



# From the City Manager's Desk

a weekly report from Scott Ochoa, City of Monrovia



March 9, 2007

## ***Measure L Passes!***

Although we have yet to get a final tally of the 250+ provisional ballots (we are awaiting the County's verification of signatures), the unofficial canvass indicates that Measure L passed 70% to 30%. Generally, these provisional ballots mirror the votes cast overall. We should have a final tally by this coming Friday.

It is no surprise that the total votes garnered by the Library measure roughly equal the number of votes cast in favor of Mayor Hammond and Council members Adams and Lutz. I think this is an indication of the trust that the community has for this Council. Rest assured we will do our dead-level best to convert this trust into achievement on behalf of the community. Whether it is a new library, a rehabilitated fire station or the economic vitality of the city, we truly appreciate the trust and confidence of the entire community.

## **Old Town Construction Update**

At this point, all of the major Myrtle Avenue Improvements have been completed and construction crews are focusing on the remaining punch-list items – clean-up, repairs to damaged private property, and installing the remaining twinkle lights in the trees. The issue of the moment is the brightness of the new street lights on Myrtle. This issue has come up recently with a several complaints that the street is too bright. On the other hand, we've had many more folks indicate that the lighting is great because it augments the sense of security and destination in the Old Town district. That's great, because that sentiment was exactly what we were shooting for when these plans were drawn up as part of the Vision 2005 strategic planning process.

Still, City Council members have individually requested that we experiment with lower wattage bulbs to see if we can "soften" the lighting without losing the desired effects. The nice thing about being ahead of schedule and under budget with a project is that we can absorb these kinds of contingencies into the project budget. Even if we were to buy new light bulbs for Myrtle Avenue, the good news is that we can use the existing bulbs in other City-owned light standards. We shall see. Please be sure to email us your questions and suggestions!

Colorado Commons is moving along very quickly. The developer, Barker Pacific, recently opened a sales office on the 500 block of South Myrtle. The response thus far has been overwhelming and I believe the units will sell out very quickly. If you have not been by the office, I'd encourage you to stop in – if only to get an idea of what the units will be like.

As always, if you have any questions about any of Old Town projects, please feel free to give me a call.

## **Monrovia FD Responds With Strike Team**

The Anaheim Hills fire got progressively worse this weekend, so much so that Monrovia FD participated in a Strike Team request that required us to send two fire engines (one was the State OES engine that we house) and a battalion chief. Naturally, we instituted a callback of staff to cover our shifts. If the summer indeed arrives early this year, then we could see an increase in Strike Team requests.

On a related note, with the higher temperatures usually come "Red Flag" fire conditions. Thus, you may see our Fire Department vehicles patrolling foothill neighborhoods as a precautionary measure. Please feel free to contact Chief Donovan with any questions regarding fire prevention activities.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Planning Commission – March 14, 2007. A Planning Commission training session will be conducted at 6 p.m. by Carol Lynch, Assistant City Attorney and Alice Griselle, Community Development Director and cover topics such as the Commissioner's duties, public service ethics, working with fellow commissioners and staff, preparing for meetings, basic meeting procedures, quasi-judicial and legislative decisions, findings, the record, and public participation in land use planning.

The regular meeting will convene at 7:30 and there are two items on the agenda:

- An Ordinance to amend Title 17(zoning) of the Monrovia Municipal Code pertaining to permitted uses and use type explanations for the P/QP(Public/Quasi-Public) zone.
- A General Plan Conformity for vacation of an alley between California and Monrovista Avenues so that it can be incorporated in the Planned Unit Development of 20 units approved for the site.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES HAPPENINGS**

### **RECREATION DIVISION**

Community Services Commission. Administrative Reports on the agenda for the March 13, 2007 Commission Meeting;

- MOU between the City of Monrovia Department of Community Service, and United States Youth Volleyball League for use of the Mary Wilcox Youth Center: Review recommendation to renew the USYVL MOU for the period of April 1, 2007 thru March 21, 2008 for use of the Mary Wilcox Youth Center to conduct youth volleyball programs.
- 2007 Program and Equipment Fee Analysis: Review recommendation to increase program fees as follows: Youth football to \$30 per child, swim team fees to \$60 for first child, \$50 for second child, \$40 for third and subsequent child(ren), racquetball fees to \$2 for youth play and \$5 for adult play, and pool rental fee to \$90 per hour and pool rental fee for youth events - \$75 per hour.
- 2006-2007 Mary Wilcox Youth Center Revenue and Fee Analysis: Review recommendation to increase gymnasium fees at the Mary Wilcox Youth Center to \$60 per hour, include a \$10 fee per hour for use of the kitchenette as part of the room rental fee structure and include a \$12.50 staff recovery fee per person, per hour.

Another Successful Arbor Day Event. City dignitaries, staff and community members joined 40 Youth Commissioners as they celebrated the annual Arbor Day Ceremony. This year's event was held on March 7 at 4 p.m. in the City of Monrovia Parking Lot on the corner of Lime and Ivy Avenues. This year's tree planting was dedicated to Breast Cancer Awareness and a representative from City of Hope spoke on this important issue. City Clerk Linda Proctor, City Treasurer Steve Baker and Community Services Commission Chair Becky Shevlin graciously accepted the Tree City USA Award presented by a representative from the Los Angeles County Forestry Division. This is the 20<sup>th</sup> year the City of Monrovia has been awarded this honor. The planted tree was the Ginkgo Biloba which replaced a damaged tree in the parking lot.

Golden Age Senior Club – In the News. The March 8 edition of the Weekly Star featured an article on the Golden Age Club's presentation of "Joey & Maria's Comedy Italian Wedding". The event was held on Monday, February 25 the Monrovia Community Center and was the perfect setting to stage this comedy production hosted by the Golden Age Senior Club. The article detailed the senior's singing, conga line dancing and laughing throughout the interactive play. Seniors were quoted as saying "Laughter is the best medicine," "When you get to our age, what else do you look forward to? Memories; good memories!" Senior club meetings are held weekly at the Monrovia Community Center. For further information or to join a senior club contact the Monrovia Community Center at 626.256.8246.

### LIBRARY DIVISION

After School Special: On Thursday, March 15 at 3:45 p.m., the Youth Services Department presents the Brian Waite Band in the Alvord Room. Brian Waite and his band are the best kids' rock and roll band ever! Get ready for some toe tappin', sockhoppin', kid-friendly musical fun.

Saturday Special: Celebrate St. Patrick's Day by listening to holiday stories, enjoy a snack, watch a short film about something green and create a St. Pat's Day craft to take home at the Library's St. Paddy's Day Special on March 17 at 11 a.m. and again at 2 p.m.

Become a Literacy Tutor: Reminder: a Literacy Tutor Training Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, March 17, 8:45 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., at the Monrovia Community Center.

### **FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Personnel responded to 74 emergency calls from 0800 hours February 28 to 0800 hours March 7. Significant Incidents include:

Vault Fire: On Monday March 5 at 7 p.m., Engine 101 responded to an electrical vault fire at a senior citizen complex on Royal Oaks Drive. Edison was notified and responded to the location. After Edison crews opened the vault, Engine 101 extinguished the fire with a portable CO2 extinguisher. The vault contained a set of 16,000 volt power lines. Due to the vault fire, several of the buildings experienced a power outage. Consequently, an elderly female was unable to utilize her electric powered breathing treatment and became short of breath. Squad 101 responded and transported the patient to Arcadia Methodist Hospital for treatment.

Vehicle Accident. On Tuesday afternoon, firefighters responded to a reported vehicle accident on the east bound 210 Freeway at Huntington Drive. Several vehicles had collided, causing a truck to go over the embankment and off the freeway. The driver of one vehicle sustained minor injuries and was transported to the hospital.

## FIRE PREVENTION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

Captain Patrick attended the Assistance to Firefighters Grant workshop this week. This month the Department is expecting the Federal Government to release the guidelines for 2007 grant applications. The Fire Grant work group is working to identify eligible projects and prepare recommendations.

## TRAINING AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

March 1, 2007 was a big day for the Monrovia Unified School District and the Monrovia Fire Department. As part of our continued support for the kids in the Monrovia Reads Program several of our members took part in the opportunity to read to the second graders. Later that afternoon, three of our units participated in the School District-wide earthquake drill as part of our joint efforts to develop guidelines for the safe handling of our young people and the coordination and communication with the City of Monrovia EOC during emergency operations.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

This week the Fire Department conducted a one-day staff retreat (all Captains, Battalion Chiefs, Deputy Fire Marshal Robin, Administrative Assistant Dennis and Fire Chief Donovan were present) held at the Canyon Park cabin. The purpose of the retreat was to conduct in-service training, to discuss current and prospective operational issues and to evaluate the effectiveness of the department, given the recent re-organization.

The day began with a very informative class on the budget process and use of the City's budget computer system. Administrative Director Mark Alvarado and Finance Division Manager Buffy Bullis presented the class which was well received and very useful – our thanks to Mark and Buffy for their time and continued support of the Fire Department and our thanks also to Information Systems Manager Mitch Cochran for his hard work in setting up the computer system for use during the retreat! After the budget class was presented the group discussed the past year's events and identified expectations for the upcoming year. Finally, open discussion was held related to the effectiveness of current practices given the major department re-organization that has taken place and is continuing to occur.

Overall opinion was very positive and the meeting was concluded with a consensus from all that the department is heading in the right direction and is improving the day to day practices related to effectiveness and efficiency.

## **ON THE POLICE BLOTTER**

During the last seven day period, the Police Department handled 514 calls for service resulting in 148 investigations. Following are this week's highlighted issues and events:

Warrant Arrest. On March 4 at 12:40 p.m., an officer was patrolling the 500 block of West Huntington when he saw three subjects loitering near the businesses. When he stopped to investigate, a computer check revealed one of the subjects had a no-bail warrant for grand theft auto. The suspect was arrested and the other subjects were field interviewed and released.

Vandalism / Battery on a Peace Officer. On March 4 at 3:23 p.m., a witness called to report four suspects spray painting graffiti on city traffic signs and the block walls in the 1700 block of South California. The suspects were last seen headed west on Evergreen towards Myrtle. An officer saw the four suspects with the paint cans in the 100 block West Evergreen. One suspect ran inside a

business. The officer detained the remaining three suspects and ordered them to sit on the ground. When the second officer arrived to assist, one of the suspects attempted to flee and resisted arrest, which caused injuries to the officers and suspect. The witness in this case positively identified all of the suspects. One suspect was charged with felony battery on officers and the other three were cited. The witness who reported the crime was rewarded with the \$100 graffiti bounty.

Parent Abuse. On March 4 at 11 p.m., a single mother raising her 12-year-old son by herself called the police for help. Officers arrived and discovered the boy had hit his mother with a glass bottle, then began beating her with his skateboard. After determining he did know right from wrong, he was arrested and subsequently taken to Los Angeles County Juvenile Hall.

Burglary in Progress. On March 5 at 2:15 p.m., officers responded to a residential burglary in progress. The suspects were described as a male subject wearing a baseball jersey and a female subject with long brown hair. The reporting party saw the two suspects walking north away from a house in the 300 block of North May. The male suspect was carrying a green duffle bag. Officers did an area search and located the two suspects and took them into custody. The male suspect was in possession of a controlled substance, which was found in his wallet. Investigation continuing.

Fight in Progress / Man with a Gun. On March 5 at 3:42 p.m., officers responded to a call of a fight in progress in the 100 block of East El Norte. The suspects had already fled the scene. There had been a fist fight between two individuals, and one individual had pulled up his shirt to reveal a firearm in his waistband. Officers obtained the suspect's vehicle description. The fight is a continuation of an incident from the previous night that did not occur in Monrovia. Investigation continuing.

Shoplifter in Custody / Man with a Knife. On March 5 at 4:11 p.m., officers responded to a call of a man with a knife inside a business in the 1600 block of South Mountain. The original information implied the suspect was using a knife in the commission of stealing property or to avoid capture. Officers arrived and discovered the loss prevention officers had seen the suspect remove an anti-theft device attached to the property with a knife. The suspect did not use the knife as a weapon. The suspect has a previous theft conviction, so this shoplifting is a felony petty theft with a prior case. The suspect was arrested and charged with the felony offense.

Transformer Fire. On March 5 at 6:53 p.m., police received two calls that a transformer had exploded in the 1000 block of Royal Oaks. On arrival, officers found there was a small fire seen near the transformer. Monrovia Fire Department personnel responded and put out the fire. There were no additional fires as a result of the transformer exploding.

Fraud Report. On March 6 at 2:06 p.m., a business in the 1600 block of South Mountain called about a male subject trying to purchase a large amount of gift cards with a fraudulent credit card. The suspect left the business prior to the officers' arrival. The officers conducted an area search and located the suspect inside a nearby business. A field show-up was done and the suspect was positively identified. The suspect had gift cards from several other stores and a stack of fraudulent credit cards in his vehicle. The account numbers on the cards were actually good account numbers belonging to other people. Investigation continuing.

Disturbing Subjects On March 6 at 4:45 p.m., officers responded to Shamrock and Monrovista on a call reporting six to seven male subjects and two female subjects in the roadway drinking beer and possibly selling drugs. When the officers arrived, the subjects started to walk onto the front lawn of a nearby house. The officers verified the subjects were not wanted on the property and then told the group to leave. One of the male subjects refused to leave and challenged the officers. This subject was arrested for trespassing, challenging to fight and delaying a police officer.

# THE PUBLIC WORKS **SCOOP**



## **ENGINEERING:**

Traffic Signal Installation - Royal Oaks and Bradbury. On September 5, 2006, City Council awarded a contract for the traffic signal installation at Royal Oaks and Bradbury. Staff was aware that the manufacturing of the signals would take several months. The contractor is scheduled to begin installation on Thursday, March 8. Area residents have been notified. The project is scheduled to be operational through mid-April.

Myrtle Avenue Streetscape Project Update. The majority of the construction is completed with the contractor and staff inspecting and creating a punch list for correction. This should be fully completed within three weeks.

Colorado Commons Update. The concrete garage floors have been poured. The first floor of the parking structure deck is being installed in the residential parking area including the first ramp. The contractor will begin to install rebar for the concrete floor, install all required plumbing and electrical conduits. The project is progressing on schedule.

539 Cloverleaf Update. All of the erosion control measures are completed including the placement of sandbags along each trail and in the open areas. In addition, desilting basins have been installed on the site. Brush clearance has started and should be completed in the next few weeks.

## **OPERATIONS – Environmental Services – Facilities – Parks**

2006 Christmas Tree Recycling Program was a Success. Of the 67 jurisdictions within Los Angeles County participating in this year's Christmas Tree Recycling Program, Monrovia had the fifth highest tonnage of Christmas trees disposed for the Green Waste Recovery Program. Monrovia residents and businesses placed 113 tons, or 11,345 Christmas trees, out during the week prior to and two weeks following Christmas for recycling. Thanks to all of the residents and businesses for recycling.

Graffiti Continues to be on the Rise. Recreation Park has received a lot attention from taggers this past week. The new benches at tables located under the gazebo has been a hot spot for the graffiti. In addition to painting all of Recreation Park's tables and benches this week, Parks Staff painted over 150 square feet of graffiti at different locations throughout the park.

Barney Glenn Field Update. Barney Glenn Field at Recreation Park received its last minute touchups in preparation for Monrovia Youth Baseball League's opening day ceremonies on Saturday, March 10.

## **STREETS:**

### Concrete Sidewalk Rehabilitation:

- 600 block S. Mayflower Ave. west side of street.

### 50/50 Driveway Approach Rehabilitations:

- 400 block Hurstview, 100 block Poinsettia

### Graffiti Removal:

- 14 traffic signs
- Block wall at Monrovia Wells Field

### Traffic Sign Installation/Replacement:

- Replaced bent sign post at Magnolia and Evergreen
- Straighten sign pole 521 S. Myrtle Ave.
- Straighten sign post southwest corner Stedman and Greystone
- Straighten sign post 1600 block south Myrtle Ave.
- Straighten street name sign northeast corner Myrtle and El Norte
- Straighten street name sign Myrtle and Taylor
- Replaced 35 MPH sign at Magnolia and Evergreen

### Miscellaneous:

- Cleared wood debris from roadway at Duarte Rd. and Mayflower
- Removed weeds from center median at Peck Rd. and Longden
- Covered street sweeping signs, no-parking signs, set out barricades with "POLLING LOCATION" signs and American Flags attached at all polling locations for local elections.

### **UTILITIES:**

#### Customer Service

- Staff read and recorded 720 water meters
- Completed 38 work orders
- Distributed 103 water shut-off notices
- Reactivated 5 water services

AMR Training - Customer Service and Finance staff have completed the training of the new Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system. The new handheld meter reading device has the capability of picking up radio frequency signals that will read and record water meter readings automatically into the hand held unit. The new AMR handheld unit also has the capability of manually inputting meter readings which is currently being used until the radio read meters are installed, beginning March 26, 2007.

Water Production: Water consumption is 36.5 millions gallons, an increase of approximately 4% compared to last week's figure.

Staff collected 54 monthly water samplings as required by the Department of Health Services:

- 31 water system sampling
- 15 well sampling
- 8 water treatment facility sampling

#### Utility Maintenance

- 5 new residential water services were installed
- 56 water main system valves were inspected and operated
- 15 underground service alert's utility location requests were completed
- 12,500 feet of sewer mains were cleaned
- 1 fire hydrant was replaced at 900 S. Monterey Avenue
- Repaired 1 water main break at 119 N. Shamrock Avenue.

The 2006 -2007 Water Main Replacement Project will break ground on Monday March 12, 2007. The project consists of installing new water mains, water services, valves and fire hydrants beginning at Stedman Place, followed by Oaks Avenue and Highland Place. Residents who will be affected by the construction will receive at least 2 days advance notification.

Have a great weekend!

---

**FOR YOUR CALENDARS:**

***SUNDAY, MARCH 11***

***DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS***

**Tues., March 20, 7:30 p.m.**

**Regular Council Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 21,**

**First Day of Spring**

**Tues., April 3, 7:30 p.m.**

**Regular Council Meeting**

**Tues., April 17, 7:30 p.m.**

**Regular Council Meeting**