

**Local News Round-Up**  
**September 16, 2013**

**BANKRUPTCY**

[Dan Walters: Municipal Bankruptcies Confront Huge Issues \(\*Sacramento Bee\*\)](#)

As federal bankruptcy judges deal with the insolvencies of two medium-size California cities, Stockton and San Bernardino, and the huge fiscal collapse of Detroit, they are confronting an issue with almost incalculable impacts – whether public employee pensions are ordinary debts or enjoy special protections.

**REDEVELOPMENT**

[Santa Monica's City Council Requests \\$14.6 Million from County for RDA Obligations \(\*Santa Monica Lookout\*\)](#)

Santa Monica will seek another \$14.6 million in property taxes from the County in order to pay off the debts owed by its former Redevelopment Agency (RDA).

In order to assure that the City's now-defunct RDA meets its financial obligations, the City Council, acting as the RDA's successor agency, rubber stamped a recognized obligation payment schedule (ROPS) Tuesday.

**ELECTIONS**

[San Bernardino: Mayoral Candidate Forum Focuses on Bankruptcy \(\*The Press-Enterprise\*\)](#)

Candidates for San Bernardino mayor outlined their position on public safety and getting the city out of bankruptcy Saturday, Sept. 14 in the first forum of the campaign season.

[Deadline Approaches for San Mateo County Redistricting Maps \(\*San Mateo County Times\*\)](#)

San Mateo County residents have until Sept. 20 to provide their own vision of the county's supervisorial districts.

The county is studying whether to shift the boundaries of its five districts as part of an upcoming switch from at-large to district elections. A nine-person District Lines Advisory Committee is expected Sept. 24 to choose one or more new maps for the Board of Supervisors to consider in October.

[Voting Rights Act Leading California Cities to Dump At-Large Elections \(\*Los Angeles Times\*\)](#)

First came Modesto. Then Compton, Anaheim, Escondido, Whittier, Palmdale and others were pushed into the growing ranks of California cities under pressure to change how they elect their city councils. Activists seeking minority representation on those councils are clamoring to have members elected by geographic district. Ethnically diverse cities that hold at-large elections and have few minority officeholders have proved vulnerable to lawsuits under the 11-year-old California Voting Rights Act.

**CITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

[Site Location Leads City Leaders Towards Residential Development of The Cannery \(\*The Davis Enterprise\*\)](#)

As long as there have been proposals to develop The Cannery site in North Davis into a residential neighborhood, there also has been support in the community to build a business park there instead. Fears abound, even at the City Council level at times, of Davis continuing to evolve into a bedroom community, where people live in town but commute out to places like Sacramento or the Bay Area every morning for work.

[Council to Receive Senior Rent Control Initiative Report; Police Chief POST Certificate Presentation Planned \(\*Lake County News\*\)](#)

This week the Lakeport City Council will see Lakeport's top cop receive one of the state's highest professional law enforcement certifications, with the council also set to discuss a report on options regarding a ballot initiative to place the city's senior mobile home parks under rent control. The council meeting, which also is a joint meeting of the Lakeport Redevelopment Successor Agency and

the City of Lakeport Municipal Sewer District, will begin at 6 p.m., in the council chambers at Lakeport City Hall, 225 Park St.

## **PENSIONS / EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

### [L.A. County Pension Fund is Taking Heat Over Hotel Investment \(\*Los Angeles Times\*\)](#)

A handful of maids and janitors line up most weeks outside the gleaming Embassy Suites in Irvine to urge visitors to boycott the hotel.

But the workers aren't just protesting management — they are also targeting their union brothers and sisters. One of the hotel's largest investors is the Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Assn., which manages \$41 billion in pension funds for firefighters, sheriff's deputies and other union and nonunion workers.

### [City of Santa Barbara, Police Union Reach Agreement on Salaries, Benefits \(\*Noozhawk\*\)](#)

After lengthy negotiations led to an impasse, the City of Santa Barbara and the Santa Barbara Police Officers Association announced Wednesday that they have reached a tentative agreement for a new three-year labor contract.

### [Temecula: City Asking for Vote on New Union Deal \(\*The Press-Enterprise\*\)](#)

Temecula officials want a ye or nay vote on the new deal they have offered the city's rank-and-file union employees, a group of around 100 people represented by Teamsters Local 911 of Bellflower.

### [Lawmakers Act to Bar Pension Lawsuit by Former Vernon Manager \(\*Los Angeles Times\*\)](#)

The state Legislature late Thursday sent a measure to Gov. Jerry Brown that would block the former city manager of Vernon from forcing the city to restore his \$545,000 pension.

Former administrator Bruce Malkenhorst has sued the city after his pension was disallowed by the California Public Employment Retirement System (CalPERS), which reset his annual retirement at \$115,000.

## **HOUSING**

### [Hotel, Housing Plans Seek OK in Foster City \(\*San Mateo Daily Journal\*\)](#)

The Foster City Council will take a couple of votes tonight that, if approved, will bring a new hotel to the city and fund dozens of affordable housing units at the vacant 15-acre site adjacent to City Hall.

## **LEGISLATURE**

### [Pérez Says California Water Issues on Next Year's Agenda \(\*Sacramento Bee\*\)](#)

The Legislature will reconvene in January, during which time Pérez said issues surrounding water infrastructure and water quality need to be addressed. Pérez held up a bottle of brown water collected from a home in Maywood, a city in southeast Los Angeles County, to illustrate his point.

### [Bills Sent to the Governor, At a Glance \(\*Ventura County Star\*\)](#)

Gov. Jerry Brown has until mid-October to act on the following bills sent to him at the end of this year's legislative session.

### [League of California Cities Reports Medical Marijuana Bill Stall in Waning Hours of Legislative Session \(\*Sierra Sun Times\*\)](#)

Legislative efforts to establish a statewide regulatory scheme for medical marijuana took a number of forms in 2013. The last of these was a pair of last-minute gut-and-amend attempts to radically limit cities' ability to regulate medical marijuana facilities — with the second and final attempt fizzling out late last night.

### [Minimum Wage Hike Proposal Gets Mixed Reviews in Merced \(\*Merced Sun-Star\*\)](#)

California's minimum wage would rise to \$10 an hour within three years under a bill passed Thursday by the state Legislature, making it one of the highest rates in the nation. Gov. Jerry Brown indicated earlier

this week that he would sign the bill, calling it an overdue piece of legislation that would help working-class families.

Opponents, however, say businesses would suffer because owners also face voter-approved increases in sales and income taxes, and because of the uncertain costs of the federal Affordable Care Act.

#### [Wolk's Community Green Energy Legislation Sent to Governor \(Daily Democrat\)](#)

The Assembly voted Friday to approve Senate Bill 43, broadly-supported legislation by Senator Lois Wolk, D-Davis, and coauthor Assemblyman Das Williams, D-Santa Barbara, to establish a program that would open access to clean and affordable renewable energy to millions of Californians who currently can't take advantage of the state's renewable programs.

#### [Statewide Marijuana Regulation Bill in Not Introduced \(Pasadena Star-News\)](#)

The Medical Cannabis Regulation and Control Act bill, AB 604, was not introduced for consideration in the Legislature and will likely come back in January, said a spokesman for Assemblyman Tom Ammiano, D-San Francisco.

The bill would have had the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control make a new division to handle regulations for medical and commercial marijuana activity statewide including testing, distribution and production.

#### [California Legislature Curbs Spending Impulse \(Los Angeles Times\)](#)

With a rebounding economy and a \$6-billion tax hike approved by Californians last fall, the Legislature's freshly minted Democratic supermajority began the year with the money and power to reverse years of deficit-driven budget cuts and derailed political priorities.

But even with a two-thirds majority for the first time in more than a century, the 2013 session featured no spending binge and no recalibration of state law to the far left, despite the dire predictions of some conservatives and the hopes of some liberals.

## **WATER**

#### [Climate Change Prompts New Concerns About Delta Tunnels, Sacramento Water Supply \(Sacramento Bee\)](#)

The Sacramento City Council this week stepped up its critique of a plan to build two giant water diversion tunnels in the Delta, warning that it may harm the city's ability to access drinking water in the decades ahead.

#### [Feds to Upgrade Fish Protections at Delta Water Pumps \(Sacramento Bee\)](#)

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has awarded a \$4.3 million contract to install new fish protection devices at its water diversion pumps in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

The pumps near Tracy divert water to serve farms and cities in the San Joaquin Valley. The pumps do not have modern fish screens.

## **REVENUE & TAXATION / FINANCE**

#### [Officials Take Sales Tax to the People \(Stockton Record\)](#)

With fewer than two months to go before the Nov. 5 election, city officials today kicked off a push to rally support for a 3/4-cent sales tax increase.

Councilwoman Kathy Miller will lead a group knocking on doors in Stockton neighborhoods seeking support, and on Friday she, City Manager Bob Deis and Councilman Michael Tubbs met with The Record's editorial board to make their case.

#### [City Audit Outlook Not Good: Officials Expect Independent Review will Raise Significant Concerns \(Chico Enterprise-Record\)](#)

Chico city officials are predicting results of a third-party internal audit released later this year will give light to several areas of concern.

Initial work by Sacramento firm Vavrinek, Trine, Day & Co. has produced more scrutiny than audits of the past, said Mayor Scott Gruendl. Many details of what auditors are uncovering cannot be revealed yet, but

all will be made public when they finish the work and report to the City Council, most likely in November.

## **HEALTH**

### [Value of Blood Tests Near Exide Recycling Plant Questioned \(\*Los Angeles Times\*\)](#)

Los Angeles County's plan to offer blood tests for lead poisoning to hundreds of thousands of people in southeast Los Angeles was greeted as a political victory in working-class communities that have long worried about the health effects of emissions from a Vernon battery recycler.

## **CITY ADMINISTRATION**

### [Poway's New Economic Development Manager on the Job \(\*Pomerado news\*\)](#)

Poway's new economic development manager brings over 20 years of related government experience to a job that he started this week.

For W. Jay Virata, the position also represents an opportunity to return to San Diego County, where he was raised and still has family and friends.

## **CITY ORDINANCES**

### [Clearlake City Council Passes First Reading of Medical Marijuana Cultivation Ordinance \(\*Lake County News\*\)](#)

The Clearlake City Council moved forward Thursday with an ordinance concerning medical marijuana cultivation that included changes previously directed by the council.

Additional verbiage changes and corrections were made prior to the first reading of the ordinance, which was adopted on a 4-1 vote with Councilmember Jeri Spittler voting in dissent.

## **IN OTHER CITY NEWS**

### [Atascadero Continues Efforts to Bring Visitors to the City \(\*The Tribune\*\)](#)

The city of Atascadero is kicking off the second phase of a plan designed to draw visitors to the city.

The first phase has already produced a new tourism website and social media outreach. The efforts are part of a 20-month, \$240,000 contract with TJA Advertising and Mental Marketing the city agreed to in November.

The overall campaign aims to increase overnight stays in the city; build collaboration among retailers, eateries, wineries and event organizers to increase transient occupancy tax returns to the city; and generate awareness of the city's key assets.