



Avalon City Council Weekly Update 3-14-14

Catalina Transportation Services – Item on Tuesday's City Council Agenda

There is an item on Tuesday's City Council Agenda pertaining to the purchase of replacement vehicles for the existing City Trolleys that are operated by Catalina Transportation Services. Tuesday's agenda item DOES NOT pertain to the taxi or dial-a-ride services in town; it simply seeks to allow the City to avail itself of grant funds for the proposed purchase of replacements for the trolleys, which have reached the end of their lifespan and utility. Earlier today, the City became aware of social media traffic – and the distribution of handbills – that was suggesting that the City was looking to eliminate taxi and dial-a-ride service in town, and encouraging residents to come down to Tuesday's City Council meeting to speak on this topic. We were able to track down the source of this misinformation to a social media posting from Catalina Transportation Services. I had a candid conversation with Connie Stewart, Catalina Transportation Services' General Manager, about this matter. Connie advised me of retractions they were going to make for the posting, and efforts to educate those who had been misled. Attached to this Weekly Update document is an email apology from Connie, and my response. The City and Catalina Transportation Services are continuing an ongoing dialogue about the future of transportation services in Avalon, and as of today, no recommendations or decisions have yet been made. We are working together in an effort to determine what is best for the community, as well as our visitors.

Fire Department

The Avalon Fire Department has taken final delivery and completed in-service training on its new Type 5 engine, Engine-1 (picture, below). This new, much needed apparatus replaces the existing 1999 Ford F-350 Master-Body Engine-1 that dates back to Fire Chief Goslin. This apparatus has been in front line, first out service for 15 years and is worn out with limited life left in the body, pump and electronics. It was slated last year by city council for donation to the Hawaii County Fire Department in the town Laupahoehoe, where the small platform on a 4x4 wheelbase will be helpful in limited use.

The new Engine-1 is a 2013 West-Mark Ford F-550 with 250 gallon tank, foam capable pump with three discharges. It is also equipped with modern electronics such as three separate radio bands to operate with multiple agencies, a fully NFPA compliant warning light system and back up camera. The platform is slightly larger, allowing 100 additional gallons more than before, as well as more efficient equipment storage.

The project did experience several problems with the PTO and pump initially. West-Mark manufacturing stood behind their product and worked through the long process to repair the issues and perform extensive testing before its return. The project was funded during FY 2012-2013 (\$150,000.) and did come in on budget.

This apparatus is a welcome addition to the department and will greatly assist us in continuing to providing excellent service to the island residents and visitors.



Law Enforcement:

The Sheriff's Department arranged to bring a Narcotics Detection Dog over for the day this past Saturday to focus on Catalina Express cargo searches and to provide high visibility on Crescent Avenue. The dog alerted on two pieces of luggage on Catalina Express. One piece contained a small quantity of medicinal Marijuana, and the other contained Marijuana paraphernalia. No arrests were made. On Sunday, two fifteen year-old children were involved in a roll-over golf cart accident on Wrigley Road. No one was seriously injured, and the cart was not stolen.

Public Works:

Lower Terrace Project: Overall the project is proceeding nicely, however, a few issues and unknown conditions have resulted in some Change Orders. These were anticipated, and forecasted within the original budget/estimate.

However, the need to add Crescent Ave storm drain repairs (estimated at approximately \$100 K – additional details provided below) was not budgeted, and will impact the final project numbers. Crescent Avenue needs to be repaired in order to allow for the requisite large trucks and heavy machinery that are required to complete the Lower Terrace project.

Crescent Ave Storm Drain Repair (a component of the Lower Terrace Project): Phase 1 was completed, with temporary paving applied on Wednesday and Thursday. Traffic has been rerouted to this side of the street, with demolition of the other side (Phase 2) starting this coming Tuesday or Wednesday, depending on cruise ship activity.

Pebble Beach Emergency Sewer Repair: This project will be finalized next week. While sewage is flowing within the new pipe, the recent rain prohibited us from installing the final asphalt. That will be accomplished within a few days.

Southern California Edison (SCE) Vaults: As of this week, "real" excavation has started! The archeologists have provided Henkels & McCoy (SCE's subcontractor) the approval to proceed. A new schedule has been provided, with the new vaults set to be installed starting next Thursday. The completion of the lower vault area is scheduled for April 4th. We are working with the Tongva / Gabrielino tribal representatives and Henkels & McCoy on a Reburial Ceremony (date and time have yet to be finalized). The upper vault location excavation should start on Monday, April 7.

Planning Department:

This week The City received the Catalina Island Golf Course Improvement Project Site Plan from the Santa Catalina Island Company (Island Company). We are in the process of reviewing the plan, and will be reaching out to the Island Company in short order with our thoughts, questions and concerns.

Information Technology:

City's File Server: It was discovered on Monday that the City's primary file server was malfunctioning due to a corrupted image on the hard drive. While Pat Grady (our IT Consultant) was able to repair and restore the image a determination was made to replace the server now, rather than wait a few months as had been initially planned. Our fear is that we may continue to experience issues with this server and compromise our system.

Power Failure: On Tuesday morning, Avalon experienced a power failure. Because of the power fluctuations prior to the outage, the primary network switch located at the Fire Department was permanently damaged. An order was placed for two network switches; one for the Fire Department and one as a spare to keep on-hand. There was no damage to other City equipment.

GIS Program: Pat Grady, Dennis Jaich and Jordan Monroe met to discuss the City's GIS program. We will be developing a plan for utilizing GIS in a more effective and productive manner. It is our goal to conduct a few roundtable sessions with the department heads to analyze how best to use GIS to improve efficiencies and processes. We will also be evaluating the City's current services and assist with the consolidation of the various data layers currently hosted by two providers as well as evaluate other GIS companies to possibly offer their services.

Audio/Visual Improvements in the Council Chambers: We are working with a vendor to improve presentations and sound during public meetings (getting rid of the projector, providing for laptop connectivity on the dais and the podium, replacing the CRT televisions with flat screens, etc., etc.). Once we finalize the components of the proposal, we will bring it back for your review and consideration.

Vehicle Noise Testing

Six of the eight weeks for the annual vehicle registration and vehicle noise testing are now finished. We have tested 786 (+160 since last week, or about 48% of the vehicles) for noise. Of that amount, 86 have exceeded the 74 dB threshold, putting the overall failure rate to date at 11%. The average passing level is 71.5 dB (excluding electric vehicles, porter trucks and smart cars), and the average failing level is 75.6 dB. 26% of the vehicles that failed have since retested, with 82% of those subsequently passing at an average of 72.8 dB. Yamaha has a failure rate of 12%, E-Z-GO has a failure rate of 20%, and Club Car has a failure rate of 9%. Only 3 other porters or other type vehicles have failed thus far.

City Attorney's Office:

The City Attorney's Office would like to make you aware of its Emerging Issues in Public Agency Law website. You will need to create an account to access the site, which is located at the following address: <http://www.bbknowledge.com/>

Respectfully submitted,



Ben Harvey
City Manager
City of Avalon

Attachment

Email from Catalina Transportation and response from the City dated 3-14-14

Internal Distribution:

City Treasurer
Chief Administrative Officer/City Clerk
City Attorney
Department Heads
Mr. Monroe
Mr. Jaich
Ms. Schuchard
Ms. Byerrum
Mr. Grady

External Distribution:

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Los Angeles County Fire Department
Santa Catalina Island Company
Catalina Island Conservancy
Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce
Southern California Edison
Catalina Island Medical Center
Long Beach Unified School District
Catalina Express
Catalina Transportation Services

Ben Harvey

From: Ben Harvey
Sent: Friday, March 14, 2014 12:22 PM
To: 'Catalina Transportation'
Subject: RE: Facebook posting & City Council meeting

Connie, on behalf of the City of Avalon, I accept your apology and appreciate your efforts to implement Catalina Transportation's plan to educate those who were misled regarding the agenda item pertaining to the future purchase of replacement vehicles for the existing trolleys. I look forward to the continuation of our ongoing discussions about the future of public transportation in Avalon, and pledge to keep an open mind as to what is best for our community and our island visitors. Thanks.

From: Catalina Transportation [<mailto:catalinatransportation2@catalinaisp.com>]
Sent: Friday, March 14, 2014 12:08 PM
To: Ben Harvey
Subject: Facebook posting & City Council meeting

Per our conversation today I wanted again to apologize for the misunderstandings and the Facebook postings regarding the negotiations for the transportation program. There was a Facebook posting listed on our company page asking for the community support regarding the transportation program. It was a misunderstanding on our parts due to the fact that we did not fully understand or comprehend what Tuesday's meeting was regarding. Once we were fully aware of the situation we posted a retraction to that statement. We have posted this retraction on various Avalon community websites to get the word out to the residents here on the Island. We will be posting another retraction today as well as again on Monday and Tuesday prior to the meeting in the hopes that we get the word out. I have spoken with our taxi drivers regarding the posters that were handed out. It was never our intent to anger people or to anger you or the City council members. It has always been our intent to negotiate on a friendly and trustworthy basis. It was our understanding that the meeting was to be about purchasing the new vehicles as well as possibly eliminating the ART program. We were incorrect in our assessment of the meeting and handled that situation poorly. I want to assure you as well as all the City Council members this will not happen ever again. Before ever assuming what any meeting or situation is regarding we will call and discuss matters with you first. We really do want to work with you to come up with the best plan for the City of Avalon. I am sure we will be able to do this. On Tuesday night my plan is to speak to the City Council Members personally regarding the postings as well as the flyers and to assure the members of the community that Tuesday night's discussion is only regarding the purchase of new vehicles which both the City of Avalon as well as Catalina Transportation Services agree is an absolute necessity. I also plan on showing up to the meeting early in the hopes of gathering the citizens prior to them entering the meeting to explain the situation fully and in person to each of them that may arrive. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to call me. You reach me at the office or on my cell phone at any time.

Thank you,

Connie Stewart
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