



Avalon City Council Weekly Update 11-21-14

City Manager's Office – City Employee Customer Service Training

On Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, all full-time City employees participated in mandatory customer service training. Four separate interactive sessions were convened at Tremont Hall. Based upon the discussions and feedback received from City employees during the training, an internal customer service brochure is being developed for distribution. This internal brochure will address the primary objectives and considerations to be made in delivering excellent customer service, and will serve as a handy reference tool for our employees. In addition to the internal brochure, changes will be considered and likely implemented to city operations and procedures such that customer service is at the forefront in all that we do. Later this calendar year (hopefully), we will embark upon providing supervisor training for those City employees who serve in this type of role (Department Heads and others). Next fiscal year, I would like to explore additional customer service training related to City processes and efficiency improvement. I would like to thank our City staff for their enthusiastic participation in the customer service training. As a result of staff's sincere input, I know that we will enhance our customer service delivery, and identify areas where improvements may be achieved.

City Manager's Office/Grant Administration – Fresh Water Resources

City staff is continuing to explore the State Department Water Resources' Waste-Energy grant opportunity with Hittite Green Solutions due December 12, 2014. The technical details required by the technology to work on this island are being assessed by Hittite's team in Turkey, and the requirements of the grant are being evaluated by the City to determine if we can take this opportunity to the next step. The grant would provide a desalination demonstration on Catalina that has the potential to ultimately produce up to 20,000 gallons/day.

Finance Department – City Employee Cost of Living Adjustment

All City employees that are not members of management or who are not serving in supervisory positions will receive a 2% cost of living adjustment (COLA) in their pay check on December 12th. The COLA will be retroactive to July 1st, the start of Fiscal Year 2014-15, and will continue thereafter. We are able to provide this increase now because the City Council adopted the Fiscal Year 2014-15 Budget this week. An email will be sent to all employees informing them of this and that the City Council and management appreciates their patience in receiving this well-deserved increase. The total fiscal impact to the City will be approximately \$90,000 for Fiscal Year 2014-15.

Finance Department – Street Report

We have completed and filed the city's FY2013-14 Annual Street Report required by the State. By completing this in house, we were able to save the \$3,000 fee the City has been historically paying the State each year to complete the report for us. Included in our on line files are all the source documents and account map groupings on how the report was completed so it can be easily replicated each year going forward.

Finance Department – Bond Draw Analysis

We completed the reconciliation of the Tax Allocation Bond Draws – Series A monies and determined how much of the monies we were able to draw down to reimburse the city for previously paid costs. Accordingly, we submitted a draw request for \$1,016,000, which has now been received and deposited into our Successor LAIF investment account. In the near future we will be repaying the monies the General Fund loaned to the Successor Agency in prior years to complete the work associated with the Lower Terrace project.

Finance Department – Sidewalk Repairs & TDA Article 3 Monies

Working with our Grants Administrator we contacted our MTA counterparts about MTA accounting requirements and we found out they were now holding \$18,256 for us for to be used specifically on bike and pedestrian benefiting projects. The monies will start to lapse at the end of FY14-15, but we plan to submit a reimbursement form to cover the costs of the Public Work's staff time that they put into fixing the sidewalks these past few months. Each year the City receives eligibility for \$5,000 but we need to have an acceptable project.

Finance Department – Chamber of Commerce

We completed the Chamber of Commerce's annual reconciliation of transient tax revenue earnings for FY2014, which resulted in a true-up payment of \$80,259 to be sent to the Chamber. The Chamber receives 22% of the total TOT monies received by the City and this resulted in a total of \$982,000 being paid to the Chamber this past fiscal year. This represents a \$94,000 or 10.5% increase over the prior year.

Finance Department – Annual Single Audit Requirement

For FY2013-14, the City expended less than \$500K in Federal funds from all sources, so we are exempt from having to undergo the annual Single Audit as proscribed by Federal guidelines. The annual certification was filed this week with the Dept. of Health and Human Services - Community Development Block Grant agency, our Federal government agency with oversight in this area.

Recreation Department - Relay for Life

Recreation Department staff met Wednesday with Nicole Padilla from the American Cancer Society to discuss partnering to host a Relay For Life event in June in Avalon. Each year, more than 4 million people in over 20 countries raise much-needed funds and awareness to save lives from cancer through the Relay For Life movement, and the City is excited to be a part of planning for this event.

Recreation & Planning Department - City Planning

City Staff met today with Brian Ulaszewski, Executive Director of City Fabrick, a non-profit corporation that transforms physical environments for people, to discuss various proposed projects in Avalon, including the design of streets and sidewalks, park spaces, and opportunities such as parkettes or pocket parks that have proliferated in Long Beach. We are excited about the opportunities this visit presented and will report out with more information as specific projects become available.

Harbor Department – Boat on Beach

On Saturday November 15th at 6:15 AM, Harbor Patrol Officer Dawes reported a 42' power boat on the beach just north of Hamilton Cove which occurred due to the captain apparently falling asleep at the wheel while enroute to Catalina. Officer Dawes requested Baywatch Avalon for assistance and then was able to remove two females and a child off the boat. The commercial tow firm Vessel Assist was contracted by the owner to pull the boat off the beach before towing it to a boat yard to make repairs.



Harbor Department- North East Wind Event

This past Saturday afternoon November 15th, the National Weather Service predicted North East winds in the area. Harbor Patrol Officers removed most of the floats on the Pleasure Pier Saturday night in preparation of the wind event. Sunday morning the winds were still calm but NE winds 15-20 knots along with 2' swells reached Avalon Harbor about 10:00 AM. Additional Harbor Patrol Officers were called in, and the rest of the Pleasure Pier floats were removed while boats were towed off the first row of moorings near the pier into deeper water. In addition to the floats and boats in the harbor, the winds also made it too rough for divers to exit the water at the Casino Dive Park stairs. Twenty-seven (27) divers who entered the Casino Dive Park before the wind and swells arrived needed to be pulled out of the water on the City's Rescue 2 boat as well as Los Angeles County Fire's Baywatch Avalon and transported to the Rescue Dock. No injuries were reported.

Public Works Department – LA County Sheriff's "Black Box"

As reported in the Avalon City Council Weekly Update last week, the PWD was to install the LASD Sheriff's "Black Box" at a discreet location in the area around City Hall. The purpose of this action is to allow the public an opportunity to inform the department of any crimes or tips that could facilitate LASD's attempts to reduce wrongdoing and/or illegal activities. As of Thursday this week, the box has been installed near the entrance to the City Council Chambers. This location was chosen in compliance with the Sheriff's wishes to be inconspicuous in nature, and in an area that is less trafficked. Once again, we encourage the public to use this anonymous depository for any purpose they feel necessary or warranted. Captain Fetterol will

be the only person with a key, and will be checking the box on a regular basis. Here's a picture of the "black box" at City Hall:



Public Works Department – Tree Trimming/Removals

We have received some concerns from our citizens on the removals of trees that are taking place at various locations in town. Their concerns stem from the fact that some of these trees are old, beautiful, and attractive. However, unfortunately, the necessity arises for the removals once the trees start to die, disrupt any hardscape, or impede pedestrian traffic. The PWD is acutely aware of the concerns of the public in this area, and have facilitated a plan to work with the Conservancy for replacements with endemic trees in the areas where removals have taken place.

Public Works Department – eBus Charging Stations

At the City Council meeting this week, the Fiscal Year 14-15 Budget was approved. One of the items included therein was the authorization for the funding for construction of the new eBus Charging Station. As has been previously reported, the City will be commissioning new eBusses in an effort to fulfill our desires to limit/constrain fossil fuel equipment and vehicles on the island. City staff has contacted the Santa Catalina Island Company (SCICo) and has received positive feedback to potentially lease land out in the Pebbly Beach area for the construction of the concrete charging station. We thank the SCICo for working with us on finding a logical area for this facility, and their understanding of the benefits that electric vehicles can produce the island.

Public Works Department/Capital Improvements – Fuel Dock Project

At the Planning Commission meeting this week, the Site Plan Application, and the Mitigated Negative Declaration were adopted and approved for the proposed Fuel Dock project. This action had to take place in order to move forward with requisite project permits with the California Coast Commission (CCC). Due to the change in the proposed project from concrete pier pilings, to lumber pilings, this issue had to go back to the Planning Commission again. It is hoped that this will be the last hurdle that the City will have to address in order to receive the CCC Permit for construction.

Public Works Department/Capital Improvements – Public Bids

Also included at the City Council meeting this week, the Fiscal Year 14-15 Budget was approved. Included within the budget were some Public Works Projects that are now on the books and need to be administered. Staff will be working on the contract documents, which will allow advertising for public contractors, and subsequently, the reception of public bids. The first contract to be developed and administered, will be the Pebbly Beach Rock Fall Protection fencing project. This project will consist of placing fencing on top of the existing K Rail along Pebbly Beach Road in an effort to mitigate the small rocks that fall on that stretch of roadway. The development of contract documents is a long process, however, we anticipate that the City might be able to receive sealed bids by March 2015.

Fire Department – Thanksgiving Safety

The Avalon Fire Department wants everyone to enjoy a safe Thanksgiving this year. Below are some holiday safety tips, as well as a link for additional information:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop so you can keep an eye on the food.
- Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
- Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot and kids should stay 3 feet away.
- Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy or coffee could cause serious burns.
- Keep the floor clear so you don't trip over kids, toys, pocketbooks or bags.
- Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- Be sure electric cords from an electric knife, coffee maker, plate warmer or mixer are not dangling off the counter within easy reach of a child.
- Keep matches and utility lighters out of the reach of children — up high in a locked cabinet.
- Never leave children alone in room with a lit a candle.
- Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.
- The NFPA and the Avalon Fire Department discourage the use of outdoor gas fueled oil turkey fryers.

For additional Thanksgiving safety information please consult the following link:

<http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers/holidays/thanksgiving-safety>

Planning Department – Proposed Vons Project

The Planning Commission approved the proposed Vons project on Wednesday evening, minus the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the café. It was three to one in favor of adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring Plan. It was a two in favor to two opposed vote for the CUP, which resulted in a denial. It was three to one in favor of the Site Plan and Coastal Development Permit as proposed by staff, with some additional conditions added regarding the delivery bay doors and back-up beeper on the tractors for the delivery vehicles. The 15 day appeal period ends on December 4th. Over 100 members of the public were in attendance at the Planning Commission meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Harvey

Ben Harvey
City Manager
City of Avalon

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