



Nancy Gardner

Councilwoman

Newsletter: March 2009

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
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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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SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES – OR NOT

The City has a ban on smoking on public beaches. EQAC (Environmental Quality Affairs Committee) has asked the City to look into expanding the ban to all public places—parks, streets, alleys. If you have an opinion (“Another infringement on my personal liberties!” “Why should I be exposed to secondhand smoke when I’m walking my dog!”), the Council will be discussing the issue at our study session on March 10. You can also weigh in via email, etc. EQAC will also be asking the City to explore the prohibition of leaf blowers in residential areas, but that one is not on the agenda yet.

BANNING RANCH

Any effort to purchase Banning Ranch as open space requires us to have some idea of the value of the property. We asked an appraiser to give us a bracket (suggested high and low ends) and ended up with a figure of approximately \$185 million, excluding cleanup costs. There were quibbles from the open space proponents as to the methodology, and we haven’t yet received the owner’s appraisal, but it gives us a starting point. Our consultant has had time to contact only a few funding agencies at this point. Nobody has started throwing bushels of money at us, but he will continue to look for the pot of gold. We have also asked him to meet with members of the Banning Ranch Conservancy to share information on his funding efforts and to get their ideas on potential sources of gelt.

PARKING

The Business Improvement District hosted a meeting for its members on the subject of parking. The businesses attending were asked whether they would prefer strictly enforced time limits on PCH or some form of paid parking. They opted for paid parking since that provided more flexibility for the various businesses, some of whose customers stay for ten minutes, others who stay for two hours. This happened to be the recommendation of the parking consultants, also. We will continue to study, study, study and talk, talk, talk and eventually come up with a pilot program.

NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION – AND NO UNFUNDED MANDATES!

The California Constitution requires the State to reimburse cities for state-mandated costs, but it has set up a byzantine recovery process that can take seven years before the claim is ever heard by the Commission on State Mandates. That’s a long time to be fronting the money. In 2007, AB 1222 was passed which created an option for cities to bypass the Commission and deal directly with the appropriate department. Newport Beach has taken the lead, successfully negotiating reimbursement from the Department of Finance and the Franchise Tax Board last year for one such mandate, and this year we’re pursuing a second one. The city staff deserves kudos on this one.

HORSES

I grew up living in Corona del Mar, riding horses and surfing. My riding places, first at the stable replaced by Irvine Terrace, then at the pasture which is now Crystal Cove State Park, no longer exist, nor do most of the horse establishments that were then prevalent in Costa Mesa. Now one of the few remaining, the Equestrian Center at the Fairgrounds, is in jeopardy. That’s a shame. I think kids get some great lessons working with animals. I know you can’t generalize from one person’s experience, but none of my horse friends ever got in trouble, and while I think surfing is a terrific pastime, also, I can’t make that same blanket statement about my beach mates.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

This is a two-way process; please don’t hesitate to contact me with your ideas and opinions.