



From the City Manager's Desk

a weekly report from Scott Ochoa, City of Monrovia



November 2, 2007

Library Relocation Soon to be Underway

Monrovia's new public library will soon move from concept to reality. The first step, however, is handling the logistics of moving the existing library collection and staff to temporary quarters so that the existing structure can be demolished.

To that end, Saturday November 10 will be the final day of operations at the existing library building in Library Park. Library patrons have been advised for some time now of the relocation, and updated general information announcing the closure and the temporary relocation has been disseminated on the City's website, in press releases and street banners (these will be placed early next week).

The temporary home of the Monrovia Public Library will be the Mary Wilcox Youth Center. While special flooring (to protect the gymnasium floor) and electrical systems have been installed in the Youth Center – and the actual move will only take about two weeks – the Public Library will not reopen until December 17. This five-week closure will give staff the time to re-establish all of the internal sorting and cataloguing systems and other necessary functions to get ready for the public. Monrovia's Library staff has already been in contact with their counterparts in surrounding communities to request their support and assistance in serving patrons during this transition period.

If you have any specific questions regarding the library's "transitional/abridged" collection, hours of operations, story times, etc., please feel free to contact Community Service Director April Soash.

Wildfire Wrap-up

This latest round of wildfires was an unprecedented wave of destruction. The scary part is that we are not out of brush fire season yet. Thus, we will continue to remain vigilant and cautious with Monrovia's hillsides. You never want to see or experience this kind of devastation, but it does represent the best test of our region's readiness to combat this kind of disaster.

In terms of Monrovia's contribution to the collective effort to extinguish these firestorms, all three of Monrovia's fire engines that were out on strike teams have returned home safely. Our people did the MFD proud; I am grateful to them for their effort and courage. Additionally, it is important to note that we were able to send three engines because all of our call-back provisions worked as designed and we had the staffing capacity to guard the home front as well as participate in mutual aid.

Lastly, I am confident that the State and Federal governments will make good on their commitment to reimburse local agencies for their personnel and equipment costs to participate in the mutual aid effort. It's a testament to the training and professionalism of California's emergency services apparatus that our fire and police forces know what to do and how to do it, if and when disaster strikes.

Fire Station No.1 Grand Re-opening

Speaking of the Fire Department, please join us as we re-dedicate Fire Station No.1 on Thursday, November 8 at 3 p.m.

This building was in seriously bad repair. Over the past several years, however, the City Council has held to a comprehensive and strategic program to keep all City buildings in workable condition, and directed staff to set aside funds to maintain our fixed assets. The five year program adopted by the Council focused first on Fire Station No. 1, the Corporation Yard and the Historical Museum (the Library, because it was so completely out of date, was considered a teardown – hence, Measure L last March). Today, with Fire Station No.1 done, the Corporation Yard nearing completion and the Museum underway, we are executing the plan expeditiously and cost-effectively. Moreover, all of this work is getting done alongside the regular and ongoing maintenance of Monrovia's streets, water and sewer system infrastructure.

City Council Meeting Preview

The November 6 City Council meeting agenda features a number of interesting items for consideration.

We will begin the evening with a Study Session on Integrated Waste Management issues. This dialogue is a continuation of a previous study session that focused on the question, "What happens after 2013?" This is the date that the Puente Hills Landfill closes. Currently, the vast majority of Monrovia's municipal solid waste is disposed of at this landfill.

The Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County do have a plan in place to load trash onto trains and haul it out to huge, modern landfills in the desert. However, there are two problems with this approach – 1) it is hugely expensive; and 2) this "waste by rail" program cannot – at least, initially – handle all of the waste currently being disposed of at Puente Hills Landfill. For example, Puente Hills today accepts 13,000 tons of trash per day. This daily limit is usually met before mid-morning. Under the waste by rail program, only 8,000 tons of trash can be processed and loaded onto the rail cars. Thus, what happens to the other 5,000 tons per day? We know today that private landfill operators take advantage of the early closure of public landfills like Puente Hills. This does not bode well for communities that will have to scramble to find a reliable location to dispose of their residents' and businesses' trash.

The staff presentation will focus on a number of different options, scenarios and technologies that will help address this vexing problem. It is important to keep in mind that there is likely not one answer to this puzzle; the answer is actually a combination of answers. The one thing I do believe for certain is that the status quo cannot be sustained.

We have a number of presentations on the agenda. The first is the recognition of the sponsors for the 2007 Halloween Event "Screamin' Skeletons"; the second is a presentation to the sponsors of "Make a Difference Day," held this past Saturday; third, is a presentation of the Good Neighbor Award to the Monrovia Home Depot for a Good Samaritan project recently undertaken; and finally, the recognition of the first graduating class of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) participants. As we saw with the recent firestorms, well-trained and knowledgeable volunteers can make a world of difference in responding to a disaster situation.

Under Public Hearings, item PH-1 will be opened and continued to the December 4 City Council meeting agenda, with no action taken on November 6.

The Monrovia Redevelopment Agency has one item on the business agenda. Item MRA-1 is the authorization to enter into a Sign Easement Option Agreement with the owners of the shopping center located at the northwest corner of Monterey Avenue and West Huntington Drive. With CompUSA having moved out of this site, we have today a great opportunity to land a major retail tenant at this key location. At the same time, the option to construct a modern electronic message board sign on the premises could be a benefit to both the new tenant and the City. This option agreement would give the Agency the right to construct such a sign sometime over the next five years. The monthly term for the option is \$6,500. Staff is recommending approval of the option agreement.

We have two Administrative Reports. Item AR-1 is the adoption and first reading of Ordinance 2007-17, regarding the 2007 California Fire Code and the 2006 International Fire Code. Essentially, municipalities must periodically update their respective fire safety codes to help ensure that the agency in question is both abreast of and enforcing the most modern and up to date health and safety codes. If the Council were to approve this ordinance, a public hearing would be set for the December 4 Council meeting to take additional testimony. Staff is recommending approval of Ordinance 2007-17.

Item AR-2 is the Amendment to the existing Agreement for Services with Curbside, Inc. to include E-Waste (electronic waste items) into the list of household hazardous waste items (HHW) that can be collected by this door-to-door service.

The initial contract for door-to-door collection of HHW materials was first approved by the City Council in 2002. Under this program, Monrovia residents can call Curbside, Inc. to come to their home and collect HHW, rather than deliver these hazardous materials themselves to the County's collection "Round-up's." With the proliferation of E-waste such as cell phones and computer monitors, and the concerted regional push to keep these hazardous materials out of landfills, staff is proposing to amend the contract with curbside to include such E-waste.

Basically, residents can have Curbside collect 10 items of E-waste free of charge. Amounts in excess of the 10 items will be charged \$0.48 per pound. Please note that this program is NOT available for business waste. The cost to the City for this contract amendment is \$20,000. Funds are available in the Waste Management Fund. Staff is recommending approval.

As always, if you have any questions about items on the agenda, please feel free to contact me directly.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Special Events

- Montecito Fine Arts School, 121 E. Huntington Drive is having an "Open House" on Saturday, November 3, from 7 to 11 p.m. A searchlight will be used between 7 and 9 p.m. to guide guests to the location.
- Sierra Cup, 409 S. Myrtle Avenue, will be having their "Grand Opening" on Saturday, November 10, from 5 to 11:00 p.m. Their activities will include a live jazz band at the rear of the business on the patio. The surrounding merchants were notified of the event. All of the activities should be contained inside of the location and in the rear patio.
- Immaculate Conception Church will be hosting a "Monte Carlo Night" fundraiser on Saturday, November 17, from 6 to 11:30 p.m. Activities will include food, dancing and a bar. A silent auction

and casino games will be held inside of a tent placed in the northern section of their parking lot. There should be sufficient parking remaining for participants.

COMMUNITY SERVICES HAPPENINGS

LIBRARY DIVISION

Library Move. The Monrovia Public Library will close to the public on Tuesday, November 13 through Saturday, December 15 for the move to temporary library quarters at the Mary Wilcox Youth Center. The Youth Center will serve as the temporary library for 18 months while the new library is built in Library Park.

During the closure, the library's November 15 Thursday Afternoon Special, "I Wanna Be a Dog" with storyteller Karen Rae Kraut will be held at 3:45 p.m. at Bradoaks Elementary School, 930 E. Lemon Avenue, Monrovia. The November 17 Saturday Special "Thanksgiving Bookfeast" will be held at the Santa Anita Family YMCA Day Care Center on Mountain Avenue, behind the YMCA building. Pre-arranged Literacy Services and tutoring will continue at the Monrovia Community Center, 119 W. Palm Avenue. Books may be returned to the library's parking lot book drop until further notice.

The library will reopen to the public at its temporary location on Monday, December 17. The temporary facility will house all of the library's current children's collection, most of the adult collection and both the adult and children's public use computers. Most of the library's regular programs will also continue at the temporary location or at pre-advertised venues in Monrovia.

Public Library Staff Education Program. The Monrovia Public Library was awarded a \$5,000 *California State Library Grant* for Librarian I Alice Kuo who is attending San Jose State Library School and expected to receive her Masters in Library and Information Science (MLIS) Degree next June. This competitive grant provides tuition reimbursement to staff working in a California public library and pursuing a MLIS degree. This is the second year that the library has received this grant for Ms. Kuo. The Public Library Staff Education Program was established and funded to encourage nonprofessional public library staff to pursue the professional degree.

RECREATION DIVISION

Haunted Hikes in the Canyon. The Department of Community Services conducted the Fifth Annual Haunted Hike on Oct 25, 26, 27 at Monrovia Canyon Park. Nearly 900 participants hiked up the ¼ mile "Trail of No Return" where they encountered a 50-foot funnel spider web; garden of lost souls; man-eating plants and living scarecrows. They then entered a 5,000-square-foot "Maze of Terror" located behind the Nature Center which hosted eerie and horrifying creatures guaranteed to create a living nightmare. The Nature Center was transformed into a "Hall of Nightmares" and rooms which created sheer terror and fright. The "Road to Perdition" completed the event's loop where participants passed by a cemetery of living dead.

Screamin' Skeletons: A Bone Chillin' Good Time! On Wednesday, October 31, the Department of Community Services, in partnership with the Youth and Family Network, hosted the annual Halloween Carnival and Costume Contest "Screamin' Skeletons" in Library Park from 3 to 6:00 p.m. Activities included carnival games, a costume contest, a haunting room, toddler area, teen area, photo booth, concessions and arts and crafts. More than 850 youths attended this year's event. This great community program would not have been possible without the generous donations of the following sponsors:

Event Sponsors:

- Jodi Breneman of Dickson Podley Realtors
- Monrovia Youth Baseball League
- Sierra Autocars, Inc.
- Kim's Hapkido Karate
- Centre Stage
- Monrovia Old Town Businesses

Activity Sponsors:

- Foothill Towing
- Wells Fargo, Old Town Monrovia
- Royal Oaks Manor
- Duarte Wal-Mart
- Mesa Industries
- Dr. Domotor's Animal House
- Shell Vacations
- Century 21 Adams and Barnes, "Your Monrovia Team"

FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Personnel responded to 77 emergency calls from 0800 hours October 24 to 0800 hours October 31. Significant incidents

Grass Fire. On Wednesday evening, Monrovia firefighters responded to a reported grass fire next to the L.A. County Arboretum in Arcadia. Water Tender 101, along with an engine from Arcadia, extinguished the fire in about one hour. Damage was confined to an area just outside the Arboretum.

Flooded Condition. On Friday evening, firefighters responded to the 300 block of West Lime on a report of a broken water line on the second floor of the home. Firefighters shut off the water to the home and completed clean up operations using water vacuums.

FIRE PREVENTION AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

The brush fires in the past week have left us thankful that the Fire Department and the citizens of Monrovia have developed a proactive approach to mitigating the chance of an occurrence in our City. Instead of looking at fault in the weed abatement process, the citizens of Monrovia have looked at what they can do to protect themselves and their neighbors. Due diligence is evident when the listed measures below are followed:

- Clear leaves from roof and gutters
- Keep structures free of vegetation (creating a defensible space)
- Cut and remove weeds and brush
- Thin trees and create separation between them to prevent fire spread
- Prune low branches to create a minimum of 5 feet of clearance from the ground
- Consider removing highly flammable trees such as pines, junipers, and Eucalyptus, and if not, removing, thinning and creating proper separations
- Water-permitting, irrigate plants to reduce flammability
- Bury plastic irrigation risers on pressurized lines underground
- Store flammable household materials in a fire-safe location, not under decks or next to structures
- Use metal garbage cans and secure them so they won't blow over and ignite
- Develop evacuation plans in the event of fire; which include two means of egress and a list of important items to take with you

These are just a few pointers that should better prepare you and your family in the event of a brush fire. For more information, feel free to contact the Fire Prevention Office at (626) 256-8110 or visit

www.ci.monrovia.ca.us and click on the Fire Department. Under the Fire Department link, look for online documents which will give you more information on how to be better prepared.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES - GRAND RE-OPENING OF FIRE STATION 101

The Fire Department Open House is slated for Thursday, November 8 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. The department will be showcasing the newly renovated fire station with tours, demonstrations and prizes, not to mention afternoon refreshments. Feel free to come by and celebrate the Grand Re-Opening of Fire Station 101.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

The Fire Department is proud to introduce its newest member to the team, Fire Marshal Kenneth M. Hall. Mr. Hall has been hired as an interim employee to fill the vacancy in the Fire Marshal position and will be performing those duties previously handled by Battalion Chief Scott Haberle who has been re-assigned to Operations.

Ken retired from the City of Torrance Fire Department with the rank of Battalion Chief (assigned as Fire Marshal) after 43 years of service. His expertise includes; Fire Prevention, Hazardous Materials Regulation/Administration, Fire Investigation, Code Development, Fire Suppression, and Management.

Ken also taught fire science in the evenings at El Camino College for 18 years. He has participated in fire and building code development and has served on various regulatory committees during his career. Key highlights are:

- o Served as the Secretary of the EPA Committee to establish regulations for the Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPA)
- o Participated on the committee that formulated tools for communicating the elements of the Risk Management Plan (RMP for the Los Angeles area)
- o Served on the California State Fire Marshal's Fire and Life Safety advisory committee
- o Actively participated in the Model Code development process for 20 years
- o Served on the California State Fire Marshals ad hoc committee for formulating storage requirements for hazardous materials in universities
- o Currently serving a second four-year term on the Advisory Board for the California State Architect. Also served on the following committees for the State Architect:
 - o Emergency Preparedness – Vice Chair
 - o Inspection and Testing
 - o Codes and Standards
 - o Access

Mr. Hall has an extensive background and will be an invaluable asset to the team for the six to nine months he is anticipated to perform the interim Fire Marshal duties.

ON THE POLICE BLOTTER

During the last seven day period, the Police Department handled 592 calls for service resulting in 137 investigations. Following are this week's highlighted issues and events:

Disturbance. On October 27 at 1:30 a.m., an officer observed several subjects fighting in front of a bar at closing time where an Annual Halloween costume party was being held. There was an immediate police response from Monrovia, Arcadia and Sierra Madre police units, and the crowd of

approximately 150 subjects was quickly dispersed without further incident. One subject was arrested in front of the police station for being drunk in public.

Found Gun. On October 28 at 2:30 p.m., a resident in the 400 block of Patrician Way was doing reconstruction work in his child's bedroom. During the remodeling he dismantled a desk and set of drawers that had been built into the wall. After knocking down the desk and drawers, he found a loaded .38 revolver in the wood debris. The resident called police and reported the found weapon. The resident said he has owned the house since 1997 and was not aware the pistol was there. The investigation is continuing.

Attempted Child Abduction / Suspicious Circumstances. On October 30 at 4:50 p.m., an officer was flagged down by a motorist on his way to the station to report an attempted child abduction. The victims, two 10-year-old boys, were playing basketball in the north alley on West Walnut when the suspect approached and asked them if they wanted to earn money. The suspect was driving a tan or light brown Toyota Tacoma truck (2000-2004) with a matching color "snug-top" camper shell. The suspect told the boys all they had to do was open the rear gate for him. The boys walked towards the rear of the truck and the suspect exited. He pulled on the rear door and said it was stuck. He asked them to try opening the door. One of the boys motioned to the other to walk away, and the other boy said they could not help because they had to go and find a friend. The boys walked away towards the front of Walnut. The suspect again approached the boys on Walnut and asked if they found their friend. The boys walked away and went into a residence. Half an hour later, an uncle of one of the boys came home. The boy told his uncle what had happened, and while they were talking, the suspect drove by again in the alley and the boy pointed out the truck and the suspect. The suspect drove away, and the uncle reported the incident to police.

Armed Robbery. On October 31 at 7:46 p.m., officers were dispatched to a business in the 600 block of West Huntington regarding an armed robbery that just occurred. Dispatch advised there were two male suspects who fled in a white, older Toyota Corolla, driven away by a third male suspect. The vehicle was headed westbound Huntington from the location. As officers responded, a search for the vehicle was made, but it was not located. Investigation continuing.

Under the Influence / Parole Hold. On October 31 at 9:07 p.m., Special Enforcement Team officers were patrolling a parking lot in the 700 block of East Huntington. They saw a male subject sitting in a vehicle parked away from all the other vehicles in an unlit area of the parking lot. The officers contacted the subject to ask his business there. The subject was found to be on parole for burglary and narcotic offenses. He was in possession of a crack pipe and was found to be under the influence. He was arrested and a parole hold was obtained.



ENGINEERING:

Colorado Commons Street Improvements. The plans and specifications are complete and out to bid. The bid opening is set for November 7.

Huntington Dr. Bus Shelters: Cornerstone Concrete poured the foundations and erected the steel column posts. Project is 10% complete.

Grading Plan Check Projects

- 1402 South California Ave., Tract Subdivision, Resubmitted of plan check corrections

Public Works Inspections:

- Duarte Road between 5th and Encino - AT&T cabinet and electrical panel installations, underground conduit inspections
- 911 Royal Oaks, Sewer main connection.
- California/Monrovia/Duarte, Grading operations have begun, water and sewer utility abandonment are progressing
- 1419/1425 S. Myrtle, Grading operations have begun

Construction Documents:

- Myrtle Ave street improvements extension between Olive Ave. and Walnut Ave.: Engineering is preparing the plans for the west side improvements.
- Chantry Flats Road Repair - Professional service agreements mailed to consultant for design services
- 5th and Huntington Wash Cover - design work commencing with subsequent preparation of construction documents
- Handicap Access Ramp Construction - Preparation of plans and specifications for the construction of 20-30 handicap access ramps, sidewalk repairs and audible pedestrian signals

OPERATIONS – Environmental – Facilities – Parks:

Make a Difference Day. Environmental Services Staff coordinated with Athens Services the donation of refuse and green waste trash bins for Make A Difference Day.

150 new street trees were planted in coordination with the “Great Clean Air Tree Planting Project” grant, and a few new shrubs were planted along South Peck and East El Norte Roads.

Volunteers and Parks staff spread 40 yards of mulch in planters and annual beds at the Monrovia Historical Museum located in Recreation Park as part of Make a Difference Day.

Bulky Item Pick-up—November 17. Athens Services is scheduled for a bulky-item pick-up on Saturday, November 17, for the 400-600 blocks of East Colorado, East Olive, East Walnut, East Royal Oaks, East Almond, and East Maple.

Outdoor Education Presentation. On Tuesday, October 30, Environmental Services Staff participated in Canyon Park’s Outdoor Education Program. Staff gave an interactive environmental education presentation covering stormwater quality, water pollution prevention, recycling and the 4R’s of waste diversion from landfills (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Re-buy). Staff has additional Outdoor Ed presentations scheduled throughout this school year.

Graffiti at Recreation Park. Graffiti is on the rise again this past week and Recreation Park was the hardest hit. Parks staff and a contractor spent this past week quickly eradicating the graffiti observed at City parks.

STREETS:

Traffic Signs:

- Cleaned 22 Graffiti Signs

Miscellaneous:

- Moved all materials and equipment from the Metric Building to the City Yard
- Removed refrigerator at 445 W. Colorado for evidence for the Police Department
- Installed reflector buttons on 100 W. Lemon Ave
- Completed sidewalk, curb and street repairs at 924 W. Walnut Ave
- Form and place rebar for trash enclosure ramps at the Well Field Facility

UTILITIES:

Customer Service

- 2,143 water meters were read and recorded
- 40 work orders were completed
- 3 service requests were completed
- 180 Shut-off notices were distributed
- 5 water services were reactivated

Water Production

- Water consumption is 53.4 millions gallons, an increase of approximately 6% compared to last week's water usage.

Department of Health Services Required Water Samples:

- 17 water system samplings
- 3 water treatment facility samplings

Utility Maintenance

- 7-2" water services were installed
- 40 water main system valves were inspected and operated
- 12 underground service alert's utility location requests were completed
- 15,200 feet of sewer mains were cleaned
- 160 feet of sewer mains were video inspected

Have a great weekend!

FOR YOUR CALENDARS:

Mon. Nov. 5, 6:30 p.m.	All Commission Dinner, Courtyard by Marriott
Tues., Nov. 6, 6:00 p.m.	City Council Study Session
Tues., Nov. 6, 7:30 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Thurs., Nov. 8, 3 p.m.	Fire Station Grand Re-Opening
Tues., Nov. 20, 7:30 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Thurs., Dec. 6, 6:00 p.m.	Tree Lighting Ceremony, Library Park
Thurs., Dec. 6, 7:00 p.m.	Holiday Parade; Myrtle Avenue