



City Council Report

Newsletter of Council Member Keith D. Curry

District 7 ■ City of Newport Beach ■ California

Fall ■ 2009

Greetings !

This newsletter is designed to keep citizens informed about issues facing our city and specifically those issues facing residents in District 7. I welcome your thoughts and comments on its contents. It is distributed to homeowners and residents associations to assist property managers in keeping residents informed.

Permission to reprint with citation in whole or part is granted. I also appreciate hearing from residents on specific issues or problems you may be having with the city. Please feel free to contact me at (949) 721-9422, (949) 644-0800 or e-mail at curryk@pfn.com.

CITY SERVICES

Administrative Services	644-3127
Licenses	644-3141
Parking Citations	644-3396
Water/Sewer Billing	644-3050
Building Department	644-3275
City Attorney	644-3131
City Clerk	644-3005
City Manager	644-3000
Harbor Resources	644-3034
Public Information Office	644-3031
Fire Department (Business)	633-3104
Fire Marshall	644-3106
General Services	644-3055
Refuse Collection	644-3066
Streets & Sidewalks	644-3060
Human Resources	644-3300
Information	644-3309
Library	717-3800
Mayor/City Council	644-3004
Planning Department	644-3200
Economic Development	644-3225
Police Department (Business)	644-3681
Police (Non-Emergency)	644-3717
Public Works	644-3311
Recreation & Senior Services	644-3151
Oasis Senior Center	644-3244
Recreation	644-3151
Utilities	644-3011
Virtual FAQs	644-3211

Improving Traffic Safety in the Port Streets

In the Port Streets, one of the most difficult issues to address is that of traffic safety. There are literally hundreds of children in the neighborhood, closely spaced cross streets and access on Newport Hills Drive that encourages drivers to proceed at speeds that are often higher than safe.

The closely spaced streets and occasional sight line issues create particular problems in trying to craft safety improvements.

Over the years, we have directed several reviews of traffic safety. In 2006 for example, this resulted in a protected left turn arrow at San Miguel and Eastgate. In 2007, we added additional “traffic calming” improvements near Anderson School and Newport Hills Drive. It is important to note that we cannot simply change signage or speed limits at will. The California Vehicle Code is very specific as to the criteria that must be met for any changes or additional sign controls.

In response to continued neighborhood concern, I requested our traffic engineer to review recent accident records to see if additional measures should be implemented. I am pleased to report that we decided to add an additional seven “yield” signs in the Port Streets. These signs were installed at locations where sight distance is restricted that were consistent with state criteria.

These locations include:

- Newport Hills Drive East at Port Ramsgate
- Newport Hills Drive East at Port Albans Place
- Newport Hills Drive East at Port Locksleigh Place
- Newport Hills Drive East at Port Trinity Place
- Newport Hills Drive West at Port Wheeler Place
- Newport Hills Drive West at Port Manleigh Place/Circle
- Newport Hills Drive West at Port Charles Place

City Manager Changing of the Guard

I am hopeful that these additional YIELD signs will improve traffic safety for our children. Of course, the most effective safety improvement is driver awareness and strict adherence to the speed limits on our neighborhood streets. All of us need to be mindful of our personal responsibility for neighborhood traffic safety. ■

After more than 10 years of successful leadership at the City of Newport Beach, our City Manager, Homer Bludau, retired on September 11. Homer oversaw many important changes and improvements to our city. As one example, the 2006 voter approval of our new General Plan was a major and far-sighted strategy to maintain the economic sustainability and high quality of life we all enjoy as Newport Beach residents.

The Bonita Canyon Sports Park is an example of the many public facility improvements that were accomplished on Homer's watch. These include the Newport Coast Community Center, Mariner's Branch Library, Coastal Peak Park and the Santa Ana Heights Fire Station.

I am very pleased, that to follow Homer, the council has selected our Assistant City Manager David Kiff, who became City Manager effective September 12. David hit the ground running with an ambitious agenda to improve city operations, enhance transparency and resident communications and to ensure that the long term economic and environmental sustainability of our community is maintained.

In the past, David has led on some of the most difficult and complex issues confronting the city. These include the development of our groundbreaking group home ordinance, the annexation of Newport Coast and our clean water initiatives. In every case, he delivered results and generated trust with the community.

Two of David's first priorities will be to select a new police chief to restore the confidence of our community and our officers in the fairness and professionalism of our department, and a new director of Administrative Services, who will be responsible for implementing a new and more exacting budgeting system and helping to set performance benchmarks throughout our organization.

Fiscally stable and strong communities do not happen by accident. They result from strong and forward thinking leadership. Homer and David represent two of the finest examples of public managers and in partnership with the city council. I am confident we will continue to enjoy the type of leadership our community has come to expect and appreciate. ■

New Regional Open Space

In addition to being an elected member of the Newport Beach City Council, I am honored to represent the coastal cities on the Orange County Parks Commission. I was elected to this position by my fellow council members from the other coastal cities.

Orange County has some truly outstanding parks, beaches, open space reserves, recreational areas and historical sites. Many of you may have visited Irvine Park, O'Neill Park or some of the south county beaches operated by the county. If not, I encourage you and your family to take a weekend and enjoy these fine facilities.

Recently the Commission considered a truly historic and significant event. As you may have read in the news, the Irvine Company and Donald Bren are donating over 20,000 acres that will remain in perpetual open space. This ensures that despite the population growth that is sure to occur in California, large swaths of Orange County will remain open for future generations.

These areas include Gypsum Canyon, Weir Canyon, Loma Ridge, Freemont Canyon Santiago Canyon, Limestone Canyon and closer to Newport, Laguna Laurel. When coupled with existing open space areas such as Laguna Canyon, we are assuring the views, vistas and open space access that will help protect the special quality of life in Orange County. I have driven and walked over much of this acquisition and it is truly spectacular.

The Irvine Ranch Conservancy will develop a long term resource management plan for these lands to protect their bucolic nature.

In addition, the Irvine Company is funding an endowment for a research center at University of California, Irvine to provide scientific research to guide resource management activities on all county open space lands.

As Orange County continues to urbanize, the opportunity to protect more than 20,000 acres in perpetual open space is one that must be seized and I am pleased to be able to support this action in my capacity as a parks commissioner.

Newport Beach itself is blessed with significant parks and public open space. This helps enhance and sustain the high quality of life we all enjoy. I am proud of the fact that in addition to the recently opened Coastal Peak Park, with more than 11 acres of new sports fields and recreational facilities, we have three additional major parks under development. ■

Cross Border “Scams” Alert

Provided by the Newport Beach Police Department

Many residents of southern California have been victimized by some form of “scam” associated with a cross border (Canadian) or overseas group who are responsible for these crimes. The three most popular scam methods are (1) foreign lotteries; (2) “Nigerian” foreign money offers; and (3) check overpayment schemes.

The purpose of this alert is to educate the members of our community on these scams and provide some resource information to help determine whether or not you have been targeted.

1 Foreign Lotteries

Mass email messages are sent to recipients claiming they have won a large cash prize associated with a foreign lottery. The message requests that you send money to pay for taxes, insurance, and/or processing fees. The fees are required in order to release the winning cash prize to the victim. The goal is to try and get the victim to send money or at least to acquire their bank account or credit card numbers for unauthorized access. Please realize that it is against the law to play a foreign lottery. Do not release your credit card and bank account numbers to anyone over the phone or in an email.

2 Nigerian Foreign Money Offers

The "Nigerian" scam was named after emails that allegedly came from Nigerian "officials" who needed help getting their own money, which was not accessible. Current emails now tell victims the reporting party will transfer thousands of dollars into the victim's bank account if they will just pay a fee or "taxes" to help the reporting party access their money. The emails are from suspects trying to steal your money or commit identity theft. They will tell you how and where to send the money as well as continue to re-contact you to tell you that more money is required.

3 Check Overpayment Schemes

Check overpayment schemes generally target people who have posted an item for sale online. The suspect, posing as a potential buyer from a foreign country, emails the seller and offers to buy the item with a cashier's check, money order, personal check, or corporate check. The suspect sends you a counterfeit check that looks authentic and is made payable for more money than you expected. They ask you to deposit it into your bank account and send some portion of the funds to a foreign account. The checks may be written off of the valid account of unsuspecting victim businesses located in the U. S.

Resources

If you think you may have responded to a cross-border scam, file a complaint at www.econsumer.gov, a project of 20 countries of the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network.

The Federal Trade Commission or FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop, and avoid them. To file a complaint or to get free information on consumer issues, visit www.ftc.gov or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261.

OnGuardOnline.gov provides practical tips from the federal government and the technology industry to help you be on guard against Internet fraud, secure your computer, and protect your personal information. In addition, they provide a detailed list of possible scams that you, the potential victim, may have been exposed.

Reporting

The Secret Service investigates violations of laws relating to financial crimes, including access device fraud, financial institution fraud, identity theft, and computer fraud. To file a complaint or to get free information, visit www.secretservice.gov or call 202-406-5708.

If you believe you have become the victim of a "scam" but are not sure, you may also contact your local police department immediately using their non-emergency telephone number. Newport Beach community members may contact the Newport Beach Police Department at 949-644-3717 if they need further assistance.

