



Nancy Gardner

Councilwoman

Newsletter: March 2008

Newport Beach, California

City Contacts

City Hall

General Information

644-3309

Departments

644-

Administrative	3127
Building Dept	3275
City Clerk	3005
City Council	3004
City Manager	3000
Economic Dev	3225
General Services	3055
Graffiti Hotline	3333
Harbor Resources	3034
Licenses	3141
Mayor	3004
Public Info Office	3031
Planning Dept	3200
Public Works	3311
Recreation	3151
Refuse Collection	3066
Senior Services	3151
Streets/Sidewalks	3060
Utilities	3011
Water/Sewer	3050

Emergency Services

Emergency	9-1-1
Fire Dept	633-3104
Police Dept	644-3717

Libraries

CdM	644-3075
Main	717-3800
Mariners	717-3838
Balboa	644-3076

Oasis Senior Center

644-3244

Post Office

CdM	673-2989
Main	640-4663

COUNCILWOMAN

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UPPER BAY DREDGING

Federal funds for this project get allocated but don't make into the final budget, and as a result we have been concerned that we will have to pull the dredges out and then bring them back later, adding significant costs. Now there is an additional concern. At the recent Newport Bay Management Executive Committee meeting, I asked the Army Corps of Engineers representative what would happen if two projects were competing for funds and one was in progress and the other had come to a stop. He said that the nod would go to the one in progress, so if we don't find the funds to keep the project going, we could end up with a double whammy. We are working diligently with the other stakeholders and with our federal representatives to secure funds.

CLOSED SESSIONS

Occasionally, frustration has been expressed by a member of the public that when it comes time for the report on Council's closed session there is nothing reported. This is viewed by some as an effort to avoid transparency in government. It is rather that in closed session we are either discussing an employee review (the Council reviews the three positions that report directly to us: City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk) or discussing strategy on pending litigation or labor negotiations with the various City employee unions. Employee reviews are confidential, and one does not come out at a public meeting and reveal strategies before sitting down in court or at the bargaining table. The rest of the time we're eating our dinner.

FIRE RINGS

A heads up to anyone who likes to go down to Big Corona for a cookout. Use a fire ring. For safety reasons, that's the only place any kind of cooking is allowed. We've put up lots of informative signs, and city staff will be out this year enforcing the fire ring requirement. As an alternative, the concession stand will soon be open with its menu of traditional beach fare augmented with teriyaki bowls, sushi and the like.

CONCERNED CITIZENS LAWSUIT

As reported, the Concerned Citizens filed a lawsuit against the City for \$250 million. They filed their lawsuit in state court. Sober Living by the Sea, a group home operator, has also filed a lawsuit, and they filed theirs in federal court. Since the lawsuits involve the same ordinance and both concern questions of federal law, the City petitioned to have both cases tried in federal court. A representative of Concerned Citizens stood up at a recent Council meeting and said that this move contradicted the interests of the citizens. Now, it may not be as convenient for Concerned Citizens to be in federal court, but it is more convenient and more economical for the City, and since the City is its citizens, I would say that it is in the citizens' interest to defend both lawsuits in the same court instead of defending two lawsuits in two different venues. We will ask to be before one judge who will hear both lawsuits, and we won't end up with judgments contradicting each other.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

This is one of those good news/bad news situations. The good news is that PCH through Corona del Mar is phase one of the installation. The bad news is that any glitches in the new system will be worked out here. Hopefully, it will be a smooth launch, but even if it is, I don't want to raise anyone's expectations to unrealistic levels. There are lots of cars and limited street capacities so a certain amount of congestion is inescapable. However, the new system allows for real time management, so the timing of signals can be changed to maximize various situations, and there should be overall improvement.

CATS AND COYOTES

I live two blocks from the beach on Jasmine, so I'm not close to the hills or the gullies, but in the last year I have gone out at six in the morning to see a coyote standing on the lawn next door, and I've found the heads of two cats, the remains of coyote meals. Cat owners need to be aware that there are no safe havens for their pets who are out at night.