Okay. Well, welcome. Thank you so much for joining us, uh, at this important discussion. I think, uh, every, uh, democracy, every, um, rule of law nation depends on record keeping. It depends on the structure of law and policy and just what we know about people, about whether they're married, where they live, what properties they own. All of that is a very core part of a functioning republic. And while it might seem like this is an obscure office, a county assessor recorder, this is a key office, uh, and a key management role for the functioning of this part of the Republic. And so I'm very happy to see you all here. We are recording this session, and we'll do our best to present and, and, uh, repackage it for, uh, the web. Um, and so I'd ask our panelists to please speak into the mic when you get your chance.

I know you'll be talking to each other, but try not to do that sort of thing. Doesn't work. Um, thank you all for coming. Uh, I'm, uh, very excited about this. Please do text at 6 1 9 3 7 4 5 3 8 2. Uh, tickets will help me get, um, some of that, uh, to my phone. And so if I'm looking at my phone, it's not because I'm checking whether we're getting close to the Padres game or not. I know it's not coming yet. Uh, although I did just hear we have a TV ready for the reception after this, so please don't think you have to leave as soon as possible. Um, yes, uh, let's jump in. I'm very excited to have, uh, Jordan Marks. Hello, Jordan, thanks for joining us. Great

To see you,

Scott and Barbara Bree, welcome. Good afternoon there. Bios, of course, in the program, but I will start with Jordan. Um, I wanna ask you, Jordan, you were, uh, employee at the, uh, Assessor Recorder's office. I want you to do your best to explain what the office does, um, and, uh, and why it matters and, and go from there and what your role is there.

Thank you so much again. I'm just gonna thank the team. Julianne, uh, Scott, I know most of you showed up to hear Scott talk. I just found that out from some of our audience members and, uh, voice of San Diego. And I saw the La Jolla Country Day students outside helping folks get in. So I shout out to all the high school students. I showed up. Yeah. Uh, and then I, I told Julian, I'm gonna put a disclaimer on everything that I save. I'm gonna give you some tax saving tips today. So whatever money you save, remember to give some back to voice to San Diego <laugh>. They're always fundraising. I get your emails as a member, so, uh, we have a little fun with it. But I know the reason you came is I wanna demystify the assessor Recorder, County clerk office. I call the best deal in government cuz you get three offices that were put together in one.

And so at the assessor's office, we appraise all real and personal property. We like to say we value you. It's a little tax joke. All right. I'm a dad of a three year old. I'm gonna see if my dad jokes can compete
with Scott's over here. Uh, we're also the recorder where we record and maintain records of all your
life's most important moments, your birth certificates, your death certificates, and your marriage
certificates, not particularly in that order. And then also, uh, your real two records. And lastly, the, uh,
clerk of, uh, the county clerk. It's the Commission of Civil Marriages. And we do a lot more in these
areas, but I'm just simplifying it. We perform weddings and issue the licenses for weddings. So we issue
about 25,000 licenses a year and perform half those ceremonies on site at our offices. And we have five
offices located conveniently throughout the county that you can get married at.

Jordan Marks (00:15:20):
So it's really exciting. I'll tell you, uh, I started at the office and the chief deputy assessor and taxpayer
advocate for the office, uh, doing more of the property tax side. But I have fallen in love with the
marriage side. It is fun. And you haven't lived until you've seen a hundred folks on the county waterfront
park, uh, for a wedding. And it is just life changing for people's moments. So, uh, that's kind of an
overview of the office. And, uh, I help oversee the 450 employees, uh, 80 million balance budget and
really the, uh, passion and drive that we have to deliver great customer service. I make sure that that's
what our office does and that's our number one priority.

Scott Lewis (00:15:58):
Thanks, Jordan. Barbara, Bill, anything you want to, to that definition, but also why you would want to
take that role?

Speaker 6 (00:16:08):
That's a great question, Scott. I, I think, uh, most of you know my back, Oh, sorry. Turn

Barbara Bry (00:16:14):
On. Um, most of you know, somewhat some things about my background. Um, I spent 30 years in the
technology world. I was on the founding team of proflowers.com and other successful companies in San
Diego. But early in my career, I was a journalist. I was a Sacramento b and LA Times business writer, uh,
where I learned to ask questions, to do my research, to listen and then, uh, to be relentless in getting
the story. And I was also the first editor of Voice of San Diego in another era. And what I've learned from
all of that is the importance of public service in the importance of holding elected officials accountable.
Um, I served four years on the San Diego City Council. I ran for mayor. I lost, I never thought I would run
for public office again. But last summer, a year ago, my phone started ringing and many community
leaders encouraged me to run for this office, Assessor recorder, county clerk, because they felt it was an
office in need of modernization and new technology and new leadership.

Barbara Bry (00:17:18):
And I did research for three months before I said yes. And I said yes, uh, just almost about 11 months
ago. And I said yes, because I did find that the office needed new technology. And lo and behold, in the
last month, they've released a new website and a fraud alert system, uh, something that other counties
had done years before. Uh, they're still working on the integrated property tax management system that
other counties have already implemented. And I'm sure, uh, Jordan will explain more about why it's
been worked on all this time. And, and I can explain later why it's so important. And one of the key
things this office does is when there's new construction, you have to get it onto the property tax roles at
its new value. So when you have an empty piece of land, it's worth a dollar. You build a hotel or an office
building, is it worth $8, $9, or $10?
Barbara Bry (00:18:13):
The assessor has to send out an appraiser, and it's important to get it right because that sets the basis under Prop 13 for a long time. And what we found in our research is that this, the office is slow to get it done, and that's prob legitimate property tax money. We are not collecting to pay for education and other important community programs. And when I talked to the assessor in la, he said they were 40 billion behind in getting new construction onto the property tax roles until they implemented new procedures and new technology. So I'm running to bring new technology modernization and new leadership to this office. I'm honored that I've been endorsed by S E I U, which is the, uh, major labor union. They represent 300 of the 400 workers. And it was a hard decision for them. They did not endorse four years ago in this race. Um, they see my opponent every day at work, and I heard many stories of intimidation, but they still stepped up to endorse me for this important position because they want new leadership that listens to them and their suggestions for how to improve what goes on.

Scott Lewis (00:19:22):
Okay. Thank you. Well, there was a few things she said there. I want to get, um, your response, Jordan, just so much to unpack. Um, let's talk though about two of them. Barbara, can you just explain more what you meant by integrated property tax system?

Barbara Bry (00:19:34):
So the appraiser, the assessor appraises the property and determines the value. And when you buy a piece of property, generally the purchase price is that value. They then send, the assessor then sends that information to the auditor. That's an appointed position. And the auditor adds, applies the tax rate because depending on where you live in San Diego County, your tax rate is generally between 1.1 and 1.2%. It depends on what the voter approved bonds in your area are. So the auditor applies the tax rate and then sends that over to the tax collector who actually sends out the bill. So that's how those three offices are supposed to work together. And when you have an integrated system, you have technology that communicates with each other so that you don't have to, so that things don't fall through the cracks. And remember, I don't work at the office now, and so, you know, I have to get information by doing public accurate records access request and talking to employees. And I understand the systems do not talk to each other now. And from talking to people in the realists who deal with this office, there are many examples of things falling through the cracks. Got it. And that's why the system is so important.

Scott Lewis (00:20:44):
Okay. So I appreciate that. So let's get you to address that one and then we'll go to the next one. Just do that one specifically right now. All

Jordan Marks (00:20:51):
Right. Let's pick which, which

Scott Lewis (00:20:52):
One? The integrated tax system.

Jordan Marks (00:20:53):
Okay. So we do have an integrated property tax system right now. It operates through our mainframe system. It's an outdated system that's going through an upgrade. That is true. And, uh, what happens is
the assessor puts a value on it. The auditor controller makes sure that one, we have that checks and balances in government and then also does apply the tax rate. Now as a former budget chair of the San Diego City Council, you probably know the tax rate in San Diego is 1.23% above that band. And if you live in the beach cities, it's actually below 1.1. So just, I know this is very technical talk and I'm gonna dig in the weeds a little bit, but it's important because when you're talking to folks that property taxes impact their most precious investment, their homes, I find that people get scared when they hear misinformation. I just, I wanna make sure we're all talking, uh, about the correct information. Okay.

Scott Lewis (00:21:51):
Second one I wanted you to address was the slow to get it done. She, she alleged that yes, people, assessors, uh, appraisers weren't being sent to these properties, uh, rapidly and efficiently.

Jordan Marks (00:22:02):
So again, back to the city of San Diego process and how we interact. And I'll just rely to that cuz Barbara is a former council member in city of San Diego. So you have the permit process. I'm just, take us back one more step if that's okay. And in the city of San Diego, I just looked it up the other day, we had 5,000 permits applied for last year. I think 700 have actually been processed this year. Those was a backlog of ADU and other construction projects. Scott, you've reported on that. The UT's reported on that. When the permit comes to our office, we then go out and reassess it based on permit value. We also apply different appraisal practices. Uh, we look at market comps, income approach, different processes, and we have to choose the best way for finding the value. Because I'll tell you, assessing properties, it's a technical skillset. It's not a one plus one equals two. It's a, it's a, an art. And so in our process, we have different appraisers that will come in and you have market rate appraisers that will submit us stuff and we use all the information to get to the right value. And that's what our office is about. We're about getting to the right value, not the rush value or not the revenue driven value that some folks are, are driven by. But so

Scott Lewis (00:23:12):
Do you, do you acknowledge there is a lag, but it's because you wanna do it fast?

Jordan Marks (00:23:15):
No, and

Scott Lewis (00:23:15):
The reason, I mean, do it Well,

Jordan Marks (00:23:16):
The reason why, you know, that there's not a lag is we actually get audited by the state board of equalization. So in the state of California, all the county assessors are audited by, by this state board of equalization. I used to work there, I was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown years ago to work there and oversee county assessors. We have what's called a tax role. We have to turn in our tax role annually. It's a statutory requirement, and you don't have to take my word for it. You can go to the board of equalization and if somebody doesn't submit their tax role on time, they have to file for an extension by law. And we saw some counties do that during the pandemic, our office, we got our job done. And the reason why that's so important is not only is important for getting the homeowner their bills on time, but it also is the revenue that does go to our schools and services. And that's why the police officers and
the firefighters and a number of other different agencies that rely on our revenue have endorsed me because we get our job done timely and we get it done. Right. Barbara,

Scott Lewis (00:24:11):
Do you have information that they aren't doing that? Any

Barbara Bry (00:24:14):
Receipts? Yes, I have information and, and, and Mr. Marks didn't answer my question. I'm talking about construction that's completed, not permits that are issued, although that does trigger can trigger a reassessment during the construction process I'm talking about. There was empty land and then a hotel gets built. Um, about a week ago I was at a dinner sitting next to an executive whose company built a major facility. He told me it took two years. I mean, I have written date, I have data also. But this is just an example, two years before the assessor went out to appraise this property and they never went back and used the escape assessment process, which you can do to go back in time. So this was a company that built maybe a 20 million building and they got away with paying lower taxes than they should have for two years. This happens a lot in San Diego. And this is what I wanna fix. So that we collect the revenue that we deserve for our schools and other community programs. Jordan.

Jordan Marks (00:25:10):
So I, you know, uh, running for this technical office, I understand it's hard for Barbara to see all the different pieces, but I do know that I've also found that she's gone from being an investigative reporter to a bit of a storyteller. And I wanna lay this out. She went and talked to our LA county counterpart, the LA County assessor who I had a call afterwards. I'm like, where are these facts and figures coming out about our office being later that we're missing this? And he goes, No. What I said was, is that we're behind and we're having these issues and they're being attributed to our office unfairly. I have 450 staff members that work really hard. We have to file our tax roll annually. An escaped assessment is when somebody doesn't file their permit, when they do something that is unnoticed, that's different than what we're talking about on the new construction process where there is a permit, we reassess new construction at different phases.

Jordan Marks (00:26:01):
So when you grade the land, when you build a certain portion, when you have occupancy permits issued, and when your final permits are issued, we go out and we reassess. And it's with partnerships with the jurisdictions that we do it. So when jurisdictions that were under the leadership of Barbara fall behind and don't get us those permits on time, that's where the lost revenue is. But under revenue and tax code 75.11 D, we can actually go four years out. Okay. And you know what, uh, we are actually processing our assessments faster and more efficient than we ever had before. We have metrics and numbers that show it, but the biggest number you have to look at is our 2021 state audit by the State Board of equalization that says not only do we do our job with extreme efficiency, 99.77% accuracy, but we also do it on time. And if you ask David Dodson, who's running for board of equalization, he did our audio, He'll tell you,

Barbara Bry (00:26:57):
I George, I, Mr. Marks, I think you filed the, the information that you have. What I'm saying is that there are properties out there where there's significant amounts of new construction where you do not get out there on a timely basis so that we, the taxpayers, the residents of San Diego get the revenue that we
deserve for education and public programs. So I think you do a very good job of obfuscating what I am saying.

Jordan Marks (00:27:23):
I'm gonna trust the 20 and 30 year auditors from the state board of equalization that have an audit report that says we do our job on time and efficiently. You

Barbara Bry (00:27:32):
File versus with the information that you have. The fact is, you are missing information.

Jordan Marks (00:27:37):
We have the permits on file. And so that's what we go by. And so I think it's also fair to talk about, you know, Barbara's husband, their project with our office that was related to assessments and they had a business, they wanted to sell this thing that would go and find lost assessments. And I think you were an investor in the company.

Barbara Bry (00:27:56):
I was not an investor at the company. I never worked for the company. My husband sold his complete interest in that company in November, 2020.

Scott Lewis (00:28:05):
I was gonna say this for let's, let's, uh, let's deal with this straight out

Barbara Bry (00:28:09):
What to attack me personally. Hold

Scott Lewis (00:28:11):
On, let's stop there. Hold on, Jordan. Yeah. So let's set the, let's set this down and, and litigate this to a point and we'll drop it as soon as we can. There is a company that was featured in the ut a story in the ut uh, about properties that it had succeeded in sort of, uh, um, surfacing as having potentially been remodeled or whatever without the proper permits that could have, uh, allowed the city and other cities and state to collect more revenue. Uh, you and your husband were revealed to be investors in that

Barbara Bry (00:28:43):
I was not my hus. So what also came out,

Scott Lewis (00:28:46):
Let me just finish. We can correct this in a sec. So, uh, and the, the matter was, uh, dealt with at the city, the, um, our argument is that you filed a, uh, economic interest form that said that you were an investor in this, in this company. True.

Barbara Bry (00:29:05):
I forgot to check a box that my, So my, so when you run for public office, and this is something, if you ever run, you're gonna learn, Your life becomes an open book. I've been married to my husband Neil
Centuria for 22 years. We signed a prenuptial agreement before we got married. We have, everything is separate. I don't even own the house that I live in. He bought it before we were married. Uh, I had no interest in this company. I never worked for this company. I never owned stock in this company. I never consulted for this company. And the ethics commission investigated me and sent me a letter that I'm happy to share with you. You exonerating me of any wrongdoing. Okay? And I, this is what happens when you run for public office. Your life becomes an open book cuz you're trying to do the right thing for the residents.

Scott Lewis (00:29:52):
Well, it it would be fair if that company did want to do work for the assessor for, for this to be examined, Correct? Yeah. But

Barbara Bry (00:29:57):
It's, they, they, first of all, my husband sold all of his stock in that company.

Scott Lewis (00:30:01):
That's all done. There's no

Barbara Bry (00:30:02):
More interest that's all done. And that was in

Scott Lewis (00:30:03):
A, So why is this still relevant, sir?

Jordan Marks (00:30:05):
Well, one, I had a, I did a very thorough interview with the Union Tribune who endorsed me. And part of that was asking different folks, and look, Barbara's is right, We should be talking about our qualifications, the fact that you need to be a certified property tax appraiser, which I am to be in this office. The fact that I have that years of experience, and it is a very technical job. But along that process, and I, I'm not trying to pursue this conversation, but I got an email from the CEO of that company that said Barbara owned some of the company, and I'm, I'm, I'm not trying to, You

Scott Lewis (00:30:35):
Are now stop it.

Barbara Bry (00:30:36):
See that, that email. So let just tell you that Mr. Marks presents misinformation. I am qualified for this job, or I would not be allowed to be on the ballot if I lived in LA County. I couldn't run to be San Diego County assessor. So yes, he has a special certificate that if I win, I apply to the board of equalization to get, And they, and most assessors in the state do not have the certificate when they win. So they get the certificate from the board of equalization and then they have a year to pass an exam.

Scott Lewis (00:31:05):
Yeah. So, so Jordan, I would like to ask like, what is the, we're talking about these technical potential issues and stuff. What does it matter? What are we talking about here that you want to get at?
Jordan Marks (00:31:14):
The reason I'm mentioning this is because Barbara's gotten a lot of information secondhand about the appraisal process, and that's what's causing a lot of confusion. I'm constantly having to correct it in public about the new construction reappraisal process. Is that the information that she's gotten is some of it from the work that we did with her husband, and some of it's from a secondhand conversation with the LA Academy assessor, who I welcome Scott to call afterwards and check out our record with them. We are well known that we are a model office in the state of California because we do our job timely, because we do our job right? I meet with school districts, water districts, fire districts, the folks that rely on the revenue. Trust me, I'd have way more folks at my front door than Barbara if we were not doing our job right. And timely and getting those s out. Right.

Scott Lewis (00:32:00):
Let's hear from Barbara

Barbara Bry (00:32:01):
Specific addresses, and I, I don't know if it's anecdotal or systemic and I won't know till I get there of properties where there was significant new construction. And I'm talking millions. I'm not talking somebody adding an addition to their house. I'm talking like the CEO I sat next to who's, you know, property built a $20 million property and it wasn't reappraised for two years after it was completed. These, this is major and this is what, and, and the large property owners in town are supporting my opponent because they like the current system. They're afraid of someone who will bring in new technology and new procedures and figure out that they've been gaming the system. And, you know, at City Hall, uh, I asked, well, I see, uh, anyway, I was, uh, the first ind uh, elected official to demand an independent investigation of the 101 Ash Street scandal.

Barbara Bry (00:32:51):
I got there, the building had been bought prior to my time on the council. And I started asking questions, uh, why is the building empty? I went back and I read the, uh, lease purchase agreement, which exa, uh, indemnified, uh, the seller from all liability. I read the IBA report at that time, which said the city was paying over appra value. This is the kind of research I've done throughout my life on everything I do and in the organizations and businesses that I've started. Um, I generally leave everything better than I found it. And this office has not been subject to the kind of public scrutiny that we all deserve. And I will bring that transparency. All

Jordan Marks (00:33:32):
Right, Jordan,

Scott Lewis (00:33:33):
One quick response and we'll move

Jordan Marks (00:33:34):
On. I just think it's tough to offer scrutiny when you don't have the technical skills to administer the office and the information and the people that do have that technical, it's like a CPA job or if you're going to court an attorney, right? If Barbara's gonna say a law office is doing their job right and has
never had a legal license, are you gonna trust her to do that? Or some, it's a judge to come in and audit them. Listen, I have a

Barbara Bry (00:33:57):
Hard, this is about running an organization that's an 80 million organization with 400 employees empowering your team, giving them the tools they need, making sure they have the appropriate professional development, and then delivering great customer service, whether it's online, in person or on the phone, Jordan,

Scott Lewis (00:34:14):
Finish your thought and then we'll switch.

Jordan Marks (00:34:16):
This is a highly technical office. Uh, you know, I'll just talk about the S C I U endorsement. My employees voted overwhelmingly 68% to stay out of the race and respect the fact that I was running and it was overturned by the leadership. We have the technical people that work in this office. The, Yeah, the building industry, the carpenters union, when we interviewed with them, they said they understood it doesn't happen overnight that you suddenly become a technical expert at this job for the carpenter's union. You gotta be on a job four years before they're gonna let you go and put up a frame by yourself. And they understood. This was the same application to the assessor recorder clerk's office. All right. Let me, um, most at your life's most precious moments, okay? And every NBI I know is gonna hire a great tax account and not try to do the tax themselves.

Jordan Marks (00:35:04):
But at your life's most precious moments, we're there to make sure it's done right, Whether it's your marriage certificate getting recorded properly with the state so that it's valid, whether it's your assessment done so you're not over taxed. I've resolved over a thousand cases. I've made sure that we do our job right in every part of the office. I work with my team to be better and on customer service. One of the reasons that the in Tribune endorsed me was because we've been delivering great customer service for years. We have customer feedback cards. I read 6,000 of them, okay. Over the

Scott Lewis (00:35:39):
Last couple years. Let's rounded there.

Barbara Bry (00:35:41):
Actually like to comment that because they're, I've talked to people in the real estate industry and lawyers who deal with this office. They've had many issues and they're afraid to say something publicly because of retribution.

Scott Lewis (00:35:52):
Okay. I wanna ask about, hold on. Let's, uh, let's move on. I have a couple local issue questions. So people need to be able to make, By the way, kudos to you all for caring about assessments and stuff on Saturday afternoon. I love it. I'm a big fan of all you. Um, uh, so let's, um, let's talk about some things. People will, this is an elected office. Uh, this is an office that we choose to elect. We choose to elect certain positions because we don't want anybody else to be in charge of them. We don't want other
politicians to be def facto in charge of them. We want to have them answer to the public. And so that person needs to represent the public. And so I want to make sure we, uh, have some, uh, resolution. So in this, do you both live in the city of San Diego, Jordan?

Scott Lewis (00:36:38):
I do, Yes. Yes. So in the city of San Diego, we'll have, uh, three ballot initiatives, A, B, C, uh, one of them. And then we'll have the measure you, uh, the, the school bond tax increase. I wanna know what you feel about, uh, each of those, uh, Barbara. So Measure A is the one that would, um, um, prohibit the city from prohibiting project labor agreements. Uh, it's technical, but it's, uh, it's pretty significant labor versus, uh, business, uh, discussion. Measure B would allow the city to explore, uh, potential fee for trash collection, uh, special fee for trash collection. And a Measure C would allow the high limit to be lifted in the Midway district, uh, for, um, development. Not just in the sports arena area, but for the entire neighborhood. So I'm curious, uh, what you think of that plus the school district's decision, uh, to put another bond measure, uh, and increased taxes on that, which the assessor will have to help administer.

Barbara Bry (00:37:37):
I'm voting yes on all of

Scott Lewis (00:37:38):
Them. All of them, Yes.

Jordan Marks (00:37:42):
I don't believe it's the job of the assessor recorder clerk to take positions. I think it's our job of the assessor recorder clerk to provide information. So when our office gets phone calls on d the school bond to understand that tax increase on their home and business, we provide that information for height limit. Uh, when people ask us what does that look like, uh, revenue wise, or how does that impact my property taxes? We answer that question for the fee for trash that has, has no interaction, uh, with the office and for the public labor agreements. We have those at the county. And there's not much, like, you don't want this independent tax office to get outside its lane.

Scott Lewis (00:38:22):
So you don't, you've never taken a position on these.

Jordan Marks (00:38:25):
I have not taken positions on these, and I'm honestly, Jordan,

Barbara Bry (00:38:29):
Did you take a position on Proposition 15, the split role in the last

Jordan Marks (00:38:33):
Election? I did. And I'll tell you why. I can explain that. Sure. And, uh, so in the state of California, we have what's called Proposition 13. It was passed by the voters that created an agreement between you and the government that when you purchase property, you agree to pay 1% of that value or transaction base. So what you paid for the property in a fair and open market transaction. And that amount can go
up to 2% per year. That is administered by our office. Proposition 15 created what's called a split role. It took residential properties and commercial properties and treated them differently on tax. Remember I talked about the tax role that we have to file every year. It created a separate tax role. That's why they call it the split role. It would've taken commercial properties and reassess them every two years. Yes. That's the difference.

Jordan Marks (00:39:22):
So where, if you, anybody here buy a property in 1978, I met somebody outside that did so, or recently, when everybody here, 88% of our properties are under Prop 13. So it would've taken the commercial properties and said, Okay, your purchase price that you paid for, let's say it was a hundred thousand and you're paying 1% or a thousand dollars a year in taxes, would go to market value. The market value today, let's say the average price of a home, actually it's on commercial. So the, let's say the price is a million dollars today, it would take the tax bill from a thousand to $10,000 or 1% a year. So our office would be responsible for administering it. And what happened in the process was we met with S C I U, we, the assessors association, there's 58 counties. We work together to make sure that we have efficient administration of property taxes.

Jordan Marks (00:40:11):
So that way we don't mess it up. The schools don't get underfunded that, you know, tax bills don't arrive two or three years late. Okay? I mean, we've seen that with other areas of government where bills are coming two or three years later. We don't want that to happen. So we met and did an evaluation of the initiative. Cuz remember in California the initiative process, you don't have to consult and work through the process like you usually do in the legislature and work out the bumps and have input. This was just whatever's passed gets there. And we can look at prop 19 as that example. We went and issued them a white paper that said a couple of different items. One, you used the tax words incorrectly and they didn't get as much revenue as they wanted to get there. Okay? Two, you're asking us to ramp up and hire a thousand people in two years. There's a lot of different impacts that it had that were just not functional. So we asked for more time to implement. And for those of you that are impacted by Prop 19, you understand why now we needed some more implementation time. So we sent them without saying no, a white paper that said, this is how we can fix it. Unfortunately, you're

Scott Lewis (00:41:20):
Saying you had a reason as an assessor to, to oppose it. So I

Jordan Marks (00:41:23):
Think I was, and what happened was to oppose it. But, but, but Jordan is think it's okay. I can the, um, just

Scott Lewis (00:41:29):
Finish your thought real quick. And

Jordan Marks (00:41:30):
Then, Well, they actually listened to the revenue piece that we had told the proponent of it, and we actually spent $3 million collecting more signatures to get back on the ballot with a new piece that corrected only part of the things that we asked for. Okay. And so with bipartisan agreement in our association, which is extremely rare in the a hundred years, the association's been around, they've never
opposed anything. They actually said, We can't support this. We have to oppose it because administratively it's not functional. Okay. And I don't Go ahead, Barbara.

Barbara Bry (00:41:59):
So, so I actually opposed it also, and in many public forums, you know, I was asked my position on it and I said I was against it in a public forum, but I never did it from the dias of the San Diego City Council. And I think, and it was fine for Jordan to oppose it, but what he did is he opposed it on county time at, at the county building. And so there has been a lawsuit filed by the League of Women Voters and Alliance San Diego, uh, with the fppc, uh, alleging impropriety because this shouldn't have been done on county time. So when you ask me today how I'm voting on certain, you know, local measures, I think it's very fair. I'm in a public forum for me to tell you how I'm voting. I think the voters are interested to know how we're voting. I'm not gonna hide, you know, and try and appease one group or another because of my voter, this or that. Um, the issue is what's appropriate to do in a public forum versus what's appropriate to do when you're sitting on county property.

Jordan Marks (00:42:56):
Go one quick into this. Well, I I, I'm an attorney as well, and that's actually made me really good at this job. But my family's, um, we've been through the office when I got married and had my kid and bought my house. All these things have made me better at this job. But as an attorney, and Scott will tell you this, probably as a reporter, you don't sue somebody for the fppc, you file a complaint. Right? I've never been sued by the legal women voters. I've never been sued by any of those organizations. I have to say, in full disclosure, those two organizations were being paid to promote Prop 15. They had packs of related to it, They were interested parties. And I was asked to present at the county board of supervisors on this issue by, it was sponsored by a supervisor before the board of supervisors where the presentation was made.

Jordan Marks (00:43:44):
And the second presentation was actually done here at est, where I actually worked with Alliance San Diego to coordinate a, we just wanna have a factual presentation of what's inside the initiative. I go, I can't tell people to vote one way or the other, but I do know that we should have a factual presentation. And we joined together at Politic Fest. Unfortunately, uh, some personalities that were not mine and Scott, you were there, so you, you remember it got into it with each other. And that led to that event afterwards. But I've never been a filed by the fppc. Okay. They filed against my boss, which is their right to do. So the fppc two years ago did nothing on this issue. It's, it, I mean, you've been around for a while. I think, um, one

Scott Lewis (00:44:30):
Of the, the things this region is, is grappling with is, uh, it's become far more, um, democratic than it used to be as far as registration numbers go. Uh, the, and as we talk about this elected official representing the community, I think there's some questions, um, that, uh, about people's alliances and, and different things. And I'm wondering, you identify as a Republican, a member of a Republican party, um, there's a lot of concern, um, or there was some controversy about your boss's involvement in some of the, um, marriage issues before. Um, and I think there, there was some concern now about the abortion issue and about the freedom of choice. Uh, and locally. Now you don't necessarily deal with that, but you do deal with birth certificates, you do deal with, with, uh, marriage certificates. There is a
world where you could see some of those things being manipulated. What is your take on, um, the access to, uh, abortion issue and about where you line up with the Republican party?

Jordan Marks (00:45:30):
So, one, it's a nonpartisan office because the fact that this is a technical office, and, uh, if you read the Union Tribune endorsement of me, they actually discuss my build bridging that I've done within the L G B T community. It was one of the things that when I was hired, I said, We have to make this a priority. Everybody should be able to come to our office and feel welcome and have happiness. And that's why Nicole Murray Ramirez has endorsed me. I'm on some slate cards and some other groups. Uh, the L G B T community has really been te like wonderfully supportive of my campaign because at their, well, their life's most important moments for the members of their community and their leadership, we've been there in a supportive way. Um, I worked with Nathan Fletcher to help marry the first, uh, same sex couple from in the military service.

Jordan Marks (00:46:17):
We provided that, we helped folks, we shown up and been there and were relied upon source to know, I mean, really at your life's most important moment, you shouldn't have to think about somebody's political position or whether you're gonna be dealing with bureaucracy of waiting in line for two hours to get a birth certificate when you have a new baby in your hand. We do it right. You get in and outta office in 15 to 20 minutes. In regards to proposition one, I answered that question with the Union Tribune and, uh, you know, I, I did it because I thought it was a fair question because of what had happened with my boss. And people are gonna wonder, is this gonna be an activist that's gonna have some sort of thought to go and deny folks? Cuz realistically with, uh, reproductive, uh, uh, women's reproductive rights, there are the clinics and the hospitals that we do the exemptions for.

Jordan Marks (00:47:06):
Okay. In my entire time. And actually got a text message from Farmer's team saying, there's never been an issue on it. There never has under my leadership, there never will be. Uh, we do our job independent of any of that, but also, uh, I'm voting for Prop one. Uh, my, my wife and I used Planned Parenthood services when we were in college, Okay? Uh, not, I'm not saying she had an abortion, but we use it for, I should clarify that because my wife will get angry at me if I don't. We, uh, birth control and the other things that we had access to, and it was important and it's part of who we are as California. I don't think that, uh, the voters will show up and do anything different. But I thought it was important based on my experience having come into the office, that there'd be no question whatsoever about me having some sort of alternative, uh, agenda. We've done our job, right. We're gonna continue to do our job right? And my commitment to great customer service and making sure everybody is welcome. Nobody has a thought other than I'm getting great service and they're doing their job right, is in their mind when they're

Scott Lewis (00:48:10):
The office. I wanna ask you, you mentioned that you, Well,

Barbara Bry (00:48:13):
I'd like to comment a little on Jordan's.

Scott Lewis (00:48:16):
Okay. But I wanna ask you this question, so go ahead quickly.

Barbara Bry (00:48:18):
Sure. So first of all, um, I applaud my opponent for deciding that he's now pro-choice and voting for Proposition One. After years of attending, uh, anti-abortion rallies and holding up, uh, very questionable signs like abortion is murder, we've documented all of this demonstrating against the appointment of Elena Kagan to the US Supreme Court. But he's probably seen the polling that shows that 70% of Californians are going to vote for Proposition One. Um, I am a former board member of Planned Parenthood. I am honored to have earned their endorsement in this race. Uh, I started an organization called Run Women Run, actually both Planned Parenthood and Run Women Runner outside here to elect San Diego Pro-Choice Women to Office. I started Run Women Run in 2008. I have been passionate about in my career, in my life, in protecting women's reproductive healthcare rights. It has been one of the major things I have worked on.

Scott Lewis (00:49:13):
Okay, let him respond to that real quick and then I'll move to this next.

Jordan Marks (00:49:18):
I've been pretty libertarian leaning my entire life. I can go to sleep at night knowing my position. I've been endorsed by board members, not the formal organization, but board members of Planned Parenthood because I have to know who I am. At the end of my day, I'm not gonna change my position. But yeah, in my twenties, I was at a rally with folks telling that position. It was not my position. I'm a free speech advocate. That's always been. And there's video from the rally that Barbara won't show what I said because it don't talk about pro-life or reproductive. I talk about free speech on college campus. And I think free speech is important. But I will say this, you can look at my family's donation records. You can look at my endorsements, and I'm gonna go to sleep at night knowing that I said who I am and what I believe. Okay. And be truthful. And that's why I've earned over 3000 community endorsements, including board members from Planned Parenthood.

Scott Lewis (00:50:10):
Okay, Barbara, um, I noticed you said yes to measure B, that our measure C the height limit mm-hmm. <affirmative>, you opposed that before

Barbara Bry (00:50:19):
I Well, the Environmental Impact report wasn't done the first time around,

Scott Lewis (00:50:24):
And now you're comfortable. I,

Barbara Bry (00:50:25):
I'm comfortable that I, what I really think the city is going to need to do though to get it passed, is to deal with the appropriate infrastructure for the community, uh, which, uh, the city has not yet dealt with the appropriate infrastructure to deal with, the additional, uh, construction with the additional people that will go in and out of that area due to, you know, the construction. And then we've recently learned that the Navy now has very ambitious plans to develop their piece of property, and I don't think
they’re gonna need any approvals from the city to do it. And that could be a terrible impact on that community. Um, so I hope that the city will get involved with what the Navy is going to do and have some sort of a coordinated effort. Um, I doubt anything is going to happen in that area for the next few years, uh, just given higher interest rates and other steps that the city apparently needs to take.

Scott Lewis (00:51:17):
Okay. Let's wrap up. Um, you can address anything from before or make your final case for, uh, the office. Let's start with you.

Barbara Bry (00:51:24):
So first of all, thank you all for coming today to learn about this office that has operated under the radar, uh, for years. Um, as I said, I never expected to run for public office after losing the race for mayor. Uh, but life has many chapters and I was encouraged to run. Uh, and I’m honored to be endorsed by the San Diego County Democratic Party, by Planned Parenthood, by S E I U, which represents many of the workers in the office by the San Diego Labor and, uh, Imperial County's Labor Council. Um, and, and, uh, Senator, Senator Pro, te, Tony Atkins, and many other, uh, elected officials. Um, I've, my whole life have found myself in new situations, starting companies, uh, starting organizations like Athena San Diego to empower women in tech and biotech. Being on the founding team@proflowers.com back in April 98, when, you know, most people who even had internet were using Dialup, aol.

Barbara Bry (00:52:24):
And I've had to figure out new things every step of my life and much of my life. I was the only woman in the room or one of a few women. And I've been successful because I've been able to build teams, teams who have diverse skill sets. And that's what this office needs. Right now. It's an office of 400 employees, a budget of 80 million as I've talked to employees who are afraid to stand up and talk openly at work. Uh, because that's where my opponent is every day. They are desperate for new leadership and it was very risky for them to endorse me. They could have just stayed out of the race and done a no endorsement, which is what they did back in 2018. But I'm asking for your vote because it's time to bring modernization and new technology. There is money that is left on the table.

Barbara Bry (00:53:14):
That is why my opponent and his supporters are spending over $1 million on this race, a race that has never attracted this kind of money because it impacts their pocketbooks. And they know that this woman with a Harvard MBA who demanded an independent investigation of 1 0 1 Ash Street, uh, who was the first elected official to oppose Soccer City, I actually read the thousand plus page ballot measure and realized it was a scam and had the confidence to stand up. They are afraid that I will figure out that they owe us money, that they owe us money for education and other community programs. So as we, uh, election, uh, month is starting, ballots are going out next week, I would be honored to have your vote.

Jordan Marks (00:53:59):
Nice. Jordan, I just wanna say thank you to everybody that came here today. Usually the assessor recorder clerk office doesn't have this many fans and people that are interested. Uh, I've really enjoyed my career, uh, at the assessor Recorder clerk's office. Uh, since I've joined the office, we have launched a new website and it doesn't just appear overnight, if any of you know, government budgeting. You gotta get there in advance and you gotta plan. The records are there. We have a new program owner
alert that's gonna let taxpayers know if somebody tries to commit real estate fraud and steal their property, it's gonna be an electronic service. Automatic. We're delivering records faster and we're gonna do it. We're actually dropping fees down. We have a great customer service track record. If you've been to the assessor Recorder clerk's office, raise your hand for me. All right.

Jordan Marks (00:54:54):
If you've received service from our office and it was great, raise your hand for me. All right. That people know and I, I don't, I don't wanna tell you anecdotal evidence. I want you to go to our office and experience if you haven't, and see what great service looks like. Uh, I was with Mandy a couple weeks ago and her husband's a disabled veteran. And that's one of the programs I concentrated on when I got to the office to make sure we were doing it better, faster, reaching more folks. And I had just the best day because he told me when he got to our office, he was in and out in 15 minutes and it was unlike any other part of the government office as he experienced. And it delivered real results to their family. And so when I got to the office, we went from 4,500 veterans to over 13,000, that's 18.7 million that went back in the hands of disabled veterans.

Jordan Marks (00:55:41):
We have more homeowners receiving the homeowners exemption. That's $32.8 million a year. We have more money going back into homeless services, which is why DEA and Jim Vargas from Father Joe's Villages said Jordan's a part of the homeless solution. He's delivered us the tax information we needed to save and get more homeless folks off the streets. Uh, I'm not endorsed, Forget the organizations. I have 34 professional organizations that just appreciate a well run office. But I have community folks that we've impacted their lives and they know they get real service when they come there to our office. They get great service, they get treated fairly. There's accountability and we're service and we're a service oriented office. And so I'd like to continue leading that office. We have great vision ahead of what we're doing. We're implementing new technology that's gonna unleash all sorts of opportunity. We're working with open data folks, We're working with our city partners to make sure that they're getting online and the services that they need.

Jordan Marks (00:56:40):
But it all happens with our core function of technically knowing how to do this job. And if you don't want your property taxes messed up, then you hire professional. I'm a professional. If you wanna make sure that that birth certificate that you show up with to go and get your passport's gonna be right, you hire a professional, I can do that. If you wanna make sure that that death certificate's right, and you're working to get that app steal to the body that you wanna take back to Mexico. And we do a lot of that, making sure that that moment is a messed up. It's done right through our office and our partnership. Cuz we technically know how to do it. Correct. Thank you. And I'm just gonna say this, it's gotten better and we are the model office and the state of California and we can do better.

Jordan Marks (00:57:24):
I'm not saying that with ego. We, the reason why we're the model office is cuz everything starts with your feedback, your information, knowing that we're not getting everything a hundred percent right, But we can strive and constantly improve it. And that's what we've done. And so that's why our number one customer feedback come in our office is please take over the dmv. I'm not saying that because we're proud. I want the DMV to be get it, be better. But we just do a great job at your life's most important moments. And so you can trust me as a certified property tax appraiser, as an attorney, and
as somebody that's been in the office with a real track record of delivering for the community that's gonna continue to get there. It's gonna continue to get better. And, uh, I thank you for the opportunity. I hope I earn your vote.

Scott Lewis (00:58:09):
Thank you. Take it. I think we're ready to wrap it up. Uh, coffee break now. But first of all, I just wanna say, um, it's hard to run for office as, uh, Barbara pointed out and it, it exposes you. It's a vulnerable experience, but it's a very important one. And when people run for offices like this, it helps hold the office accountable. It helps define the office, it helps education, it helps everybody be more part of the republic that they live in. So thanks to both for, for running. Uh, yeah.

Speaker 3 (00:58:46):
Thank joining us everyone. The next session after the coffee break starts at Core pm It's a really good one. Politics of Homelessness Panel with Todd Gloria and Nathan Fletcher posted by Lisa Haad. So, um, be sure to check that out. Um, help us spread the word by sharing our website, politic f.org. Um, if you've enjoyed today's session, sign up for a weekly newsletters at words of San diego.org/newsletters. Thank you.

Scott Lewis (00:59:12):
Thank you. Thank

Speaker 8 (00:59:13):
You. Well done. Thanks. Thank you. It was Oh, okay. Great

Speaker 1 (00:59:56):
Few.

Speaker 8 (01:00:11):
Yeah.

Speaker 1 (01:01:01):
Yeah. Could well that part of of the reason weren't, I think a lot of it was to reference. No. Good. Thank you. Thanks Bob. I, Yeah, we're trying to make, I'm actually good. That's one by one. That's stay for the Are you you? Well I'm so great. Nice to have put it. You had company that's to you're not doing anymore. You're right. I appreciate this opportunity. I that right? I got ABC was like, okay, people, people office. But you said a part our office and we need to respond to it. Part Republican. Yeah. I'm register Republican. So that's to go there. I was like, she Predator was like.