

City Manager's Weekly Report

This is the weekly report for the week ending February 27th, 2009.

1. Meeting Notes

The next regular City Council meeting is Tuesday, March 3rd, beginning with a Closed Session at 5:00 PM, followed by the regular agenda convening at 7:00 PM.

2. Congressman Miller's Efforts in Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009

This past week the House of Representatives passed the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009, which funds the federal government for the rest of the year. The bill is expected to be passed by the Senate next week and signed into law by President Obama soon. This bill is separate from the Economic Recovery Act signed into law last week by President Obama.

Significantly, as the result of Congressman Miller's efforts, the Omnibus Appropriations Act includes funding for several projects that are important to the City of Richmond. These include:

- **\$600,000 for Shotspotter** – The Richmond Police Department will receive funding for the Shotspotter Gunshot Location System.
- **\$250,000 for the Richmond Youth Academy** – As you know, the Richmond Fire Department Youth Academy serves youth ages 14-18 in a ten-month program to participate in training and preparation for a career in fire-fighting. Classes focus on tutoring, computer literacy, safety training, emergency preparation, and life skills.
- **\$400,000 for the Richmond Police Activities League's One-Stop Youth Center** – The Richmond Police Activities League One-Stop Youth Center provides a safe environment for youth to congregate after school. The Center successfully focuses on meeting the developmental needs of young people through academic and employment services, mentoring programs, and recreational activities.
- **\$150,000 for work on the Rigger's Loft/Paint Shop/Sheet Metal Shop/Electrical Shop at Shipyard 3 Historic District, part of Rosie the Riveter Historic Park in Richmond** – This will provide partial funding to rehabilitate one of the five surviving original buildings of Shipyard 3, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which is located within the Rosie the Riveter World War II/Home Front National Historical Park.

3. Recent Sewer Overflow

As you know, Veolia Water reported an overflow in the sewer collection system that occurred on Sunday, February 22nd from the overflow weir located at Harbor Way and Wright Avenue. This overflow was the subject of numerous news reports this

past week. Unfortunately, like many other systems along San Francisco Bay, Richmond's sewer collection system was designed to work this way so that, during heavy rain events, like the one experienced when this overflow occurred, the number of backups into homes and businesses is limited. Mark Grushayev, Veolia's Richmond wastewater system manager provided the following additional information about this event, which I have provided below (unedited):

- **Did the Richmond wastewater plant have a sewer spill?**

The Richmond wastewater treatment plant did not experience a sewage spill. The collection system experienced an overflow that resulted from the deluge of rainwater that leaked into the collection system from the weekend rain. The system was designed to overflow into the stormwater system in order to alleviate the pressure from intense wet weather events.

- **Are there any health affects due to the overflow from the system?**

The City of Richmond and East Bay Regional Parks District posted precautionary notices to avoid swimming or ingesting the bay water until testing is complete. Once testing results show no public health threats, then the precautionary notices were removed. To date there have been no reports of public health being endangered.

- **Do overflows happen often in the city?**

The City has an underground infrastructure network that dates back to World War II. During heavy wet weather events, water leaks into the collection system and overwhelms the underground infrastructure. Therefore, the City decided in 2002 to partner with Veolia Water to operate the wastewater treatment plant and expanded that agreement for the operations of the collection system in 2004. Veolia Water was tasked to bring the sewer system in compliance with state regulatory requirements and to reduce overflows from the collection system over time. As of today, Veolia Water, working with the City, has reduced overflows from the sanitary sewer system 80 percent in the past four years. However, because of the design of the system, even if sewer spills are completely eliminated there could still be overflows at the weirs during heavy rain events.

- **What is the path forward to make sure this does not happen again?**

Heavy rainfall will continue to strain the collection system in Richmond unless more is invested in the underground infrastructure. Veolia Water, working with the City's staff, is completing a master plan that will provide a roadmap for further improvements to both the sanitary and storm sewer systems. This plan will address the most significant environmental impacts first. Veolia Water has also completed a master plan for the wastewater treatment plant that includes a detailed and prioritized list of capital improvements. Upon acceptance of the master plans, the City of Richmond and its partners have committed to invest

\$25 million over the next several years to repair and upgrade the wastewater system throughout the City.

- **Why was the initial report about the overflow delayed?**

Veolia failed to report this event to the State within the required 2 hours. Veolia reported the event as soon as it realized that the 2 hour reporting requirement was missed. This was the first overflow event since the reporting requirements had changed from 24 hours to 2 hours on July 1, 2008, and Veolia is revising its notification protocol to make sure that this type of the delay will not happen again.

4. **Richmond Community Fund Advisory Committee**

As you know, the City of Richmond and the Chevron Products Company executed a Community Benefits Agreement (Agreement) on July 31st, 2008. This Agreement creates a Richmond Community Fund that, beginning in 2009, receives \$1,000,000 annually for 10 years to fund non-profits and community programs. The Agreement requires the establishment of a seven-member Richmond Community Fund Advisory Committee (Committee) to act as advisors and provide financial and program oversight. The Committee is comprised of three City Councilmembers, two Chevron-appointed representatives, and two community members. These members serve 4-year terms.

Councilmembers Nat Bates, Ludmryna Lopez, and Jeff Ritterman were appointed by the City Council as its representatives; Mike Coyle, Chevron Refinery Manager and Dean O'Hair, Chevron External Affairs Manager will serve as Chevron representatives.

Applications for the Committee's community representatives are now available on the City's website www.ci.richmond.ca.us, or can be requested through the City Manager's Office. The deadline for submittal of applications is March 20th, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. After conducting interviews with top candidates, the current 5 members of the Advisory Committee will select the two community representatives.

The Advisory Committee established the following criteria for its community representatives:

- A Richmond resident for at least one year;
- Demonstrate a deep knowledge of community needs;
- Willingness to work hard, attend meetings and review proposals thoroughly;
- Cannot be a City of Richmond or Chevron employee;
- Understand that their employers or organizations in which they are members (or affiliated) will not be eligible for funds during their 4-year term; and
- Experience making funding decisions and understanding organizational budgets is not required but would be helpful.

The Committee plans to conduct interviews with top candidates by the end of March and select members soon thereafter.

5. **Funding for Brookside Hospital**

The Community Benefits Agreement with Chevron also included six years of \$1 million in annual funding for the Brookside Community Health Center. These funds were already transferred to the City of Richmond last month for subsequent distribution to the Brookside Health Center.

This past week, Councilmember Viramontes, Administrative Chief Janet Schneider, and I met with Cheryl Johnson, Executive Director, and Ruth Vasquez Jones, Boardmember, of the Brookside Health Center. They described their short term plans for use of the Community Benefit funds, which primarily involve strengthening their balance sheet by paying off some debt, and their long term plans to expand services in the Richmond community. Also of significance, they indicated that they would not require from the Richmond Redevelopment Agency the \$600,000 financial support that had been previously committed to their project at the west end of Macdonald Avenue.

The Finance Department plans to transfer this year's payment of \$1 million provided through the Community Benefits Agreement to the Brookside Community Health Center as soon as possible.

6. **The California Endowment will Fund Pilot Project for Implementation of General Plan Health Element**

As I previously reported to you, the City learned this past December that it is one of 14 places selected for The California Endowment's (TCE's) strategic initiative of "*Building Healthy Communities* – places where children and youth are healthy, safe and ready to learn."

Last month, the City learned that TCE has provided another grant through PolicyLink, in partnership with the City of Richmond and MIG, Inc. (the City's General Plan consultant), to support a significant pilot project in the implementation of Richmond's Community Health and Wellness Element of the General Plan. Among the key outcomes proposed for the project is to operationalize the Health Element through specific neighborhood improvement pilot projects. Work on this project within the City will begin very soon under the direction of the Planning Department, and we will keep you informed as this begins to move forward.

7. **Recreation Highlights**

The following are highlights from the Recreation Department for the current week:

- **Black History Month Expo**: The Recreation Department, in collaboration with various partners, held the Black History Month Expo on Friday, February 20th and Saturday, February 21st. Friday evening featured a "Friday Night at the Apollo" where 14 young acts performed. Saturday's events included musical

performances, artwork and vendor displays, and guest speakers, including Mayor Gayle McLaughlin. Approximately 250 people attended the event.

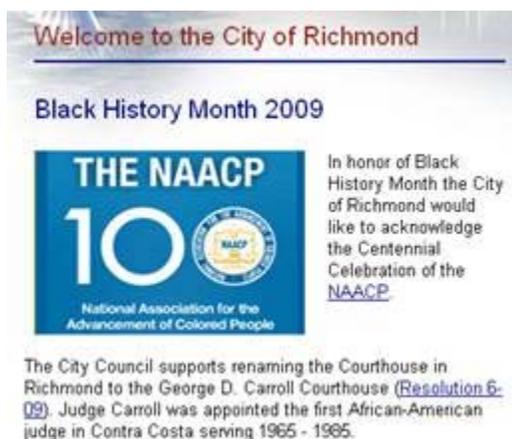
- **MLK Community Center:** The Recreation Department is conducting the J.D. Banks Memorial Dedication Ceremony on Saturday, February 28th at the MLK Community Center from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM. Several speakers are expected to make remarks followed by a presentation of the plaques and pictures to be displayed within the MLK Community Center.
- **Recreation & Parks Commission:** The Recreation Department hosted a retreat on Saturday, February 21st, 2009 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, at which the Recreation & Parks Commission participated in a workshop conducted by a management consultant. Several workshops are being planned for the future.

8. **Finance Department Hosts the California Municipal Revenue and Tax Association**

The Revenue Division hosted the Division 1 quarterly meeting of the California Municipal Revenue and Tax Association (CMRTA) on February 13th, 2009. The meeting was attended by over 40 members representing over 20 cities from the greater Bay Area. Topics covered included a recap of legislative bills impacting cities, including changes to the data exchange program between cities and the Franchise Tax Board, new laws governing massage parlors and an overview of the “Red Flags” Rule requiring identity theft prevention programs.

9. **Web Notes**

A new home page this month features Black History Month. It highlights the 100th anniversary of the NAACP and the resolution renaming the Courthouse to the George D. Carroll Courthouse.



10. **E-Mail Subscription to the City Manager’s Weekly Report**

This weekly report is provided directly to City Councilmembers, and is posted on the City’s website. It is also frequently forwarded as e-mail to other interest community members.

As a reminder, if any of you are reading this “second hand” and would like to receive the weekly report e-mailed to you directly, please sign up at the city’s website, under E-services, City Manager’s weekly report: <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/list.asp>. If you visit this site, you may find other e-services of interest to you.