



The VOICE

Your independent news source

Greater Shasta County, CA

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Did you know...

- **A May 21 ground-breaking ceremony is scheduled for a long-awaited 150-bed state-owned and operated Veterans Home in Redding. The ceremony begins at 10:30 a.m. at 3400 Knighton Road. The public is invited to attend. It will take about 2 years to construct the 155,000 square foot facility. When completed, it will employ about 244 workers.**
- **Statistics show that in Shasta County, with about 180,000 residents, there are:**
 1. **42,380 on Social Security**
 2. **20,487 obtain food stamps**
 3. **27,867 (avg) MediCal beneficiaries monthly**
 4. **2300 families on Welfare**
 5. **53,000 Medicare Beneficiaries**
 6. **Over 7,000 with medical marijuana recommendations.**

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City Negotiated Their Way Into a Ballot Measure

Redding City Councilman Rick Bosetti has openly maintained that our City union negotiated pension and retiree health insurance programs were and continue to be unsustainable since his election campaign in 2006. Most people agree with him. There remains much controversy, however, on what to do about it.

At the City Council meeting on May 4th, Councilors Rick Bosetti, Missy McArthur, and Patrick Jones voted (3-2) to pursue a **local ballot measure** for the **November 2010** election. This ballot measure will ask voters if the retirement benefits for City employees and officials should be changed. It would seek to have all active members pay the full employee contribution toward funding of CalPERS pension benefits. Currently, the City pays this to the tune of \$2.3 million each year. It also would establish a two-tier reduced CalPERS benefit for any new hires. And thirdly, it would eliminate the current City-subsidized retiree health care plan for new hires.

The City had, back in February, given employees, through their labor representatives, 60 days to voluntarily make concessions to their existing contracts (none of which have expired), that would close the \$2.3 million gap between revenues and expenditures. Paying their own share of the CalPERS pension contribution (9% for public safety employees, 7% for others) would have balanced the budget with no other cutbacks, and no layoffs. None of the labor groups agreed to do this, and would have preferred to come up with their own way of reducing their expenses. But that method of “negotiating” has done nothing but put the City further in the hole, yielding only short-term fixes to very long-term fiscal problems, forcing continual budget reduction actions as each of the short-terms expires. So, the City had no choice but to cut the \$2.3 million out of the budget with layoffs and service reductions (again). And, in three months, they may have to do it again.

Councilman Bosetti said “We have negotiated our way into this. There have been no concessions whatsoever regarding retirement benefits,” referring to negotiations in prior years that yielded the expensive pension benefits we have today.

Is a ballot measure the best way to begin resolving the expensive benefits problem for the City? Absolutely not. Whether it passes or not, it will not change the current negotiating system. It will simply indicate the preference of the voters in this community. But it certainly illustrates the frustration felt by those who are trying desperately to do what is needed to keep our City solvent and our citizens properly serviced, now and in the future.

Turtle Bay Hotel Proposal Revisited

On April 14th, the Redding City Council voted to grant Turtle Bay conceptual approval of updated plans to develop a hotel and restaurant at a different location on their campus than what had been previously approved. They further directed the City Attorney to work with Turtle Bay representatives to negotiate language for an amendment to the ground lease to allow processing of a use permit. Turtle Bay would like to sublease the property and keep the revenues, and needs the City’s permission to do so, since the City owns the property and leases it to Turtle Bay for zero dollars.

The very next day, news that Turtle Bay would own the hotel through a **for-profit** wing and the investors include the McConnell Foundation and the Stratford family appeared in the Record Searchlight. Stay tuned to learn what other information comes forward!

Privatizing the Redding Convention & Visitors Bureau Makes Sense and Saves Dollars

By: Steve Gaines, Managing Partner, Best Western Hilltop Inn

So much attention has been paid lately to the possible marketing arrangement between the Shasta Cascade Wonderland and Turtle Bay Exploration Park that it seemed a few words about the actual privatization proposal for the Redding Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) might be helpful. It also seemed worth reminding those who might suspect that this whole exercise is being developed as a sinister plot to slip City funding to Turtle Bay, that it's also important to alleviate some of those fears that hundreds of thousands of dollars of Redding marketing money would be handed over to Turtle Bay as a gift.

As the Chairman for the Redding Hospitality Group, which is made up of all the lodging properties in Redding, it should be no surprise that I can positively confirm we have a vested interest in ensuring the best possible job of marketing should be the paramount mission of the visitors bureau. Redding is one of those destinations that require effective marketing as a destination for travelers, and any decisions we make on marketing will be, as we see it, the best for guaranteeing Redding remains a popular destination.

The proposed contractual arrangement between the City of Redding and the Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association has a fixed amount of \$750,000 per year to be used for marketing purposes. If the effort is effective, and revenue for the City increases, the City keeps 75% of the increase, and the Shasta Cascade earns 25% of the increase, to be used for additional marketing. This contract amount is *several hundred thousand dollars less than what the city is spending now*, and with the savings from privatization, hopefully the City of Redding will be able to save a few police or firefighting jobs.

In the proposed agreement, there are over 20 performance requirements which will substantially use up most of the \$750,000. These include such performance points as maintaining a staff totally dedicated to marketing Redding, having offices in Redding for that staff, maintaining existing marketing programs to include producing brochures, maintaining websites, and other points which should ensure we continue to do the best possible job of attracting California, domestic and international visitors. Also included in the contract is the requirement that we spend approximately \$200,000 on advertising Redding. All of these performance requirements add up to about \$700,000.

The one area where there could be some possible advantages for our community of working with Turtle Bay is with visitor services. This is where visitors coming to Redding are looking for information and advice on attractions, hotels and restaurants. This effort is currently performed at the Redding CVB office on Auditorium Drive, five days a week throughout the year. We have been discussing the possibility of this effort being farmed out to Turtle Bay, as we think we could be doing a better service to the visitor with Turtle Bay being open 7 days a week during the Spring/Summer and Fall tourism season, and at least 5 days a week the rest of the year. In our early discussions with Turtle Bay, it looks like a contract to provide these visitor services would be in the amount of approximately \$50,000 per year and would cover the staffing and provide a dedicated space for these visitor services. We know, as the Redding CVB is the current provider of these services, we could not do it for less than the amount for which we would contract with Turtle Bay, and with Turtle Bay providing those services, the visitor would be receiving travel assistance more days per week.

The Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association has a long history in the marketing of farm northern California dating back to 1927, and we are excited about the prospect of maintaining this strong relationship for Redding's future. The revenue produced from visitors helps employ over 4,600 Shasta County residents and brings over \$360 million into our local economy, including \$110 million in payroll. Just hotel occupancy tax that goes to the City of Redding, even after paying for these marketing services, should be in excess of \$3 million this year. Visitors also account for a significant portion of the sales tax collected in Redding.

The partnership with the Shasta Cascade Wonderland over the last several decades has been very successful, and up until this recent record recession, hotel revenue (and tax to the City) was growing nicely. We in the Redding Lodging Industry can see nothing but strong, effective marketing coming out of this continuing partnership and a financially healthy industry is good for Redding.

Shasta County Increases Development Impact Fees

On July 1, 2010, the Shasta County Development Impact Fees will be adjusted to include the third and final phase of the fee implementation, and make an annual adjustment (upward) of .83%, based on the Building Cost Index provided by the Engineering News-Record. Here are the new fees:

Until June 30, 2011	Single Family	Multi-family per unit	Commercial per 1,000 S.F.	Office per 1,000 S.F.	Industrial per 1,000 S.F.
Main Fee	\$ 4,960.35	\$ 4,750.37	\$ 773.44	\$ 557.13	\$ 348.21
Main Fee + Fire	\$ 6,499.84	\$ 6,224.44	\$ 1,674.55	\$ 1,242.99	\$ 755.50
Main Fee + Traffic	\$ 6,067.22	\$ 5,432.01	\$ 2,293.94	\$ 2,354.06	\$ 1,582.75
Main Fee + Fire + Traffic	\$ 7,606.71	\$ 6,906.08	\$ 3,195.05	\$ 3,039.94	\$ 1,990.05

There are **additional** traffic impact fees below that also apply **per single family residence**, based on the actual location in Shasta County. For commercial projects, which are charged multiples of the single family residence fee, the additional fees can be obtained by contacting the Department of Public Works at (530) 225-5661.

- County Wide: \$ 800.00 (in addition to above traffic fees)
- Deschutes Interchange: \$ 1,553.86 (in addition to other TIF fees, will adjust 8-1-10)
- South County TIF Zone 1: \$ 5,726.17 (map available on Department of Resource Management website)
- South County TIF Zone 2: \$ 3,088.39 (map available on Department of Resource Management website)

And, all of the above fees are **in addition** to the typical building permit, plan check, well, and septic fees. There are many variable factors in the unincorporated areas of Shasta County depending on exactly where you build. Other fees may also apply, and each permit is treated as site specific. Contact the County Resource Management Department for more exact numbers prior to moving forward: 1805 Placer Street, Redding, CA, 96001; (530) 225-5761.

Upcoming Election Information

The 2010 Statewide Direct Primary Election will take place on **June 8, 2010**. The **deadline for voter registration** for this election is **May 24, 2010**. In addition those candidates running for California State offices, the following candidates are running for Shasta County offices:

Republican Central Committee (Vote for 1)

District 2

Wanda Agostini
Dorothy Robbins
Loeta Rhodes
Janet K. Gallino
Mark Mazzone
Susan Reed
Mike Reed

District 3

Noni Fleming
Sue E. Farrell
William L. Farrell
Fred Meyer
Ann Meyer

District 4

Patti Bosetti
Cheri Beck
Richard Long
Cherrill Clifford
Lawrence "Larry" Clifford
James K. Myatt
Erin Resner

Board Of Supervisors:

District 1

David Kehoe

District 5

Chris Young, Les Baugh, Corkey Harmon

Superintendent of Schools: Thomas Armelino

Assessor/Recorder: Ron Largent, Leslie Morgan

Auditor/Controller: Randall Faulkner, Connie Regnell

County Clerk: Cathy Darling, Russell K. Hunt

District Attorney: Gerald "Jerry" Benito, Steve Carlton

Treasurer/Tax Collector: Lori Scott

The beginning date for **Redding City Council Candidates and other open offices** to announce candidacy is **July 12, 2010**, and they have until **August 6, 2010** to file for the November 2010 election.

Sustainable Communities Strategy or Regional Climate Action Plan?

On April 27th, a greenhouse gas reduction target setting workshop was held during the regular meeting of the Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency (SCRTPA). Kurt Karperos, the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) head of air quality and transportation, came to Redding to explain SB375, the law that aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions (GhG) to 1990 levels by 2020 by reducing *passenger* vehicle miles traveled. It is *one part* of the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, referred to as AB32.

Karperos said SB375 targets will only focus on passenger car and light truck traffic in our local area, and will not include traffic from outside (I-5 etc.). CARB will set draft reduction targets for our region by June 30th. Final targets will be released by September 30th, and will be measured per capita by percentage. CARB will consider the unique characteristics of each region and economies, existing developments, and local input. They say there is flexibility in achieving targets, and they do not want to overburden regions.

Though this is a state mandate, the 18 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) in the state (including Shasta County), can take SB375 or not, according to Karperos. There are *no* non-compliance penalties. But, if you create a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) plan, you will be given CEQA relief for future development. CARB believes that more efficient planning will provide a diversity of development and a spectrum of choices that provides a better quality of life, reducing the need to use vehicles. You may, however, as a region, create an *alternate* plan rather than a SCS that would also meet the state mandate requirements.

Fortunately, the Shasta County Air Quality Management District is preparing a plan that will address issues with GhG's beyond land use, and will include compliance strategies for most sources of GhG in Shasta County. On May 4th, County Resource Manager Russ Mull recommended (and had approved) the development of a *Regional Climate Action Plan* to the Air Pollution Control Board (Supervisors). A variety of discussions are occurring in and around the state regarding the appropriateness of AB32, given current economic realities. It is likely, however, that under any circumstances some degree of reduction in GhG will be required regardless of potential changes.

This planning process would address a broader spectrum of GhG reduction in Shasta County. It would cover the County and all the cities in its jurisdiction. A Request for Proposal is circulating to recruit the technical consultant to provide an inventory of the entire County to see what each sector is currently producing in concentrations of CO2. The plan is to hire the consultant around the first week of July. The final plan will take about one year to complete, and will include the development of an accurate inventory and forecast of GhG emissions in Shasta County. Additionally, methodologies for reductions in GhG by percentage will be recommended.

A letter inviting various industries to participate in a working group to assist with plan development will be sent shortly. It will include: timber industry, agriculture, mining, building industries, cement/concrete manufacturers, power producers and others. This proactive planning process will ultimately assist with compliance and retention of our local businesses. It could be integrated with any SCS or alternate plan prepared by the SCRTPA.

While a popular social topic, the potential changes in land use statewide account for less than 4 percent of the total reductions to be counted towards the 2020 goal set by AB32 legislation. It seems appropriate to have a local plan in place that addresses the full spectrum of sources that create CO2, including those identified in the SB375 portion of the law.

Join Shasta VOICES today.

We depend on membership and other contributions.

If you are viewing this issue of "*THE VOICE*" on our website, click on the *membership tab* for information and to download a membership application or contributor form. Or, you can obtain more information by going to our website, www.shastavoices.com, or calling **(530) 222-5251**.

Mary B. Machado, Executive Director