

CHANGES AT CITY HALL

- **Mayor and Vice Mayor:** Dan Reed became Mayor with Priscilla Hill serving as Vice-Mayor in 2006.
- **City Attorney:** Peter Spoerl of Meyers/Nave was appointed Interim City Attorney to replace Patrick Whitnell who moved to Sacramento as Deputy Counsel of the California League of Cities.
- **City Manager:** The City County appointed Janice McClintock as City Manager, starting February 6. Jennifer Coile resigned due to family health situation.
- **City Planner:** Beginning November 1, Matthew Sundt of Golden State Planning and Environmental Services took over from Elizabeth Caraker. He is in City Hall all day on Tuesday and Thursdays and provides oversight of the Building Department.
- **Building Department:** Precision Inspection Company is providing Building Department services. Carolyn Costa is at City Hall Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1 to 4:30 pm. Building Plan review, within 10 business days. Building Inspector, on call, available on 24 hours notice. Code Enforcement: on call.
- **Landscape Architect:** Anita Kane, ASLA, is on contract to assist the City with review of landscaping plans, such as the American Tower cellular antenna site. Ms. Kane lectures on historic trees of San Benito County, designed the landscaping of the Veterans Memorial Hall in Hollister and won awards for her design of the fire-safe demonstration garden at the Morgan Hill CDF station.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

- The project remains on schedule in order to comply with the City's Drinking Water permit and Sewer System Discharge Permit. If the City does not demonstrate good faith effort to implement the project and improve water quality, the State Regional Water Quality Control Board may impose \$10,000/day fines starting July 1, 2006. The project is going into final design so that it will go out to bid this spring with construction underway in August.
- The "Sunday Pinnacle" newspaper published an article in October, 2005 about the City's involvement in PG&E's "Savings by Design" energy efficiency program. PG&E offered the City a rebate on engineering and construction costs of energy-saving project components that will lower the operating costs of the new water treatment plant.
- **Local Funding Match:** City officials met with San Benito County Water District officials on October 14, 2005 and requested written confirmation of grants or loans (and on what terms) they are willing to provide for the project. On November 20, 2005, the City entered into a contract with Bartle Wells Associates, infrastructure finance specialists, who can seek alternate private financing for the City's local match for the \$3.9 million grant from the US Economic Development Administration. Bartle Wells has worked for

numerous public agencies to find financing at low interest rates so that future water rate increases are as low as possible. As of February 1, 2006, the Board of Directors of the Water District has taken no action to confirm the contribution of any funds to the SJB project.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION

- **New Amtrak Service:** October 31, Amtrak bus/rail connection started with four buses daily to/from SJB connecting to the Merced Amtrak station for San Joaquin Valley trains north and south. Bus stop in the parking lot of Windmill Plaza. Buy tickets online or at the train station. Special rates for youth groups of 20+ available this spring, e.g. \$9 round trip to Sacramento- details at “Kids ‘n Trains” section of www.amtrakcalifornia.com website.
- **Highway 156 Project Alternatives:** In 2001, the SJB City Council went on record in support of the “3-in-1” regional highway proposal. This fall the Council, Planning Commission and Historic Resource Board submitted comments on the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority’s “Southern Gateway Study” opposing widening of Highway 156 between 101 and Union Road. On November 30, Caltrans hosted an open house on their proposals to widen Highway 156. More meetings will be held this spring and a Draft Environmental Impact Report is expected to be released in June.

Updates to City Website:

- **Community Calendar:** meetings and events of interest to residents
- **Events Calendar:** events of particular interest to visitors (and residents with leisure time!)
- **Meetings and Special Event Facilities:** new
- **Arts and Leisure:** expanded – let us know of additional listings
- **Historic Resource Inventory:** information about schedule, public presentations, draft documents

NEWS AROUND TOWN:

- **San Juan Bautista Chamber of Commerce, new Executive Director:** Denise Cauthen-Wright; office is now open 8 am-5pm Monday—Friday; new 2006 calendar of events is now available on line www.sjbchamber.com and updated monthly; monthly report of Chamber activities presented at City Council meetings
- **CMAP Community Cable Channel:** new programs – “Story Time at the SJB Library” with Adele Pimental, “Coffee With Coile” tours of the city with the City Manager [to make or assist with tv shows – contact CMAP [www.mycmap.org] at (408) 846-4983.
- **Robert “Bert” Zuniga:** 25 years of service at the San Juan Bautista State Historic Park where he has worked to maintain the grounds and buildings.

- **City Volunteer of the Year:** Chuck Geiger was honored at the San Benito County celebration of National Philanthropy Day as the City's Volunteer of the Year for his work in beautification and computer networking at City facilities.
- **Mission Gardens Apartments:** Construction of this complex of 43 cottages and apartments is underway on Muckelemi Street. To get on the list to rent a one or two bedroom apartment in early summer, call (831) 662-2378 or email missiongardenapts@yahoo.com. Website is in development.
- **Changes in Rates at John Smith Landfill:** adopted by San Benito County Board of Supervisors on December 6, 2005: **No charge** for computer CPUs and monitors, televisions, and microwaves of less than 26 pounds. "Clean" dirt, asphalt, concrete and wood: \$10 per pick up load (commercial vehicles are weighed).

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Fire Department:** ongoing - training of new volunteers
- **Historic Resource Inventory:** The survey and photography of historic properties was completed in December, but there are additional fun tasks between now and the summer. Sign up sheets at City Hall or Library; some can be done at home on your computer.
- **Library Auxiliary:** help with the 100th Anniversary celebration as well as ongoing library activities

ANIMAL CONTROL:

- **Dog License:** \$6, apply at City Hall, bring records of shots
- **City's new Agreement with Hollister Animal Shelter:** If you have captured a *domesticated* animal [dog, cat, rabbit] within the City limits, you can deliver it to the Hollister Animal Shelter **with a form from SJB City Hall** certifying that you are a SJB resident/business owner. We asked the City of Hollister for a contract for animal control services to include capture of unleashed animals; due to staff shortages they are not able to offer us this service at this time but may in the future.
- **Unleashed domesticated animals captured by City staff :** if there is no collar with tag or implant, they will be taken to the Hollister animal shelter where you must pay City of Hollister fees for release.
- **Chickens:** The mayor is sponsoring an open meeting on February 13 at 6 pm in the Council chambers to discuss the current situation and ways to address the overpopulation. The Council is considering adopting an ordinance which would make feeding feral chickens a misdemeanor.

UTILITY BILLS:

- **City water and sewer rates for Seniors:** The City Council considered this in 1997 but rates for a special category of customers is not legally permitted. The City of Hollister adopted a policy to consider utility rates for seniors but does not have special rates yet.

- **PG&E Assistance with Bills:** Pacific Gas and Electric offers the following programs:
 - **Payment arrangements/balance payment plan:** call 1-800-743-5000
 - **20% rate reduction for lower-income households:** call 1-866-743-2273 or www.pge.com/care
 - **One-time grants** from Salvation Army to help low-income families with utility bills: 1-800-993-9677 or www.pge.com/reach
 - **Free home weatherization program** for low-income families to make homes more energy efficient: 1-800-933-9555 or www.pge.com/energypartners
 - **1020 Program:** reduce your gas usage by 10% in January, February and March to receive a 20% rebate: 1-800-743-5000 or www.pge.com/1020

HIGHLIGHTS OF FUTURE EVENTS:

- **February 10, 3:30:** Anzar High School Homecoming Parade, downtown
- **February 11, 5:30-8 pm:** Valentine Spaghetti Feed, Community Center, fundraiser for San Juan School 4th and 5th grade educational trip
- **February 13, 6 pm:** Open Meeting about Chickens, Council Chambers
- **February 25, 5:30 pm:** San Juan-Aromas Schools Foundation annual fundraiser, Aromas Grange Hall
- **March 10, 1 pm:** Official opening of the Breen Adobe, State Historic Park
- **March: 100th Anniversary of the City Library!**
- **March 28, 7 pm:** Town Hall meeting, Council Chambers

REMINDER: Historic Resources Board review

The Historic Resources Ordinance was adopted in 2004 and the first Historic Resource Board (HRB) appointed in September 2004. Owners and occupants of properties within the Historic District should be aware that the HRB is responsible for review of actions within the Historic District and makes recommendations to the Planning Commission. Historic properties listed outside the historic district are also reviewed by the HRB. At the beginning of every HRB meeting (third Thursday of the month, 7 p.m.), there is a time for "Informal Project Review" so that any potential and/or future project applicant may present their project to the HRB for preliminary feedback only. No formal application is required and no action is taken by the HRB at that time. To get on the agenda, call City Hall at 623-4661. HRB members are Cara Vonk, 623-9216, Chair; Luis Matchain, Vice-Chair; Ted Thoeny, Secretary; Rebecca McGovern and Susan Brady.

CALL (831) 902-0887 FOR AFTER-HOURS PUBLIC WORKS REQUESTS