

The Palm Springs City Council, during a special meeting on September 29th, 2021 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyJ-Vq4r5x4>), heard passionate and compelling testimony about Frank Bogert's legacy as a seminal character in our community's history. They also heard second-hand of the difficult hurt and pain caused to some citizens of color that were displaced from Section 14 over 50 years ago. Some council members had complimentary things to say about Bogert and others choose not to disparage or focus on Bogert. Here are some of the excerpts:

“The amount of heart and soul that went into each and every presentation we received, this is very difficult issue,” stated **Vice Mayor Middleton**. [3:36:34].

“I appreciate that many people have come to support Mr. Bogert, I understand he loved Palm Springs and served the City in many ways,” said **Councilmember Kors**. [3:33:55]

“I don't quite know how we got to this big of discussion,” stated **Councilmember Garner**. [3:27:51]

Several added that this was not about Bogert and focused elsewhere. Mayor Holstege strongly said, “No comments about Mayor Bogert, his reputation, I'm not planning on litigating a man's personal reputation in a public forum.” [4:12:10]

“For me, this is not about Mr. Bogert, not here to have a debate who he is as a person,” added **Councilmember Garner**. [3:26:16]

“I don't think this is about pointing fingers, this is not a personal attack on Mr. Bogert, there is a lot of love and adoration of Frank Bogert, that admiration is real.” said **Councilmember Woods**. [3:48:25]

The Council also refused to vote on purpose to confirm or agree with the fallacious and ill-conceived City Human Rights Commission (HRC) report or resolution. Even asking their own lawyers, we don't have to vote on this and it does not have to come back to us?

“When we use words that disparage Frank Bogert as an individual and what he did and he is labeled as a racist, there is simply too many stories that betray that,” [3:44:28] said **Vice Mayor Middleton** “Frank Bogert will always be a man of great warmth and great character generous of individual acts of kindness - people don't make up those kinds of stories.” [3:45:40]

“Just want to be clear, some of the report and issues with report, with the facts about Bogert have led to some of this division over the fact so we can get to a common set of facts. My complaint is with the city.” said **Mayor Holstege** [4:13:05]

“It was a difficult situation - started before Bogert was Mayor, was part of the process realized the situation and delayed for a long time, no doubt this is difficult,” said **Councilmember Garner** in reference to Section 14 decisions. “This is native land lease extension and was a very good thing. It helped to allow the tribe to create better economic prospects.” [3:24:13 and 3:25:00]

Vice Chair Middleton went on to echo, “Frank Bogert worked closely to create the opportunities for Agua Caliente Tribe of Indians to fully take advantage of the land that has been theirs since time in memoria. That was a good thing.” [3:40:30]

ERRORS & FALSE ARGUMENTS in HRC REPORT —Some Councilmembers specifically called out errors and false arguments in the HRC report and some even apologized for the divisive nature and what had become of the report.

[3:43:00] – “I am very taken about comments received through the email from the widow of former Chairman Siva. I don’t think you can make the case that Frank Bogert betrayed Mr. Siva, not when this many decades later his widow says no. Frank was who he wanted as conservator.” sited **Vice Mayor Middleton**. “Daughter of Agua Caliente Tribe of Indians, Chairman Milanovich, if I were to ask for a character witness... (I would want) Chairman Milanovich.” [3:43:00]

Even this member of the HRC testified and sent a scathing letter sent to City leadership strongly criticizing the report and the process.

“Human Rights Council (HRC) organizers executed a pretty effective campaign to divide the citizens of our City and also remain convinced that we could have mitigated some of that divisiveness by uniting and educating with more fair and balanced information (which is part of what our committee is committed to do). As I have said in the past the removal, extraction or relocation of the Bogert statue for me is secondary to the methodology that was used to achieve the goal. I am still concerned with the anonymity afforded the creators of the report, I felt like I was asked to vote on something - who produced it? It seemed to me the antithesis of transparency.” said **Human Rights Commissioner Andrade**. [04:05:20]

“I am afraid when it comes to the (HRC) resolution, I struggle to agree with everything that is found in that resolution regarding a Frank Bogert the individual. I don’t think we had to go there,” concluded **Vice Mayor Middleton**. [3:47:25]

NEXT STEPS — Then the Council directed the City staff to begin the process to remove the Bogert statue and consider options to relocate it in additional places in Palm Springs. We heard several times that the focus was less about Bogert and more about not having any statue in front of City Hall.

“City Hall does belong to the people. The people are the City. I don’t think any one person deserves to be highlighted in front of any City Hall,” said **Councilmember Garner**. [3:27:00]

“I’m in agreement with my colleagues, this is not about Mr. Bogert, about a statue in front of city hall,” said **Councilmember Woods**. [3:49:59]

“I concur with colleagues, that a statue of a man in front of our City Hall is not the right thing to do and we need to respectfully find an alternative location and I think there are alternative locations that we can find that will allow those for Frank Bogert will always be a man of great warmth and great character to acknowledge that,” said **Vice Mayor Middleton**. [3:35:18]

Friends of Frank Bogert believe the Council’s words are a positive step to correcting the record about Frank Bogert, and we continue to believe the best place for the statue is at City Hall.