

Laguna Beach to get updates on COVID-19 at special meeting

The Laguna Beach City Council announced Thursday it would be holding a special meeting Tuesday at the request of Councilwoman Toni Iseman, who asked for an additional meeting between the council's last one and the next meeting scheduled for May 12 due to ongoing changes as a result of the

coronavirus pandemic. The meeting will include a continuation of discussion on the possible sewer user charge increases to finance a wastewater system capital improvement program. The proposal was tabled to provide more time for city staff to verify figures included in the prepared staff report.

Also for Tuesday, the City Council will be receiving an update on expected activity in the city this weekend as a result of warmer weather and provide direction to staff if changes should be made to current citywide closures of beaches, their adjacent parks and trailheads.

— Lilly Nguyen

CENSUS

Continued from page A1

guages. These include videos in Vietnamese from county Supervisor Andrew Do; in Mandarin by Tim Cheng, co-chair of the Asian American Senior Citizens Service Center; in Cantonese from Angela Wang, former president of the Asian American Senior Citizens Service Center and in Tagalog from Joseph L. Joseph, president of the Filipino American Chamber of Commerce, among other videos from local officials.

The county is also planning to put census notification stickers on school lunchboxes that several school districts are providing to children of low-income families.

Viramontes said that, although the health crisis is "10 times" more important than the census, it is important to get an accurate count so that populations can be adequately represented in politics and the community. Although, he believes the virus has hindered the ability to get an accurate count.

"We are expecting to be less successful had COVID not happened," Viramontes said.

Local governments do have more time to get their communities to respond as the U.S. Census Bureau recently announced that it's currently working to extend the deadline until October to fill out the census.

Cities are also looking to

get their communities to take part.

Huntington Beach spokesman Eric McCoy said the city's census outreach has primarily been online. City personnel are encouraging people to respond to the census on Facebook and the city's website. Several census-related videos are circulating on the city's television channel, HDTV Channel 3.

McCoy said nearly 60% of the city has responded. Staff is currently researching ways to reach out to the hard-to-count areas in the city, including contacting apartment complex managers, schools and parent-teacher associations.

"While we are focused on the health and safety of our residents during this pandemic, we continue to conduct proactive outreach to our [Huntington Beach] community related to the census," McCoy said.

Albert Ruiz, who's guiding the census strategy for Costa Mesa, said the city has increased its online marketing presence through Facebook, Nextdoor, Twitter and Instagram.

The city is also engaging households with mailing campaigns, including a letter penned by Mayor Katrina Foley requesting the community to fill out the census and notify others to do so as well.

The city also canceled an order for a mobile outreach kiosk with onsite support.

Costa Mesa has had a response rate of about 57% so

far, with all but 3% of them being online responses. Ruiz said the city is poised to exceed its 2010 response rate of 68%, and the city expects to see a higher response rate from hard-to-count communities due to targeted outreach efforts.

Ruiz said the city is working with trusted community members to connect with hard-to-count populations, including Save Our Youth, a longstanding nonprofit that serves low-income youth. The city is also working with landlords since the eviction moratorium was approved.

With the pivot to digital messaging, there is some concern that certain communities may be left out.

To target seniors who may not be technologically fluent enough to see the online messaging, Costa Mesa has also partnered with residential and care facilities. Many low-income workers are forced to continue working, so the city is partnering with digital marquis to post census information for people still commuting.

"There is a renewed sense of optimism, with everyone being so connected right now during these unprecedented times, there is a strong sense of community and taking care of one another," Ruiz said. "We are looking at making the census an extension of that because, at the end of the day, everybody counts."

benjamin.brazil@latimes.com
Twitter: @benbrazilpilot

SURFERS

Continued from page A3

phy is one inhibitory factor. Blocking 9.5 miles of oceanfront would require an expensive law-enforcement action. It would be greeted with displeasure by many residents and perhaps viewed negatively by the Visit Huntington Beach tourism bureau and its Surf City USA marketing campaign.

In the end, or today at least, responsibility falls on the individual. Going surfing may not expose you to the virus, but it exposes the community to elevated

risk.

"By going out and surfing, you're putting the lifeguard at risk," San Diego lifeguard James Gartland told *Surfline.com* this month. "And then if you end up in the hospital, you're taking a bed away from someone who might need it more than you."

To echo Warshaw paddling out now is the act of "a selfish prick of a surfer." Plunging mindlessly and compulsively toward other group activities is similarly irresponsible and is behavior that needs to be contained by government authorities.

It's up to us and responsible officials to step up and protect our communities and our most vulnerable residents.

Surfers have long endured negative stigma, a reputation they have mostly outgrown through positive contributions. Today most people around the world have friendly impressions of surfing. Let's act now to protect those gains and good vibrations.

ERIK SKINDRUD grew up surfing in Huntington Beach. He is publications director at the Hospital Assn. of Southern California in Los Angeles.

CROWDER

Continued from page A1

make a position change.

"I didn't know if I wanted to keep playing ball," Crowder said of the mental challenge. "I didn't know if I wanted to transfer or what. It was a lot of different, mixed emotions. My whole career was just crazy. It's been a crazy process, but it was a blessing, at the end of the day."

Crowder may have defied the odds already by successfully making a position change that put him on the radar of the NFL.

"I feel like I'm home now," Crowder said of playing linebacker. "I feel like I found my spot, and it's something that I've still

got to get used to, but it's something that can only get better as things keep going."

Crowder had shown that he had versatility early on. He played three sports growing up. He was a guard in basketball, which he played through high school. He also pitched and manned center field while playing baseball in his youth.

The three-day draft ended as it began, with another SEC player coming off the board. LSU quarterback Joe Burrow went No. 1 overall to the Cincinnati Bengals.

"I feel like the SEC is the best conference," Crowder added. "It's great competition. Everybody comes to work each week, and

everybody wants to win their division. [The] SEC is the best."

The Irrelevant Week folks make an effort to arrange a meeting for Mr. Irrelevant with his favorite celebrity. Put on the spot, Crowder thought of an athletic idol based in Southern California he would enjoy meeting.

"I would like to [hear] some wisdom words from LeBron James," Crowder said. "I feel like he's one of the greatest athletes in the world."

The timing of the annual Irrelevant Week festivities is yet to be determined due to the coronavirus pandemic.

andrewturner@latimes.com
Twitter: @ProfessorTurner

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS

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In This Together

Navigating through COVID-19

We know this situation is impacting everyone. We are making daily changes out of an abundance of caution to protect our residents, team members, and the community at large.



Let's stand together and stay connected.

(714) 656-2698
merrillgardens.com

17200 Goldenwest Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92647



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