

Review of Impacts on Harbor Area Proposed Budget 2004-2005 Redondo Beach

Harbor Patrol History

Last year, the City Manager directly proposed disbanding our Harbor Patrol. The reaction from the boating and harbor community was swift and universal, they were alarmed and angry. The King Harbor Boater's Advisory Panel was convened on 24 hour emergency notice. Even on this short notice, every constituent organization sent one or more delegates. The term of the day was "ludicrous". The next evening, 12 of those delegates waited until 10:30 PM to address the City Council. The boater delegates took the strongest exception to the misguided contentions that Harbor Patrol functions could be replaced by commercial tow boats and the Marina Del Rey based Coast Guard. The delegates presented a impressive list of essential educational, environmental, law enforcement, and life saving services, that can only be provided by these highly trained and motivated officers. A number of boaters provided compelling first hand accounts of timely ocean rescues by our Harbor Patrol, as boats drifted precariously close to the waves crashing on the rocks of the breakwater. Without the expeditious arrival of fully trained rescue personnel, the boats would have been lost, and the crew and passengers would have been injured or killed. The City has prudently maintained this small but indispensable cadre of professional life savers.

Harbor Patrol status in new budget

The City Manager's budget comments indicate,

"The proposed budget also depends upon a variety of other budget balancing actions. These include:" ... p29
"Transfer of parking enforcement and harbor security functions to the police department." ... p30

This is the only reference to this 'transfer' from the Fire Department, discernible anywhere in the budget, and absolutely no details are provided to explain the intentions as to the level of service or lack thereof to be provided after this 'transfer'. Once again, the boaters and Harbor Patrol personnel are alarmed and angry. The Fire folks are in communication with the Police folks, trying to accurately interpret this short cryptic reference. They believe that ..."the phrase is code for disband the Harbor Patrol..."

The RB Fire Association is also in contact with the various boater groups and has provided a comprehensive written analysis to the City Council and the boaters. There is a very strong concern that once the Harbor Patrol was 'transferred' to the police, the only actual service provided would be landside patrols, potentially by Community Service Officers (CSOs), thus the term "harbor security" and the grouping in with "parking enforcement". Whether this is the actual intention, with the lack of any explanations, and the previous misguided attempt to disband the Harbor Patrol, it is only prudent that both the boaters and the Harbor Patrol Officers react with some degree alarm.

Financial Review

There are also a number of significant changes in the budget that potentially impact both this issue and the basic financial well being of the Harbor Area. Notably, these include:

Funding from Harbor Uplands Fund

Police Department

Administration	46 % increase	p144	
Patrol	34 % increase	p141	
Investigations	23 % increase	p142	
Police Total	32 % increase	p138	\$394.4 k

...even though the Police Dept. Budget would only increase by 9 %

Harbor Uplands Summary p39

Appropriations and Transfers	5,156,450	5,282,550	Jul 04 Bal
Revenues	3,719,550	3,845,650	Jun 05 Bal
	1,436,900	decrease	1,436,900

Harbor Funding Summary p218

General Fund	100 %	decrease - deleted
Tidelands	13 %	decrease
Uplands	6 %	decrease
Total	14 %	decrease

There is a deep concern that the transferring of 'harbor security' to the police department may be being used as a rationalization to extract even more revenue from the harbor area. Along with an additional \$1M in deficits, the Harbor Uplands Fund would be depleted by nearly \$1.5M at a time when the need for various harbor facilities improvements have been distinctly identified.

The budget proposal requires eliminating 28 city wide positions. p29
 It notes that 21 police officers are eligible to retire next year. p6
 It does not make clear the police manning changes year to year. p139
 The Harbor Patrol is still listed under the Fire Dept. p151 (conflicts p30)

An obvious concern is that the mission of the Harbor Patrol would be moved to the Police Department without provisions for funding and personnel manning for water side safety. And thus, the actual harbor patrol as we now know it would administratively vaporize.

Funding from Harbor Tidelands Fund:

Recreation & Community Services

Facilities	13 % decrease	p170
Recreation Total	19 % decrease	p167

...even though our Panel has clearly identified a number of conspicuous needs in our harbor and consistently listed those in our published recommendations. The Recreation Projects list on page 181 sports a drawing of a pier and ship, but does not contemplate even one improvement to harbor recreation. The Harbor Projects list on p222 lists the planned dredging and essentially nothing else.

The City Council will meet for a Budget Workshop on Saturday, June 5, 0830 - 1130, in the library. This is not intended for public comment, but it is open to the public.

The City Council will consider the Budget Proposal at the regular City Council meeting, Tuesday, June 15, 1830.

Hopefully, the City Council will,

- 1) Preserve our Harbor Patrol under the Fire Department with fully qualified personnel.**
- 2) Preserve the Harbor Uplands Fund for Harbor Area Improvements and not allow the raiding of \$1.5 M.**
- 3) Preserve funding for Recreation and Community Services to support Harbor Area Facilities**

Fraternally,
Mark

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