

There is a budget crisis in the City of San Diego. Anyone with a pulse has probably heard that we have 200 million dollars less than we need. Over the weekend there was a Town Hall meeting or something over at Hoover. I went. Sat amongst the crowd, kept my mouth shut, and observed...it would have been insanely funny if not for the subject matter. Here's my top 10 list of moments...

10. Seeing one of the members of ZZ Top in the parking lot beforehand. If it wasn't one of them, they have clones living in this part of San Diego.

9. Being pleased at how many people came out to participate in local democracy...who says civic responsibility is dead.

8. The composure with which the Councilmembers handled the many comments they recieved over the couple hours.

7. The crazy lady who called Councilman Gloria corrupt and complained about his staff not taking a 6% paycut. I am pretty sure the ticket guy at the movie theatre makes more than his staff, but some people just like to complain.

6. Seeing Marti Emerald. Being a native, it's weird to see the news lady in person.

5. The guy who said we should consider cutting lifeguard services. I have two words for you: lawsuit. Okay, that's only one word, but how long would it really take one of those 5,000 people whose lives are saved every year to have their estate sue the City?

4. The number of people who came to this budget meeting about where we can cut to give ideas about what shouldn't be cut. I think the Council should have had to right to stop anyone asking for no cuts dead in their tracks and send them on their way. Would have made the meeting much shorter.

3. The several people who recommended raising their own taxes...followed by the several OTHER people who called the first group dumb for wanting to tax themselves.

2. Yeah diversity! Two openly gay councilmen, two women, an African-American running the meeting, a Latino. I'm not usually a big rah-rah diversity type, but I think that makes our government more representative of the community.

1. The little old lady who spent 5 minutes talking about lord knows what. The one problem with this form of participation is there is no filter. No sort to make sure only people who have really thought about the issues and done some homework get to speak. There was this one woman named Theresa Quiroz I think, she clearly was on the other end of the spectrum. She seemed to have read everything there was to read about the issues. I didn't agree with much of what she said...only so much visioning a broke organization should do, in my opinion...but it was great that she took the time to make it relevant. Next time I think I'll do a top 10 list of actual proposed budget cuts. That should be fun.