

# The Week That Was<sup>TW2</sup>

April 1 – 4, 2024



## 1. **2024 Mayor's State of the City Address Available Online**

The 2024 Mayor's State of the City Address, hosted by the Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce and the City, was held on April 2 at the Montage. Mayor Sue Kempf provided a comprehensive overview of the city's status and forthcoming initiatives. The address was followed by a Q&A session, led by Mayor Kempf and featuring the insights of Acting City Manager Gavin Curran, Police Chief Jeff Calvert, Fire Chief Niko King, Acting Marine Safety Chief Kai Bond, and Director of Public Works and Utilities Mark McAvoy. Watch the [Mayor's State of the City Address here](#).

## 2. **Interim Community Development Director to Start April 8, 2024. Recruitment for Permanent Director Underway**

David Crabtree will step into the role of Interim Community Development Director, commencing Monday, April 8. David has notably held the position of Community Development Director for the City of Brea, culminating in his retirement in 2020. He has further contributed his expertise through interim assignments in Buena Park, Fountain Valley, and Chino Hills. Meanwhile, Mark McAvoy will resume his responsibilities as Director of Public Works and Utilities. We look forward to securing a permanent candidate for the position by summer.

## 3. **Fire Administration Moves to Community and Recreation Center**

On Thursday, April 4, Fire Administration successfully relocated to their newly designated premises at the Community and Recreation Center. This move provides Fire Administration with office and meeting spaces, facilitating their upcoming endeavors, including the establishment of the new Emergency Operations Center. The Police Department will repurpose the vacated area at City Hall to serve their operational needs.

## 4. **Career Fair Attendance**

On March 20, 2024, at the Santiago Community College Career Fair, and on March 28, 2024, at the Laguna Beach High School Student Job Fair, department representatives engaged with over 275 job seekers and students, promoting various job opportunities. Our City team was represented by Robina Arora (HR Analyst), Corporal Manzano, Josh Norcross (Ocean Lifeguard III), Andre Chism (Transit Supervisor), Michelle Farry (Recreation Coordinator), Zachary Nelson (Marine Safety Officer), and Henry White (Ocean Lifeguard II).

## 5. **Fiscal Year 2022-23 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and Single Audit Issued**

Finance Division staff have been diligently working with the City's external auditors, Eide Bailly LLP, on the annual financial audit since the close of the fiscal year. The audit has been completed, resulting in the issuance of the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and Single Audit Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. The independent auditors issued an unmodified opinion on the City's financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, which is the highest level of assurance possible.

#### **6. Graffiti Removal at Boat Canyon Park**

On Tuesday, April 2, the Facilities Maintenance Division of the Public Works & Utilities Department removed an extensive amount of graffiti near Boat Canyon Park. The graffiti was discovered by a Police Department park ranger the prior evening. Due to the highly offensive nature of the graffiti, removal efforts began by 7:00 a.m. and were completed within a few hours. The work was performed by Maintenance Lead Worker Steve Rivera, Maintenance Worker II Gilbert Aguirre, and Maintenance Worker I Dylan Ruvalcaba, and was coordinated by Maintenance Supervisor Wayne Chintala.

#### **7. April 3 Administrative Design Review Meeting Recap**

The Administrative Design Review held its regular meeting on April 3, 2024. Staff from the Community Development Department presenting items at the meeting included Assistant Planner Jessica Mendoza, Associate Planner Daniel Latham, and Planning Manager Amber Dobson; Principal Planner Martina Caron served as the Hearing Officer. Below is a summary of public hearing items:

- 31192 Brooks Street – A two-year extension of time was approved.
- 390 Pinecrest Drive – A two-year extension of time was approved.
- 2001 Rim Rock Canyon Road – Modifications to a prior design review approval, including exterior material changes, replacement and new select windows and doors, and an addition of four-square feet, were approved.
- 70 S La Senda Drive – New elevated deck extension was approved.

#### **8. Planning Commission April 3 Meeting Recap**

The Planning Commission held its regular meeting on April 3, 2024. Below is a summary of the two public hearing items considered:

- **Hotel Laguna – Exterior Modifications**

The Planning Commission, at the request of the applicant, continued consideration of this item to allow additional time for preparation of the project documents. The public hearing was continued to the April 17, 2024, Planning Commission meeting. Principal Planner Martina Caron presented the item.

- **Temporary Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit – Outdoor Dining for Wild Taco**

The Planning Commission considered a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) and Coastal Development Permit for Wild Taco Laguna Beach, located at the intersection of Ocean Avenue and Coast Highway. The TUP requested extending outdoor dining for Wild Taco, as an interim measure, while staff further evaluates a permanent Outdoor Dining and Parklet Program. The Commission reviewed the project and the CEQA Notice of Exemption and after deliberation voted to conditionally approve the project. Senior Administrative Analyst Louie Lacasella presented the item.

## 9. Police Department Reports

### *Patrol Activity:*

On Friday, March 29, at 3:05 p.m., officers responded to an injury traffic collision on Coast Hwy at Nyes Place. A vehicle rear-ended another vehicle resulting in neck pain to the driver in the front. The driver was transported to Mission Hospital, Mission Viejo as a precaution. Traffic was affected for 30 minutes.

On Saturday, March 30, at 7:30 a.m., officers responded to a cut-and-rescue collision on Broadway Street at Acacia Drive. A single vehicle collided with a tree resulting in westbound traffic being closed for 40 minutes. The driver was transported to the hospital.

At 2:38 p.m., officers initiated a traffic stop at 2000 Laguna Canyon Road. The vehicle did not yield but continued driving the posted speed limit. The officer initiated a pursuit, requesting assistance. The vehicle continued on Laguna Canyon Road until Lake Forest Drive where it ultimately yielded. The driver was identified as a tourist from Turkey and did not understand the responsibility of pulling to the right when stopped by a police officer.

On Sunday, March 30, at 1:42 a.m., officers responded to Cleo Street at S. Coast Hwy for a collision. Officers arrived and located a damaged vehicle with the driver still behind the wheel. The driver collided with two vehicles and attempted to flee the scene, but the damage to the vehicle prevented him from driving away. The driver was arrested for DUI.

At 3:05 a.m., an officer conducted a routine check of an occupied vehicle at the Alta Laguna Extension. Both occupants are convicted felons with misdemeanor warrants. During the search of the vehicle, ammunition was located and a charge of felon in possession of ammunition was added.

At 9:39 p.m., officers responded to the Friendship Shelter about a stolen E-bike. The suspect was seen on surveillance video and identified by staff. The male suspect was later located and arrested for grand theft.

On Monday, April 1, at 9:13 a.m., officers responded to the Sawdust Festival grounds about a burglary report. The loss was approximately \$400 in computer equipment.

At 3:53 p.m., officers responded to the 200 block of Forest Avenue about a vehicle burglary. It was determined the vehicle was left unlocked and a black backpack containing a 9mm Beretta and personal information was stolen. Suspect information was obtained via surveillance. This incident is still under investigation.

On Tuesday, April 2, at 11:42 p.m., an officer conducted a vehicle enforcement stop around Ocean Vista and Marilyn Drive. A search of the vehicle revealed methamphetamine, forged government IDs, and reported stolen property. The female driver was placed under arrest for multiple violations.

On Wednesday, April 3, at 1:13 a.m., an officer conducted a routine check of an occupied vehicle within the 600 block of Cliff Drive. A search of the vehicle revealed a large amount

of psilocybin (mushrooms) and a loaded semi-automatic handgun. The male subject was placed under arrest and transported to Orange County Jail.

At 3:02 a.m., officers responded to the area of 1500 Skyline Drive about a domestic violence incident. Officers located the male suspect fleeing the scene and was arrested for domestic violence and other violations.

*Homeless Liaison Officer (HLO) Section*

- Working with OC Mental Health to do in-home follow-ups.
- Updating trespass letters with downtown businesses.
- Continued work with OC Parks to clear out homeless encampments.

*Traffic Section*

- The Traffic Section is working with the new motor officer to prepare them for the upcoming Basic Motor Academy course in May.
- Traffic officers are conducting directed enforcement at various areas within the city based on community concerns.

*Park Ranger Section*

- A few of the Park Rangers were approved for various ancillary duties within the department, (i.e. Social Media Team, Drone Pilot, Peer Support, etc.)
- Continuing to be proactive within the parks and beaches on both education and enforcement.

*Parking Services Section*

- All PSOs are cross-training each other on all duties and responsibilities related to their positions.

*Community Services Officer (CSO) Section*

- The CSO is planning the Road Safety Expo scheduled for Sunday, May 19th.
- The CSO is assisting with the upcoming Citizen's Academy graduation.

Gavin Curran  
Acting City Manager