

## Seaside Inside May 23, 2023 Newsletter



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### **Working for Seaside**

Welcome to my May newsletter. Since the last newsletter, I have participated in these activities: 1. Earth Day Celebration, 2. The District Attorney's victim's dedication ceremony, 3. Red Dress Day (Raising awareness of missing & murdered indigenous women) 4. The flag memorial for victims of the opioid crisis, 5. Ambag monthly meeting, 6. Rotary lunch with Leon Panetta as the guest speaker, 7. Walter Lee Avery Gallery reception, 8. Marina pump track grand opening, 9. Press conference for our lights on program, 10. Seaside International Festival and 11. I attended the JPIA (Joint Powers Insurance Agency) conference in Paso Robles from May 14 to May 17.

## **JPIA Conference**

I enjoyed attending this conference hosted by the JPIA in Paso Robles. The JPIA is an insurance pool that cities join to cover specific liabilities within local jurisdictions. Currently, the JPIA has over 120 cities and municipalities in the pool. I serve as Seaside's representative to the JPIA.

I went to many workshops on various topics. Still, the most essential part of the conference was building relationships with other elected officials because learning from each other can prevent mistakes or guide success. During the meeting, I got to know council members from Morro Bay, Grover Beach, Atascadero, Pismo Beach, Seal Beach, Chino Hills, San Dimas, Grand Terrace, and La Palma.

As I spend more time on the city council, I understand that building relationships with other cities, municipalities, counties, and stakeholders is extremely important, and those relationships often end in a positive for Seaside. There are three relationships that I would like to pursue.

## **Monterey Bay Football Club**

First is the Monterey Bay FC Union, which has its stadium (Cardinale Stadium) in our city. In terms of full disclosure, this year marks my 25th year as a soccer referee working with school districts and youth soccer leagues. As a referee, I must make quick decisions and show leadership during the games. I always enjoy working with young soccer players and watching them grow. For several years, I coached soccer with the Seaside Police Athletic League. I worked for Coast-to-Coast Soccer, which contracted with local school districts to provide soccer instruction throughout Monterey County Schools. Soccer is my passion.

The city should build an excellent relationship with the team and promote Seaside as a soccer town. As I walk around Seaside, I notice our residents increasingly wearing Union gear, and it feels like our residents have embraced the team. Now I believe it's time for Seaside to take the next step.

Something I think we can do to build our relationship is lighting city hall the colors of the team after a home win (think Sacramento Kings- "light the beam"). What if the city of Seaside "colored the hall" after every win from the Union? Maybe the team will consider a watch party somewhere in Seaside that makes sense. Another suggestion would be flying the Union flag at city hall to show our support. Soccer brings people together and can get the people of Seaside closer to each other. When our community is united, everyone wins.

If you haven't attended a game yet, I highly recommend going. Please let me know if you need some tickets.

## **CSUMB**

The second meaningful relationship for our city is partnering with CSUMB, which will bring our city more success. When the military left, there was a void in Seaside because the businesses lost many of their customers. As the university grows (The student count when I attended was around 3500 and now is over 6500), Seaside is in an excellent position to host student events, bring families into our community, and increase our sales and tax revenues. The city is already planning to establish this vital connection with the development of the Campus Town Project adding over 1485 new housing units and 250 hotel rooms.

The university has spread out in other cities, including the Salinas City Center and CSUMB at Ryan Ranch, and CSUMB in North Salinas. Recently the university selected a new

president, and I've been told by our city staff that the new leader is willing to work with the city of Seaside. If we continue to work with them, maybe they will consider investing in our downtown or other city areas.

## **Oaxaca**

The third partnership area is with our sister city, Oaxaca de Juarez. Perhaps the yearly Oaxaca by the Sea festival can evolve into a Seaside/Oaxaca partnership where we have a cultural center and a plaza on lower Broadway.

I consider These three areas important, and I will continue to reach out. and build relationships to make progress in these three areas.



## **Five Star Service This Month goes to the City Finance Department**

In every newsletter, I recognize a department that has provided five-star service to our citizens. This month it is the City Finance Department. Every year around this time, the city's finance department is busy working on our budget. The city's budget year is July 1 to June 30, so the finance department is working to balance our city finances. The city council will meet on May 30 and May 31 to review the budget and allocate funds for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

This month I received a 5-star service request based on a resident's interaction with Accounting Technician Lori Merwin. Lori provided excellent service regarding the billing for our city's water system to this ratepayer. The work is complex, and Lori and the entire finance department get five stars for all their hard work to keep our city in an excellent financial position and for their service to the public.

Thank you.