



5.9.17

# MANIFEST

Welcome to the Manifest; a semi-weekly summary that cares more about brevity than grammar, and what is about to or could happen in Seaside than what did or didn't. Contributions to future editions are welcome at [cmalin@ci.seaside.ca.us](mailto:cmalin@ci.seaside.ca.us).

📄 Edit Board Recap – DCM Hodgson, Clerk Milton and me had a meeting with the Editorial Board of the Monterey County Weekly last week. It went something like this:

The math doesn't add up. Math not adding up can be a bit of a distraction at an Editorial Board meeting on government revenue. But that's what's happening. Daphne, Lesley and me are in the conference room at the Monterey County Weekly, answering questions about Measures L and G and the math ain't adding up. Publisher Erik Cushman scans the one-page summary of Seaside's comparative general fund revenue per capita and quickly notes the hotel tax, property tax and sales tax lines don't sum to the General Fund Revenue line.

We go off a small tangent as Daphne and me explain that particular math isn't supposed to add up. The three broad categories of property tax, sales tax and hotel tax were picked to illustrate which towns were more or less property, retail or tourism rich, and there's other small pieces of each City's financial pie that were left off the table for the sake of simplicity. The bottom line is Seaside has \$58 to fund services for every \$100 the other cities, on average, in the region have in their General Fund budgets. We get that straightened out (I think) and move on. They ask if we can provide a little more detail on both the revenue the expenditure side and we say, "sure" (attached, and now adding up).

The meeting got off to a decidedly non-formal start. Sara showed us to the conference room and went off assemble the panel. It's a bright, airy, cheerful room atop a colorful if labyrinth workspace, and you can see how a bright, sharp newspaper gets constructed there. They got a bright blue wall. We got a not so inconspicuous purple one ourselves. This will be fun.

The panel arrives. After they move me across the table, five on their side. Three on ours. Four Mac laptops opened and typing on their side. A few handouts on

our side. A few handouts and “Seaside Rules!” scrawled on the whiteboard by a certain enthusiastic city manager, while Sara was out assembling the panel. You can’t take me anywhere. Or, at least, anywhere there may be a whiteboard. They ask us if we’d like water or coffee and we all decline, because our ethics border on obsession. They tell me they put my bike in the courtyard, for safety.

I make some quip about Seaside being perfectly safe and my bike being outside on a daily basis, unlocked. The quip is to both express confidence in Seaside and give them some inkling of my approach to risk. Which is, basically, to be adverse to risk aversion. Ain’t nothing transformative ever happened without risk, and ain’t never been progress without change. So ... let’s go. Open the office door. Get staff working together. Include. Innovate. Inspire. Be open to the possibility that an unlocked bicycle is a window to the community’s soul.

Establish some ground rules. Me, Lesley and Daphne can’t advocate for Measures L & G. We can only inform. Here’s some info. You be the judge. We’ll answer any question you have, and the City has info on our website too:

<http://www.ci.seaside.ca.us/610/Information-About-Measures-L-G>

And so the questions come. Why was the Porta-Potty placed right by my window? Because everything that can go wrong, will. Next time, just call. Does Monterey Downs owe the City money? \$116K, which we’ve not forgotten about. They are assisting with defense of the lawsuits, so it’s not like they aren’t helping. How much would Measures L & G provide in revenue? Being conservative in our estimates, \$1,900,000 annually for Measure L and \$300,000 annually for Measure G. Is that enough? Not on its own. There’s \$194 million in unmet capital need for streets, parks, sidewalks, stormwater and facilities, so do the math on how long \$2.2 million a year takes to catch up to \$194 million, and then factor in hundreds of thousands of state and federal grants going away that presently fund the basics of youth services and fire-fighting. Do you have too many fire-fighters or police? No. In fact, we need more police officers now, and will need more fire-fighters as we grow. How much does the City pay in pension costs? We’ll get you that number (it was 8.6%, overall). Are you sure you don’t need water? Thanks, we’re fine. Or, is that a question about water for redevelopment? We certainly need that.

Somewhere in the mix, the big question. What's the big picture? I go to the whiteboard, but there's some Trump cartoon that won't erase. So I break out the sock puppets. Just kidding.

The small part of the big picture is this. Measures L and G would diversify and import revenue into the community. Diversifying and importing revenue on one side, while modernizing operations on the other side, are the basics of fiscal stability in city government. L and G are not the whole solution, but would appear to begin to address the finding of the recent community poll in which 74% of respondents thought Seaside had some or great need for additional funding.

The big part of the big picture is Seaside is the most diverse, youngest and most in need city, with the lowest per capita income, overlooking that big blue saltwater thing. Seaside also happens to be the community with the greatest potential and the most opportunity. As a young city, we don't need to operate as a museum. We don't have to be fixed in some past conception of ourselves. We can look to the future and create our own authentically diverse and vibrant community. Welcoming investment, building an economic base, broadening the socio-economics of the community and multiplying social capital as we do it; that's our unique opportunity in the region. I say something like CSUMB and the redevelopment of blighted Fort Ord property are the fulcrum upon which the community pivots and there's typing happening on the Mac laptops facing me.

Such tremendous opportunity, that no one else has. Great need, and tremendous opportunity. That's some swell, word-problem math that I'll take any day. So, forgive the part of me that doesn't lock my bike. You either believe in the community you work for. Or you fail.

We cover the bases on developments in progress. Main Gate. Surplus II. Golf Course. Downtown. Campustown. Automall O' Luxury. We discuss the General Plan Update underway and the oak study nearing completion. They bring up Monterey Downs (which, they seem to not like so much) and I boil it down; a new industry and hundreds of millions of investment was not a bad idea. The implementation of the idea as a false choice / pitched battle between obliterating the landscape or supporting economic development was (new guy here, could be mistaken) the problem. So, let's learn from that as a community and move on. Economic development and respect for the land are not mutually incompatible goals.

Include. Innovate. Inspire.

If that's not tangible enough, build a community where bike theft is not something we worry about.

I'll say this. The last time I was in an Editorial Board meeting, it was with the Quad City Times. A beleaguered daily paper, struggling with plummeting subscriptions and resource constraints imposed by their parent company, it was a depression festival. Them, asking me to pretend the internet did not exist. Me, suspending no such disbelief. Them (metaphor alert) handing me a target to pin to my chest.

It was good to be back in a functioning Editorial Board conference room (except for the unerasable whiteboard). Intelligent people. Sharp questions. Zero animus. Mutual desire to see the community and region succeed.

Seaside (so said the unerasable whiteboard as we left) rules.

**Peninsula Cities Comparison**  
**Per Capita Analysis**  
**Based on 2016-2017 Budgets**

CITY:	<u>SEASIDE</u>	<u>MONTEREY</u>	<u>MARINA</u>	<u>PACIFIC GROVE</u>
		(a)		(b)
POPULATION	34,071	28,610	20,982	15,352
TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE	\$ 29,800,000	\$ 71,650,000	\$ 18,800,000	\$ 21,500,000
Per Capita	\$ 874.64	\$ 2,504.37	\$ 896.01	\$ 1,400.47
PROPERTY TAX REVENUE	\$ 6,600,000	\$ 10,400,000	\$ 5,200,000	\$ 6,000,000
Per Capita	\$ 193.71	\$ 363.51	\$ 247.83	\$ 390.83
SALES & TRANSACTION TAX REVENUE	\$ 11,100,000	\$ 8,900,000	\$ 5,300,000	\$ 3,700,000
Per Capita	\$ 325.79	\$ 311.08	\$ 252.60	\$ 241.01
TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX	\$ 3,100,000	\$ 18,900,000	\$ 2,800,000	\$ 4,700,000
Per Capita	\$ 90.99	\$ 660.61	\$ 133.45	\$ 306.15
OTHER GENERAL FUND TAXES	\$ 4,600,000	\$ 8,800,000	\$ 900,000	\$ 2,910,000
Per Capita	\$ 135.01	\$ 307.58	\$ 42.89	\$ 189.55
OTHER GENERAL FUND REVENUES	\$ 4,400,000	\$ 24,650,000	\$ 4,600,000	\$ 4,190,000
Per Capita	\$ 129.14	\$ 861.59	\$ 219.24	\$ 272.93
TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES	\$ 30,600,000	\$ 64,250,000	\$ 18,800,000	\$ 20,200,000
Per Capita	\$ 898.12	\$ 2,245.72	\$ 896.01	\$ 1,315.79
POLICE EXPENDITURES	\$ 13,100,000	\$ 14,730,000	\$ 7,700,000	\$ 7,800,000
Per Capita	\$ 384.49	\$ 514.85	\$ 366.98	\$ 508.08

FIRE EXPENDITURES	\$	6,700,000	\$	17,600,000	\$	3,100,000	\$	3,700,000
Per Capita	\$	196.65	\$	615.17	\$	147.75	\$	241.01
PUBLIC WORKS EXPENDITURES	\$	5,700,000	\$	14,400,000	\$	3,000,000	\$	3,400,000
Per Capita	\$	167.30	\$	503.32	\$	142.98	\$	221.47
RECREATION EXPENDITURES	\$	2,300,000	\$	8,570,000	\$	1,000,000	\$	500,000
Per Capita	\$	67.51	\$	299.55	\$	47.66	\$	32.57
OTHER GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES	\$	2,800,000	\$	8,950,000	\$	4,000,000	\$	4,800,000
Per Capita	\$	182.39	\$	582.99	\$	260.55	\$	312.66

(a) City of Monterey expenditures for the library, the museum, the conference center and the harbor were removed for comparison purposes.

(b) City of Pacific Grove expenditures for the library and the museum were removed for comparison purposes.