

Two Weeks That Were^{TW2}

May 17 – May 30, 2024



I had to change the title from “The Week That Was” because I totally missed last week – it flew by a bit too fast. As always, thanks for reading and for caring about the community. TW² is extra long today and is presented in four parts:

Part I – Important Goings On for You to Know:

- 1. Please make sure you also read the weekly community newsletter!** The newsletter is linked [here](#), and to avoid duplication I will (mostly) not repeat what’s provided there.
- 2. Wave Watch Christening.** Mayor Sue Kempf christened the City's rescue vessel, Wave Watch, on Friday at 9 a.m. Many attended the ceremony, including lifeguard alumni, the Laguna Beach City Council, and representatives from Congresswoman Katie Porter's and Assemblymember Diane Dixon's offices. Wave Watch effectively bridges a critical seven-and-a-half-mile gap in offshore response capabilities. It substantially enhances our emergency response infrastructure, improving efficiency and effectiveness in on-water emergency operations. Wave Watch will be in service for summer operations. We are pleased to welcome Wave Watch to the city fleet.
- 3. Public Works & Utilities Staff Celebrate National Public Works Week.** Thanks, Public Works! Last week the Public Works & Utilities Department celebrated National Public Works Week. These are the good folks who keep our parks and beaches clean, our facilities kept up, our wastewater managed, our capital projects implemented, and so much more. Employee appreciation events were held at several facilities, including the Corporation Yard and 479 Ocean (City Hall West) to recognize staff's contributions to rebuilding, improving, and maintaining the City. A special thanks to the department's administrative staff, including Administrative Assistant Catalina Ramirez, for coordinating the events.
- 4. Pavement Resurfacing at the Downtown Public Library and Treasure Island Parking Garage** Last week, the Street Maintenance Division of the Public Works & Utilities Department coordinated the resurfacing of the parking areas at the Downtown Public Library (Lot 23) and the Treasure Island Parking Garage (Lot 8). At the library, existing deteriorated asphalt was milled, a layer of new asphalt pavement installed, and new parking stalls were painted. In addition, minor repairs needed for the concrete surface of the parking garage at Treasure Island were performed by contractors, funded by The Montage Resort, per the approved maintenance agreement. These projects were coordinated by Deputy Director Reza Jafari with contributions by Maintenance Supervisor Todd Henry and Maintenance Worker II Brian Nguyen.
- 5. Public Works & Utilities Staff Successfully Complete APWA Public Works Institute Module 1** Staff members from various divisions within Public Works & Utilities recently participated in the American Public Works Association (APWA) Southern California Chapter's Public Works

Institute Module 1 – Basic Supervision in Public Works. This prestigious institute is structured into four comprehensive modules, each designed to address different facets of supervision and leadership within the field of public works. The participants who successfully completed the Module 1 training, reflecting a commitment to professional development, include Deputy Directors Reza Jafari and Richard Gonzales; Alpha Santos, Project Manager; Ashley Moran, Administrative Analyst; Chris Osuna, Maintenance Lead Worker; and Elias Campos, Equipment Operator.

- 6. Moss Street Beach Access Improvements** On May 17, the Public Works Department held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Moss Street Beach Access Improvements. The ribbon cutting was attended by members of the City Council, Senator Dave Min, Assemblymember Diane Dixon, City staff, and residents. The new Moss Street Beach Access enhancements include the replacement of the existing stairs with new stairs, walkways, overlooks, handrails, bike racks, and enhanced landscaping. The design incorporates colored concrete steps, board-formed concrete retaining walls, and black anodized aluminum handrails. The muted earth tones assimilate these enhancements into the newly vegetated bluff, which consists of a mix of native and drought-tolerant plants. The new stairs have been realigned to create overlook points that enhance the viewing experience of Moss Point while traveling down the stairs to the beach. The enhancements also include a new enclosed lifeguard tower. The tower accommodates a single occupant and will significantly improve working conditions for Marine Safety Department staff assigned to Moss Cove. The construction cost of \$1,770,000 was partially funded, with \$1,225,000 secured by Senator Dave Min and Assemblymember Diane Dixon through the state budget. Any questions about the project may be directed to Senior Project Manager, Ulises Escalona, at uescalona@lagunabeachcity.net.
- 7. Public Works Partners with Surf & Sand Resort to Augment Staff.** This week, the Landscape Maintenance Division of the Public Works & Utilities Department coordinated with the Surf & Sand Resort to supplement the City's parks maintenance staff for the next several weeks while the hotel and resort is undergoing major renovations. To keep hotel staff employed during these major renovations, the resort reached out to the City to offer its staff's volunteer assistance at no cost to the City. Beginning this week, the Landscape Maintenance Division utilized these volunteer staff at Main Beach and Heisler Park to install mulch in planters, remove weeds, litter pick, and sweep park pathways. This effort is expected to last through the month of June and was coordinated by Deputy Director Reza Jafari with daily oversight by Maintenance Lead Worker Chris Osuna. Thanks, Surf & Sand Resort!
- 8. Facilities Maintenance Team Removes Graffiti.** Earlier this week, the Facilities Maintenance Division of the Public Works & Utilities Department performed graffiti removal at Heisler Park, Anita Street Beach Access, and Ruby Street Park. Police Department Park Rangers notified the Public Works team on Tuesday morning, and the Facilities Maintenance Division quickly dispatched Maintenance Worker I Aaron Borrueal and Maintenance Aide Armando Nunez to address the issue. This work was coordinated by Maintenance Lead Worker Steve Rivera.
- 9. Public Works and Marine Safety Work Together to Install New Fire Pits at Aliso Beach.** This week, the Street Maintenance Division of the Public Works & Utilities Department, in coordination with the Marine Safety Department, installed several new wood-burning Fire

Pits at Aliso Beach at locations approved by City Council on May 14. The Street Maintenance Division will maintain the new fire pits by inspecting and cleaning them weekly and making adjustments, as needed, such as relocating them on the sand or removing them prior to significant storms or tidal events. This work was coordinated by Maintenance Supervisor Todd Henry.

10. Memorial Day Recycling Outreach Campaign. The Public Works & Utilities Department conducted a California Redemption Value (CRV) Recycling Campaign in the City of Laguna Beach starting on May 24 through May 27. The campaign, organized by Administrative Analyst Ashley Moran, achieved significant success in raising awareness about the importance of CRV recycling through Google Ads/YouTube, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok. The Memorial Day CRV recycling campaign garnered 81,665 impressions, the highest impressions and reach received through X. City staff is planning future educational SB 1383 Organics and CRV recycling campaigns focusing on social media platforms and YouTube. For more information on CRV recycling, visit the City's webpage at www.lagunabeachcity.net/recycling

11. City & Laguna Beach Unified Tour CR&R Material Recovery Facility. Last week, Public Works & Utilities Department staff and representatives from the Laguna Beach Unified School District toured CR&R's Material Recovery, Transfer, and Disposal Location in Stanton. CR&R will become the City's new Solid Waste and Recycling Services hauler beginning July 1, 2024. The combined tour aimed to enhance understanding of the CR&R facility's operations and its role in sustainable waste management. Questions regarding CR&R's Transition Plan can be addressed to Senior Public Works Analyst/Solid Waste Program Coordinator Liz Avila at lavila@lagunabeachcity.net or 949-497-0344.

12. Facilities Master Plan. On May 16, City representatives hosted four public meetings at the Laguna Beach Community and Susi Q Center to gather early input for a new Facilities Master Plan. This plan aims to assess the current and future needs of over 288,000 square feet of facilities, including public safety buildings, community centers, and the library. The meetings highlighted the library, animal shelter, Festival of Arts complex, Laguna Playhouse, and key recreation facilities. Enthusiastic residents shared numerous ideas, which are being compiled into a summary for the project website. This marks the start of an ongoing community engagement process, with more meetings planned. Residents can sign up for updates through the FMP webpage and contribute their thoughts via email to fmp@lagunabeachcity.net.

13. Police Department Reports

Patrol Activity:

Wednesday, May 22:

- At 6:43 a.m., Dispatch advised there was a suspicious vehicle on the sand at Victoria Beach. Officers responded and contacted three subjects. One was subject to a gang injunction involving the Garden Grove street gang, Hard Times. Since the vehicle was stuck in the sand, a tow truck was requested. Field Interview cards were completed for all the subjects.

- At 9:29 a.m., detectives from another agency requested assistance locating a fraud suspect in our City. Laguna Beach officers searched for him and identified the suspect near 1000 S. Coast Highway. They coordinated with the detectives, who responded to their location and took the fraud suspect into custody near Laguna Coffee Company.

Saturday, May 25:

- At 9:25 a.m., officers responded with lights and sirens to the 30000 block of Marilyn Drive for a person slumped over in a vehicle. The reporting party wasn't sure why the man was slumped over, and he was too fearful to check on him. The driver had an outstanding warrant. A search of his vehicle yielded narcotics and paraphernalia. The driver was arrested, and his passenger was released. Officers used the Truenarc handheld narcotics analyzer, which detected fentanyl.

Sunday, May 26:

- At 1:37 a.m., an LBPD Jailer was transporting a prisoner to the Orange County Jail when he came upon an injury traffic collision on Laguna Canyon Road at Big Bend, involving a solo vehicle that collided into an Edison pole. The solo occupant had been consuming alcohol and was transported to Mission Hospital Mission Viejo. An officer responded to the hospital and eventually placed the driver in custody for DUI. Edison responded to check the tether wire cables which were damaged in the collision. Edison determined no structural damage to the pole had occurred and secured the wires.
- At 6:50 a.m., officers responded to Bank of America for a transient camping in front of the ATM machine. When officers contacted him, he became irate and spit on an officer. He refused to identify himself or pack his belongings. He was placed in custody for resisting, delaying, and or obstructing a peace officer and battery on a peace officer. After he was placed in custody, he told the officers he was going to kill them. While being booked into the LBPD Jail, he gave a false name. Threatening a peace officer, providing a false name to a peace officer, and refusing to provide a DNA sample were added to his charges before being transported to the Orange County Jail.

Monday, May 27:

- At 12:46 p.m., a caller reported seeing a vehicle strike a parked vehicle and drive away from the area. A motorcycle officer located the suspect vehicle downtown and attempted to stop it. The driver refused to stop and a pursuit ensued into Newport Beach. Due to the motorist's erratic driving, the pursuit was canceled. The driver was identified and arrested three days later.

Tuesday, May 28:

- At 12:22 a.m., officers responded to the 1900 block of Laguna Canyon Road for a report of a domestic violence incident in progress. The suspect fled the scene just before the officer's arrival. The victim sustained moderate injuries and was transported to Mission Hospital Laguna Beach. LBPD officers did an excellent job

of searching for the vehicle and located it as it attempted to leave the area near the 405/133 split. Officers coordinated a felony car stop near Santiago Canyon and SR-241. The suspect exited his vehicle and removed his son from the rear seat. The suspect subsequently surrendered and was arrested for felony domestic violence and child endangerment. The family lives out of town.

- At 4:03 p.m., emergency personnel responded to a two-vehicle collision in the 2600 block of Laguna Canyon Road. One motorist drove off the roadway and struck a Frontier utility pole. The second motorist collided with the broken pole in the middle of the street. Both drivers were transported to the hospital with minor injuries. Frontier gave a 2-hour estimated time of arrival. All lanes of Laguna Canyon Road remained closed for 6 hours until Frontier crews replaced the downed pole.

Community Event:

- On Thursday, May 23, members of the LBPD Honor Guard, Command Staff, and various personnel attended the Orange County Peace Officers Memorial celebrating the lives and sacrifices of those who have fallen in the line of duty in the County of Orange, including LBPD officers Gordon French and Jon Coutchie.

II. Upcoming Events

- *National Beach Safety Week May 20 – 27.* National Beach Safety Week was established to educate the public about safety while in and near the water, emphasizing the hazards associated with rip currents. In 2023, Laguna Beach Lifeguards made over 7,000 rescues and provided educational contacts for over 480,000 people, preventing accidents and injuries on City beaches. Below are the United States Lifesaving Association beach safety tips:
 - Swim Near a Lifeguard
 - Learn to Swim
 - Learn Rip Current Safety
 - Never Swim Alone
 - Designate a Water Watcher
 - Alcohol and Water Don't Mix
 - Feet First Water Entry
 - Life Jackets Save Lives
 - Observe Signs & Flags
 - Beat the Heat & Block the Sun
- *LBHS Tennis Court Maintenance.* The LBHS tennis courts will be closed from now through **Monday, June 10** for court resurfacing and maintenance.
- **Friday, May 31:** Pride 365 Rainbow Flag Distribution/Summer of Pride Celebration from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Promenade and Susi Q
- **Friday, May 31:** City Hall closed
- **Saturday, June 1:** Pride Month - Pride Flag Displayed at City Hall
- **Thursday, June 6:** El Morro 3rd Graders meeting Mayor Kempf at 9:00 a.m. and 9:45 a.m. in City Council Chambers

- **Thursday, June 6:** City Hall Art-to-Go Exhibit Reception from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at City Hall
- **Friday, June 7:** PD Badge Pinning and Swearing-In Ceremony at 3:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers
- **Friday, June 7:** City Hall closes at 4:30 p.m.
- **Saturday, June 8:** Laguna Ocean Foundation Kelpfest from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Main Beach
- **Saturday, June 8:** Circus Bella at 1:00 p.m. & 3:00 p.m. at Bluebird Park
- **Friday, June 14:** City Hall closed.
- **Saturday, June 15:** Fete de la Musique from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (1:00 p.m. Opening Ceremony) at Main Beach
- **Wednesday, June 19:** Juneteenth (City Hall Closed)
- **Thursday, June 20:** CR&R Townhall Meeting from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers – learn more about the transition from Waste Management to CR&R.
- **Friday, June 21:** City Hall closes at 4:30 p.m.
- **Saturday, June 22:** CR&R Townhall Meeting from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in City Council Chambers – learn more about the transition from Waste Management to CR&R.
- **Saturday, June 22:** Laguna Ocean Foundation/Chamber Beach Clean-Up at Main Beach from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Part III – On the Upcoming City Council Meeting Agenda

Some noteworthy items on the June 11, 2024, City Council Agenda include:

1. LB Fire Department Standards of Cover and Community Risk Assessment
2. Lang Park – Pickleball Update
3. Results of the Citizens' Revenue Enhancement Survey
4. An appeal of the Design Review Board's (DRB) decision relating to 32051 Coast Highway.

A disclaimer: Please know that I won't highlight all of the items on the agenda - if I missed calling one out that you're specifically interested in, please know that doing so was not purposeful.

Part IV – Less Important Stuff – My Weeks That Were

- **Memorial Day.** It was great to see so many folks at the Lbfd's pancake breakfast as well as to listen in on the Memorial Day service at 11 at Heisler Park. The Gold Star mom's words and story were so moving.
- **Morning Coffee.** It was fun to spend time with some of our staff this past Thursday as a part of allowing me to meet more City staff. I didn't get to say hello to everyone, and my introvert side was uncomfortable just plugging myself into conversations there, but I really appreciated meeting so many people.
- **Library.** I spent some time this week with the OCPL librarian, Julie Quillman, at the Laguna Beach branch. I got a nice tour of the library, saw the fairie garden, and learned a lot from Julie as to how the OCPL works – from funding to budgeting to collection materials.
- **School District.** I had a good visit with Dr. Jason Vilorio of the Lbusd – we talked about our respective agencies and how we can work together better.

- **Electrification Fair.** What a great showing on Thursday for the Climate Action group – and it was my first time seeing the Rivian South Coast Theater (I had seen a good handful of movies there over the years in its “before” state – what a change!). The Fair had some good tables about solar, induction cooking, and other ways to reduce our direct use of fossil fuels.
- **Community Development Director.** I spent part of the week finishing up some reference checks and conversations about candidates for Community Development Director. I’ll talk more about that soon.
- **Meeting with SCE.** Community Development, Public Works, and our office (including me) met with SCE this week to talk about their plan to remediate and repair damage done to the open space habitat and resources back in January when they did an emergency installation of a handful of 12kV poles.

As always, if you have any questions relating to this report or about any matter in the City, feel free to [send me an email](#). I like to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Dave Kiff

City Manager

Note: Thanks to the department directors and city staff, as well as to Assistant City Managers Jeremy Frimond and Gavin Curran, for helping pull this together.