

Palm Springs City Hall Petty Cash Heist Cover-up

Content:

Embarrassed city officials neglected to inform the public that City Hall had been burglarized over the weekend. The occurrence was not reported until more than three days had passed. The days of Pony Express communications are behind us. We live in an age of telephones, fax, Internet email and the U.S. Postal Service. A three-day delay in news reaching the public can't be blamed on a communications delivery failure. A better explanation is needed.

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Palm Springs, California. Today's "[Thieves take cash in Palm Springs City Hall heist](#)" story in the local paper reported a break-in and theft of petty cash at City Hall sometime over the past weekend (either Saturday or Sunday). The break-in was not reported on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday and not until yesterday were details made public. Had it not been for the excellent investigative journalism work of newsroom mainstay Mr/Ms [Staff Reports](#), the entire tragic occurrence would have remained concealed.

Apparently Staff Reports was unsuccessful in obtaining quotes from City Hall officials and the story content is based on a news release from the Police Department. Although City Hall has an excellent media staff who daily (if not hourly) churn out press release notices every time the mayor changes his shirt, the lack of an official response from them must surely be viewed as a cover-up. Theft of city funds is not only a serious crime, it is one about which the public needs to be informed. The petty cash supply is part of the General Fund and its theft will have budgetary implications. Cutbacks in city services will surely follow and its certain there will be a reduced amount of funds available for purchase of staples, paper clips and number two pencils. If funds are not recovered, budget cutbacks or higher taxes are the only possible solutions.

The Police Department is across and down the street from City Hall. Their proximity may make them another potential petty cash heist target. It may be advisable for both locations to join the Neighborhood Watch program in an effort to prevent future break-ins and thefts. Police personnel responsible for advising the Neighborhood Involvement Organizations about crime prevention and protection of private property should be asked to address City Hall officials, as well. A strong Neighborhood Watch program could do wonders in terms of protecting civic center government offices from events of this type. And, of course, City Hall staff should always call the police department and report thefts and break-ins. Such reports not only start the investigative process, they also contribute to important policing statistics.

While police investigators work to apprehend those responsible for the theft, the Petty Cash Heist Cover-up needs to be investigated by officials in City Hall. Surely the matter is one destined for the next City Council meeting agenda. It may be necessary to create a new commission to investigate the cover-up. Appointment of citizens to sit on the new Petty Cash Heist Cover-up Investigative Commission may require a city-wide candidate recruitment process. And, of serious importance, the opinions of city officials need to be uncovered so residents may become better informed and convinced their best interests are being protected.

Bond Shands
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