

City Manager's Weekly Report

This is the weekly report for the week ending January 23rd, 2009.

1. Meeting Notes

The next regular City Council meeting is January 27th, beginning with a Closed Session at 5:00 PM, and followed by the regular City Council agenda (mostly presentations) at 7:00 PM.

2. Contra Costa County 2009 Humanitarian of the Year

Corporal Larry Lewis of the Richmond Police Department was honored on January 20th before the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors as the 2009 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Humanitarian of the Year. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend this presentation, along with Assistant City Manager Leslie Knight, Police Chief Chris Magnus, and Deputy Police Chief Ed Medina, joining a rooting section that included Larry's family and an enthusiastic group of PAL youth.

As you know, Larry serves as executive director of the Richmond Police Activities League (PAL). He joined the police department in 1981 and has worked with youth throughout his career. Larry now supervises the Richmond PAL youth program that serves thousands of West Contra Costa children annually. The program includes about 1,200 participants at the PAL offices on Macdonald Avenue and about 2,500 in sports programs in Richmond. Just this month, Richmond PAL had the official opening of its 20,000 square foot gym at 22nd Street and Macdonald Avenue – a project in which Larry played a vital role.

As a Richmond native, Larry knows how important it is to provide safe activities for youth in Richmond who often have no place to go after school and no role models to guide them through their adolescent years. His first job was with the Boys Club in El Cerrito. Eventually, he became the organization's director.

As a beat officer in the North & East Neighborhood of the City of Richmond, Larry went above and beyond the call of duty working with the neighborhood council to improve conditions at Grant Elementary School. When neighbors launched a "million pennies" drive to raise money to improve the school auditorium, Larry worked diligently on the campaign. During the "Have Fun But Don't Shoot Your Gun" campaign to discourage celebratory gunfire, Larry brought police cadets to the neighborhood to walk door-to-door distributing information and encouraging peaceful celebrations. Larry has also spearheaded the cadets' participation in the annual City of Richmond neighborhood picnic. During this picnic, the cadets fit and distribute dozens of bicycle helmets to encourage safe riding practices.

One of Larry's most enduring contributions has been through the youth program of the Richmond Kiwanis Club. Not only did he play an instrumental role in the development of this club but he was an adult leader of the Kiwanis for more than a decade. He oversees the youth public service projects within the club, which has

won numerous awards for their work. You can find Larry and his Kiwins feeding senior citizens, working at the GRIP meal programs, and doing other amazing community outreach projects throughout the city. Larry is now sharing his success with Kiwanis groups outside Richmond.

Larry has also received the Police Officer of the Year Award as well as other commendations while in the Police Department.

On behalf of the entire City staff, I congratulate Larry on his much deserved award!



3. **Richmond Inaugural Celebration**

This past Tuesday, January 20th, the City of Richmond and Neighborhood House of North Richmond hosted an inaugural event at the newly renovated civic auditorium. Community members began arriving as early as 5:00 AM to get a good seat to view the big screen television broadcast of the inauguration. The event included a free buffet breakfast, a short program with 2 first-time voters and a local historian, banner signing, and 2 plus hours of big screen live inaugural viewing. The close to 2,000 attendees each received flags and Obama calendars that they enthusiastically waved and held throughout the program. ABC Channel 7 filmed live from there, interviewing many Richmond residents, which was shown on local TV throughout the day. City staff continues to receive calls from the community telling them how much they enjoyed the event and that they appreciated that the city created a place where people could celebrate the historical event together.

ABC Channel 7's coverage of the Richmond viewing at the Presidential Inauguration can be found online at:

http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=news/local/east_bay&id=6614810

A number of people worked very hard to organize the event, with Administrative Chief Janet Schneider pulling the heaviest oar among City staff to make it a success.

4. **The Economic Stimulus Bill**

The Economic Stimulus Bill, H. R. 7110 - Job Creation and Unemployment Relief Act of 2008 (Bill) is intended to address the nation's need to bolster the economy and create jobs. Today, the House Appropriations Committee approved the major spending portion of the package – \$358 billion in spending to rebuild roads,

bridges, waterways, energy grids and other job-creating construction projects. Administrative Chief Janet Schneider and Mark Grushayev, Veolia Program Manager, went to a meeting in Sacramento hosted by the State Water Resources Control Board to hear what public agencies need to do to access the money for the City's badly needed waste and storm water projects. It is estimated that The California Clean Water State Revolving Fund would receive an amount in excess of \$425 million to fund "shovel-ready" projects that would create jobs immediately. While it still isn't clear what "shovel ready" means, staff is now preparing projects for possible funding.

5. **Recreation Highlights**

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

- **6th Annual Chinese New Year Celebration**: The Richmond Senior Center will hold the 6th Annual Chinese New Year Celebration on Saturday, January 31st, 2009. Approximately 250 participants are expected to attend this event.
- **Boxing**: The Booker T. Anderson Community Center continues to conduct boxing classes every Tuesday through Friday from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Currently, fifteen members attend regularly.
- **Shields-Reid**: The Recreation Department has begun conducting free pool and ping-pong programs for seniors at the Shields-Reid Community Center.
- **Parchester**: The Parchester Neighborhood Center, with the help of community member volunteer, Yvonne Melendez, escorted 14 teens to the City of Richmond Inauguration event held at the Richmond Auditorium on Tuesday, January 20th, 2009.
- **California Kayak**: The Recreation Department Aquatic Center has renewed the annual contract with California Kayak to offer kayaking instructional activities and classes to be held at the Swim Center.

6. **Street Resurfacing**

Public Works completed resurfacing Panama, Fresno and Sacramento Avenues this week.