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The Fire Department Mural

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### **Working For Seaside**

Welcome to my third newsletter as I enter my fourth month as a Seaside Council Member. Since the last newsletter, I have participated in these activities: 1. Fire department mural unveiling, 2. The Police department's swearing-in of new employees, 3. A SNIP Day where Seaside residents got free spray and neuter services for their pets, 4. The Watsonville Film Festival in Seaside, 5. The Parent University hosted by Seaside, 6. The Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce 114th Annual Awards Dinner, 7. My first Community Human Services meeting, which I am an alternate, and 8. I am now on the Governance, Transparency, and Labor Relations Policy Committee with the Cal Cities organization.

### **Fire Department Mural**

When I was the chairman of the Neighborhood Improvement Commission, we asked the City Council to use some of our Airbnb TOT tax funds to help paint the fire department. The City Council agreed, and the process started. Lead-based paint was removed, the building was completely repainted, and new fire doors were installed.

An old, faded mural was on the Broadway side of the fire department building. The

Neighborhood Improvement Commission recommended taking \$25,000 out of the budget for a new mural, and the City Council agreed. Finally, the mural was unveiled on March 2. It is beautiful.

**“Include, Innovate, Inspire”**

### **The Governance, Transparency, and Labor Relations Policy Committee**

On March 9, I received an e-mail from Cal Cities announcing my appointment to the Governance, Transparency, and Labor Relations Policy Committee. The committee reviews upcoming State Assembly or Senate bills and recommends support or opposition from Cal Cities. We had our first committee meeting on March 17 to discuss a proposed bill requiring city council members to take a two-hour financial training course on city finances. Our committee voted to oppose the bill, and the recommendation has been forwarded to the Cal Cities Board.

### **Improving the Downtown Business District**

There is currently a conceptual plan for the business district, but no single entity is in charge of implementing it. The current model is that the city develops the infrastructure and then waits for the downtown business community to lead. Unfortunately, that model hasn't worked very well in most communities.

I proposed a new commission to deal with the downtown, and my idea was struck down (see my February Newsletter). After meeting with the City Manager and discussing this proposal with the chair of the C Jobs Commission, we all felt that this commission could take on this task. At the March 16th meeting, I asked that this item be placed on the next council agenda for discussion. The council decided not to do this, and the reason given was that we needed to hire our Economic Development Director first.

Since forty percent of the council consists of new members, I don't understand why we can't discuss the future vision of our downtown and how we can achieve these goals. The City Council provides the vision and direction, not the staff.



### **Five Star Service this month goes to the Seaside Fire Department**

Our fire department has exceeded expectations with its performance during the storms this winter. In addition to serving our city, they have responded to requests for help throughout the county. Our Fire Chief must be commended for her leadership. On top of the fire department's daily duties, they have envisioned a new fire sub-station for the city on the corner of 1st and Giggling street on the former Fort Ord.

At the March 16 council meeting, the Council got to see the renderings of the new building, which were spectacular.

The Seaside Fire Department and its chief exemplify the qualities that we want from our public employees. Kudos to them!

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