

The Week That Was^{TW2}

December 18 – December 22, 2023



1. Working Draft Materials for Council's Annual Planning Retreat Available Online

The City Council will convene for its annual planning retreat on January 19, 2024, at the Laguna Beach Susi Q and Community Center. The planning retreat is set to commence at 8:30 AM. A working draft of day's materials is posted under the meeting agenda portal on the City's website ([Click here to access the document](#)). Financial outlook reporting will be provided closer to the planning retreat.

2. Arts Commission Year In Review

During 2023, the Arts Commission has engaged 243 visual artists and 271 performers in producing works and experiences for residents to enjoy. More than 240 free concerts were presented, including performances by the Pacific Symphony and Pacific Opera Project. A full report of all the cultural art programming facilitated in 2023 can be seen [HERE](#).

3. New Recreation Programs Coming to Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center

In its continued effort to expand recreation program offerings at the former St. Catherine's Parish School site, the Transit and Community Services Department is pleased to announce that it is offering several new recreation classes at the Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center beginning on January 8, 2024. Specifically, the City will add to the basketball, volleyball, pickleball, futsal and children's art programs currently being hosted at the facility. New programs for winter include a youth skateboarding class, youth gymnastics class, children's music class, and art classes for both children and adults. Classes are now open for registration [here](#).

4. Holiday Closure of Community Centers

The Laguna Beach Community and Susi Q Senior Center, and the Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center will be closed December 25, 2023, through January 1, 2024, due to the Christmas and New Year's holidays. Both facilities will reopen on Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

5. Trolley and On-Demand Holiday Schedule Changes

Trolley and on-demand services will not operate on Christmas Day (12/25) or New Year's Day (1/1). Trolley and on-demand service will end at 7 p.m. on Christmas Eve (12/24) and at 10 p.m. on New Year's Eve (12/31). Weekday Coastal trolley and Laguna Local service hours will be extended to end at 8 p.m. Tuesday (12/26) to Thursday (12/28), as well as Tuesday (1/2) to Thursday (1/4). For more information, please call (949) 497-0766 or click [here](#).

6. Balloon Ban Ordinance to Become Effective January 1, 2024

As a reminder from last week, the City Council adopted an ordinance earlier this year banning the sale of balloons and prohibiting their use on public property. The local law takes effect January 1, 2024. Additional information about the City's balloon ordinance can be found on [the City's website](#).

7. Wooden Top Rail Replacement at Brown's Park Viewing Deck

Last week, Facilities Maintenance staff replaced the wooden top rail at the Brown's Park viewing deck. The work involved removal of the deteriorated existing top rail, preparation of the work surface, cutting the lumber to size, and creating well-fitting mitered joints. The work was overseen by Maintenance Supervisor Wayne Chintala.

8. New Public Safety Workspaces at the Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center

Over the past several weeks, Facilities Maintenance staff has been improving various spaces at the Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center (CRC), including preparation of the new Employee Breakroom, Marine Safety Office, and Report Writing Room to be used by Police and Marine Safety officers. Improvement of these spaces involved replacing carpet and/or vinyl flooring, painting walls, replacing light fixtures and damaged ceiling tiles, adjustment of electric receptacles, and installation of new office furniture. Staff began using these new spaces this week.

Meanwhile, work is also underway for February's planned relocation of Fire Department administrative offices from City Hall to the administrative building of the CRC. The work is being overseen by Deputy Director Reza Jafari.

9. CR&R Solid Waste & Recycling Services Transition Planning

CR&R staff and City staff, led by Senior Public Works Analyst Liz Avila, have met biweekly since the City Council selected CR&R as the new solid waste and recycling hauler in July. Below are three highlights of transition logistical planning work underway to optimally position CR&R for a transition that results in minimal inconvenience to its customers:

- *City Fleet and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure:* CR&R has purchased new collection vehicles, including a Electric Vehicle (EV) collection truck. An EV charging station will be installed in the City in late 2024, at CR&R's expense. This project is being planned in conjunction with City staff to optimize a potential interlay with the City's Master Plan for Electrification—a policy initiative of the City Council. To accommodate the size and turning radius requirements for the collection vehicle, the planned location for installation is within Lot 16 adjacent to the City's Maintenance Facility.
- *Incumbent Driver Engagement:* Per the City's Franchise Agreement with CR&R, and in accordance with State Law, CR&R is required to provide an offer of employment to the incumbent's (Waste Management) workforce directly affected by the award of contract. Incumbent driver engagement includes discussions with

Waste Management and applicable labor unions. It is anticipated that a meeting will occur in January 2024 to offer employment to those incumbent drivers.

- *Route Manager/Driver Training:* CR&R will reassign its most senior Route Manager to begin operational training program in the City. CR&R has also identified its most senior drivers accustomed to similar hard-to-service and densely populated routes and will begin shadowing exercises of the incumbents' routes beginning in early 2024.

10. Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget Launch

The Finance Division initiated the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget development by providing all City departments with the budget calendar and process instructions. The correspondence to City departments transmits the instructions, timelines, and strategy that will provide the basis for the review and modification of the City's Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-25. The budget process incorporates City Council priorities developed during the City Council's Strategic Planning Session scheduled for January 2024 and will also include already available performance metrics to showcase performance of operations and services by each department. Budget training for departments will be held in early January to address any questions the departments may have on the overall budget process.

11. Computer Network Switch Upgrade

The IT Division has completed the installation of phase one of the core network switch upgrade. The core switches are high-capacity switches that are in the city's data center backbone that serves as the connection to city enterprise applications. The new core switches offer upgraded performance, increased security features with the latest technology, and improved reliability with a longer life span.

12. City Council Study Session regarding Scope of Services for Comprehensive Zoning Code Update Request for Proposal (RFP)

Staff is preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a comprehensive zoning code update. The primary objective is to streamline the code, reducing ambiguity and ensuring alignment with the City's defined objectives. Recognizing the importance of the project, a study session will be scheduled in March to seek City Council policy direction concerning assignment scope and desired outcomes. The goal is to ensure that the RFP effectively meets the City Council's interests and community needs and objectives.

13. Police Department Reports

Personnel

- Jason Ross graduated from the Golden West Police Academy and will start as a new police officer on Monday.
- Tracy Pellazar started as a new dispatcher with us this week. Tracy was previously a dispatcher with the Maui Police Department and was integral in the emergency response during the recent Lahaina fire.

Patrol Activity

- On Saturday, December 16, 2023, at 0254 hours, Laguna Beach officers assisted the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) with a vehicle pursuit that ended near Crown Valley Parkway and Coast Highway. Laguna Beach officers helped establish a perimeter and our canine team responded to assist with a search. The driver of the vehicle was later located hiding in a nearby yard.
- On Sunday, December 17, 2023, at 1613 hours, officers responded to Katella Street about a male subject going through a mental episode who was threatening his neighbor with guns. Officers contacted the male subject and managed to talk him out of the residence. He was placed under arrest and officers confiscated five firearms from his home.
- On Monday, December 18, 2023, at 1007 hours, officers responded to Ralph's grocery store about a theft which just occurred. A description of the male subject who fled was given to responding officers and a short time later, he was located near the Taco Stand. The male subject was placed under arrest for multiple violations, including an outstanding warrant.
- On Monday, December 19, 2023, at 0002 hours, officers responded to the 100 block of Saint Ann's for a suspicious male in a vehicle. A subject was located and taken into custody for possession of narcotics.
- At 0202 hours, officers contacted a female pedestrian in the area of Glenneyre Street and Oak Street. A small amount of narcotics were located on the female and additional pieces of evidence were located in her U-Haul truck near the Laguna Lodge. It appears the female and an unknown male were responsible for mail theft which occurred in the City of San Clemente. LBPB detectives are working with OCSD to get the mail returned to its rightful owners. One subject was arrested for possession of narcotics and mail theft.
- At 1330 hours, officers located a stolen vehicle and conducted a high-risk car stop in the 300 block of Broadway. The driver was arrested for possession of narcotics and a stolen vehicle.
- On Monday, December 18, 2023, at 0438 hours, officers responded to Ganahl Lumber about a burglary. The two suspects had fled before the officers' arrival with a large number of power tools. This is an active investigation.
- On Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at 2225 hours, officers responded to the area of Ceanothus Drive and arrested two male subjects for burglary. The two male subjects had been located with dark-colored clothing and flashlights in the area. Additional information was substantiated by witnesses in the area and both male subjects were arrested for burglary and transported to the Laguna Beach jail.
- On December 20, 2023, LBPB was dispatched to the north city limits for a cut and rescue traffic collision. Officers located an abandoned vehicle on its side at the bottom of El Morro dip. CHP took over the investigation.

- Training of new HLO Officer Zach Oblea is ongoing.

Traffic Section

- Working on ordering equipment from the Office of Traffic Safety grant.
- Working with the new Motor Officer to prepare them for the upcoming Basic Motor Academy in January 2024.

Park Ranger Section

- The Park Rangers attended Cocoa with a Cop at the Public Library.
- The Park Rangers transitioned to their new schedule this week. This will allow for three park rangers seven days a week and for longer periods to address concerns in the early evening.

Parking Services Section

- The PSOs are addressing community concerns related to illegal parking in various areas of the city.

Community Services Officer (CSO) Section

- Hot Cocoa with a Cop at the OC Library
- Shop with a Cop at the Irvine Spectrum with Laguna Beach students
- Police Navidad at the Boys and Girls Club
- Assisted with Spark of Love with the Fire Department

Community Events

- Christmas Golf Cart Parade

Sean Joyce

Interim City Manager