

# CITY OF EMERYVILLE MEMORANDUM



**TO:** Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** Patrick D. O’Keeffe, City Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Progress Report - June 2011

The following provides the City Council and staff with a summary of the activities of each department for the prior month.

## **CITY MANAGER**

- Staff met with a representative of Hyatt Hotels, Richard Morgan, to discuss their acquisition of the Woodfin hotel out of bankruptcy. Hyatt will continue to operate the hotel as a suites hotel with the flag of Hyatt Summerfield Suites. He was well aware of the requirements of Measure C and stated that they would comply, and desires to move the reputation of the hotel beyond its controversial past under Sam Hardage.
- Staff met with representatives of P.G.&E., Wareham Development and Novartis to discuss PGE infrastructure condition in Emeryville and plans for inspections and upgrades. Topics included planning for future growth in the area per the new General Plan, plans for upgrading current pipes, and inspection of the 30” main transmission gas line that runs down Hollis Street. PGE stated that they are implementing an inspection program for all major transmission lines and that the Hollis Street line would be inspected in the next 60 days. We agreed to follow up with additional discussions regarding facility upgrades for electric and gas to accommodate planned growth.
- Many hours were spent in June dissecting the State legislation to eliminate redevelopment agencies and extract the tax revenues to help balance the State budget. A discussion of the impact of the legislation and how we will adapt is scheduled for Council in July.
- Staff participated in a meeting sponsored by QB3 to celebrate the opening of a business incubator in west Berkeley in a Wareham industrial building conversion. QB3 is a collaboration of the three UC campuses (Berkeley,

UCSF, and Santa Cruz) to assist with the creation of new businesses using technology developed in the school labs. Although this new incubator is not in Emeryville, it is close by and we may see positive impacts from growing new businesses that seek office/lab space within Emeryville once they grow out of the incubator space. As part of the meeting staff had an informative discussion with a UC executive who is responsible for linking venture capital funding to new start up businesses emerging from UC Berkeley.

- We all said good bye last month to Dr. John Sugiyama who is heading back into retirement after spending three years guiding EUSD as Superintendent. We are fortunate to have had leadership of his caliber for a brief period, especially during the critical vote on Measure J for the Center of Community Life. Although we will miss John, we welcome Debra Lindo as the new Superintendent and look forward to collaborating with her to carry on the positive mutual work between the City and the School District.
- Staff participated in a briefing session with a new staff member of Congresswoman Barbara Lee's office, Teddy Miller, to bring him up to speed on federal funds we are seeking for the I-80 Bike Bridge and Ashby Interchange projects. Teddy is a native of the East Bay and has a positive familiarity with Emeryville.
- Staff participated in a second meeting with the Chamber and the managers of our marinas to discuss America's Cup preparations. One of the items of discussion was a proposal for jointly funded and coordinated advertising of Emeryville in boating publications (e.g. Latitude 38) to let prospective race participants and observers know of our close proximity to SF with lower cost lodging and amenities.
- Staff has started preparations for the November 8, 2011 General Municipal Election. Three City Council seats are up for election, with the nomination period for candidates starting at 9am., Monday, July 18 and ending 5pm, Friday, August 12 (however, if at least one of the incumbents does not file nomination papers by August 12, the nomination period for non-incumbents is extended to 5pm., Wednesday, August 17). In addition, per City Council direction, staff is developing two proposed ballot measures to be considered in July for placement on the November ballot. One of the proposed ballot measure would raise the business tax rate from 0.08% to 0.10% of gross receipts and the other proposed ballot measure would remove the existing maximum tax cap on gross receipts (currently businesses do not have to pay more taxes after the tax percentage of their gross receipts total \$117,088 – equating to gross receipts of roughly \$146 million). Under the City's existing business license tax structure, businesses pay an annual minimum fee of \$25 which would remain unchanged (applies to businesses with gross receipts of \$31,250 or less). The City has approximately 2,200 licensed businesses that fall under the gross receipts category (another approximately 400 businesses

are taxed under specific fees per category such as food trucks and contractors).

The business license tax generates approximately \$3.5 million annually. This revenue represents approximately 13% of the overall General Fund budget (excluding interfund transfers) and is one of the City's top 5 revenue sources. If both proposed business license tax ordinance amendments are passed, it is estimated that the City would receive an additional \$916,000 per year, with approximately \$152,000 being generated by the elimination of the tax cap and approximately \$764,000 being generated by raising the business license tax from 0.08% to 0.10%.

- Staff continues to work with the cities of Berkeley and Oakland as well as PG&E to deepen efforts to strategize how best to further energy efficiency and related climate change/"green" practices, especially for the commercial and multi-family sectors. In addition to working on developing protocols for encouraging multi-family complexes to initiate energy efficiency measures, staff has volunteered to lead a work group on identifying various federal, state, regional, and private incentives available to businesses wishing to further energy efficiency and related "green" practices.
- City Clerk staff has been working on improving the City's advisory committee process by developing a community outreach flyer; updating the City's Administrative Instruction that clarifies staff roles and responsibilities; and developing standard templates for committee agendas, minutes, and appointment/thank you letters. In either July or early August, the City Clerk's Office plans to hold an Advisory Committee 101 workshop for committee secretary staff that will also include training on the City Council Chamber audiovisual equipment as well as protocols for after hour meetings.
- City Clerk staff continues to work on several organizational improvement projects, including the following: developing an "Emeryville 101" interactive workshop for City staff; developing an electronic tracking system for public records requests; expanding and improving the City's community outreach initiatives and procedures; and converting the City's paper-based records management system to an electronic-based system.
- The "2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday ENEWS, the City's electronic newsletter was distributed on June 14 and 28. The June 14 edition featured articles on the Pak-n-Save proposed façade improvements; the proposed Escuela Bilingue school on San Pablo Avenue; the new Community Development Commission of Emeryville (new governing board of the City's Redevelopment Agency); a workshop on the proposed Sustainable Transportation Plan; and a haiku poetry competition sponsored by the City's Poet Laureate. The June 28 edition had articles about free summer concert series and upcoming AC Transit route changes. Both newsletters announced that the City was

accepting applications from community members interested in serving on the City's Planning Commission; announced that the Emeryville Child Development Center was accepting applications for enrollment, and provided information on the Thursdays Emeryville Farmer's Market adjacent to City Hall. Interested community members can read the electronic newsletter online from the City's website: [www.emeryville.org](http://www.emeryville.org) or subscribe and have the newsletter sent directly to their email address. Information on how to subscribe/unsubscribe is listed at the bottom of each ENEWS.