

The Week That Was^{TW2}

March 25 –March 29, 2024



1. **Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center Cellular Booster**

On March 26, the City Council approved the purchase of a cellular booster system for the Laguna Beach Community and Recreation Center (LBCRC). This system will enhance cellular service for all users at the LBCRC by amplifying existing cellular signals from nearby towers. As a result, comprehensive coverage throughout the facility will be ensured, which is necessary for providing emergency response within the City. IT Division staff estimate that the system will be implemented within 45 days.

2. **Spring Compost Giveaway Event**

On Saturday, March 23, in partnership with Waste Management and OC Waste & Recycling, the City hosted a successful drive-thru compost giveaway at the Act V Parking Lot. The event was organized by Administrative Analyst Ashley Moran with staff assistance from the Orange County Conservation Corps, who provided a team of 6 corps members. Approximately 135 vehicles drove through the event to obtain 15 tons of compost was distributed to residents from the Irvine Bee Canyon Greenery at the Bowerman Landfill. OC Waste & Recycling creates the compost, which is STA (Seal of Testing Assurance) Certified by the U.S. Compost Council as compost derived from curbside residential green and organic waste. The free compost giveaway helps promote awareness of the importance of diverting organic waste from landfills and reducing greenhouse gases through composting.

3. **Citywide Asphalt and Concrete Repairs**

Over the last two weeks, contractors working for the Public Works & Utilities Department performed permanent asphalt and concrete repairs at more than a dozen locations Citywide to correct various pavement deficiencies such as potholes, depressed pavement, broken curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. Residents and affected businesses were notified in advance. This work was coordinated by Maintenance Supervisor Todd Henry and inspected by Project Manager Bob Koch.

4. **Street Maintenance Division Staff Attends Training**

On March 21, the Public Works & Utilities Department several members of the Street Maintenance Division attended a traffic control training seminar hosted by the American Public Works Association. The primary purpose of attending the seminar was to heighten safety awareness for those employees who work in the traveled way. Staff members who attended the training include Maintenance Worker I Luis Gonzalez-Ayala, Maintenance Worker II Jose Torres, Equipment Operator Rick Weiers, Equipment Operator Elias Campos, and Deputy Director Reza Jafari.

5. **Comprehensive Zoning Code Update**

On March 26, the City Council held a study session for a comprehensive zoning code update. Principal Planner Wendy Jung and Planning Manager Amber Dobson presented a draft scope of services for the work effort necessary to update the zoning code. Following staff's presentation and receipt of public comment, the City Council directed staff to proceed with issuing the RFP and appointed Councilmembers Bob Whalen and Mark Orgill to collaborate with City staff and consultants on the comprehensive code update effort. Staff plans to issue the RFP in April, and return to the City Council in Summer 2024 with a recommendation to award a contract.

6. **Design Review Board March 28 Meeting Recap**

On March 28, the Design Review Board recognized the Board Chairman, Don Sheridan, for his service to the community serving on the Design Review Board; this was Don Sheridan's final Board meeting. Community Development Department staff presented items at the meeting that included five noticed applications. One application was continued, and one application was tabled. Below is a summary of the three public hearing items considered:

- 622 Bluebird Canyon Drive – The Board approved a modification to the roofline of an existing single-family home and found that view equity had been achieved.
- 950 Baja Street – The Board had previously heard the project and had recommended changes. The applicant incorporated those changes, and the Board approved a new single-family home on a vacant lot with several changes to the plans related to decks, landscaping, and square footage via a condition of approval.
- 705 Marlin Drive – The Board approved modifications to a single-family home with a previous Design Review application and changes to the prior conditions of approval. Modifications included a 34 square foot addition to the first floor, a change to a privacy wall, and a change to the roofline of the structure.

- **Housing and Human Services Committee recommends that City Council pursue a Local Housing Trust Fund.**

This week, the Housing and Human Services Committee (HHSC) emphasized the importance of establishing a Local Housing Trust Fund (LHTF) during its meeting. Discussions revolved around administrative and loan guidelines, the need to pursue grant funding, and City revenue sources. HHSC also discussed priority populations and programs. This effort underscores the City's commitment to addressing funding options for affordable housing needs. The matter is tentatively scheduled for City Council consideration on April 9, 2024.

7. **Thank you!**

I want to again express my deepest appreciation to the Laguna Beach City Council that assigned me 7 months ago the honor of serving as interim city manager of such a terrific organization. I have truly enjoyed every day of my time in this beautiful community.

Laguna Beach is a special place because of your involvement. The City Council and staff are committed to providing you with information that fosters and informs your engagement. I want to assure you that City staff remains committed to continuing to share with you, through this publicly disseminated weekly correspondence, the noteworthy

efforts of your local government that affect the quality of life and municipal business of your community.

8. Police Department Reports

Employee Special Recognition

- One of the biggest liabilities of a police department is the management of the property/evidence room. For the past ten years, our valued property/evidence officer, Debi Jensen, has done an outstanding job to ensure we remain compliant with the law. Debi is a passionate team player and dedicated to her craft. On Wednesday, March 27, Debi received an Award of Achievement for her outstanding work with the California Association of Property and Evidence (CAPE). We are extremely proud of her!
- LBPD participated in the annual Baker to Vegas law enforcement 120-mile relay race and returned with a top finish in their category. The team consisted of 20 runners and 11 volunteers. The department has participated in this relay on 15 occasions; this was the fastest team in the department's history.

Patrol Activity

On Thursday, March 21, at 10:18 p.m., officers conducted a traffic stop in the 3200 block of Alta Laguna Boulevard. A vehicle search was conducted which yielded a loaded handgun with the serial number filed off. The driver (Santa Ana resident) was arrested for felony weapon possession-related charges.

On Friday, March 22, at 2:29 a.m., an officer received notification of a stolen vehicle passing him around Cleo and South Coast Highway. The officer located the stolen vehicle and conducted a felony traffic stop at 4th Avenue and Coast Highway. The vehicle was stolen out of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and had three occupants. The two adult occupants were arrested for vehicle theft and the third, a 14-year-old juvenile, was transported to Orangetown.

At 3:36 a.m., another officer received another stolen vehicle notification and attempted to stop the vehicle. The vehicle fled out the canyon and the officer terminated the pursuit when he lost sight of the vehicle past SR-73 (according to policy).

At 10:03 a.m., officers responded to an injury traffic collision on North Coast Highway (NCH) at Emerald Bay. Two vehicles were involved, resulting in three injuries. Both northbound lanes of NCH were closed for two hours.

At 3:11 p.m., officers responded to a fight at Main Beach. One subject was arrested for public intoxication. While in custody, he attempted to escape and had to be physically restrained by staff in jail.

On Saturday, March 23, at 1:10 a.m., officers were dispatched to the 600 block of Ramona regarding an unknown trouble call that was transferred from CHP. Officers met with a male who stated he was involved in a Domestic Violence incident with his girlfriend. The male had visible injuries to his arms. The girlfriend had barricaded herself in the residence.

Later that morning, she was arrested for a felony warrant and the previous night's domestic violence.

At 4:55 p.m., a park ranger contacted the driver of an illegally parked vehicle. The driver appeared intoxicated and drove away. The park ranger was then aggressively approached by the driver later. The park ranger physically restrained the subject until officers arrived. The subject was arrested for various misdemeanor charges.

At 11:09 p.m., an officer observed the suspect of the various crimes against the elderly female (from the March 20 incident) in the 400 block of Glenneyre. The subject fled when the officer arrived. The officer saw the vehicle was again vandalized (white spray paint) and stopped the suspect. The suspect was in possession of white spray paint. The subject was arrested for various felonies.

At 8:07 p.m., Laguna Beach police and fire responded to Cleo Street and South Coast Highway about a traffic collision involving a pedestrian. The female pedestrian was believed to be outside the crosswalk when the collision occurred. She was transported to Mission Hospital Mission Viejo.

Neighborhood Enhancement Team (NET):

Homeless Liaison Officer (HLO) Section

- Working on verifying all information and documentation for the in-house 290 registration program.
- Working with OC Parks to clear out homeless encampments that border our city.

Traffic Section

- The Traffic Section is preparing to order an additional RADAR trailer.

Sean Joyce
Interim City Manager