

Pacific Daily News

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Hafa Adai, It's Friday

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Don't forget to vote in today's Pacific Daily News poll. Today's question:

What should be done with Gov-Guam's personnel functions?

Results from yesterday's PDN poll are on **PAGE 2**



CULTURAL CUISINE

Get down-home Chamorro food in the heart of Tumon. **SEE STORY, PAGE 30**



PESKY SHOWERS

Rain frustrates the Bank of Guam A's and the Palau Stingers. **SEE STORY, PAGE 64**

Pacific Daily News ON THE AIR

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Playing:
Kristine Lorenzo, 8, takes her turn on the bicycle while her cousin, Avina Atan, 9, runs toward her brother, Avin Atan, 5, in front of their home in the Gill Baza subdivision.



Masako Watanabe/Pacific Daily News/mwatanabe@guampdn.com

Subdivision turmoil

GEPA to meet with residents

By Steve Limtiaco
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Moving to the Gill Baza subdivision in Yigo was an affordable option for 63-year-old Justina Hartman, who said she was tired of dealing with inflexible landlords and rising apartment rent for 10 years.

However, it has not been a perfect solution. Bad roads make it difficult for her grandchildren to get to the bus stop on rainy days. Buses can't make it into the subdivision to pick them up, so the children must walk down a dirt road to the nearest paved road each morning. They missed school yesterday.

The bad roads also mean she doesn't have trash collection service, and children yesterday afternoon were rolling a garbage can down the road to dump trash into the jungle.

The situation worsened this week after the Guam Environmental Protection Agency cited Hartman and dozens of other residents for inadequate sewer systems, asking them to correct the environmental violation or

leave within 60 days.

Two families in the subdivision already have filed lawsuits against the developer.

Government officials have said developer Cyfred

is responsible for installing a sewer system and maintaining roads in the subdivision.

▲ See **Eviction**. Page 4

WHAT'S NEXT

▲ Guam Environmental Protection Agency acting Administrator Randy Sablan and other EPA officials plan to meet with residents of the Gill Baza subdivision this evening at 6:30 to discuss violation notices related to sewer problems in the subdivision. As many as 40 families have been or will be asked to correct the violations or move out.

WHAT IT COSTS

What it costs to live in the Gill Baza subdivision:
▲ The quarter-acre lots cost \$42,500, which includes a down payment of \$950.
▲ The interest rate is 12 percent, over 30 years.
▲ Monthly payments are about \$427 per month, or \$153,859 by the time the last payment is made.
▲ Sen. Jesse Lujan, vice president of the development company, said the sale price is for the land only and does not include the cost of infrastructure.

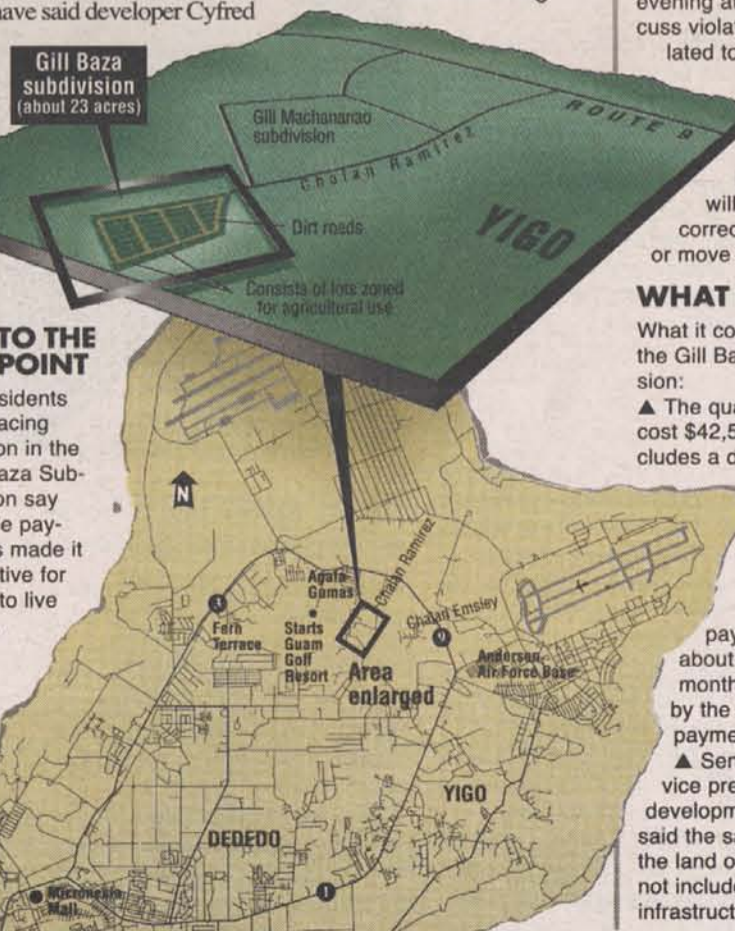


Illustration: Cid Caser/Pacific Daily News/ccaser@guampdn.com

TO THE POINT

▲ Residents now facing eviction in the Gill Baza Subdivision say flexible payments made it attractive for them to live there.

Bills delay pay raises in teacher salaries

By Oyaol Ngirairikl
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What should have taken two months to complete — assessing the wages and pay raises of public school teachers — wasn't completed in nine months, so now thousands of teachers are left without the pay raises they were promised.

But it may still be some time before public school teachers will see their pay change. Three proposed bills being considered by the Legislature today could, if passed into law, delay the process even more.

A law passed in April directed the Civil Service Commission to study wages for public school teachers and implement salary increases. The law gave CSC officials 60 days to complete the process, but nine months after the law was passed, CSC officials had done nothing. Since Jan. 1, the GovGuam personnel functions have been merged with the Department of Administration to streamline the process.

And today, two senators will start work on a bill that would raise salaries for teachers to match the national average.

▲ See **Wages**. Page 4

FATAL FIGHT

Two men plead guilty to an early 2005 murder at Erica's Lounge. **SEE STORY, PAGE 2**



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Eviction: Residents file suits against Cyfred

▲ Continued from Page 1

but company officials have not done that, claiming the government agreed to install a sewer system and is legally responsible for maintaining the roads.

'Where will I go?'

Hartman, who is originally from Chuuk, moved to the subdivision in June 2000, into a wood-and-tin home built by her husband at the time. The seclusion also was something she appreciated, she said, because she did not want her grandchildren exposed to bad influences.

"I really want somebody to help me to stay," Hartman said. "If I have to leave, I have to get my money back. ... If I do not have money, where will I go?"

Cyfred Vice President Jesse Lujan, a Republican senator in the Guam Legislature, on Wednesday said the residents in the subdivision hold the deeds to the land and the "government needs to work with individual landowners" to resolve the sewer issue.

He also said that if the government were willing to deliver coral to the area, residents could provide the labor to spread it on the roads.

Hartman said she does not recall the developer ever making any promises about a sewer system.

"They did not tell me to dig a septic tank, but I (dug) a septic tank on my place because I need to use a toilet — that is what everybody needs," she said. "I know that is against the law, but what can I do?"

The environmental agency has also issued violation notices to long-time residents in the area not affiliated with the subdivision.

Fred Arriola, who resides in his sister's house on land between the Gill Baza and "Zero-Down" subdivisions, said the family has been



Masako Watanabe/Pacific Daily News/mwatanabe@guampdn.com

Moving out?: Carisa Nelson, 15, stands in the doorway of the house she lives in, owned by her aunt in the Gill Baza subdivision. Nelson said members of her family had built the house themselves and had moved in just a few months ago.

asked to move. Arriola said their house has been there for about 15 years, long before anything was built in the area across the road.

Their home has power from lines that were around before the house was built, Arriola said, and a septic tank for sewage. There never has been running water at the house, he said, so he brings it from a tank at the village mayor's office every day. Like others in the area, Arriola does not have a phone line, and the family relies on cellular phones.

"We spent a lot of money for this area," Arriola said, and if the government wants them out, it needs to pay them for the house and the land.

Residents sue

Some residents already have taken the issue to court. Attorney Wayson Wong, who represents two families in the subdivision, said he expects a trial date will be set soon in Judge Anita Sukola's courtroom.

Wong said Cyfred is being sued for unfair and deceptive practices because the development plan requires the company to install a sewer system and it never was done.

Wong said one of his clients, the Abalos family, has moved out and is suing to get its money back from Cyfred. His other client, the Sananaps, want a sewer system in-

stalled or a reduction in monthly payments to Cyfred.

Kini Sananap, who is represented by Wong, did not want to say much about the issue, other than he has spent a lot of time and money building a home and does not want to move out. His 15-year-old niece, Carisa Nelson, said the government or the developer should be held accountable for the problem. "Not us," she said.

Guam EPA officials are scheduled to meet with affected residents in the subdivision at 6:30 p.m. today to discuss the violation notices and their options.

SEN. JESSE LUJAN

Republican Sen. Jesse Lujan, who is vice president of Cyfred, has twice used his legislative office in an effort to get taxpayers to pay for road improvements and maintenance in and around the subdivision.

▲ A Jan. 10, 2004, request to the Department of Public Works, written on Lujan's office letterhead, was denied by government officials, who said the roads in the Gill Baza subdivision are the developer's responsibility.

▲ The Legislature late last year approved as much as \$750,000 in road improvements at the Gill Baza subdivision and a neighboring subdivision. The road projects, totalling \$24 million island-wide, were approved as part of the fiscal 2006 budget bill, and Lujan was one of 11 senators who voted in favor of the bill.

▲ Lujan owns several \$45,000 lots in the subdivision, according to financial documents on file at the Guam Election Commission, and also has a 10-percent ownership of Cyfred, the company that developed the subdivision. That ownership is worth about \$1.7 million, Lujan reported.

▲ During 2004 he received \$15,000 from Cyfred, his financial documents state, although Lujan yesterday said he has had little involvement in the company's operations during the past several years. He has been the company's vice president since 2002.

▲ The attorney general this week said his office is investigating the subdivision.

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Wages: Last salary raise for teachers was 16 years ago

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Speaker Mark Forbes, R-Sinajana, and Sen. Judith Won Pat, D-Yona, said the law passed in April should have made the issue a "done deal."

"These raises should have been done 60 days after the law was enacted yet the Civil Service Commission was unable to take care of it," Forbes said.

Meanwhile, three bills written by Democrat senators to restore personnel functions to the Civil Service Commission will be discussed in a public hearing today. Democrat senators said the transfer wasn't discussed in a public hearing and was attached to the budget law prematurely.

Department of Administration Director Lou Perez said a preliminary assessment of Civil Service functions by the U.S. Department of Interior earlier last year had recommended some CSC functions, including paying new employees higher than the entry-level salaries, be moved to the administration department. The administration agency serves as the government's human resources department.

"At the time, the person (who) was doing this study said it might work better if DOA handled those

TEACHING RAISES

▲ **April 22:** Gov. Felix Camacho signs Bill 78, which requires the Civil Service Commission to review teachers' current pay and give new wages upon 60 days of enactment, into Public Law 28-36.

▲ **June:** Civil Service Commission asked GPSS officials to provide numerous documents, including certified personnel positions; class standards; proposed salary schedules and justifications for salary and/or salary schedule increases; and all supporting documents.

▲ **June:** Upon receiving the request, GPSS personnel office started collecting the data for more than 2,000 classroom teachers, guidance counselors, librarians and other employees in teacher positions.

▲ **September:** Governor signs

duties," Perez said, adding that those duties were considered redundant.

Adequate education

Rose Acovera, a 29-year teaching veteran with the Guam Public School System, said since the last \$5,440 pay raise for teachers around 1990, pay has remained stagnant for teachers, although the cost of living

fiscal 2006 budget bill into law. The law also transferred the Civil Service's authority to approve salary adjustments to the Department of Administration effective Jan. 1 this year.

▲ **Jan. 18, 2006:** GPSS personnel employees completed the commission's requested information and sent it to the Department of Administration's human resources office.

SPEAK OUT

The following bills will be discussed at today's public hearing scheduled to start at 9 a.m. at the Legislative building in Hagåtña. For more information about the bills, visit www.bobsoffice.org.

THE BILLS

▲ **Bill 203** - Would restore the authorized powers and personnel of the Civil Service Commission

has increased.

The cost of gas has almost doubled, food is now more expensive and utilities have had to increase their rates to stay in the black.

"Here I am with the same pay that I've been getting for more than 15 years," said Acovera, who teaches sixth-grade language arts at Oceanview Middle School in Agat.

by repealing certain provisions of the general appropriations act of fiscal 2006.

▲ **Bill 204** - Would restore authority to the Civil Service Commission as it existed prior to the enactment of Public Law 28-68.

▲ **Bill 205** - Would postpone the date of when changes to the Civil Service Commission responsibilities take place to June 30, 2006.

▲ **Bill 254** - Would allow agency leaders, with their respective agency board approval, to recruit potential employees at salary levels "above-step" or above their normal entry salary levels — which many people believe are outdated — authorize agency directors of line and autonomous agencies to create new positions; and require transparency and disclosure in the creation of new positions and above-step recruitment.

Oceanview Principal Lynda Hernandez-Avilla said many teachers and some administrators remain hopeful that salaries will increase.

"It'll be wonderful for our teachers. Many of them come into this job because they love children and they love teaching, but the reality is you need money to survive," Hernandez-Avilla said.

She added that increased salaries would make Guam's schools more competitive in the job market.

"Right now we're losing teachers because they can get paid more, and with bonuses, somewhere else. No one can blame them," Hernandez-Avilla said.

"So if as an administrator I want to keep my good teachers and hire other good teachers so that I can give my students an adequate education, then I need larger salaries," she said.

Forbes yesterday said he and Won Pat want to see teachers' salaries come up to the national average.

"We're patterning the salaries and the averages established by the American Federation of Teachers," Forbes said.

The most recent AFT teacher salary survey found that the average teacher salary in the 2003-04 school year was \$46,597, according to the AFT Web site.

Currently, Guam's average salary for teachers is about \$36,000.

Forbes said raising teachers' salaries will require funding, which is something he and Won Pat intend to address with their bipartisan legislation.

He added that money outside of the General Fund will have to be used or the existing budget law will have to be changed to cover the pay raises.