
More of the Same—or Fresh Thoughts and Faces?

By **Linda Sutter** September 3, 2026

The Crescent City Harbor District stands at an important crossroads. The question facing voters is straightforward: Do we continue with more of the same, or is it time for fresh thoughts, fresh faces, and a different approach to leadership?

For years, I have attended Harbor District meetings, reviewed public records, followed the finances, asked difficult questions, and challenged decisions when I believed the public deserved better answers. I have not done this because it was easy or popular. I have done it because public agencies belong to the public, and those entrusted with their operation have a responsibility to be transparent, accountable, and careful with every public dollar.

The principles I would bring to the Harbor Commission begin with accountability. Commissioners should ask questions, read the documents placed before them, understand the financial condition of the District, and never simply accept that everything is fine because someone says it is.

Second is transparency. Public records, financial reports, contracts, grants, debts, and major decisions should not be mysteries. The public should not have to fight for information about its own government. Good government welcomes scrutiny because transparency builds trust.

Third is fiscal responsibility. The Harbor cannot continue looking only to the next loan, grant, or temporary solution. Grants can rebuild infrastructure, but they cannot substitute for sound day-to-day management. We need realistic budgets, accurate financial reporting, responsible spending, and a long-term plan that makes the Harbor economically sustainable.

Fourth is respect. Fishermen, business owners, employees, tenants, taxpayers, and members of the public should know that their concerns matter. Commissioners will not always agree with one another or with the public, but disagreement should never eliminate professionalism or courtesy.

Finally, I believe in independent thinking. A commissioner is elected to represent the people—not to rubber-stamp staff recommendations or follow the crowd. Sometimes leadership means being the person willing to ask the question no one else wants to ask.

I am not promising that every Harbor problem can be solved overnight. The challenges are too serious for empty promises. What I can promise is preparation, persistence, questions, transparency, and an independent voice.

This election is about more than filling a seat. It is about deciding what kind of Harbor District we want going forward.

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The voters will decide.