

Respectfully, Pam Sexton and Curt Gabrielson

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When we dream alone, it is only a dream, but when we dream together, it is the beginning of reality.

**No to Washington bust.pdf**

337K



City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

New Message

1 message

George & Sharon Limburg <gslimb@charter.net>

Sun, Feb 7, 2021 at 10:14 PM

To: "aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org" <aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org>, "cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org" <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

I'm hoping that the members of the concil will not take a knee when deciding the fate of the George Washington bust. It deserves to be in a place of promience (where it is) not moved to some back hall in the city building where only a few will ever see it. Before uou decide ask yourselves who else in our history has done so much to build the nation we have.

Regarding the flying the blm flagconsider the motives of the founders of the moovement. Patrisse cullors and Alicia Garza, as quoted in the washington times article, stated this goal. "This isn't about justice, it's about destroying America," features scenes of recent rioting, fires and mayhem, but begins with a clip of Ms. Cullors.

"We actually do have an ideological frame," says Ms. Cullors. "We are trained Marxists." dated june 25, 2020.

Let me see if i get this straight, you are considering tearing down george Washington and elevating marxism. i guess it goes hand in hand.

George Limburg



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Washington Bust

2 messages

Victoria Bañales <vibanale@cabrillo.edu>

Sun, Feb 7, 2021 at 7:24 PM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Dear City of Watsonville Mayor and Councilmembers:

I write to urge you to vote to remove the Washington Bust from the Watsonville Plaza. Last year, the Parks and Recs Commission voted to remove the Bust. The City Council should honor this decision and proceed to relocate the statue to the Watsonville Public Library. Doing so not only validates the Parks and Recs Commissioners' work, research, and thoughtful decision, but also is an act of social justice.

I understand people have a strong sense of "patriotism" and may feel upset or unsettled when parts of their (American) culture and history are questioned. They may argue that Washington's behavior was normal for his day. But normal for whom? Washington's behavior (and that of others like him) was never, ever "normal" behavior for Black and Native peoples. When I hear people say Washington's behavior was "normal" and that he was not "perfect," I am aghast. Millions of people were murdered and raped as a result of the actions of these so-called "imperfect" men who were acting "normal" for their time period. But "normal" for whom? For Black and Native people, it was not "normal" behavior to kill, maim, enslave, exterminate, torture, dehumanize, and rape entire peoples/cultures. For Black and Native peoples, this was not "normal" behavior and it never was! Not then, not now, not ever. Such racist and insensitive ethnocentric excuses legitimize the logic and thinking of white supremacy, studying history through a dominant white lens. And this is precisely why the Bust should be removed. It's time we stop "normalizing," legitimizing, and celebrating prominent historical figures who committed unspeakable acts of violence against Black and Native peoples. The time has come for Watsonville to do the right thing.

Moreover, I do not think requesting feedback via online forums or surveys is the best way to reach a wide audience. Such a method leaves out the majority of the residents of Watsonville, many of whom are Spanish-speaking and are not included in these online forums or surveys. Their voices will not be heard or taken into consideration. For example, last semester, I asked my Cabrillo students (Watsonville Center English classes) what their thoughts were about the George Washington Bust. If I recall correctly, only 1 student knew about the debate. The City of Watsonville can and should do better than that. At Cabrillo College, where the issue of changing the college's name is gaining momentum, the Board established a task force, and there are several upcoming educational forums, which will include Native scholars, and a scholarship competition. Cabrillo faculty have also been encouraged to include mini-lessons in our classes to inform students about the debate.

Last but not least, even if a minority of Watsonville residents believes the City of Watsonville should remove the Bust (which I don't think is true for reasons stated above), and even if such a decision may seem to go against a majority, removing the Bust is the right thing to do. The march toward social justice has always been met with disdain and resistance. Always. These voices are loud. These voices clamor patriotism. These voices will attempt to discredit the opposition and make excuses, saying "it's the way things were," "nobody is perfect," "Washington is a hero," etc.). But when social justice wins, and when time transpires, we look back and reflect, and we know it was the right thing to do. I will add that the Bust has no place in our beautiful public plaza and was put there through some shady process in exchange for money (without the consent of the community). Your vote to remove the Washington Bust and relocated it to the library is a strong vote for social justice/antiracism. It is a courageous vote. It may not make you popular with certain constituencies, but *it is the right thing to do*. Thank you for reading my letter.

Sincerely, Victoria Bañales

--

Victoria M. Bañales, Ph.D.
English Department
Cabrillo College
6500 Soquel Dr.
Aptos, CA 95003
(831) 479-6112

2/8/2021

City of Watsonville Mail - Washington Bust

Victoria Bañales <vibanale@cabrillo.edu>

Mon, Feb 8, 2021 at 8:09 AM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

By the way, I forgot to provide my address: Victoria Bañales, [72 Alisa Circle, Watsonville, CA 95076](#). My apologies, VB

[Quoted text hidden]



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Washington Bust

1 message

Manny Solano <mannyjsolano@gmail.com>

Sat, Feb 6, 2021 at 11:47 AM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Cc: Nick Calubaquib <nick.calubaquib@cityofwatsonville.org>, pcs@cityofwatsonville.org, Matt Huffaker <matt.huffaker@cityofwatsonville.org>

Dear Mayor and City Council,

Attached is a letter in support of the George Washington bust.

Thank you,

Manny Solano
75 Fruitland Ave.
Watsonville CA. 95076



MSolano Washington Ltr 2.6.21 (1).pdf

165K



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Removal of the George Washington Bust from the Plaza

1 message

Erin Wood <erinlisewood@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 5, 2021 at 6:11 PM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Hi there,

I am having trouble adding my comment for the meeting on Tuesday 2/9 to the website, both as a comment or as a PDF, so I am including it here below.

Thank you!
~Erin

Dear City Councilmembers and attendees of the meeting,

As we have seen at the Capitol, we need to take white nationalism and violent extremism seriously. It is alive and well in our county, as it has been since the colonization of California.

I live in the Santa Cruz Mountains, where on June 6th, a resident named Steven Carrillo, shot and killed a sheriff. Steven had plenty more destructive devices in a van, which he had used in a drive-by to kill a security officer in Oakland during a BLM protest earlier last summer. Steven was linked to Boogaloo, a group of heavily-armed extremists. "The Boogaloo term is used by extremists to reference a violent uprising, or impending civil war in the United States."

I bring this up since we saw protestors to keep the George Washington bust dressed in Boogaloo attire, Hawaiian shirts with camo, along with some attendees flashing white power signs. All the more reason to remain vigilant of how angry and emboldened members of extremist groups are.

I am a direct descendant of George Washington's uncle and I see no reason to glorify George Washington at all. He was an enslaver who started the French and Indian War, and signed the Fugitive Slave Law in 1793, which stated that slave owners had the legal right to recapture enslaved people who escaped across state lines, if necessary with force. He ordered the Indigenous folks to be killed.

Is this really what we want to uplift in the plaza? There are so many artists in Watsonville to showcase instead of a bust that causes and perpetuates harm.

Feel free to share this comment at the meeting. I obviously support the removal of the bust and replacing it with art chosen by Latinx residents of Watsonville.

**Erin Wood
5th Generation Californian**

**"Disaster demanded a new dawn.
Only new thinking can lead to a new dawn.
We know that."
~Zadie Smith
Intimations**

Erin Wood, L.Ac., M.S.
Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine
510.717.WOOD
www.erinwoodacupuncture.com

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Some Tuesday & Thursdays at [3947 Opal Street](#) in North Oakland
Fridays in Boulder Creek, in the San Lorenzo Valley

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City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

Fate of the George Washington bust.

2 messages

Michelle Leahy <missyleahy@gmail.com>
To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

Fri, Feb 5, 2021 at 1:45 PM

Hello, my name is Michelle Solano Leahy. I was born and lived in Watsonville for 35 years. I still live in North Monterey County, but I still visit family, friends, and continue to enjoy the many businesses in Watsonville. I support the bust of George Washington remaining at the city plaza for one basic reason. George Washington accomplished many things for this country, but he was happiest as a farmer. What better reason to keep it there. I hope you consider this when determining the end result. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Michelle Solano Leahy

Beatriz Flores <beatriz.flores@cityofwatsonville.org>

Fri, Feb 5, 2021 at 1:59 PM

Cc: Matt Huffaker <matt.huffaker@cityofwatsonville.org>, Tamara Vides <tamara.vides@cityofwatsonville.org>, Nick Calubaquib <nick.calubaquib@cityofwatsonville.org>
Bcc: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org

**Beatriz Vázquez Flores, MMC**

City Clerk - (831)768-3040 or (831)768-3042

275 Main St., Suite 400, Watsonville CA, 95076

beatriz.flores@cityofwatsonville.org**Business Hours: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday - Friday.**

[Quoted text hidden]



Desiree Moya <desiree.moya@cityofwatsonville.org>

{PCS} Re: George Washington Bust Update

V E <vargas.eh@gmail.com>

Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 11:00 AM

To: pcs@cityofwatsonville.org

So, are you now going to replace it with a bust of Karl Marx?

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021, 10:00 AM City of Watsonville <pcs@cityofwatsonville.org> wrote:



City Council to Determine Location of George Washington Bust



Desiree Moya <desiree.moya@cityofwatsonville.org>

{PCS} Re: George Washington Bust Update

Zarko Radich <zradich@gmail.com>

Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 12:21 PM

To: pcs@cityofwatsonville.org

Let "Revolunas" put this on a ballot, so people of Watsonville can make a decision!
Otherwise "Revolunas" will ask for more and more and we will listen somebody who we don't know much about.

On Thu, Feb 4, 2021 at 10:00 AM City of Watsonville <pcs@cityofwatsonville.org> wrote:



City Council to Determine Location of George Washington Bust



City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

Feb 9 meeting

1 message

Pedro Castillo <pcastle@ucsc.edu>

Mon, Feb 1, 2021 at 10:54 AM

To: eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Estimado Eduardo,

A motion from the Parks and Recreation Commission to remove the bust of George Washington from the Plaza is coming to the city council for action on your meeting of February 9. I strongly support this motion and hope that you do

also. The bust of George Washington does not belong at the Plaza and is a terrible "role model" for our children. He was a slave owner and by having his bust at the Plaza is sending the wrong message to the youth of our community.

Thanking you for your consideration and best, Pedro

Pedro Castillo

Professor of History Emeritus

University of California, Santa Cruz

Resident of 4th District



City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

Date of Meeting to address the GW Bust?

1 message

Erin Wood <erinlisewood@gmail.com>

Fri, Jan 8, 2021 at 10:14 AM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Greetings and Happy New Year!

Wondering when the discussion about the removal of the GW bust from the plaza will happen? I attended some of the previous Parks and Rec meetings and look forward to continuing the discussion. As we have seen at our nation's Capitol, we need to take white nationalism and violent extremism seriously. It is alive and well in our county, even in California.

I live in the Santa Cruz Mountains, where you will all remember, on June 6th, a resident named Steven Carrillo, shot and killed a sheriff. He had plenty more weapons and destructive devices in a van, which he had used in a drive-by to kill a security officer in Oakland during a BLM protest earlier this summer. Steven was linked to Boogaloo, a group of heavily-armed extremists. "The Boogaloo term is used by extremists to reference a violent uprising, or impending civil war in the United States."

[Steven Carrillo and Joseph Keeler preliminary hearings pushed to March \(msn.com\)](#)

[Federal Criminal Complaint Links Attack on SC Sheriffs, Oakland Security Officers to Boogaloo Movement : Indybay](#)

The reason I bring this all up is that we saw protestors showing up to keep the GW bust in Watsonville dressed similarly to the Boogaloo attire (Hawaiian shirts and camo) along with some attendees flashing white power signs. All this is more reason to remain vigilant of how powerful, angry, and armed members of these extremist groups are.

I am a direct descendant of GW's uncle and I see no reason to glorify GW at all. He was an enslaver who started the French and Indian War, and signed the Fugitive Slave Law in 1793, which stated that slave owners retained the legal right to recapture enslaved people who escaped across state lines, if necessary with force. Here is more info about how he also ordered the Indigenous inhabitants of the land to be killed: [George Washington owned slaves and ordered Indians killed. Will a mural of that history be hidden? - The Washington Post](#)

Is this really what we want to uplift in the plaza? There are so many other artists and local works of art in Watsonville to display, ones that don't cause and perpetuate harm.

Thank you so much for your time and feel free to reach out with any questions, Erin Wood, L.Ac.
5th Generation Californian

--

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~Zadie Smith
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Fridays in Boulder Creek, in the San Lorenzo Valley



City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

New Message

2 messages

George & Sharon Limburg <gslimb@charter.net>

Wed, Jan 6, 2021 at 5:27 PM

To: "eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org" <eduardo.montesino@cityofwatsonville.org>, "cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org" <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

I am writing this in response to the placement of the bust of George Washington. I think it should stay right where it is. Any capitulation to the radical group revolunas would only embolden them and the three park commissioners Sencion, Hurtado-Aldana and Carrasco to destroy the history of our country. Over many generations people have come here to enjoy the opportunity and way of life George Washington founded. As Jessica Carrasco stated in the paper the bust offends a big part of our community. To that I say you and those offended should be grateful that we had such men as the founding fathers (not the so called founding father that Tony Nunez referred to them as) for without them you wouldn't have a country to complain about.

George Limburg
Watsonville

George & Sharon Limburg <gslimb@charter.net>

Wed, Jan 6, 2021 at 5:28 PM

To: "cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org" <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

[Quoted text hidden]



City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

Washington statue

1 message

SUSAN RODRIGUEZ <suematkell@sbcglobal.net>

Thu, Nov 5, 2020 at 6:26 PM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

Good evening:

I am writing to you to let you know I'm appalled that the decision whether to remove the statue of Washington has gotten to this point. Why are you being pressured to do so? The statue needs to remain where it is. What everybody is forgetting is this was a gift that the city gladly accepted. How can you now decide to get rid of it. You all should be ashamed of yourselves for even considering it. I was born and raised in Watsonville and I the people wanting to get rid of it have an agenda of some dirt. Please vote to keep it. It is the right thing to do to honor Mr Alaga's gift.

Sue Rodriguez
Watsonville, Ca

Sent from my iPhone



City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org>

George

1 message

Sylvia Lazo <sylvialazo@mac.com>

Wed, Nov 4, 2020 at 4:52 PM

To: aurelio.gonzalez@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

We are asking you to vote in favor of keeping the George Washington bust in the plaza. Please respond.
Don and Sylvia Lazo

Sent from my iPhone



City Council <citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org>

George Washington Statue

1 message

Rose Cawaling <momcawal@icloud.com>

Wed, Nov 4, 2020 at 9:20 PM

To: citycouncil@cityofwatsonville.org, cityclerk@cityofwatsonville.org

You as a council should honor the survey the people took.

What a waste of city resources to spend money on a survey no one on the Parks Commission took into consideration.

The statue should stay.

Sent from my iPhone