



## Avalon City Council Weekly Update 8-07-15

### All City Departments – Eagle Scout Candidate Nicholas Smith/Casino Dive Park Sign

The City of Avalon is extremely grateful to Eagle Scout Candidate Nicholas Smith (pictured below, with Mayor Marshall), who this week unveiled the Casino Point Dive Park sign that he designed and had fabricated for his Eagle Scout Project. If you haven't yet seen the sign in person, please make the trip over to the Dive Park. In addition to being informative and interesting (wreck information is included), the sign also offers public interest and safety benefits with the outlined distances to points of interest located within the park. The Dive Park is located at the cross roads of City and Santa Catalina Island Company property lines, and abuts a protected marine area. Accordingly, many different rules, regulations and concerns had to be taken into consideration before allowing the sign to be presented to the City for installation (yes, ultimately it ended up on City of Avalon property). At the Eagle Scout Project unveiling ceremony on Monday, Eagle Scout Candidate Nicholas Smith got to see first hand the public's enthusiasm, interest and excitement regarding the end result. It was very rewarding for all in attendance to observe. Our thanks to Eagle Scout Candidate Nicholas Smith and all those who played a part in making this project a success. Our visitors and residents will benefit from this welcome addition to the Dive Park.



## City Manager's Office – Avalon Bowl Amphitheater

I met with Kris Wilhelm of the Santa Catalina Island Co. earlier this week to discuss the Avalon Bowl Amphitheater, the proposed “re-use” of the space, and a potential private/public partnership to help realize the City Council “Enhance Recreation Opportunities” Goal of making the Avalon Bowl Amphitheater a usable space, reminiscent of its function around the turn of the century (and to a degree, its last iteration during the 1980s). City staff is putting together a preliminary proposal for SCICo (the property owner) to review, outlining the scope of work, partnership arrangements, and grant/funding opportunities. A private donation from a community member has been identified, and we hope this will help continue to move this possibility forward.

## City Manager's Office – Island Consortium/SCE Mtg. re. Water

As a follow-up to the recent meeting of the Island Consortium with Pedro Pizarro (SCE President), a technical conversation was convened yesterday for the specific purpose of reviewing Southern California Edison's water data previously released within SCE's annual report. John Mack (Catalina Island Conservancy), Norris Bishton (Hamilton Cove Homeowner's Association) and I met with Ryan Stevenson and Cooper Cameron of SCE at the Conservancy's office in Long Beach.

SCE provided revised well production and desalination plant output data for the years 2005 through 2014. Much of this data has previously been in dispute; it has been the Island Consortium's assertion that SCE's figures “didn't add up”. With this in mind, SCE reviewed this data, auditing its well production data logs from 2005 through 2014. During this audit, SCE found unit of measure, as well as other unintended errors (in other words, the numbers reported in the reports in various locations over the years had been inconsistently reported – sometimes in thousands of gallons, sometimes in gallons, sometimes in acre feet, etc.). SCE advised that this unit of measure error was determined to be the likely cause of concern previously brought to light by the Island Consortium. Upon detailed review of the data furnished by SCE at the meeting yesterday, John, Norris and I agreed.

In addition to the well production data, SCE also provided the assembled Island Consortium subset with a detailed overview of the Santa Catalina Island Water System Infrastructure Plan (a hardcopy of which I have in my office, and am happy to review with you). The water system overview was helpful, as it allowed for us to better understand the separate island systems, the connected island systems, locations of wells, directions of water flow, etc.

In addition to the water data and system overview discussion, SCE also provided a tentative schedule for three (3) proposed upcoming California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Advice Filings that SCE hopes to submit:

1. First amongst the three Advice Filings will be one submitted to advise the CPUC that SCE will NOT be implementing Stage 3 water rationing due to the upcoming installation of the additional desalination unit, scheduled for September. This proposed Advice Filing will be consistent with language contained within the MOU the City entered into with SCE for the purchase of the additional desalination unit, and is likely to be submitted to the CPUC sometime during the month of August.
2. Second of the three Advice Filings will be submitted to the CPUC in the October/November timeframe FOLLOWING a discussion with the greater Island Consortium group regarding SCE's desire for cost recovery related to the drought relief effort. This is obviously a potentially contentious issue, and we expect a spirited discussion on this topic with SCE.

3. Last of the three Advice Filings will be one requesting permission to allow for a tariff deviation for private individual residential and/or commercial desalination units. This Advice Filing is consistent with discussions currently underway with a separate group of island stakeholders, the City, Environ Strategies and SCE.

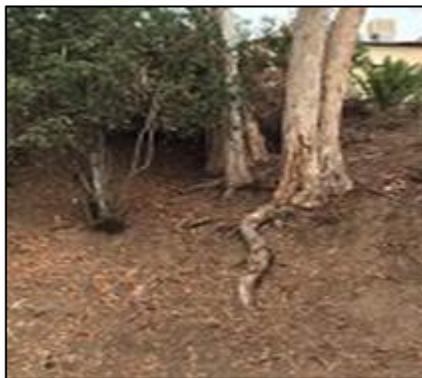
All those in attendance at yesterday's Island Consortium technical meeting felt that the exercise was productive and valuable.

#### Chief Administrative Officer/City Clerk - Public Restroom and Public Trash Contracts

With the increase of visitor counts and corresponding demand, the City restroom contractor is hiring an additional attendant to help manage the public restrooms. It is a thankless job, and we would like to acknowledge how hard the contracted personnel work at this important duty. The City's Public Trash contractor has also seen an increase demand of his time, and requisite attention to public trash areas. As a result, the public trash can contractor has taken it upon himself to build more trash cans to accommodate the demand. We thank him for his ongoing efforts to keep Avalon clean and tidy.

#### Public Works Department – Peoples Park / Eucalyptus Tree Removals

Tree trimming has been taking place again this week at Peoples Park. Specifically, we had to remove problematic eucalyptus trees that. The pictures below exhibit the rooting system of these trees in the existing slope, where they are simply growing out sideways, and not into the bearing soil. Although we certainly do not enjoy removing any tree whatsoever, the decision to finally remove these trees was necessary on behalf of public safety. We appreciate the understanding and cooperation of the public during these ongoing procedures



#### Public Works Department – Picnic Fry / Sewer Lateral Repair

During our regular, ongoing sewer lateral inspection activities, we noticed questionable integrity issues with the existing sewer lateral at the Picnic Fry on Crescent & Clarissa. In so doing, the owners, Santa Catalina Island Company (SCICo) were notified and their positive action allowed for the requisite repair to quickly commence. SCICo's contractors, Arbor Works Co., diligently and effectively started the repair construction this week, and are scheduled to have the major replacements completed very soon. While it is unfortunate that this work had to be conducted during one of the busiest times of the year, the repair was urgently required, and had to be completed as soon as possible. Our thanks to SCICo and Arbor Works for quickly responding using proper repair construction protocol.

Public Works Department /Capital Improvements – City Awarded “Outstanding Project of the Year” by American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)

I am proud to announce that the City of Avalon was awarded the “Outstanding Construction Project of the Year”, by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), for the substantial investment and repairs to our aged sewage system, and other accomplishments.

The previous City Council, in coordination with the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), developed several goals focused on reducing sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs), improving the water quality of Avalon Bay, and complying with the RWQCB’s Cease and Desist Order (CDO). The City worked closely with consulting firm Michael Baker International (formerly RBF Consulting) to gain a better understanding of how to tackle such a multi-faceted problem and how to best allocate resources to achieve the most positive environmental impact. Since the issuance of the CDO, the City of Avalon had spent over \$5.7 million (City and State funding) on the implementation of:

- \* Upgrades to the City’s sanitary sewer collection system,
- \* Municipal code updates regarding sewer operations and services,
- \* Stringent water quality testing and monitoring in Avalon Bay,
- \* Developing a Fats, Oil and Grease (FOG) Program throughout the City’s restaurants, and
- \* GIS-based inspection and tracking system for the sanitary sewer inspection and repair program.

The hallmark of the City’s overall plan to improve water quality in Avalon Bay was the sewer improvement program, which was developed. The work program included a city-wide sewer system condition assessment (20 miles) and prioritization program, design and construction of essential sewer main improvements and development of a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based inspection and tracking system. Hence, funds of over \$5 million were allowed to be spent on sewer improvements, which consisted of replacing or rehabilitating 2 miles of sewer pipe (much of it dating back to the 1920s), completing various spot repairs throughout the sewer system, and upgrades to process equipment at the City’s wastewater treatment plant. Also, a Fat, Oils and Grease (FOG) elimination program was developed for the City’s 60+ restaurants and the City is currently creating and implementing a 20-year capital improvement program to further upgrade the sewer collection and treatment system.

As a result of the City’s efforts, water quality in the Bay has improved significantly. The City is accomplishing the goals set for by the RWQCB and was recently removed from the Heal the Bay’s 2013-2014 Annual Beach Report Card Beach Bummer List. Dennis Jaich, our Interim Public Works Director and his dedicated Public Works/Capital Improvement Department team are to be commended for their efforts!

### Finance Department – Bob Mescher is Getting Up to Speed

Chris Woidzik, the Interim Chief Financial Officer has passed the baton to Bob Mescher, the new City's new Finance Director. This week, Chris trained Bob on the financial software programs, filing systems, tasks and projects. Bob toured various city facilities and met with the department heads and other employees to become more familiar with the City. Next week, he will meet with the department heads to review the adopted budget for each of their departments. Bob's primary focus in this first quarter is to routinely provide reports of actual results as compared to the adopted budget. Chris will focus on finalizing the financial information for the year ending June 30, 2015.

### Harbor Department – Carnival Cruise Line Weekly Abandon Drill

Carnival Cruise Lines has requested and received permission to conduct their Weekly Abandon Drill while in port in Avalon next Tuesday, August 11, 2015. As part of this scheduled drill, Carnival plans to sound their general emergency alarm signal and use their public address system. The Harbor Department will be actively monitoring the drill. I bring this item to you for your general awareness and in the event that you are questioned by the public.

### Fire Department – Governor's State of Emergency Related to Wildfires:

With wildfires burning across the state, exacerbated by severe drought conditions and extreme weather, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. has declared a State of Emergency to help mobilize additional firefighting and disaster response resources. As these resources are deployed throughout the state, provisions are always made to provide for appropriate staffing levels. What this means to Avalon and Catalina Island as a whole is that our normal Los Angeles County Fire and Cal Fire Mutual Aid resources are still available to us in a time of need. Each brush season, firefighting resources are deployed over the entire Southwestern United States and assigned as incidents dictate, for exactly these types of scenarios.

Respectfully Submitted,

***Ben Harvey***

Ben Harvey  
City Manager