

Kim Shirley's Council Report for Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Friday, June 23rd- ReGen Monterey Board Mtg- In our ongoing conversation about waste that is brought in from outside our member organizations, this meeting started off with a pulled item from the consent agenda regarding a contract from Cold Canyon in San Luis Obispo county. The contract was for ReGen to pay \$10/ton in exchange for Cold Canyon's recyclables for a three week time span while they did repairs on their MRF. After costs, ReGen would net ~\$100,000 for that time period. A few on the board were questioning the contract and the need for us to pay for these recyclables, even though it was for a very short period of time and was being done to help out this agency (afterall, we may need this service at some point for our MRF). In the end, we all agreed to cap the tonnage at 2,500 (they are set to provide us with 1,500 tons of recyclables) just in case their repairs get delayed. There was also a request to talk more about rates for outside organizations at a later date. In this meeting, we also held a public hearing on our 5% tip fee increase (there were no comments). We approved the budget, which included the tip fee increase, as well as the new pay schedules. During the TAC report, I was able to share that I attended one of their meetings and I complimented them on the good work they're doing. Many are so grateful that we have such a collaborative and inclusive process for tackling SB 1383.

Monday, June 26th- Regional Taxi Authority Mtg- This is a once a year meeting that occurs for Peninsula MST Board members. It was interesting to learn a bit more about our taxi cabs in the area! As you might expect, we unfortunately don't have lots of people clamoring for new taxi permits (no new permits from last year and in fact we lost one). A rate comparison was done comparing Monterey County with Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, and Santa Clara Counties and we have very comparable rates (even a bit higher than the others), so the rates were not increased. Apparently, the \$3.50/mile is the max taxi's can charge and just about all of them charge near that rate. We approved a budget for next year, which will operate in a slight deficit, which staff felt was ok for another year or so (we have reserves). We also recommended approval to move taxi service down to south county cities. They are paying into Measure Q which pays for taxi vouchers but they are unable to use them. After hearing that at least three taxi services were interested in serving these areas, the Regional Taxi Authority will now try and push this service into those areas to see if people can take advantage of the taxi service instead of relying only on the MST RIDES program.

Tuesday, June 27th- Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP) Regional Housing Summit- This public meeting, which included many stakeholders and an invitation to all electeds, was provided to review MBEP's new white paper on housing called "Practical Housing Policy: Increasing Supply and Affordability." The summit included a focused presentation on their 5 policy recommendations which are: 1) Streamline permitting and reduce discretionary reviews, 2) Increase allowable densities, 3) Reform impact fees, 4) Increase funding sources for affordable housing, and 5) Optimize inclusionary housing ordinances. They also gave us a

legislative update. Turns out there are over 50 potential bills in the legislature that are focused on improving outcomes for housing. In addition, they had a panel which consisted of developers, housing program coordinators, policy directors, and a city manager. I would say the mantra of the day was to increase political will, create objective design guidelines, and focus streamlining of permits. I liked that one of the members of the panel really focused on “community” and “the people” instead of just talking about affordable houses. There was a clear message that all of the community must be engaged in these processes. One interesting idea was the idea of a “form based code.” Basically, approving building guidelines for the “envelope” (say a two story, single family home) but then realizing that that “envelope” could also turn into a fourplex that could contain 4 different family units. Apparently Salinas is working on implementing these type of guidelines. Overall, it was a super informative and thought provoking meeting. I want to thank Planning Commissioner Gary Kreeger for also attending and his interest in learning more about housing elements and affordable housing.

Tuesday, June 27th- City Council Meeting- Tonight's meeting began with two presentations, one to honor our police department and the work they did in catching the thieves who were stealing fire hydrant brass caps (thanks DRO PD!) and the second was from M1W to introduce us to their new billing system which will be arriving in 1 year (if approved by the Board) and has a potential savings of \$400,000. On the consent agenda, I pulled a few items for further discussion. Besides asking a few questions regarding our financials, I asked to review the resolution that had Mayor Donaldson as a signer on our LAIF account (Local Agency Investment Fund). I knew that he would function as the second signer of the account, but I wanted clarifying language in the resolution that explained primary signatures (the city manager) and the secondary signature (Mayor) and, as in previous resolutions of this nature, I wanted the vice mayor to be included. Ultimately, we ended up passing the resolution with the clarified language and then they will bring back a separate resolution that will include the vice mayor's name on the LAIF account, too. I also pulled the item which addressed the new Special Committee appointments. I requested that the Special Committees begin to meet in the next month or so to begin talking about our operating guidelines, but I was informed that this will be discussed (hopefully soon!) in another council meeting. I will be waiting.

Under New Business, we chose three planning commissioners for this next 4 year term. Congratulations to the two incumbent commissioners, Denise Wood and Louise Goetzelt, and the new Planning Commissioner, Celine Pinet. We also passed a new Investment Policy and passed the new budget for FY 23/24. We also passed a rate increase for our garbage franchise agreement. With the added costs of SB 1383 (the organic waste composting law) and with ReGen Monterey increasing their tip fees by 5%, this equated to a 2.9% increase for our residents, which equals to about a \$1.00 increase on our GreenWaste Recovery bill.

In the City Manger comments, he announced the vacancy on the Airport Board for the Director who represents Del Rey Oaks, as well Seaside, Sand City, and some parts of Monterey (late note: former councilmember, John Gaglioti was chosen for this Airport Director position). He also shared about the road work that's been happening on Via Verde, and shared that the

Planning Commission will be getting a Housing Element update at their next meeting on July 12th. He's hoping we'll have a compliant 5th cycle Housing Element around Aug/Sept. Fingers crossed! Then it will be onto the completion of the 6th cycle House Element by December 15th.

Wednesday, July 5th- Seaside Groundwater Basin Watermaster Mtg- This board meeting was pretty straightforward (much different than my first mtg!). Besides passing the consent agenda we voted to hire new legal counsel for the board. Not that we're anticipating litigation, but having a lawyer experienced with water will be very beneficial moving forward (and we already gave him his first assignment- see Ad Hoc mtg notes). The only other discussion we engaged in was talking about the ASR (Aquifer Storage and Recovery) Wells 1 and 4. Cal Am has historically been pulling water from ASR-1, but the Division of Drinking Water determined that that well can no longer be used because it did not meet the necessary underground retention time of two months. To explain, Pure Water Monterey injects water into the basin where it must stay for at least two months before it can be extracted for use. Using tracers, they discovered that ASR-1 was pulling water that had been underground for less than two months. Additionally ASR-4 has not been able to be used because mercury had been found. That well will now be run with a treatment for mercury, but it still needs to be approved for use by the state. In light of these well issues, it was asked if Cal Am was planning on building any more extraction wells. Turns out they are planning on 4 more wells, but they are roughly 2-3 years out from being completed. In the report there was some talk about varying the water injection and extraction to help with the issues with ASR-1. I made the comment that given the potential for seawater intrusion, we really need to be injecting the maximum amount of water possible, so I think it's very important that Cal Am focus on completing those additional wells as soon as possible.

Wednesday, July 5th- Seaside Groundwater Basin Watermaster Replenishment Ad Hoc Committee Mtg- Right after the board meeting, our ad hoc committee met. The purpose of this committee is to develop concepts and/or funding mechanisms for the Watermaster to replenish the Seaside Groundwater Basin. This was the first time this ad hoc committee has met since 2021. Although the focus is on funding, it's hard to not also talk about where that replenishment water will come from. Of course, given the makeup of the committee (Chris Cook from Cal Am, John Gaglioti, Paul Bruno, George Riley, and myself) we have differing ideas about the what that new water source might be (Cal Am's desal in 3-5 years or something else down the road in 10-15 yrs?). Although there is a clear divide in the committee, I will admit it was a very pleasant and productive meeting. In the end, we came out with two tasks for our next meeting. The first was brought about by Director Riley who wanted our legal counsel to provide his interpretation of the adjudication in terms of how it talks about assessments for replenishment. As it is now, Cal Am is receiving credits whenever they spend money towards their desal plant. How can this credit be used towards replenishment is the question. Seems that we need real money that will allow us to move forward with our mission. Our new legal counsel, Joe Hughes, will return to our next ad hoc mtg with his legal interpretation of the adjudication in terms of replenishment assessment costs. The second task is that we all agreed we'd like to hear a presentation from a water consultant firm who can talk to us about putting together a study that provides maybe

three options for funding replenishment water for the basin. In that study, they'll need to look at potential new sources of water (all of the ideas have different costs) and then provide us with some ideas for paying for this extra water. There was already a consultant firm who was working with the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin GSA so we're going to target that company first. It was great to walk away feeling like we were moving forward with something that could provide us some answers in the near term. In all, we have about \$28,000 available for this study, so we'll see what we can get!

Saturday, July 8th- Monterey Peninsula Housing Coalition Mtg- The majority of this meeting was dedicated to our guest speaker, Senator John Laird. He spoke about the potential legislative policies that are being discussed in terms of housing. Of course, water is one of our big barriers in terms of new housing, so he also shared that he's pushing for a local workshop from the State Water Resources Board to set the path for eliminating the Cease and Desist water order. Sounds like we can look for something to happen fairly soon (Fall?). We also had a brief discussion to share where all of our jurisdictions are in terms of our housing elements.

Monday, July 10th- MST Administrative Performance Subcommittee Mtg- This meeting allows a portion of the board to review the MST performance stats for the month and provides us with the State and Federal legislative updates from our MST lobbyists. In terms of performance stats, I asked about our ridership numbers in comparison to pre-pandemic numbers. Turns out our numbers are currently 60-70% of pre-pandemic ridership. Since the end of 2022, MST has implemented the Better Bus Network, which reorganized routes to maximize ridership and targets those in our community with the greatest transportation needs. With these new routes, we're continuing to see significant growth in ridership which is certainly good news. In terms of State funding, we'll see money for capital purposes, mainly focusing on zero-emissions transit and additional money for infrastructure (hydrogen fuel prep). For Federal funding, the House is attempting to repeal climate change actions in order to finance their bills, so it's unclear at this time what money we may see towards zero-emissions transportation.

Monday, July 10th- MST Board Mtg- Please see the MST board highlights in our agenda packet. Highlights for me included a land parcel transfer from Seaside for former Fort Ord land (long time coming) and a positive letter in response to the Civil Grand Jury's overall positive report of MST.

Wednesday, July 12th- Seaside Basin Watermaster TAC Mtg- This meeting is always interesting since it's generally made up of water engineers and various reps from water agencies and cities. The first topic of discussion was an update on a replacement for one of our shallow wells (F09). Permits are in process and a company (Maggiore Bros) has been chosen to complete the well. The second topic was about an issue with another well (Sentinel Well #4). Monterey Peninsula Engineering (MPE) was doing work around this well and accidentally sheared off the top portion. There's now a portion from the top that fell 18' into the well. This will now need to be retrieved and repaired. I asked and it sounds like MPE will be covering the cost of this repair. Lastly, we reviewed the FY 23-24 Monitoring and Management Program for the

Watermaster. In the portion that discussed water replenishment, I requested for it to show that Pure Water Monterey Expansion is moving towards completion in 2025 and that the Cal Am desal plant is still in its planning phase (the original wording reflected that in the next few years we'd have one or both of these projects, but I felt it was important to have the language reflect the current stage for each of the projects).

Wednesday, July 12th- Planning Commission Mtg- I attended the Planning Commission meeting because it's main focus was on the draft 6th cycle Housing Element (HE) which is the document we'll be sending to the state's Housing and Community Development (HCD) very soon. Our contract planner, Denise Duffy's presentation was mostly focused on the two comment letters we received which were from the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District (MPUSD) and LandWatch. There is legislation that will make it easier for school districts to build housing on sites that they own, so the Planning Commission was in favor of adding a program to our HE that allows for preferential housing for teachers and their employees on the parcel of land that the District occupies off of HWY 218. Additionally, I was very happy to hear that two other programs will be added to our HE. The first is a program which will have the city implement objective design standards for new buildings (this makes it much easier for permitting and developers appreciate knowing ahead of time what is expected). The second is that we will be writing a Safety and Environmental Justice element (similar to the Housing Element, this is another "element" within our General Plan). Del Rey Oaks has never had a Safety element, so I'm very happy that we will be addressing this topic, as this is required by the state and it's the location where our city can address climate change and preparing for the future. Overall, we have lots of work and decisions ahead of us (ex. inclusionary housing ordinance, which states the percentage of affordable housing we'll require when a developer comes in to build houses; density bonuses which provide developers additional units to build if they fulfill the requirements for affordable housing). Other ideas such as raising height limits, limiting parking, and ways of streamlining permits are just a few examples of topics we'll need to cover in the future. Personally, I view these discussions for affordable housing as some of the most important topics we may cover for the future. If we want to help solve the homeless crisis and provide housing for our workforce, we'll need to all come together to support these efforts. I strongly encourage everyone to join in on these conversations (FYI- I was the ONLY member of the public there...I hope that changes in the future).

Saturday, July 15th- Monterey Pride Event- What a fabulous day of love and acceptance!!! Although I was asked as an elected official to walk at the front of the parade, my daughter and I participated with another group of LGBTQ+ women and allies called the "Gaia Goddesses" who focus on different environmental issues. We dressed up as butterflies while we danced down the parade route and had someone hand out cards that talked about saving the monarch butterflies. Besides the joyful parade, we enjoyed talks from Congressman Panetta, Senator Laird, Supervisors Mary Adams and Wendy Root Askew, and Seaside council member Alexis Garcia-Arrazola who all shared how important it was to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community while standing together to make sure the rights of this community are upheld not only in California but also throughout the nation. After lunch, we thoroughly enjoyed the drag queen (and king!) show.

Again, such a wonderful day of acceptance, joy, and love, which made me realize just how often those in the LGBTQ+ community are in spaces that don't show total acceptance and how important it is to create safe spaces for everyone. The grand marshal of the day was Mayor Tyller Williamson (first openly gay mayor of Monterey) who I congratulated with a big hug and big thanks for hosting such a memorable and happy celebration.

Friday, July 21st- ReGen Board Mtg and biochar ribbon cutting- The joint powers of authority for Monterey Regional Waste Management District met first. The JPA meets only twice a year and exists to allow the district to carry debt, so it's merely a 5 min logistical meeting when we do meet. Next, the board meeting began and from the consent we discussed the authorization of a characterization study of our waste stream. This study (not to exceed \$244,000) would robustly analyze what is going into our waste stream which allows us to determine what kind of education and outreach needs to be done to in order to make sure our waste stream only contains waste materials. This statistically significant study was last done over 10 years ago, so I support gathering this important information. After the consent agenda, we had a presentation for the remaining funds of our edible food recovery grant (\$10,000) which will be going to Pajaro Valley Loaves and Fishes to help build their capacity which is greatly needed after this winter's flooding. Next we talked about the Materials Recovery Facility needing its tip floor being resurfaced for \$1.6 million. Given that it gets such heavy use and is worn down enough to have rebar showing in areas- it desperately needs resurfacing and it was easily approved. Our last item was a discussion about rejecting bids to update the Scale House. Turns out bids came in much higher than expected. And, given that our traffic has increased, staff is thinking that there may need to be a new design and rethinking in terms of updating the Scale House and the needed remodeling. Therefore, staff will be coming back in the future with next steps for addressing traffic and efficiency at the Scale House. One of the last items was hearing the report on the Technical Advisory Committees report and talking about the jurisdictions' responsibility for enforcing organic composting for commercial and multi-family housing. Waivers can only be given out due to lack of organics or from lack of space. Enforcement begins in January 2024, so it'll be important for DRO to begin this process of reaching out to businesses and making sure they're educated on this law.

After our Board Meeting, I went over to the ReGen Monterey and Sitos Group's ribbon cutting for the new biochar pilot project. There were roughly 100 people in attendance for this exciting start for a process that will allow us to capture carbon that normally would have been released in the atmosphere through composting. The biochar product will mainly be used as a soil supplement for grape growers in south county, but there are many potential uses for biochar. Additionally, the pilot project may also test out using biosolids from M1W to create biochar. With our organic waste that we have available, this biochar pilot project will be an excellent way to see how some of that waste can be captured for additional, climate saving uses.

Friday, August 4th- Meeting with Gonzalo Coronado, Chronic Disease Prevention Coordinator for Monterey County- After talking with Kendra Howell, a policy lead at Blue Zones Project, she electronically introduced me to Gonzalo Coronado because of his work on

tobacco policies. Gonzalo and I then met in person and talked about all of the ways jurisdictions are working to make their communities healthier through tobacco ordinances. He shared that Del Rey Oaks is currently listed as a grade "F" in our overall tobacco control within our city, as graded by the American Lung Association. Some of the ways we could improve our score would be to reduce sales of tobacco products (mainly those who may be selling to youth or selling single-use vaping products) and create smokefree areas within our city. The main thing that we discussed was the idea of a tobacco retailers licence ordinance that would require tobacco retailers to purchase a licence through the county (the ordinance would mirror the same one the county uses). This license then funds the Environmental Health department to follow through on enforcement that aims to reduce sales to minors and single-use products. I also discussed the potential for an ordinance that would make our public events, public parks, and outdoor dining smokefree. As a health instructor, I was thrilled to learn that we can easily be doing more in our city to make our community healthier. I've shared this information with City Manager Guertin and look forward to these ordinances being brought to the council, hopefully by the end of the year.

Wednesday, August 9th- Watermaster TAC Committee- We received several updates at this meeting, including reports on the FO-9 Replacement Well and the damage to the Sentinel Well #4. Both of these projects are depending on one company to complete their work and seems it's a busy company, so nothing definitive was reported out. We spent most of our time on a presentation on the "Development of the Seawater Intrusion Model for the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency." They shared some of the data that's being used to make their model, which eventually will be used to review projects that can combat the seawater intrusion that's already happening in the basin. Three options for dealing with seawater intrusion were reviewed. The first is to extract the seawater, which creates a barrier on both sides of the extraction and prevents the seawater from moving further inland. The second option is to take water from the Salinas River and inject that water in the north end of the basin, which would also push back the seawater. The third option, is just to reduce demand. Any or all of these options may be used and I appreciated hearing more about our neighboring basin. Lastly, we approved the Monitoring and Management Program Operations and Capital Budgets for FY 2024.

Council Report from Councilmember John Uy

August 22, 2023

I. Council Report: Regular Meeting of the DRO City Council on May 23, 2023

Honoring National Public Works Week and Celebrating Our City Hall Staff, Ron Fucci and Sherman Low

With hearts filled with gratitude and admiration, we come together to honor National Public Works Week, a time to recognize the dedication and tireless efforts of individuals who play an essential role in shaping our community's foundation. This year, we have the distinct privilege of extending our heartfelt appreciation to two exceptional members of our City Hall family—Ron Fucci and Sherman Low.

During the week of May 21-27, 2023, we proudly joined communities across the nation in acknowledging the 63rd annual National Public Works Week. This week stands as a testament to the vital contributions made by public works professionals who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure our city's infrastructure, facilities, and services run smoothly, enhancing our quality of life.

In the heart of our City Hall, two outstanding individuals shine as beacons of dedication, commitment, and excellence—Ron Fucci and Sherman Low. Their passion and expertise have been instrumental in shaping the very fabric of our community. Through their tireless efforts, they have not only improved our physical landscape but have also touched the lives of each resident they've served.

Ron and Sherman, your work transcends the ordinary; it is a testament to your unwavering commitment to the well-being of our community. Your efforts ripple through our streets, buildings, and neighborhoods, leaving an indelible mark of progress and care. You've dedicated yourselves to safeguarding our infrastructure, ensuring the provision of essential services, and elevating the quality of life for all who call Del Rey Oaks home.

Your contributions are immeasurable, and we take this moment to extend our deepest gratitude for your dedication, ingenuity, and boundless enthusiasm. Through your actions, you embody the spirit of National Public Works Week—showcasing the power of teamwork, innovation, and civic pride.

It was with great pride that, on the 23rd day of May, 2023, we set forth this proclamation to honor National Public Works Week. We recognize the substantial impact of public works professionals, including our very own Ron Fucci and Sherman Low, on the health, safety, and well-being of our community.

As a council and as a community, we salute your dedication and achievements. Your efforts have woven threads of resilience and progress into the very fabric of Del Rey Oaks. May this week serve as a time of reflection and celebration, and may you feel the warmth of our appreciation all year round.

Authorize the Annual Display of the New Pride Flag at City Hall to Commemorate Pride Month in the whole month of June

With a heart full of pride and enthusiasm, we, Councilmember Uy and Councilmember Ragsdale-Cronin, humbly presented our proposal to commemorate LGBTQ+ Pride Month through the annual display of the Pride flag at our beloved City Hall. We stand before you with a shared vision of inclusiveness and a deep commitment to the values that make our city vibrant and strong.

The beauty of unity in diversity radiates from the core of Del Rey Oaks (DRO). By flying the Pride flag, we embrace a broader community that reaches across the Monterey Peninsula and resonates throughout the nation. Our action aligns with the very essence of our city—a sanctuary of diversity and acceptance. This act serves as a beacon, illuminating our unwavering dedication to promoting awareness, fostering education, and embracing a just society.

Reflecting on the strides we've taken thus far, we recall the impactful moment of June 2022 when the DRO Council united to honor Pride Month. Through that proclamation, we declared our unwavering support for diversity and inclusivity. Now, we seize the opportunity to turn these words into tangible actions, standing shoulder to shoulder with our LGBTQ+ family members, friends, and neighbors. This step signifies our commitment to unity and solidarity.

Del Rey Oaks resonates with warmth and openness, embracing a mosaic of LGBTQ+ voices within its vibrant tapestry. Displaying the Pride flag at City Hall signifies our resolute dedication to this community's well-being and happiness. It's a sweet melody of acceptance that shall ring out annually, a testament to the harmonious blend of hearts that make up our city.

Our vision is clear—a city that thrives on the strength of its diversity, a city that embraces all its citizens with arms wide open. While progress has been made, challenges persist. Displaying the Pride flag at City Hall in June is a resounding proclamation, echoing our commitment to erasing discrimination and prejudice from our collective story. The flag, gently fluttering against the backdrop of our municipal haven, paints a heartwarming picture of acceptance, hope, and love.

In conclusion, let us unite in this celebration of unity, embracing the display of the Pride flag at City Hall throughout the entirety of June. We invite you to join us yearly in commemorating Pride Month, standing together as a shining testament to the harmony that is Del Rey Oaks. Our community is poised to embrace this opportunity. With the resounding unanimous approval of the Council during our meeting on May 23rd about this proposal, we light up our city with the vibrant colors of inclusion throughout the whole month of June every year.

II. Council Report: Del Rey Oaks Pride Flag Raising Event on June 1, 2023

It is with immense pleasure and pride that I present to you a comprehensive and vibrant account of the highly successful Del Rey Oaks (DRO) Pride Flag-Raising Event held on June 1, 2023. This remarkable event was a true testament to the spirit of love, unity, and diversity that defines our community and serves as a beacon of acceptance for all. It is my honor to take you on a journey through the enchanting moments that unfolded during this historic event, attended by distinguished leaders from the Monterey Peninsula and the ever-supportive Del Rey Oaks family.

A Celebration of Unity and Diversity:

The DRO Pride Flag-Raising Event, hosted at our cherished DRO City Hall, was nothing short of a magnificent spectacle that brought together people from all walks of life. It was not just an occasion; it was a testament to the unity that forms the bedrock of our community. It was a time when our voices harmonized, and our pride flags soared high, each fluttering emblem a symbol of our unwavering commitment to acceptance, kindness, and inclusiveness. The event marked not only a celebration but also a declaration of our city's dedication to fostering unity and celebrating the beauty of diversity.



Reflecting on the Significance:

Before we delved into the festivities, we took a moment to reflect on the profound importance of the event. This marked the commencement of Pride Month, a time when we honor the struggles and triumphs of the LGBTQ+ community across history. It is a time to celebrate the strides we have made and reaffirm our unwavering commitment to equal rights and acceptance. Del Rey Oaks, our nurturing abode, has always welcomed everyone with open arms, and this event was a testament to that spirit.

A Tribute to Patriotism and Equality:

The event began with the soul-stirring rendition of our National Anthem, a powerful testament to our patriotism and our



commitment to equality for all. Each fluttering pride flag carried not only the colors of the LGBTQ+ community but also the ideals of our great nation's fight for equal rights.

A Symphony of Voices:

The event unfolded with a series of poignant speeches and performances, each contributing to the tapestry of unity and acceptance. Del Rey Oaks Mayor Scott Donaldson's opening remarks resonated deeply, highlighting the significance of standing as a united front in support of the LGBTQ+ community. Mayor Donaldson's unwavering support has paved the way for positive transformation within our city.



The Poetic Voice of Unity:

Professor Daniel B. Summerhill, the esteemed Monterey County Poet Laureate, enchanted the audience with his poetic prowess. His renditions of works by queer poets showcased the transformative power of art in challenging societal norms and promoting understanding.



Inspiring Voices and Advocates:

The event provided a platform for LGBTQ+ advocates and community leaders to share their inspiring messages. The presence of distinguished figures like Supervisor Wendy Root Askew, Honorable Yuri Anderson, Councilmember Alex Garcia-Arrazola, Ms. Isabel Meza, and Ms. Xochitl Guerrero underscored the commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusiveness. Their speeches were a testament to the shared vision of unity and collaboration.



A Trailblazing Force:

The Guest Speaker of Honor, Sheriff Tina Nieto, exemplified the pinnacle of achievement. As the first woman, openly LGBTQ, and Hispanic Sheriff of Monterey County, Sheriff Nieto shattered glass ceilings, lighting the path for future generations. Her presence embodied the progress we have achieved and the continued journey toward acceptance and unity.



A Symbolic Gesture of Strength:

The climactic Inclusive Progress Pride Flag Raising, carried out by our very own Del Rey Oaks LGBTQ+ residents, Ms. Joetta Grant and Ms. Jessica Vargas, was a poignant symbol of unity and strength. Their act reminded us of the importance of education and understanding regarding the LGBTQ+ community, uniting us under the banner of acceptance.



Unveiling the Flag's Symbolism:

The Inclusive Progress Pride Flag, adorned with a triangle of additional colors, was a canvas of hope and meaning. Each color held significance, from life (red) to nature (green) and serenity (blue). The added light blue, pink, and white stripes represented the trans community, while the black and brown stripes stood for people of color. The yellow triangle with the purple circle represented the intersex community, an embodiment of the event's educational mission.

A Sweet Farewell to the Ceremonial:

The event's ceremonial portion concluded with a performance by the electric Rouge Roulette. Their music echoed the spirit and resilience of the LGBTQ+ community, encapsulating the essence of pride and acceptance.



A Walk of Pride:

The event's journey continued with a Pride Walk from City Hall to Del Rey Park, where attendees marched with their pride flags held high, a vivid demonstration of unwavering support for love, unity, and diversity.

**A Diverse Gathering at the Park:**

Gathering in the beautiful environs of Del Rey Park, residents and guests were welcomed with open arms, creating a warm atmosphere of fellowship and mutual respect. We came together, not just as individuals of different backgrounds and beliefs, but as one harmonious family to champion the values that bind us.



A Rainbow Feast for the Soul:

The reception at Del Rey Park was a feast for the senses, with the visual and gastronomic delight of the Rainbow Cake and savory delights that echoed the vibrant spirit of inclusivity and unity that defines our community. This cake was more than just a confection; it stood as a testament to the colorful spectrum of our community, emphasizing the beauty and strength that comes from unity in diversity. As guests indulged in the delectable treats, we were reminded of the beauty of embracing our diversity.

**A Reception Full of Joy and Pride:**

Rouge Roulette, our main performer, took center stage, providing us with mesmerizing performances that thrilled the attendees, instilling a sense of joy, hope, and pride. Their artistry was truly the heartbeat of our celebration, resonating with the ethos of the event.



We were graced by several esteemed speakers:

1. **Councilmember Kim Shirley**, from the City of Del Rey Oaks, spoke about the history of Pride Month celebrations in Del Rey Oaks. Her relentless advocacy for the LGBTQ+ community has consistently bridged the gap between ideals and actions. She exemplifies the spirit of service and commitment.
2. **Councilmember Brian McCarthy** from the City of Marina shared his heartfelt support and experiences, reminding us of the strides we've made and the paths yet to traverse.
3. **Councilmember Bill Ragsdale-Cronin**, from our very own City of Del Rey Oaks, spoke eloquently about his vision for a world where acceptance and love are universal. His dedication to creating a welcoming environment is truly commendable.
4. **Councilmember Anthony Rocha** from the City of Salinas emphasized the strength in unity, illuminating the mutual support and collaboration that binds our cities.
5. **Former Mayor Alison Kerr** recalled the legacy of acceptance and progress in Del Rey Oaks. Her words were a poignant reminder of our journey, our achievements, and our mission ahead. She mirrors that of a "fairy godmother," a magical figure who weaves her enchantments to create a world where dreams are realized for the LGBTQ+ community in Del Rey Oaks. She is the fairy godmother who waved her wand and turned the challenges into stepping stones, the hardships into lessons, and the battles into bridges that connected hearts.



A Bright Future Ahead:

As we conclude this narrative, let us remember that our quest for equality does not end here. The energy and fervor that coursed through every moment of this event shall propel us toward a future of inclusiveness and unity. May we carry the spirit of love, acceptance, and diversity within us as we continue building a brighter tomorrow for all.



With Sincere Gratitude:

I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who participated, supported, and attended this event. Your presence and commitment made this celebration an extraordinary success. Together, we stand as a testament to the power of unity and acceptance.



III. Council Report: Regular Meeting of the DRO City Council on June 27, 2023

On June 27, 2023, I was unable to attend our City Council Meeting due to a prior commitment that I held close to my heart. Last year before I held office, I joyously received an invitation to be one of the entourage members at my best friend's wedding in the Philippines. While I strive to fulfill my duties as your councilman with unwavering dedication, this was a moment I simply couldn't let pass by.

I weighed the options, sought alternatives, and considered remote participation. After exploring every possibility to balance both responsibilities, I realized that the long-distance travel, infeasibility of remote access, and the wedding's schedule would unavoidably conflict with our City Council Meeting. This decision weighed heavily on me, as I hold my role in our community in the highest regard.

I want to assure you all that my absence was not a decision made lightly. Every meeting holds significance for me, as they are opportunities to engage, collaborate, and represent your interests. However, the bonds of friendship and the importance of being present for those who have stood by me throughout my life are equally invaluable.

Transparency has always been a cornerstone of my service, and I felt it was necessary to share this personal moment with you. I am committed to my responsibilities as your councilman and pledge to continue advocating for our city's growth and well-being.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your understanding and support during this time. I am energized by the trust you place in me and the shared goals we work towards. As we move forward, I assure you that my dedication to our community remains resolute, and I will continue to champion your interests with the same passion that brought me into public service.

Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your lives, and I look forward to the opportunities ahead as we collectively strive for a brighter future for our beloved Del Rey Oaks.

IV. Council Report: Monterey Peninsula Pride on July 15, 2023

On July 15, 2023, a vibrant celebration of love, diversity, and unity unfolded as the Monterey Peninsula Pride Parade graced our Monterey Peninsula community. I had the privilege of participating alongside a group of spirited Del Rey Oaks residents, standing in solidarity to show our unwavering support for equality, acceptance, and the rights of every individual.

The atmosphere was truly electric as the parade route came alive with an array of colorful banners, exuberant performances, and heartwarming displays of unity. It was a joyous occasion where our city's values of inclusivity and respect shone brilliantly, reminding us all of the power of coming together as a community.



Walking alongside fellow Del Rey Oaks residents, I witnessed the genuine enthusiasm and excitement in their faces as they proudly represented our city's commitment to fostering an environment where every person can be their authentic selves. Our unity, regardless of backgrounds or orientations, radiated like a beacon of hope.

In moments like these, it becomes evident that our shared journey towards progress is propelled by the bonds we nurture within our community. Our presence at the Monterey Peninsula Pride Parade is a testament to our dedication to building bridges and promoting understanding among all individuals, regardless of who they are or whom they love.

As your councilman, I am deeply moved by the positive impact we can create when we stand up for what is just and embrace the beautiful diversity that enriches our lives. Our participation was not just a march in a parade; it was an embodiment of the values that make Del Rey Oaks a place where everyone feels welcomed, cherished, and valued.

V. Council Report: AMBAG Board of Directors Meeting on August 9, 2023

This report provides an overview of the discussions and presentations made during the AMBAG (Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments) Board of Directors Meeting held on August 9, 2023. The meeting covered various topics related to planning, including the Draft 2023 Public Participation Plan, the 2026 Regional Growth Forecast, and an update on the Rural Regional Energy Network.

1. Public Hearing: Draft 2023 Public Participation Plan: Heather Adamson, Director of Planning, presented the Draft 2023 Public Participation Plan. The plan is a comprehensive document that guides regional planning agencies and local jurisdictions in the public participation process for the Monterey Bay region. The plan covers the four-year period from 2023 to 2026 and adheres to federal and state legislation. The plan emphasizes the transportation decision-making process and includes innovative online marketing strategies and visualization techniques for public outreach. The plan was released for a 70-day public review period, beginning June 14, 2023, and ending on August 23, 2023. The AMBAG Board of Directors will be asked to adopt the Final 2023 Public Participation Plan on October 11, 2023.

2. 2026 Regional Growth Forecast: Heather Adamson also presented information on the 2026 Regional Growth Forecast. This forecast, which is updated every four years, projects population, employment, and housing numbers for the tri-county area of Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties. The forecast informs various planning efforts, such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) and transportation projects. Three methodology options were presented:

- Option 1: Employment-Driven Method
- Option 2: Cohort Component Population Growth
- Option 3: DOF Forecast

Planning Directors expressed support for Option 2, the Cohort Component Population Growth method, due to its alignment with other regional agencies and the local input it provides. The

preferred methodology will be selected in September 2023, and a draft of the regional forecast will be ready for review and discussion in October 2023.

3. Rural Regional Energy Network Update: Amaury Berteaud, Sustainability Program Manager, presented an update on the Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). The RuralREN is a program aimed at bringing energy efficiency opportunities to rural communities in California. The CPUC approved the creation of RuralREN with a budget of \$84 million for 2024-2027 and a preliminary budget of \$93 million for 2028-2031. The program will implement five equity-focused programs in the AMBAG region, including public equity, codes and standards, finance equity, workforce education and training, and residential equity programs. The program will operate with a governance structure and will start its operations in early 2024.

The AMBAG Board of Directors Meeting on August 9, 2023, covered important planning topics, including the Draft 2023 Public Participation Plan, the 2026 Regional Growth Forecast, and an update on the Rural Regional Energy Network. These discussions highlighted the efforts of AMBAG and its partners to enhance public participation, plan for regional growth, and bring energy efficiency opportunities to underserved communities. The AMBAG Board of Directors will continue to play a crucial role in guiding these initiatives to benefit the Monterey Bay area.