

# George Weiss eyes second term on City Council

By **Clara Beard**  
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Laguna Beach City Councilmember George Weiss has officially entered the election ring to retain his seat at the dais as residents hit the polls in November.

Weiss, who first ran for office in 2020 and won, said he did so to give the residents a voice.



George Weiss (far right) at the 2023 Veteran's Day Awards sponsored by Orange County Supervisor Katrina Foley with Laguna Beach veteran Arnie Silverman. Photo courtesy of George Weiss

"Before I ran, residents reported being treated in a dismissive or antagonistic manner by city council and executive staff," said Weiss, a former Marine who graduated from Loyola University with a psychology degree. "I worked to

change that, and we now have a more professional executive city team and staff than ever before. I also pledged to listen to residents' issues and to work to solve them. One of the first agenda items I spearheaded in January 2021 was the establishment of a tax-deductible COVID Relief Fund to provide direct financial assistance to individuals and employees living or working in Laguna impacted by COVID-19."

When residents lamented that the upcoming council agenda items were too cryptic and sometimes late, Weiss helped pass an agenda item in February 2022 to provide a 12-day advance notice of future items.



George Weiss (far left) at an Art Walk event at Hotel Laguna with Sande St. John and Santa. Photo courtesy of George Weiss

"We also had issues with closed session titles not matching the actual items being discussed and reports on agenda items not matching the exact language of the contract or resolution," Weiss said.

During his time at the dais, Weiss considers some of his most significant achievements to be his involvement in the Climate Action Plan to reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions, banning the sale and use of balloons in public

places and passing an item requiring an outside appraisal of any property the city may purchase valued at over \$500,000.

“There wasn’t an outside appraisal of the Ti Amo project when council voted to acquire it,” he said. “I voted against it.”

Weiss also regards his involvement with Rivian and the Laguna Beach Historic Preservation Coalition to renovate the South Coast Theater movie theatre as an important success during his council tenure.



Weiss at the 2023 poetry contest celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Laguna Beach Library.  
Photo courtesy of George Weiss

“Rivian’s restoration of the movie theatre is a model of how responsible development works,” he said.

Weiss is also working alongside Battalion Chief Andrew Hill to restore Laguna’s first fire truck, the Seagrave, which serves as Santa’s official ride to Hospitality Night in December.

The city has large projects on the horizon, such as the Doheny desalinization project, which is estimated to cost \$23 million; the undergrounding of Laguna

Canyon Road, approximately \$150 million; the Downtown Action Plan, estimated at \$14 million; the takeover of Pacific Coast Highway and others.

“Since these projects could cost residents more in taxes, it’s my fiduciary obligation, as it should be all City Councilmembers, to prioritize which projects to undertake and fund, such as those that benefit residents the most,” Weiss said. “We must spend resident taxpayers’ money more prudently than we have in the past. How has the spending on many of these large projects improved the lives of residents? We need to find funding from others, not residents, to deal with congestion threatening our quality of life and safety, such as in a disaster requiring an evacuation of the town. Shouldn’t this be a priority over large purchase projects that don’t benefit residents?”

When he’s not working on civic issues, Weiss enjoys swimming at the city pool or the ocean, taking part in beach cleanups, dancing and attending Opera Laguna. He also maintains a native plant and vegetable garden.

Laguna Beach’s general municipal election will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 5, to elect two city council members, a city clerk and city treasurer. All positions will hold a full term of four years.

The nomination period for these positions is closed. Judie Mancuso, Hallie Jones and incumbents Weiss and Bob Whalen are pursuing a city council seat, while City Treasurer Laura Parisi and City Clerk Ann Marie McKay are running unopposed.

Find out more about Weiss’s platform at [georgeweisscitycouncil.org](http://georgeweisscitycouncil.org).