

Seaside Inside--February 2023 Newsletter



WORKING FOR SEASIDE SEASIDE INSIDE BY ALEX MILLER, COUNCIL MEMBER

Issue 2 -February 23, 2023

CONTACT Alex Miller
831-777-8317
amiller@ci.seaside.ca.us
P.O. Box 13 Seaside, CA
93955 Website:
www.alexhmiller.com



This picture was taken at the Seaside Recreation Services Department's Father -Daughter dance. The young woman on the left is Mayor Oglesby's granddaughter, and on the right is Council-member Miller's daughter.

Working for Seaside

Welcome to my second newsletter. Since the last newsletter, I have participated in these activities: 1. The Martin Luther King Jr. march, 2) my first AMBAG meeting (Association of

Monterey Bay Area Governments), 3) the Ellis Park ribbon cutting, 4) Black History Month at City Hall, 5) the League of Cities conference in Universal City and of course, 6) An Evening with my Gal which was a father-daughter dance sponsored by Recreation Services. Also, I celebrated my 39th birthday with family and friends on February 13.

While at the League of California Cities conference, I collected 56 business cards and contacted and spoke with many individuals. I gave my council business card to 74 individuals and ensured people left the conference knowing about Seaside. Building bridges with other cities is a top priority.

I initially promised to respond to calls and emails concerning my job as a council member within 48 hours. Since the last newsletter, I have received forty communications, and my average response time has been under 25 minutes. Please reach out to me. anytime.

“Include, Innovate, Inspire”

Highlights from the January 19, 30, and February 16 Council Meetings

One of the main issues from the community meetings was keeping the city safe. Chief Borges made his annual report to the council and the significant points are below.

- As per the annual crime report, overall crime is down 13%.
- ·In 2022, 4413 parking citations were issued compared to 1,044 in 2021
- ·There were 1635 traffic citations issued in 2022 versus 1,012 in 2021.
- ·Traffic calming and mitigation measures on Hilby Ave are in effect. Extra police enforcement has been deployed, and a radar trailer displays speed with a sign that says, “slow down.”
- The police have developed a task force to deal with fireworks.
- Three more police officers were hired, and two corporal positions were eliminated, thus making more officers available to protect the public.
- Seaside should acquire the Shot detection system, an audio detection device that detects gunshots, locates the source, and works in tandem with the Flock Safety Falcon™ Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) cameras so that our officers can respond to gunshots quickly to preserve critical evidence and solve more cases.

The City Council approved this technology with a 5-0 vote to add 25 shot detection and ALPRs around Seaside. There is an annual cost of \$90,000, for which the police chief has a grant.

Recreation Services

Officials from the Recreation Services Department made a presentation to the council. Given the space considerations of this newsletter, it is impossible to list all of the accomplishments of this outstanding department.

Currently, Seaside has 25 parks throughout the city. I'm pleased to announce that park rehabilitation has been a priority with this current council, including:

- Approval of a new basketball court at Lincoln Cunningham
- Approval of a concept plan for Lincoln Cunningham and Havana Soliz
- Approval of a complete parks master plan
- Completion of Ellis Park
- Approval of Cutino Park Improvements
- Approval of playground equipment for Fernando Park

Grand Hyatt Hotel and Conference Center

On January 19, A representative presented information about the new hotel they are building in Seaside at the golf course. Grand Hyatt hotels are luxury properties located in more than 50 spots worldwide. Most are in cities like San Francisco, Rio de Janeiro, Athens, and Dubai. This brand is known for luxury spas and fine dining experiences. The hotel in Seaside will have 330 luxury rooms, bars, restaurants, a spa, and a fitness center and be available for conferences. It is expected to be operational in twenty-four months. All council members expressed support for this new addition to our city.

Downtown

Many people expressed the need for a vibrant downtown in my community survey. So, on January 5, I asked that this item be placed on the agenda at the January 19 meeting. I wanted to discuss the importance of turning the downtown into a viable area for First Friday events and multicultural celebrations. Also, I wanted to develop a plan to have the right type of businesses downtown. Council members said that they had invested a lot of money into downtown infrastructure, and it would be up to the businesses to develop a plan. My motion to discuss the future of the downtown was defeated 4-1.

Monterey County Tourism Improvement District

A presentation about the Tourism Improvement District was made at the February 16 meeting. The district executive gave a pitch about how they advertise the region. According to him, all cities benefit from their advertisements and the development of leads for conferences and trade shows. Funding for the district comes from a hotel room assessment where the budget hotels pay between \$1.50-\$2.50 per occupied room per night, and the luxury hotels pay \$7.50 per night per occupied room.

The City of Monterey administers the district, and they need the council's permission to join. The manager of the Embassy Suites added to the presentation and stated that there was a need for the district. However, only eight of the thirteen hotels in Seaside wanted to join the district. About a third of the luxury hotel rooms will be in Seaside when the new Hyatt is in operation. The city will contribute close to a million dollars a year. The presentation ended close to midnight, and the final vote was 4-1 for joining the district for ten years.

I believe that I need to explain my no-vote. First, they had been planning this vote for eighteen months but showed up in Seaside five days before the deadline, and we were told that the deadline couldn't be changed. This is so disrespectful. The presenter said the report showing what they have done for Seaside wouldn't be available until next week. Two members of the public not affiliated with the district who spoke were both against this project. The first community member pointed out that it was 11:30 PM, and the vote should be postponed so that community members could weigh in. The point was made that the district would feature activities in Seaside. Still, we don't have a structure to accommodate outsiders. I voted no because of this and the ten-year commitment.



Five Star Service from City Departments and Agencies

Each month I want to recognize a department that has provided five-star service to our citizens.

This month it is the Recreation Services Department.

They provide programs for youth, seniors, and adults. This department offers swimming programs and art programs. They do special events, including movies in the park, Sunday Blues in the Park, Winter Wonderland, the Martin Luther King Jr March, an Evening with My Gal Dance, and many others.

Most importantly, this department strengthens families; they deserve five stars.

•