



Avalon City Council Weekly Update 8-08-14

Fire Department – New Full-Time Probationary Firefighter:

The City of Avalon Fire Department (AFD) is proud to announce the selection of Jorge Hernandez Jr. (pictured, below) for the full-time Probationary Firefighter position. The selection process began in the AFD Reserve Firefighter ranks for those individuals who possessed a valid California Emergency Medical Technician License, California State Fire Marshall Volunteer status, Firefighter 1 or 2 Certification and Valid California Physical Agility Test completion. A four person selection panel was convened with two AFD members and two members of the Huntington Beach Fire Department (HBFD). The two HBFD members were selected not only for their knowledge and experience, but also because they had no connection to Avalon or Catalina Island. The selection process then looked at three distinct factors: the application packet, the interview and a technical skills assessment. The board was in complete agreement that all were outstanding applicants and the decision was very difficult. Reserve Firefighter Jorge Hernandez brings with him a large degree of local knowledge, enthusiasm and hundreds of hours of additional training and response hours. He is also bi-lingual. We welcome him into the City of Avalon family and wish him well in the next challenging step of firefighter probation, which is a tremendous amount of additional hands on and web based learning to successfully complete additional requisite California State Fire Marshall Certifications.



Recreation Department – Oktoberfest/Brew Fest – October 25, 2014:

The City of Avalon will be rolling out advertisement, information and ticket sales in the coming weeks for an Oktoberfest-style Brew Fest scheduled to take place on October 25, 2014. The event is in partnership with local service clubs and hopes to be a successful replacement to the ChurchMouse Marlin Invitational to supplement small non-profits, projects, and school groups that will certainly feel the void left this year. As of today, the festival is scheduled to take place from 1-4 PM on Saturday, October 25, 2014 on South Beach and will feature a huge variety of beer, high-quality entertainment, food, a silent auction, and more beer. This is a preliminary timeframe. We are currently working on the possibility of having this as a multi-day event, with more than one window of festival availability per day (in other words, potentially an afternoon as well as an evening session, over two or possibly even three days – maybe Friday/Saturday/Sunday. Heck, in Germany, Oktoberfest runs the entire month! That's why they call it "Oktoberfest").

Public Works Department – Avalon Bay Water Quality Testing:

We have been working hard on cleaning the beach, and investigating the possible source of pollutants entering the Bay lately. The thunderstorm last week caused us problems with unwanted runoff. However, we are pleased to report that the testing performed by the County this last Tuesday showed that our beaches were clean, and the postings came down. We anticipate that our daily cleaning efforts, and our continued maintenance of the sewer facilities will show positive results through the summer season.

Public Works Department – More Potential Desal Demonstrations:

The Public Works Department is compiling information on various types of equipment that would be necessary in our quest to produce fresh water from sea water. Since the demonstration of the Desal (RO) unit in July, the Department has been actively seeking information and advice on potential units that could possibly be implemented in our city. We will continue to explore our various options and inform City Staff and Council of the options as they become available.

Public Works Department – Reclaimed Water:

The Public Works Department is also investigating reclaimed water. We are reaching out to community members that are knowledgeable in this area, as well as other municipalities and agencies that have already implemented various systems. City Staff is also engaged in efforts to gather as much information as necessary to investigate grants that may be available through various State and Federal agencies.

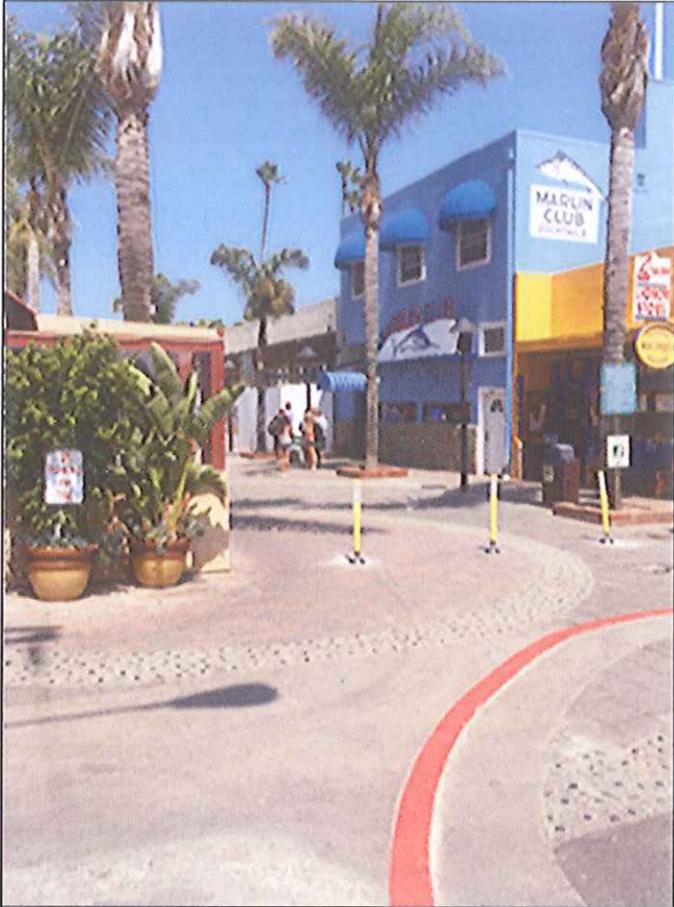
Public Works Department – Storm Drains:

We are currently performing tests on our beachfront storm drain system, flap gates, and low flow diverters. The reason for this is that there exists a problem with infiltration of salt water into our sewer system. This situation creates substantial problems at the wastewater treatment plant as too much salinity hampers processing. Not only does the processing of sewage take a lot longer, but we are also experiencing increased costs for energy and materials during the treatment process of our wastewater. Next week we will conduct more testing to try and find the location that is allowing ocean water into our storm drain system, then eventually into the sewage system. We will plug various openings, and calculate intrusion by checking the volume levels at the wastewater treatment plant.

Public Works Department – Traffic Delineators Blocking Crescent Avenue:

For safety and congestion reasons, traffic delineators have been installed at entrances to Front Street where any vehicular traffic is prohibited. During this busy time of year in particular, visitors and delivery trucks (among others) seem to disobey the signage on this busy walkway. The delineators installed are collapsible and will allow emergency and maintenance vehicles to enter without any damage to the vehicle.

Here is a photo of one location with the new delineators:



Finance Department - FY2012-13 Financial Statement Issuance:

By end of day today, we plan to have issued the long-awaited FY2012-13 financial statements. This is in addition to the FY2011-12 financial statements that were issued in February of this year. As a result of these accomplishments, we will become current with all the other cities in the State. Additionally, we have spoken with our auditors, MHM, and they have indicated they would be able to fit into their schedule the audit of our FY2013-14 (the fiscal year just completed) financial statements in December of this year. Currently, they are and will continue to be working through the audits for all their other clients previously scheduled through November. Please note, however, the City will need to prepare for this audit to meet the December audit date.

Finance Department – Public Financing Workshop Follow-Up:

At the last Council meeting there was the concluding session on Public Financing and steps to be taken before this effort can be undertaken. A few of the financial requirements mentioned included having current audited financial statements, preliminary unaudited financial statements, and showing how the City has been performing on its debt outstanding and other of those debt covenants. The issuance of the FY's 2011-13 financial statements brings us current with that requirement and the final recording and reconciliation of the FY2013-14 financial information to be wrapped up soon will allow for assessments on the City's financial condition to be completed. Additionally, the City has been performing according to the terms on its external debt.

Finance Department - Arbitrage Assessment:

Required with the issuance of tax exempt bonds is that there be a Federal arbitrage analysis performed. This requirement was also mentioned during the Public Financing Session at the last Council meeting. Previously, the City issued the 2003A Tax Allocation Bonds and 2003B Housing Tax Allocation Bonds, which are still outstanding and have now been taken over by the ACIA Successor Agency. Although we were delayed in completing this assessment, we can report that it was recently completed and the results were that there was no rebate liability due nor was there any jeopardy in losing the important tax exempt status. The next analysis to be performed will be due in September 2018.

Respectfully submitted,



Ben Harvey
City Manager
City of Avalon

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