



Avalon City Council Weekly Update 3-27-15

City Manager's Office - Anheuser-Busch Bud Light "Up For Whatever" 2015 Event

Along with the CatBev, the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau, the Santa Catalina Island Company, and various local merchants, the City has been diligently working with representatives from Anheuser Busch and their subcontractors in an attempt to bring the proposed Bud Light "Up For Whatever" 2015 Event to Avalon. Tentatively proposed for the last weekend in May (the weekend following Memorial Day – May 29th through 31st), the event promises to provide significant long-term exposure and interest to the City of Avalon and greater Catalina Island, in addition to an increase in revenues to the local economy. Representatives from Anheuser Busch will be making a presentation to the Avalon City Council regarding this event at a special meeting scheduled for this coming Tuesday, March 31st at 6:00 PM. I am extremely excited about the possibility of this event, knowing that the City of Avalon is well-suited to serve as host. I hope that you all share my enthusiasm, as we (hopefully) embark upon a proposed partnership that not only will bring the community a terrific event, but potentially also will serve as a model for other future possibilities. I am "Up For Whatever"!

City Manager's Office – Proposed FY 15-16 Budget Preparation Update

City staff are completing Budget Request Forms for the FY15-16 budget year. With the financials up to date, City staff can now work with current spending information and estimate future trends (!). The Finance Department has done an excellent job bringing the financials current. Also, thank you to staff for working with limited information over the last few years and producing budget plans that have moved the city forward. We anticipate the first Budget Study Sessions on Fees, CIP and Departmental Budgets in May, with the formal budget adoption in June.

City Manager's Office – IT Training

CDW-G, the city's IT purchasing partner, has created a preferred business provider relationship for the City with New Horizons Computer Learning Centers allowing the City to take advantage of significant costs savings. New Horizons will be providing three on-site Microsoft Office classes in beginning-level Outlook, Word and Excel. The classes will be held in the Council Chambers, at the dais, with New Horizon's supplying laptops for hands-on training. The first class is on March 30th with others later in April. Additionally, the City will be providing an intermediate-level class called "Excel Tips and Techniques for Increased Productivity and Improved Financial Modeling" on-site shortly after the Beginning Excel class through Eric W. Augusta & Associates. This is an excellent Tips/Tricks Excel class for all users. The City is also pursuing value added vendors that offer live on-line training and on-demand computer training to continue City staff's learning process of Microsoft products and other software such as Adobe.

Harbor Department – Dive Park Emergency Phone

The Dive Park Emergency Phone has been repaired and allows people to push a button that activates a call to 911. Once connected, the dispatcher is automatically notified the call is originating from the dive park and it also allows the caller to converse with the dispatcher over a speaker phone.



Planning Department – Proposed Zane Grey Pueblo Renovation

On Thursday of this week, The Planning Commission had a favorable review of the Zane Grey Pueblo Renovation project. However, they continued the Public Hearing to allow for the erection of story poles and to allow for submittal of the Site Plan that has changed to address some of the neighborhood concerns.

Planning Department – Conditional Use Permit Follow-Up

We have received about a dozen responses to the first wave of inactive CUP letters that were sent out. To date, there is about a 50/50 split between those wishing to retain their permit, and those willing to relinquish them. Those wishing to retain them will be scheduled for hearing with the Planning Commission at a near-term date.

Planning Department/Grants Administration – Meals On Wheels

Thanks to information provided by Mayor Marshall, the City has been in contact with the Los Angeles County Community and Senior Services Area Agency on Aging (say *that* fast three times!) to research possible funding sources for the City's "meals-on-wheels" program. The City program provides hot meals five days per week delivered to homebound seniors and disabled persons as well as offering a "congregate" meal for seniors currently being held at Singing Waters Church. The net cost to the City averages between \$10,000 - \$15,000 annually. The County has a program that may provide 100% funding for the City's program, and includes the possibility of additional funding available for a part-time position to run the program. The requirements of the County program mirror the service the City already provides, except for the County program must be free of charge (the City charges a small fee for each meal, which would be eliminated under the guidelines of the County program). Staff is waiting to hear back from the County regarding the timing of the next funding cycle. Staff is also reaching out to other agencies who have participated in the County program. We will keep you posted as we continue to pursue this.

Finance Department – Accounting Training Class

The Introduction to Governmental Accounting class was hosted at the City this week, with 10 City participants. We were very fortunate to have been able to bring the instructor, who is a partner in an accounting firm, to the island to teach the class. Each member of the Finance Dept. staff attended, along with staff from other departments and Council Member Cinde MacGugan-Cassidy. The discussion incorporated points on governmental accounting concepts, an overview of the different accounting processes dealing with how transactions are recorded to the General Ledger and how they then make their way into the financial statements. Included in the discussion was commentary on steps to completing the annual budget and what auditors look for when examining the budget as part of their audit.

Finance Department – Business Tax Reviews

Brownell & Duffey has completed their work on the selected businesses that underwent compliance reviews for the 2012 and 2013 years. In the cases where it was determined that businesses had underpaid the City, that invoicing has now been sent out. Due to the varying reasons as to why the underpayments resulted, we also included mention in the invoice and letter that since it's possible that the underpayment issue could have extended through 2014 and into 2015, we've requested these operators to revise those reporting forms and send us a true-up payment by mid-April to avoid late charges and interest. Additionally, we're able to report that we have resolved all but one of the outstanding underpayment invoices for the prior year (2011 and 2012) Brownell & Duffey reviews. The determination of the remaining review is in process.

Fire Department - Emergency Test:

This past Wednesday, the City of Avalon in cooperation with its Los Angeles County Operational Area partners participated in an emergency notification drill. The National Oceanic Atmospheric and Administration (NOAA) and State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) conducted the test in conjunction with the tsunami warning communications system.

The City of Avalon specifically tested its Code Red Reverse 911 System; those persons who have previously signed onto the free system, received notifications by phone, text or e-mail depending what options they selected during enrolment. Anyone may sign up via www.cityofavalon.com by following the Code Red links.

Public Works Department – Cemetery Upgrades

The PWD has been in the process of developing a new area that will be used for additional burial plots and all cemetery amenities. The needed stonework has been performed to about 90% completion by PWD staff; specifically master brick mason Mr. Matt McBride. His expertise and proficiency in the work has proven to be essential in our attempt to complete this area in a skillful fashion for the City's future use. It is anticipated that the ongoing development of the upper cemetery will be completed in the winter of this year.

Public Works Department – Traffic and Roadway Paint Markings

Due to the City's close proximity to the ocean water, it is necessary to maintain and repaint many of the roadway markings around town. The projection of a fast approaching busy tourist season is significant. Consequently, it is necessary to touch up, and repaint many crosswalks/stop sign limit lines, and all traffic markings that exist. Thanks go out to our staff,

especially Ms. Marisa Brown, for keeping a prudent eye on the problematic areas, and her commitment to ensure the safety of vehicular and pedestrian travels in this City.



Public Works Department /Capital Improvements – Salt Booster Station Electric Repairs

The PWD, primarily with assistance from our partners at Environ Strategies, are developing a Scope of Work (SOW) for the implementation of needed electrical repairs to the Salt Booster Station facility. This structure is critical to the public as it accumulates and pumps salt water to the reservoirs; pressurizes all the pipelines and fire hydrants that are in the City, which in turn allows our Fire Department ample water for fire suppression purposes. Consequently, the seriousness of these repairs are necessary. Although there are other future repairs scheduled at this location, this particular project will involve the replacement of the old and worn electrical Motor Control Center (MCC). It is anticipated that in the near future, staff will be able to solicit bids from qualified firms for the installation of these needed repairs.

Public Works Department /Capital Improvements – Pebbly Beach Sewer Pump Station Repairs

The Pebbly Beach Sewer Pump Station is also a very critical component to our infrastructure facilities, particularly the sewer collection system. It is the final structure in the system, which transfers (pumps) raw sewage to our Treatment Plant at Pebbly Beach. Accordingly, it is with great importance that this facility be maintained and kept in good working order. Again, the PWD, with assistance from ES, are developing a SOW for the implementation of electrical repairs, which include new meters, breakers, and relocations of the ATS (Automatic Transfer Switch). Staff is working on the Contract Documents, which will aid in our attempt to pass along the SOW to specialized electrical contractors to perform the tasks at hand. It is anticipated that this project will take place in August 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Harvey

Ben Harvey
City Manager
City of Avalon