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Changing of the Guard

By Duane Plank

The changing of the guard occurred on Tuesday night at the final regularly scheduled 2009 meeting of the El Segundo School Board. Robin Funk was elected by the Board to serve as President for the upcoming year, with Tammy Reeves selected to serve as Vice-president, and Lisa Wilkin chosen to be the Board's clerk.

Three of the five board members, outgoing President Ann Coles, Bill Watkins and Funk, were also sworn-in to begin their second four- year terms as Board members. All three had run unopposed in the recent election.

Superintendent Geoff Yantz noted the quality of the people willing to devote their time to the future of the school district and the students, teachers, and employees in the city.

"I just want to add that they all ran unopposed," Yantz said, "and I think that says a lot about the services that you have contributed over the last four years, and I certainly look forward to the next years, and know that great things are still to come."

Before taking over as President, Funk paid her respects to outgoing President Coles. Said Funk, detailing some of the leadership characteristics that she saw in Coles: "Respectful, committed, informed, confident, professional, a good listener, calm in the eye of a storm, focused on goals, a consensus builder."

Coles had a few remarks to mark the end of her term, which was highlighted by the difficult budgeting dilemmas that California school districts face because of the state's monumental fiscal challenges. "Some days I felt like I was herding cats, but I've learned a lot," she said.

New assignments to Board members were noted. Among some of the assignments were Reeves to El Segundo High School, Wilkin to the Middle School, Coles to Center Street Elementary, Watkins to Richmond Street Elementary, and Funk to the Ed Foundation.

Barbara Calhoun, who is the Facilities Technician for the High School modernization project, was in attendance and welcomed by the Board as she completed her first day on the job. Calhoun will be the construction manager who will oversee all of the issues dealing with Bond Measure M, which was passed 13 months ago.

The \$14 million in bond money is earmarked to improve and address safety issues in the High School's aging auditorium and athletic facilities. According to Yantz, the project is successfully moving forward, with construction scheduled to begin in August of 2010, with a scheduled completion date of May 2011 for the athletic facility, and August of the same year for the auditorium.

Calhoun, said educator Dave Lubs, who presented the new hire, "is a certified construction manager, has a degree in business management, and is also a licensed real estate professional."

Said Calhoun: "I just wanted to say that I am very, very excited about this opportunity, and I am looking forward to working with this district and this community."

Lubs also recognized Center Street educator Renee Hoover, for her accomplishment of achieving National Board Certification status, a highly coveted award in the teaching profession.

During the special presentation section of the meeting, the Board recognized the El Segundo High School boys water polo

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Lady Eagles Win Tourney



FrontRow/L-RStatisticianMaxineSoriano,ErinSato,KristinBucher,MikaHongo,StephanieGee,LaurenVillaneuvaBackRow/L-RAsstCoachChristinaConcialdi,AnishaTyagi,MirandaGagnier,Lauren Sato, Amy Reaser; Head Coach Kelly Geis Photo by Loyd Villaneuva.

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The Water Conservation Ordinance: A Quick Primer

By Brian Simon

As previously reported in these pages, a new water conservation ordinance will go into effect in El Segundo starting January 1, 2010. Intended as a program to encourage voluntary reductions in local H2O consumption, the ordinance provides a series of guidelines for everything from lawn watering to washing cars, with potential penalties imposed for violations. The ordinance is viewed as a compromise between the City's previous document and new policies prescribed by the Metropolitan Water District, and allows the City to remain eligible for MWD grant funding.

The following overview covers the most important provisions of the ordinance as they relate to residents (though the document includes additional guidelines for commercial car washes, dry cleaners, hotels/motels, restaurants, and construction activities). A separate conservation ordinance pertaining just to water landscaping regulations for commercial and industrial businesses and entities is scheduled to be passed by the El Segundo City Council next week.

Before proceeding any further, this reporter must take responsibility for a rare but unfortunate error in a prior article regarding the permitted time periods when people may water their lawns under the new ordinance. The correct answer: You can water between 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. It seems that several local citizens became concerned when they read the article and thought watering would only be allowed between 9 p.m. and 5 a.m.—not the most convenient window of time, to say the least. So, apologies for any confusion due to the inverted numbers.

Repairing Leaks

If you find out you have a leaky pipe, faucet, toilet, sprinkler, appliance or other water system or device, you will have up to 48 hours to start repair work.

Watering Hours/Schedules

As a general rule, you can only water your lawn between 5 p.m. and 9 a.m. and for no

more than 15 minutes per station per day. But there are some exceptions to the rule. You can water between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. using properly programmed weather- or sensor-based irrigation controllers or drip irrigation. You can also water by hand with a bucket or by using a hose with an automatic shutoff nozzle. And finally, you can turn on the water during this period if you are installing, repairing or doing routine maintenance on your irrigation system.

Surface Cleaning

If you want to use a hose to wash off a sidewalk, driveway, roadway, parking lot, or other outdoor paved or hard surface area, make sure the water doesn't spill into the storm water drainage system.

Spillage/Rampant Use

Be sure to keep any water spillage into streets, curbs or gutters to a minimum and limit runoff, and don't indiscriminately run water for no good reason.

Pools/Spas/Fountains/Ponds

You can only empty and refill a pool or spa to prevent or repair structural damage or for public health reasons. Also, any pool, spa, decorative fountain, basin, pond or waterway must have a water recirculation device. Pool filter backwash water or water from any of the above sources can't be discharged into the storm water drainage system.

Miscellaneous No-Nos

You cannot water your lawn, plants or any

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Grid-lock May Soon Be Over for Local Power Plant

By Brian Simon

El Segundo power plant officials are confident their long-delayed redevelopment project will finally get off the ground before the end of next year. Once up and running, the high-efficiency, gas-fueled facility will provide 540 megawatts of additional power at the beachside generating station and provide power for about 400,000 homes while helping shore up reserve energy throughout the basin during peak usage periods. The plant could also solve many of El Segundo's long-term budgetary woes by providing as much as \$40 million over a five-year period in various tax revenues, according to a recent fiscal analysis provided to the California Energy Commission (CEC).

The proposal to replace two outmoded,

1950s generators at the plant with new units goes back to 2000, but obstacles ranging from environmental outcry to lack of a power purchase agreement delayed it from moving forward. The CEC finally approved the project in late 2004. Plant owner NRG received a CEC license permit in 2005 to rebuild the units using "once-through" ocean water cooling, but ran into opposition from environmental groups concerned about the negative impacts on marine life. A court ruling in early 2007 prompted the company to shift technologies to the more environmentally-friendly air cooling. The switch drew accolades from key eco groups such as Heal the Bay and the Surfrider Foundation.

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