

# South Bay Cities

Featuring the Weekly Newspapers of Hawthorne, Lawndale, Torrance and Inglewood

Hawthorne Press Tribune  
The Weekly Newspaper of Hawthorne

Lawndale Tribune  
AND LAWDALE NEWS The Weekly Newspaper of Lawndale

Torrance Tribune  
The Weekly Newspaper of Torrance

Inglewood News  
The Weekly Newspaper of Inglewood

Herald Publications - El Segundo, Hawthorne, Lawndale, Torrance & Inglewood Community Newspapers Since 1911 - (310) 322-1830 - Vol. 7, No. 11 - March 13, 2025

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## Happy Women’s History Month



Rain and wind couldn't stop the El Camino College's annual Women's Walk. ECC is celebrating Women's History Month with a lineup of guest speakers all leading up to our annual Distinguished Women's Awards and Reception. To view the full event lineup for Women's History Month, please visit [www.elcamino.edu/whm](http://www.elcamino.edu/whm). Photo courtesy El Camino College Facebook page.

## Rain Lifts and the City Council Meets

By Ron Sokol

Tuesday March 11 was full of rain and chill. Shortly before 6 pm, however, the difficult weather lifted to show a bunch of sunshine glistening on the moist foliage. With that good spirit in mind, the City Council meeting began. Invocation was presented by Pastor Greg Guich of Hawthorne's Centinela Bible Church, thanking God and praying all good things for the City.

Mayor Vargas spoke briefly (one more time) about the vital importance of decorum among the city council, the public and all officials. It is particularly good to hear the significance placed by our Mayor and Council about treating each other and the community with genuine respect and consideration.

Police Sergeant Jarome Michalczak then came forward and described an outreach to those with special needs throughout Hawthorne. Nationally some 15% have special needs. The outreach will come in the form of a sticker that can be prominently placed at residences, if not businesses, as well, so there can and will be more empathetic and meaningful interaction with those who, in any given instance, are vulnerable. One positive aspect of the sticker is to enhance protection.

Next, Jan Vogel was asked to come forward. Jan has headed the South Bay Workforce Investment Board for decades. At this point it is hard to know which superlative to afford him and his group. Mr. Vogel shared a number of the Board's programs that, thankfully, are going well. One has been the placement of special needs individuals who work as "ambassadors" at Los Angeles International Airport. He said: "The goal is

to provide a friendly face and smile to help those having issues there..." Another goal now is to get this program going even more so with the advent of the Olympics here in 2028. Jan also emphasized the apprentice programs the Board Force is behind, with over seven thousand participating in just the last few years. These programs help individuals learn good work, a trade, and in turn, assist employers with developing personnel who become that much better workers. Of interest as well is a very recent program the Board has furthered with those individuals separating from imprisonment who helped during the tragic local fires. Some have since found good work and pay. Finally, Jan talked about helping the unhoused. To date, some 15 have

come through the Board's program, at least 8 of whom have found a level of housing, and nine of whom have been working.

Erika Lampkin, Director of Human Resources for the City, expressed appreciation and praise for Pablo, the "Jailer" for the City of Hawthorne since 1999. He has not just trained many, but has proven time and again to be very dependable. It is no easy task, as Mayor Vargas pointed out, because the jail here at times will house persons from other locations where there is no such facility. Kudos to Pablo, who receives the Good Neighbor Award.

Continuing with the positivity at hand, Council member Monteiro addressed his recent

**See City Council, page 5**



Good Neighbor Award. Image provided by Ron Sokol.

## Weekend Forecast

**Friday**  
Rain  
51°/45°



**Saturday**  
Mostly  
Sunny  
59°/47°



**Sunday**  
Cloudy  
65°/51°



# Torrance Tribune

The Weekly Newspaper of Torrance

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## Clarissa Adame Receives the Daughter's of the American Revolution (DAR) National Award



The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in 1890 to promote Historic Preservation, Education, and Patriotism across the United States. Since the Society's founding, more than one million women have found purpose and passion in DAR membership. Congratulations Clarissa. Photo courtesy North High School Facebook page.

### City Council

from front page

authorized negotiation with City Manager Vontray Norris. The key details of Mr. Norris' revised, extended employment agreement were disclosed. There was much applause in the Chamber when it became clear that the deal was done: Mr. Norris would continue as Hawthorne's City Manager until 2030. He is well respected, so effective, and Hawthorne is better because of him. Mayor Vargas talked about the vital importance of continuity and that one of Mr. Norris' attributes is his ability to courteously say "No." This quality was described as akin to a parent showing affection for their child, but standing firm so that the child does not make unwise choices. By the way, Vontray Norris is a Hawthorne native.

Felize Lopez, Hawthorne's Director of Finance, presented considerable detail about the City's budget, revenues, increases, decreases,

and delinquencies, much of which shows the positive status in which the city thankfully finds itself. There is a concern, however, with three significant projects that are going forward (such as the redevelopment of City Hall). This relates to the impact on the overall economy with the change in administrations in Washington, D.C. If issues arise, one option would be to scale back smaller projects and seek to lock in contracts that carry a 12 to 18-month fix on costs. There is one particular number in all of what Ms. Lopez discussed that invariably creates a sense of hopefulness: In 2014, Hawthorne had \$14,076,078 cash on hand; as of December 31, 2024, that sum was \$89,693,489. Quite a big increase, and that figure was even larger by the end of January this year.

Council member Johnson brought up a discussion item with respect to difficulties

and burdens caused by trash and trash bins left on public rights of way. City Attorney Robert Kim addressed some of the ways this is being dealt with, and what might make sense in the way of enhancing the current ordinance. City Manager Von Morris will work with Republic Services and report back to the Council soon.

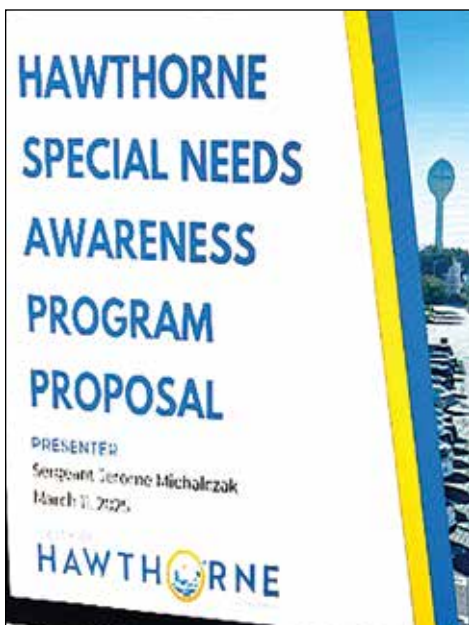
Council member Manning is asking the city to partner with the Los Angeles Sparks (women's basketball team) for a basketball clinic on July 13 and 14 at the Hawthorne Memorial Center. The Council's approval involved a fee waiver, but just for the first year, and also to add the Sparks to the community event list for the youth of Hawthorne.

Council member Manning next asked to give a directive to the City Manager to increase the budget for Hawthorne's Façade Program.

This relates to "the look" (the appearance) of areas in the city. Presently those funds are to end by June 30 this year. Council member Monteiro indicated, however, that several persons have expressed disinterest in the Façade Program and that it has not been successful. Mr. Norris, the City Manager, will evaluate if there are sources of funds.

Finally, Mayor Vargas brought the City's 311 App to the fore. He is pushing to promote the app wholly. The mayor's goal is to make sure the 311 App is prominently displayed because it provides excellent ways for the city to communicate with the public and with the public.

In sum: A busy and productive meeting. While I think the rains will return soon, this evening at this City Council meeting, the sky was clear. •



Special Needs Awareness.



Jan Vogel, South Bay Workforce Investment Board. Images provided by Ron Sokol.



City Manager Vontray Norris.