

From: [Thomas, Matthew](#)
To: [Monarrez, Rachel](#)
Subject: Fw: Questions about your January 22 vote to increase Board member compensation
Date: Friday, January 30, 2026 5:12:06 PM

I will not be responding as usual. Funny, I already read an article he wrote and now he's reaching out??

See you tomorrow for a wonderful day.

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From: OC Independent <theocindependent1@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2026 2:42:31 PM
To: Thomas, Matthew <mthomas@orangeusd.org>
Subject: Questions about your January 22 vote to increase Board member compensation

Trustee Thomas: Good afternoon. On January 22, 2025, you voted to approve increasing your maximum monthly board member pay from \$400 to \$2,000. I am writing an article about it and have several questions.

I understand that state law *allows* (but does not *require*) this increase, so my questions do not pertain to laws and bylaws permitting this action.

- Why do you believe you and the other Board members deserved such a large pay increase?
- Do you think you and your Board members were underpaid at \$400 a month?
- Why didn't you pull the item from the consent calendar and explain to the public your reasons for approving this pay increase?
- Whose idea was it to place a pay increase on the Board agenda?

My deadline is Noon on Monday, Feb. 2. Thank you for your prompt response

Matthew Cunningham
Editor
OCIndependent.com
714-504-4106