



Avalon City Council Weekly Update 8-14-15

Avalon Fire Department - Disaster Preparedness:

The Los Angeles County Operational Areas, in corporation with the Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management, California Office of Emergency Management, Department of Homeland Security as well as the Federal Emergency Management Agency have produced a comprehensive electronic Emergency Disaster Survival Guide. This guide is a nearly all inclusive all hazard document that can help individuals and families prepare and recover from disasters. The goal is to provide tips that can assist people in being self-sufficient when disasters strike. We encourage people to follow the link and review this document and share it with others:

<http://lacoa.org/pdf/emergencysurvivalguide-lowres.pdf>

Public Works Department – Hill Street Retaining Wall

As we previously reported, on a small City easement up on Hill Street, the old wooden retaining wall had deteriorated, and began to break down. Public Works forces had to start removing the old rotten lumber, excavate back into the slope, and start the installation of a new concrete retaining wall. This effort has been difficult as the access is very limited as it is very narrow. Therefore, the time involved, and the manual labor this project required, was substantial. However, it is now completed, is supporting the slope, and looks very good. We thank the residents in this area for their understanding in the delays, and the cooperation they exhibited during the construction.



Public Works Department – Palm Tree Date Removals

The palm trees that are abundant on this island require a substantial amount of maintenance to keep them attractive, but more importantly, safe. Some of these trees are a special type of Date Palm, which produce a hard type of date - not the kind that can be ingested. They are troublesome because when they form and are ripe, the dates start to drop, which produces a safety hazard. They are so hard as to resemble marbles, which creates a slipping hazard. Consequently, it is very important that our crews monitor these trees, and remove the fruit before they can become a hazard. We will continue to inspect these particular trees and deal with them on an as-needed basis.



Public Works Department /Capital Improvements – Master Development Plan - Recycled Water

It is with great pleasure that we are able to announce the first step in bringing recycled water to this City is approaching quickly. With the City Council's approval of the Master Plan Development study through our selected engineering firm, the work is scheduled to begin in early September.

The purpose of the Master Development Plan is to help the city realize goals of an adequate, properly functioning utility infrastructure; as energy self-sufficient as technology allows. This work will include a feasibility study and conceptual design of a recycled water system as well as the many other facets or aspects that could be involved in this significant task.

Considering the current drought conditions, and with the prospect that the City should anticipate future rainfall deficiencies, we are proud of this important initial step in the recycled water arena.

Planning Department/Grants Administration – National Transit Database

The City's annual NTD (National Transit Database) audit was performed Tuesday. NTD reporting is a grant requirement the City must comply with as a condition of funding received to pay for the City's land transportation program (ART, DAR and ACT). The audit focuses on passenger counts, passenger miles, revenue miles and revenue hours. The audit went smoothly and the City was found to be compliant in all areas audited.

Finance Department – Sales Tax Up

HdL Companies, the City's sales tax consulting firm, reported that the City's adjusted sales tax receipts for the quarter ending June 2015 were 7% higher last quarter than the same quarter of the prior year. Regionally, the sales tax receipts for all of Los Angeles County increased only 5%, while the Southern California region as a whole was up by 4%. More than half of the City's sales tax receipts are from restaurants and hotels. The City continues to outperform other agencies in the Southern California region, with quarterly collected receipts exceeding pre-recessionary levels.

Recreation Department – Ocean Water Polo

With the help from Joe Montano and Edgar Alvarez, the City's Swim Instructors, promoting the sport to visitors and Los Angeles County Baywatch ocean lifeguards, we have seen an increase in ocean water polo play this year. Yours truly, David Hart, and Jordan Monroe have become regulars at the informal pickup games on Mondays and Wednesdays at 5:30 PM that take place at the ocean water polo court at South Beach. The games have been fun – and very competitive - at times. We have seen all levels of players come out on Mondays and Wednesdays – from “duffers” such as yours truly, to active collegiate players visiting the island. David Hart has been speaking to Long Beach Aquatics as well as Newport Dunes water polo club teams regarding the possibility of staging tournaments next year.



Harbor Department – Busy Days in Avalon Harbor

The last two weeks we have experienced larger crowds and have been at capacity daily in Avalon Harbor. Although we have to use Descanso Bay and Hamilton Cove as an overflow on a daily basis, these outside harbors are also filling up on Fridays and Saturdays.

City Manager's Office – Gateway Water Management Authority IRWM

This week, City voting delegate Jordan Monroe attended the City's second meeting as part of the Gateway Water Management Authority IRWM (Integrated Regional Water Management group). While the group covers areas generally outside of Avalon's direct impact – and visa versa – it is critical that our island community be represented at these types of multi-agency meetings and groups. Our presence not only lets us see what is being done elsewhere, but it is equally beneficial that these overtown agencies see Avalon present, thereby keeping Catalina Island on their radar. The main topic of discussion at the August IRWM meeting was establishing a grant policy, especially in anticipation of the many Prop 1 funding opportunities that will be forthcoming. In these discussions, it has become clear to us that we need to continue to explore the potential role the County could play in any of the City's grant applications. Specifically considering the fact that LACO represents the unincorporated areas on the island, as our water system is island wide. We are still working with the County, and SCE, regarding Supervisor Knabe's proposal of support for Catalina's new desal plant, and these tangential issues are also being discussed.

City Manager's Office – Planning Department Oversight

Planning Consultant Steve Flint's contract for temporary oversight of the Planning Department ended on Friday. Accordingly, I have been in discussions with Michael Baker International (formerly known as Pacific Municipal Consultants), regarding interim Planning Department oversight. Michael Baker International is an extremely reputable firm, with extensive municipal planning experience throughout California. They have an office overtown in Long Beach. I anticipate being able to have a representative from Michael Baker International overseeing the daily operation of the Planning Department this week, and will continue to keep the City Council informed on this topic. Depending on the required duration of their stay, a professional services agreement could be shortly be coming before the City Council for review and approval.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ben Harvey

Ben Harvey
City Manager