

**STAFF REPORT**

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**  
**FROM: ROBERT PERRAULT, CITY MANAGER**  
**SUBJECT: MAYOR'S COMMENDATION HONORING LONGTIME GROVER BEACH RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OWNERS - GENE AND GRACIA BELLO**

---

**BACKGROUND**

Mayor Shoals has initiated a program to recognize residents and citizens who have substantially contributed time and resources to the City. The Mayor has decided to provide a commendation to Gene and Gracia Bello, long-time residents and local business owners, who have made significant contributions to the life of the community and, specifically, the City of Grover Beach.

In preparing this report, staff consulted with Mr. Arnie Dowdy, former City Manager and former Parks, Recreation and Beautification Commissioner, who assisted in providing the following background information regarding Gene and Gracia Bello.

**DISCUSSION**

Gene originally hailed from Southern California and Gracia from North Dakota. They met in pharmacy school at the University of Southern California (USC). Gene was studying under the GI Bill, after serving in the U.S. Navy for almost six years.

The Bellos married in August of 1953 and started a family. They both began their careers working for others in Escondido, California, as Gracia had previously lived there. However, they both knew they really wanted to have their own pharmacy. They soon discovered a pharmacy was available in the central coast community of "Grover City".

Cecil Beebe owned The Tri Cities Pharmacy located at the corner of North Ninth Street and Grand Avenue in Grover City. The Bellos purchased the property and pharmacy in 1956. Gene jokes that they "had a business for thirty-eight years in *Grover City* and retired in *Grover Beach*".

Grover City, formerly an unincorporated community in San Luis Obispo, became a full-fledged city by incorporating in 1959. Gene and Gracia, showing their pride in operating a successful business in the new city, applied for and received a business tax certificate "Business License #1". They proudly held that license until their retirement in 1994. They have since donated it to the City's historical archives. (Please see Attachment 2.) While operating their business, they came to know their customers on a first-name basis and were able to provide the medicines the customers needed back in the days when physician availability was limited.

---

**APPROVED FOR FORWARDING**



**ROBERT PERRAULT  
CITY MANAGER**

**Please Review for the Possibility of a Potential Conflict of Interest:**

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None Identified by Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Bright   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shoals                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Molnar   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nicolls                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Peterson |

**Meeting Date: November 19, 2012**

**Agenda Item No. 1**

From the very beginning, the Bellos have been active in local and civic affairs. They were part of the original business group that started the Grover City Civic Association in 1956 and were also active members with the Chamber of Commerce. They remain active with the Chamber to this day. Local education was also important to the Bellos, and Gene served a four-year term on the School Board in the early 1960s.

The Bellos were also active in real estate ventures. It was mainly through the efforts of the Bellos, who purchased and consolidated a number of small commercial properties along Grand Avenue, that construction of a prominent financial institution was possible. That property subsequently became Mid-State Bank and is now the location of Rabobank. Gracia also demonstrated her talent for marketing. When the couple opened a second location, Gracia stocked the shelves with a variety of merchandise and was actually a forerunner for the modern day corporate pharmacy.

Gene and Gracia, owners of Grover City Pharmacy, were very concerned with the issue of the proposed name change. As Gene explains, their position was not opposed to the name change to "Grover Beach". What they were opposed to was that the City Council was considering making the change without a vote of the people. The City Council ultimately agreed and held an election in 1992. A majority of the residents that year approved the name change.

Be it called "Grover City" or "Grover Beach", the Bellos have been proud business owners and citizens of our community for almost fifty five years. Over the years they have continuously supported the City, the Clark Performing Arts Center, and the Exploration Station, among others. Most recently, the Bellos gave a \$500 donation that will be used to offset some of the costs associated with youth activities at the City's holiday celebration. Approximately 20 years ago, they served as Grand Marshals for the *Grover City* Christmas Parade. More recently in 2010, they were selected as Grand Marshals of the *Grover Beach* Holiday Parade.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

No Council action required for this item.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

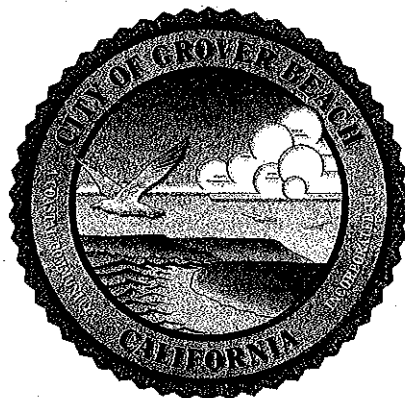
There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

### **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

The agenda was posted in accordance with the Brown Act.

### **Attachment**

1. Mayor's Commendation
2. First Grover City Business Tax Certificate



# Mayor's Commendation

Presented to

## GENE & GRACIA BELLO

*In recognition and appreciation for  
your many years of service and contributions  
as civic pioneers and business owners to  
the City and residents of Grover Beach.*

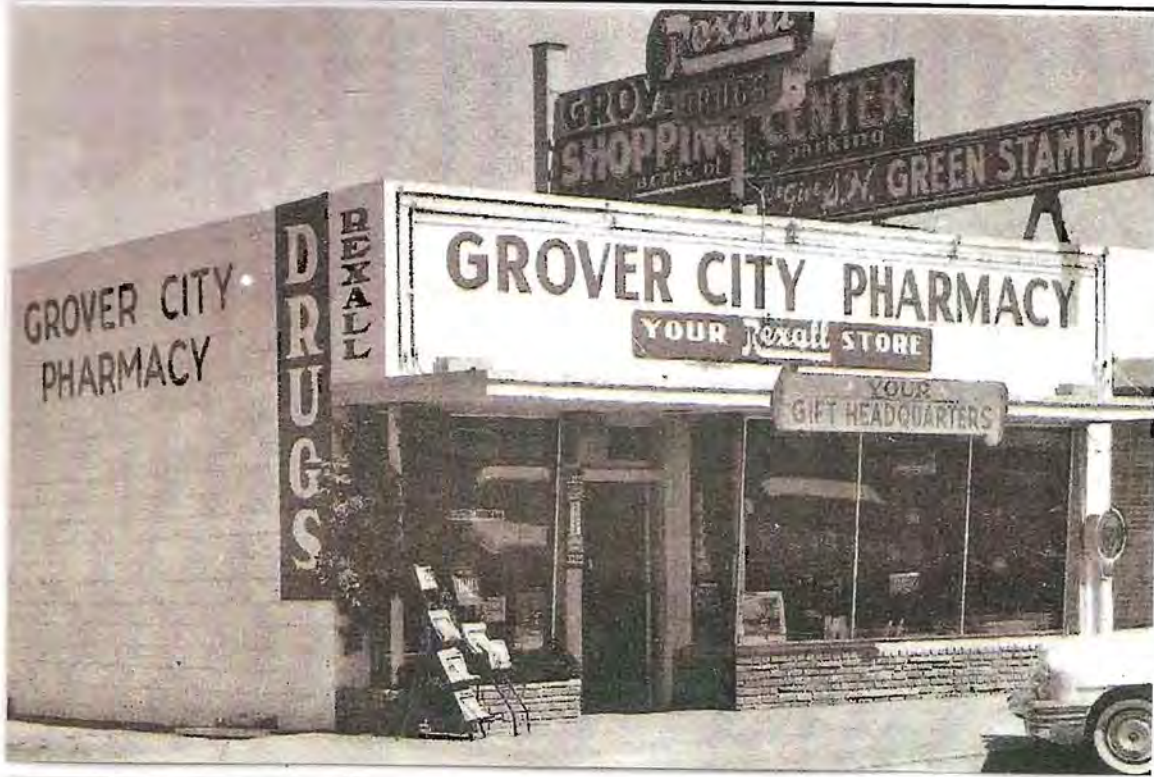
*In witness thereof, I hereunto set my hand and cause  
the seal of the City of Grover Beach to be affixed  
this 19<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2012.*



\_\_\_\_\_  
John P. Shoals, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Donna L. McMahon, City Clerk



**CITY BUSINESS LICENSE**  
**GROVER CITY, CALIFORNIA**

**No 0001**

Dated ..... May 5, ..... 19.60

Having received the sum ..... Twenty-five ..... Dollars \$25.00

License is hereby granted ..... Eugene A. Bello .....

to transact business of ..... Grover City Pharmacy, Inc. ....

and to be carried on at ..... 901 Grand Avenue .....

in the City of Grover City in conformity with the provisions of said City of Grover City.

This license is issued for the period of ..... January 1, ..... 19.60

to ..... January 1, ..... 19.61, and is intended to cover only that classification described in application of License.

*Neil G. Sheehan*  
 CITY CLERK