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It's Fiesta time again!



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Lompoc Mayor, 61, dies

By Eric Lindberg
 Lompoc Mayor Dick DeWees died Thursday evening due to complications from a prior medical condition. He was 61.
 DeWees, who had served as mayor of the city since 1998 and was re-elected to a fifth term in November, had been treated for chest pain late last month, according to published reports. City officials said he died at approximately 9 p.m. at Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital.
 "The city council and city administration extends their most sincere condolences to Mrs. DeWees and the DeWees family," according to a statement from the city. "The family has asked that the media and the public respect their privacy during this difficult time."
 No further information was released on the cause of his death. City officials said funeral arrangements are pending.
 Local political figures expressed sadness after learning of his passing and described DeWees as a dedicated father and faithful public servant who brought humor and enjoyment to government meetings.
 "He took his job seriously, did his homework and gave thoughtful answers to issues before [the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments]," Santa Barbara Mayor Marty Blum said in a prepared statement. "I will miss his hearty laugh and his common sense comments in our meetings together."
 Carpinteria Councilman Joe Armendariz also reflected on DeWees' lengthy public service and sense of humor.

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BY ERIC LINDBERG
 DAILY SOUND STAFF WRITER

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MAYOR

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“He loved the city of Lompoc and represented the people of Lompoc exceptionally well as their elected mayor,” Armendariz said in a prepared statement. “Dick was also a sensible and effective voice on SBCAG and [the Local Agency

Formation Commission], and made the meetings an enjoyable time for all of us. He will be greatly missed.”

Officials with Bringing Our Community Home, an organization seeking to end chronic homelessness in the county in 10 years, also praised DeWees’ involvement with the plan. The mayor had served on the leadership council

responsible for drafting the guidelines for the program in 2005. He also served on the governing board of the organization since 2007.

“Mayor DeWees understood the needs of individuals and families without housing, and was making significant contributions to creating solutions,” according to a statement from the group.