



City of Needles

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Mayor, Janet Jernigan
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Councilmember Tona Belt
Councilmember Jamie McCorkle
Councilmember JoAnne Pogue
Councilmember Henry Longbrake
Councilmember Zachery Longacre

City Manager Patrick J. Martinez

MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PATRICK J. MARTINEZ, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: WEEKLY MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 3, 2025

1. The City of Needles met with the **San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department (SBCSD)** this week to strengthen efforts to combat graffiti and vandalism in our community. Graffiti is a serious concern for Needles, impacting the City's image and safety. We are committed to taking collaborative action to prevent and address this issue. Recently, graffiti incidents, including vandalism at the skate park, resulted in an individual's swift arrest and citation, thanks to SBCSD's prompt response. The estimated damages from these incidents exceed **\$10,000**, including staff time and materials costs. Restitution will be pursued by those responsible. The City is forming a **multi-agency task force** with SBCSD, the Needles Unified School District, and Caltrans to tackle this challenge. This initiative includes enhanced documentation of graffiti incidents, encouraging residents to report graffiti to SBCSD's non-emergency line at **909-387-8313**, and installing additional security cameras at **Duke Watkins Park** to deter future vandalism. As part of these efforts, the City has introduced a **cash reward** for information leading to identifying and prosecuting those responsible for graffiti. In a personal show of support, the **City Manager** has generously offered to contribute the reward from his own pocket, reflecting a unified commitment to safeguarding Needles and upholding the community's integrity. These measures, combined with partnerships, enhanced surveillance, and strict enforcement, highlight the City's dedication to keeping our community clean, safe, and welcoming. We thank SBCSD, the school district, Caltrans, and our residents for their continued support in combating graffiti. Together, we can preserve the pride and vibrancy of Needles.
2. The City of Needles invites you to a special ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the launch of the **Veterans Housing Program** on **Tuesday, January 7, 2024, at 11:00 AM PST**, at **1624 W Broadway St, Needles, CA**. This vital program addresses the housing needs of homeless veterans, combining HUD rental assistance with VA case management services. Since May 2024, nine HUD-VASH vouchers have been issued, providing critical housing and support. This initiative is the result of collaboration between the Housing Authority of the City

of Needles and community partners dedicated to supporting our veterans. Representatives from **Senator Padilla's Office, Congressman Ruiz's Office, and VA Loma Linda** will join us to commemorate this milestone. We encourage everyone to come out, show their support for our veterans, and celebrate this transformative step toward ensuring they receive the resources and care they deserve. We look forward to seeing you there!

3. The annual **Run for the Wall (RFTW)** procession, honoring Vietnam Veterans and advocating for POW/MIA accountability, will stop in Needles on **May 15, 2025**, at noon. This cross-country motorcycle journey, starting in Los Angeles and ending in Washington, D.C., gathers hundreds of thousands of participants. Last year, over 300 motorcyclists were welcomed at **El Garces in Downtown Needles**, and this year promises another strong turnout. In past years, participants have been supported by community members, city officials, and local organizations like the Needles High School Band, Fort Mojave Tribal Band, VFW Honor Guard, **Needles Military Moms**, and the **Daughters of the American Revolution**, who served lunch and ice cream. More details will follow as the event approaches. Here is a [link](#) to the official RFTW website for further information about the event.
4. Palo Verde College's Spring 2024 classes begin next week on **January 13, 2025**, at the **Needles Center**, located at 725 W. Broadway. With affordable tuition—just **\$46 per unit** for California residents and **\$69 per unit** for Arizona and Nevada residents—the college offers a variety of resources to help students succeed. The **Financial Aid Department** provides access to state, federal, and local grants, scholarships, and tuition waivers through FAFSA or the California Dream Act. Additionally, **Veteran Services** assists veterans and their dependents in applying for and certifying educational benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs. Students can also benefit from numerous scholarships and grants offered annually through the **Palo Verde College Foundation**, helping to reduce financial barriers. Support programs such as **Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS)** aid students with physical, psychological, or learning challenges, while the **EOPS and CARE Programs** provide educational and financial assistance to disadvantaged students, including single parents. The **CalWORKs Program** further supports eligible students in achieving self-sufficiency through education and career training. These resources empower students to achieve their educational and career goals. For more information, call **760-326-5033** or visit the [Palo Verde College Schedule of Classes online](#). Don't miss this opportunity to start or continue your journey—classes begin next week!
5. A second community cleanup event is scheduled for Saturday, January 18th, at 10:00 a.m., on Third Street, near the former Center for Change at **300 H St, Needles, CA 92363**. We seek volunteers to join us in this effort to beautify our city and address illegal dumping and littering. Together, we can make a significant difference and keep Needles clean and welcoming. The first cleanup event, held a couple of weeks ago, was a tremendous success. Over two dozen volunteers removed approximately 1.5 tons of litter, including 50 trash bags,

mattresses, tires, and branches. Organized by Councilmember Longacre and supported by Mayor Jernigan, city staff, and community members, the event demonstrated our community's commitment to maintaining a clean and inviting city. Let's build on this success and make the upcoming event more impactful! Building on these efforts, the **Needles Pride Program** promotes clean, attractive neighborhoods through property upkeep, code compliance, and organized cleanups. The program encourages well-maintained landscapes, removal of outside storage and abandoned vehicles, proper trash container placement, and enforcement of parking standards. Residents can schedule up to **three free bulky item pick-ups annually** by calling **1-800-364-3754**. To stay informed about future cleanups and other community updates, download the **Needles Connect app** from the [Google Play Store](#) for Android or the [Apple Store](#) for iOS devices. With support from our Public Works and Code Enforcement teams, this initiative fosters community pride and collaboration to create cleaner, safer Needles. Together, we can make a difference!

7. As your City Manager, one of my key responsibilities is to keep the Mayor, City Council, and our community informed about significant developments and ongoing initiatives. I am pleased to share the [link to my 2024 Manager's Reports](#), which include the Council Weekly Updates prepared throughout the year. These reports highlight key achievements, updates on city projects, and opportunities where we can collaborate to address community needs. My goal in sharing this information is to promote transparency and provide valuable insights that support the City Council in making informed decisions to benefit Needles. These updates also serve as a resource for you, our residents, to stay engaged and informed about the progress we are making as a community.
8. City Hall will be closed on **Thursday, January 9, 2025**, in observance of a **National Day of Mourning**. Regular operations will resume on **Friday, January 10, 2025**, at 8:30 AM. For emergencies during the closure, residents can contact City Staff at **760-326-5700**, and our after-hours answering service will promptly make direct calls to the appropriate staff member. For public awareness, a flyer has been posted on the front door of City Hall detailing the closure.
9. **IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:**
 - **January 25 – Community Clean-Up:** Dispose of trash and bulky items for free from **8:00 AM to noon** at various city locations: Gates (Safari Drive), North K (near underpass and BNSF Road), Vista (Nikki Bunch Ball Field), and Cibola (Robuffa near Public Works Yard). Note: Hazardous waste and specific materials are not accepted.
 - **February 15 – Route 66 Information Fair:** The 2025 Route 66 Information Fair, hosted by the Friends of El Garces, will feature Route 66 vendors, tours, and presenters. More information to follow.
 - **April 21-27–Route 66 Bike Week:** Experience the adventure of a lifetime by riding the historic stretch of **Route 66** from Needles to Seligman. This weeklong event celebrates the freedom of the open road and the vibrant culture of Route 66. More information, visit their [website](#).