



Nancy Gardner

Council Member

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Newport Beach, California

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Recreation 3151
Refuse Collection 3066
Senior Services 3151
Streets/Sidewalks 3060
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BLACKBALL

For many years Newport has had a blackball policy. During summer months, when the blackball goes up, surfboards must get out of the water. Only one area, River Jetty, has no blackball. Boardsurfers would like additional area(s) open to them during those hours. Meanwhile, bodyboarders plead to retain their reserved area, and body surfers and swimmers wonder if there could be an area just for them. The working group of staff and PB&R commissioners will make a recommendation to the PB&R Commission soon. Meanwhile, someone started an on-line petition to change the rules at the Wedge which give body surfers priority. I went on line and read some of the comments. Made me embarrassed to say that I surfed.

LOWER CASTAWAYS

Conceptual plans were presented to the Harbor Commission subcommittee focused on this area. I was particularly taken with one which provides for a cycling hub with an area to change tires, etc., a launch for paddleboards and kayaks, several small event areas, a small amphitheater for educational presentations. This could be a terrific addition to the city. Thanks to Steve Rosansky who thought to make the ceding of this property part of a development agreement with The Irvine Company.

VECTOR CONTROL

Vector Control will be making a pitch to the Newport Bay Executive Committee to get behind the filling in of Big Canyon wash. While this might seem, at first glance, to be environmentally undesirable, VC points to this area as a major source of mosquitoes, there being just enough water for breeding, but not enough to support mosquito fish which would eat the larvae. Filling in the marsh would also eliminate a major source of selenium to the bay. It is still water situations which create the harmful form of selenium. We will see what Fish and Wildlife says about the idea.

TRASH

At our November 12 meeting, the council will be looking at the contract (which is on the city's web site) for the proposed outsourcing of our trash services. After the three finalists were named, staff contacted cities and unincorporated areas where the three handled the residential trash and found satisfaction ratings equal or better than ours. Still, we have a high level of service. Can this really be matched? Well, while residents would be supplied with regulation disposal carts (three sizes), they would still be allowed to put out bags and other items, and the company would pick up large items on request. In addition, we would have separation of recyclables for those who want it, and household hazardous waste pick up. Take a look at the contract, and decide for yourself. In addition to service, many have expressed concern for our employees. They have several options. They can ask to be reassigned to a different position in the city, and no, we are not creating new positions to accommodate them. Vacancies come up regularly in MOD, and we have several new parks coming on line, so there's plenty to do. Yes, there might be retraining, but since we are committed to automated trucks, there would be retraining anyway. A second option is to retire. Quite a few in the department are of or near retirement age, fully vested in their pensions, and they would have the choice of leaving and taking it easy or taking another job. Finally, all three companies have committed to hiring any city employee that wishes to make the change. Of the three companies who made the finals, one (Rainbow) is employ-owned, one (Ware) is unionized and one (CR&R, staff's recommendation) offers both union and non-union options. At the council meeting, I expect we will hear from the two companies not recommended as to why they are the better choice, and I'm sure residents will have comments on the desirability of outsourcing and items in the contract.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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

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