

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

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**OCTOBER 03, 2011**

For additional information on any of the items in this report, please see contact list at the end of this report.

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**GAS LINE RUPTURE AND REPAIR:** City Staff and PG&E coordinated closely and efficiently to manage an emergency response and repair of a 4-inch plastic gas line that was accidentally ruptured Monday, October 3rd, just after noon, by a private contractor working on replacing the aging water main along East 2nd Street. The break occurred near the rear driveway to City Hall, behind the police department, at the sidewalk along East K Street.

As a conservative precautionary measure, evacuations were ordered for residences along East K and L Streets from roughly East 2nd to East 3rd Streets, as well as for City Hall and the Police Department, Senior Center, Gymnasium, and Library. In addition, cars in those areas were not allowed to be operated until air quality readings indicated zero chance of gas in proximity to an ignition source. (The repair equipment has spark arrestors.)

Displaced residents were offered shelter at the Community Center; Postal Service employees sheltered in place; and Liberty High was evacuated voluntarily.

Police and Public Works personnel provided and maintained perimeter barricades. Police and fire dispatch operations were moved quickly to and from temporary quarters at Fire Station 11, without a break in service, as 911 calls were transferred to the Vallejo Police Dispatch Center for answering, as pre-designated in such an evacuation. Additional police personnel were called to the event but were not utilized due to the quicker than expected repair.

The Fire Department oversaw incident command, public information, and air quality testing; Parks and Community Services provided building control and post-event clearance, and the City's engineers expedited the repair operation.

The repair was completed, all evacuations lifted, and City services reopened between 3:30 and 4pm. – *City Manager*

**BENICIA SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY SERIES:** The City of Benicia, in partnership with Dominican University, has held two of six workshops in its Benicia Sustainable Economy Series. The series is targeted toward leaders in Benicia's Commercial/Industrial sectors. The objective of the series is to present the concepts, tools, case studies and implementation methodologies to give participants a platform for further action. Attendance is limited to 35 participants and is currently full. Additional workshop series will be held in Spring 2012.

The first workshop, [Sustainability: Making the Case for Business](#), provided an overview and comparative analysis of the major initiatives at the intersection of business development and environmental and social responsibility. For any human activity to be sustainable, it must first be economically viable.

The second workshop, [Lean and Green: Sustainable Operations Management For Your Organization](#), focused on the overlay of efficiency and sustainability objectives within an organization's operations. The video link for this workshop was unavailable at the time this update was released.

These workshops are available on YouTube. Stay tuned for information and videos from future workshops. - *Public Works & Community Development*

**NOOKS AT THE LIBRARY:** Have you been wanting to find out more about eReaders? Now is your chance. The library has purchased six Nooks from Barnes and Noble for you to use. They are preloaded with the current top 10 Bay Area Best Selling Fiction, and they can be checked out from the library for three weeks. If one is available, its box will be placed in the New Books Shelving area. Just bring the empty box to the Public Service Desk to check out a Nook. They are first-come, first-served and cannot be put on hold. -*Library*



**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: IN SEARCH OF A BETTER WORLD EXHIBIT:** This [exhibit](#), made possible by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, looks at the remarkable life and achievements of one of America's most beloved personalities.



The library has had a number of successful events focusing on the library and adventures of Benjamin Franklin. The Glass Armonica concert by William Zeitler was a unique and memorable experience.

The exhibit's last special event was held on September 30, 2011, as Dr. Joseph Illick from CSU San Francisco talked about Benjamin Franklin abroad. - *Library*

**BOOK CLUB FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART:** Are you an adult who enjoys reading books written for children and teens? If so, you'll want to come to our newest book club. The group meets every third Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. The book to read for October is "Born confused" and in November, readers will select a Nancy Drew book to bring and discuss. - *Library*



**SOLAR PROJECT:** Most of the former City Hall parking lot has been removed in preparation for re-grading and construction of the new lot. The Community Center parking lot is expected to be the first of the City sites where solar carports will be installed, with construction starting as early as the second week of October. Crews working on different parts of the project will then rotate among the sites until all of the panels are installed. - *Public Works & Community Development*

**BENICIA YOUTH COMMISSION:** The Youth Commission kicked off the 2011-12 school year with 36 commissioners and a very eager Chair, Heidi Wing & Executive Board. After the first two meetings in September the commission has outlined goals & objectives for the year related to local events, community service projects, and volunteering. The commission submitted their Work Plan to the Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Commission for review at their October 12th meeting.



The Commission participated in the Benicia Community Center Grand Opening by providing free root beer floats and staffing an information booth inside the facility during tours and class demonstrations.

The Commission is also collaborating in the Kids Kaleidoscope / K2 Haunted House at the Youth Center and plans to place over 100 flags at the City Cemetery for Veteran's Day. - *Parks & Community Services*

**EAST 2ND STREET WATER LINE REPLACEMENT AND RESURFACING PROJECT:** Work is progressing on schedule with a tentative completion date of mid-November. The water main line is being installed this month and street improvements will be constructed the first half of November. The contractor is starting work at 8am and finishing by 5pm. Two-way traffic has been maintained through the work zone and the cooperation of the traveling public and adjacent properties is much appreciated. - *Public Works & Community Development*

**POLICE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT:** The Police Department has a [monthly report](#) available online providing information on community services, statistics, case summaries, and professional development. - *Police Department*

**OFFICERS' DUPLEX:** Work on the historic landmark at the Arsenal was approved last week by the Historic Preservation Review Commission. In addition to rehabilitation of the exterior, the property owner has approval for a patio on the west side of the building to accommodate outdoor dining for an anticipated restaurant. – *Public Works & Community Development*

**LIBRARY NEWSLETTER:** The Library has recently started to publish a [monthly newsletter](#) that will include statistics on library use, successful past activities, and information on future programs and events. The newsletter is available at the kiosk in the library or on the [Library's website](#). – *Library*

**POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT:** The Police Department's [annual report](#) for 2010 has been issued and is available online. – *Police Department*

**OPEN SPACE (BEHIND COMMUNITY PARK) GRASS FIRE:** On Friday, September 16, 2011 at 4:46 PM a [First Alarm Vegetation Dispatch](#) went out. Benicia Engine 11, Brush 11, Water Tender 11, Engine 12, Brush 12, Vallejo Brush 24 and Battalion 11 responded to a vegetation fire burning the land between the Benicia Community Park and Lake Herman. Fire engines arrived on scene at 4:59 PM. A Second Alarm and a request for Cal Fire response were made due to the difficult access and heavy fire conditions.



The fire burned approximately 10 acres of brush and grass. No structures or fencing were damaged. The fire was placed under control at 7:13 PM with fire crews on scene until 9:00 PM to assure complete extinguishment. There were no injuries to firefighters or to the public. Fireworks appear to have caused the fire. The origin was at the rear of the Benicia Community Park. Approximately 50 firefighters and 10 fire apparatus responded to the incident. Assisting Benicia in the suppression efforts were: Vallejo, Fairfield, and Cal Fire. Retardant dropping planes and water dropping helicopters were key to controlling the fire. Contra Costa County Fire Protection District moved an Engine Company to Benicia Fire Station 11 to protect our community while the on-duty crews were attending to the fire.

Fire season is not over and we remind everyone to practice fire safety and to consider this year's [Fire Prevention Week](#) (October 9-15) theme "Protect Your Family From Fire" – *Fire Department*

**FIREFIGHTERS GOING PINK FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER** – For the second consecutive year Benicia Fire is "[Caring Enough to Wear Pink](#)" in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Beginning October 2, 2011 on-duty personnel will wear pink tees on a rotating schedule (alternate between standard uniform and pink tees).

Members of the community are invited to purchase a Pink Fire Department tee shirt available for \$20.00. All monies raised will be donated to the "Susan G. Komen for the Cure" foundation. Pink shirts will be available for purchase at Station #11 (150 Military West) during the month of October while supplies last. – *Fire Department*

**COMMUNITY CENTER GRAND OPENING:** The Grand Opening / Open House for the



Community Center took place on Friday, September 30, 2011. The program started with opening remarks and introductions from Mayor Elizabeth Patterson. Mike Dotson, Director of Parks & Community Services presented an overview of the project and recognized those individuals who were involved from the beginning to the completion of the new center. The afternoon followed with class demonstrations, meet and greet with instructors, tours, refreshments, and games and activities for the kids. It was a perfect afternoon and several

hundred-community members toured and enjoyed the new facility. – *Parks & Community Services*

**AMPORTS LOADING DOCK FIRE** – On Friday, September 23, 2011 at approximately 9:03 PM, Benicia Fire Department units were dispatched to a [dock fire](#) at the Amports Loading Dock located at 1279 Bayshore Road. The fire was placed under control at approximately 12:31 AM. Benicia Fire Department resources cleared the scene shortly after 2:30 AM. Damage was contained to a conex storage box and an area of the dock approximately 20 feet by 110 feet. The cause of this fire is accidental and electrical in nature. Although the cause of this fire was accidental, the responsible person(s) may be charged with causing an unlawful fire through reckless acts, which may be considered a felony (Penal Code 452(b)). Total damage estimate for the dock is \$250,000.00 dollars.



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The fire was burning on the underside of the dock making it impossible to direct hose streams on the fire from our fire engines. This fire required boats with fire pumps to contain and extinguish the blaze and the use of heavy equipment to clear dock material. Tugboats were used to move a fuel barge away from the burning dock. Assisting in the firefight were: Valero Refinery FD, Vallejo FD, Fairfield FD, East Contra Costa Fire Protection District, Benicia Public Works, US Coast Guard, Tug Boats Millennium Fire and Guardian.

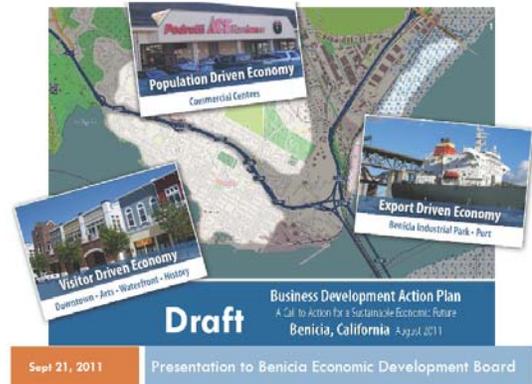
There were no reported injuries. Amports representatives praised emergency responders for their efforts in fighting the fire, and that our efforts allowed Amports to continue operations (no disruption to dock operations). – *Fire Department*

**STATE PARKS:** Staff is scheduling a meeting with Steve Bachman, Acting District Superintendent and Mary Pass, Silverado Sector Superintendent, to begin discussions regarding the proposed agreements for the State Recreation Area, Fisher Hanlon House and Benicia State Capitol. – *Parks & Community Services*



**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN:** Given the declining revenues of local government, the City is reevaluating our economic and business development activity to address current issues and opportunities. As part of evaluating and updating actions for economic development, a team of experienced economic development and downtown/tourism professionals conducted an assessment of past activities, the purpose being to learn from the past, plan for the future and take advantage of current opportunities.

Using the City's Economic Development Plan of 1994-95 and Economic Development Strategy of 2007 the intent of the project is to create a [Business Development Action Plan](#), an addendum to the 2007 Economic Development Strategy, which will reflect actions that are needed in the current economic environment. The objectives of the Business Development Action Plan are to focus on activities and actions that will continue to create economic prosperity and jobs for the community, and, in the near term, generate and increase tax revenues to maintain and support the quality of life Benicia residents enjoy.



The next steps are an all day workshop on Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup> for members of the economic/business community and members of the City's Economic Development Board, and a joint meeting of the Board and City Council on Tuesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>. Both meetings are to review the plan. Members of the business community and the public are encouraged to attend. – *Economic Development*

**DOG PARK:** The fall turf renovation project at the Phenix Dog Park is coming along nicely.



The new turf is lush and green, and is filling in to form. However, the most important part of the renovation project comes during the final phase of establishment when the individual grass plants develop deep root systems that are better able to withstand the constant traffic.

The park and park patrons will greatly benefit by allowing the turf to remain closed for at least another two weeks. With the winter rains right around the corner we need as much time as possible to try and develop strong

roots in the turf.

Staff has informed the users and posted signs at the park advising the public that the turf area will remain closed until October 14, 2011. The additional time will help the grass get established and provide for a better turf in the winter months. – *Parks & Community Services*

**LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT:** The Benicia Public Library [Annual Report 2010-2011](#) detailing statistics and providing information on new services and updates from this past year has been issued and is available online. – *Library*

**COMMUNITY FIRE MUSTER** – On Saturday, September 24, 2011 the Benicia Volunteer Firemen Inc., Benicia Fire Museum, Benicia Fire Department and Benicia Main Street hosted our first '[Community Fire Muster](#)'. The Muster activities began with a parade down First Street, which included the Benicia Panther Band, Benicia Antique Car Club and various antique fire apparatus from all over Northern California. This event provided a great opportunity for everyone to learn about the history of the fire service and have fun in the process. There were several competitions for adults and children. It was a great day in Benicia and all had a fun time!  
– *Fire Department*



### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

For additional information on any of the items in this report, please contact one of the following departments:

**[City Manager/Human Resources/Economic Development](#): 707.746.4200**

**[City Attorney](#): 707.746.4216**

**[Finance Department](#): 707.746.4225**

**[Fire Department](#): 707.746.4275**

**[Library](#): 707.746.4343**

**[Parks & Community Services](#): 707.746.4285**

**[Police](#): 707.746.4265**

**[Public Works & Community Development](#): 707.746.4240 or 746.4280**