
Seaside Inside June 20, 2023



Volume 1 Issue 6



Working for Seaside

Welcome to my June newsletter. It's hard to believe, but six months and five days ago I was sworn in as a Seaside City Council Member. I knew the time would go quickly, but it has gone faster than I could imagine. Being on the City Council is a true honor and a pleasure.

Since the last newsletter, I have participated in many activities.

1. The Re-Imagining Policing Symposium.
2. The Palenke Arts Festival.
3. A meeting with Congressman Jimmy Panetta.
4. City Council Budget sessions on May 30 and 31.
5. A community meeting I sponsored at the Seaside Highlands to discuss Monterey Road traffic issues.
6. The

Del Rey Oaks Pride flag raising. 7. The first session of our new Farmers' market. 8. Finally, even though this was not official business, I held my daughter's birthday party at our beautiful Laguna Grande Park on June 11th. Alivia turned 7 this year, and I am so proud to be her father.

Sixth Month Report

In my remarks at the December meeting where I took the oath to be a Seaside Council member, I talked about three images that would guide my decisions on the council. It's time for an update on those three items.

The first one is the newly painted fire station with a mural on one side depicting life in our great city with one of our new electric police cars parked in front. I see the Seaside community involved with our first responders and these agencies embracing new technologies and strategies to keep us safe and engaged.

Over the last six months, I have attended a press conference for our Lights On Program where we give people vouchers to fix burned-out lights on their vehicles. I participated in the Seaside Police Athletic League's Basketball Banquet, and was present for the Fire Department mural unveiling and the Police Department's swearing-in of new employees. I voted for license plate readers and have supported the initiatives started by our Police Chief. In addition, I bought eighty tickets to Monterey Bay Union Football Club's First Responder's Night and gave forty tickets to the Fire Department and forty to the Police Department. It's important to show our gratitude to the first responders.

Highway 1 is filled with cars headed south to Monterey and Carmel every weekend. In the future, I see many vehicles exiting Fremont Avenue and heading towards our vibrant downtown, where we have wine walks, First Friday events, and multicultural celebrations. We are going to become a destination city. I voted for the Grand Hyatt but still have problems getting other council members to articulate their visions for the downtown. This is the first step before we can complete the projects that were planned thirteen years ago. I hope that other

council members will reach out to our sister city and to CSUMB so that we can form partnerships that will allow us to have a cultural district at the end of Broadway. We need to have attractions that will bring visitors to Seaside--the gateway to the Monterey Peninsula. Lastly, I have contacted our soccer team, which has produced excellent results. City employees now receive discounts on tickets, and a giant flag has been delivered to city hall. This partnership is destined for greater things.

My last image is of the stars you receive to rate a business transaction. I see Seaside employees and all aspects of our government with a five- star rating. Our city is filled with talented people, and I will do everything I can to help them shine. Change always starts at home, and I have responded to citizen comments and requests within hours. Plus, I have had more coffee with individuals than I can count. In each of my newsletters, I have highlighted an outstanding city department. So far, we have awarded five stars to the Finance Department, the Neighborhood Improvement Commission, the Recreation Department, the Building Inspection Department, and the Fire Department.

I am proud that I have played a role in moving Seaside forward. The best is yet to come.

Budget Highlights

The city's budget highlights our priorities as we move forward in the upcoming year. Our total budget is 66 million dollars for the 2023-24 fiscal year. After three city council meetings to discuss the items, the final budget was approved at the June 15th meeting. Roughly 16 million of the budget is allocated for police services and 10 million for firefighters. The most significant budget expenditure is 27 million for public works, up from 13 million in 2022. Public works include infrastructure projects, including repaving streets, fixing sidewalks, improving our parks, and other projects around the city. These items are essential for the maintenance and useability of facilities and have overwhelming public support. Part of this allocation is the basketball

court at Lincoln Cunningham Park and paving the pathways through the park. Repairs will finally be made at this park.



This month's 5-star service goes to the Seaside Police Department. Under the leadership of Chief Borges, our police have been more proactive in protecting Seaside. When something happens in Seaside (or outside Seaside), our police have been "all hands-on deck," that kind of leadership does not go unnoticed. The Seaside Police have a strong presence, and it isn't always to cite or arrest someone. Often, it's a welfare check or just chatting with one of our residents.

TRUST is our department's motto: Transparency, Respect, Unity, Service, and Training. The men and women of the Seaside Police Department are living up to this motto daily. They deserve to be honored. Thank you.

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