



NEWS



News Headlines 5/15/2018

- FOUR INJURED IN TWENTYNINE PALMS HEAD-ON CRASH
- 2 killed in crash on Johnson Road in Phelan
- Victorville officials: Don't be scared by audit, but pensions another story
- Hesperia City Council meeting: What to watch for

FOUR INJURED IN TWENTYNINE PALMS HEAD-ON CRASH

Staff Writer, z1077news

Posted: May 15, 2018

Four people were injured in a head-on collision in Twentynine Palms Friday night. **County Fire** Battalion Chief Scott Tuttle said the cars crashed on Lear Avenue, just north of Amboy Road, about 5:15 p.m. The California Highway Patrol said a gray Toyota Corolla driven by Dynasty Salcido of Twentynine Palms was driving southbound on Lear Avenue and attempted to pass a slower vehicle in front of her. Salcido crashed head-on into a gold Ford Taurus driven northbound on Lear Avenue by Kurt Schauppner of Twentynine Palms. The impact of the crash caused one of the cars to roll over into the desert. A child was flown to Loma Linda Medical Center. Two adults were taken to Desert Hospital in Palm Springs and one man was taken to Hi-Desert Medical Center. The California Highway Patrol is investigating.

<http://z1077fm.com/local-news/todays-full-newscast/>

2 killed in crash on Johnson Road in Phelan

Staff Writer, VVNG

Posted: May 14, 2018



(Photo Alonso Guillermo)

PHELAN, Calif. (VVNG.com) — Officers with the California Highway Patrol are currently on scene of a double-fatal traffic collision.

According to the CHP indent logs, a crash involving a vehicle and a buggy (off-road vehicle) was reported at 12:49 pm, near the intersection of Johnson Road and Smoke Tree Road. The logs reported the buggy was on fire after the crash.

Firefighters with **San Bernardino County Fire** responded to the scene and pronounced two people dead on arrival, scanner traffic reported.

A third person was transported by ground ambulance to a local hospital with unknown injuries.

Johnson Road, north of Smoke Tree is closed in both directions as officials investigate the crash.

The cause of the crash is currently under investigation by the Victorville CHP office. Anyone with information is asked to call (760)241-1186.

Victorville officials: Don't be scared by audit, but pensions another story

Shea Johnson, Daily Press

Posted: May 14, 2018 4:53 p.m.

Kennedy said the city would be paying \$5 million more annually for pension liability in just five years and without a corresponding increase in tax revenues, tough decisions are likely on the horizon — potentially the trimming of services.

VICTORVILLE — For years, Councilman Jim Kennedy says auditors have indicated that threats facing the city raise questions about its ability to continue to exist.

But it's their job.

"It's not predicting the future," Kennedy recently tempered, "but it is disclosing future uncertainties that we need to be concerned about."

In a March review, auditing firm Davis Farr LLP pointed to rising pension and retiree medical benefit liabilities, ongoing litigation costs and routine bond defaults at the Southern California Logistics Airport to arrive at its "going concern opinion."

"They said concern, but I don't see a problem," Mayor Gloria Garcia said during a May 1 Council meeting.

The opinion meant, in the auditor's words, that the city and SCLA may have difficulties paying bills as they become due. But it also apparently caused panic among several people, who reportedly reached out to Mayor Pro Tem Jim Cox to seek reassurance that obligations would be met and contracts would not be cancelled.

Cox said during the May 1 meeting that he had requested the audit be brought back to address those issues. Or put simply, to "tell it exactly like it is and not what it appears or may or looks like."

"Property taxes are up, sales taxes are up," he continued in an effort to underscore the city's financial health, "and I don't know of a single bill we have in the General Fund or the general budget that we haven't paid."

For Kennedy, who has spent nearly five decades as a certified public accountant, any anxiety was the result of the misunderstanding of basic accounting standards, although he was clear that officials also were not trying to minimize the essence of the report.

The underlying issues raised by the auditor, he added, were important: "But you gotta understand which ones are serious."

The \$6.6 million in current bond defaults at the airport, for example, do not affect airport operations and can only be paid by tax increment, not on the city dime, he explained.

City officials expect the default situation, attributed to the dissolution of redevelopment funds in 2012, will be cured in "after two or three more years," according to a staff report.

Losses reported at the airport caused by depreciation, Kennedy said, also won't cause its authority to fail.

But the major issue, which city officials underscored was facing municipalities and agencies across California, was rising pension liabilities. Victorville’s current net liability is nearing \$40 million, and 75.46 percent funded.

“The pension issue is a statewide problem affecting not only cities that are members of the CalPERS system but also those county agencies that manage their own pension programs,” the staff report noted.

Kennedy said the city would be paying \$5 million more annually for pension liability in just five years and without a corresponding increase in tax revenues, tough decisions are likely on the horizon — potentially the trimming of services.

“We could cut the parks, we could close all the parks, and we would not have enough to fund that liability,” Kennedy said. “We could stop doing street sweeping entirely — still wouldn’t have enough to fund that liability.

“There are services that we’re going to have to deal with in the future in order to cover that liability,” he continued, “and this program is just going to get worse. It’s going to get bigger and bigger.”

City officials see the transition to a City Fire Department, where pension obligations have been described as significantly lower than **San Bernardino County Fire**, as one assisting maneuver.

New employees in the city have been hired with lower benefits and the enhanced performance of the CalPERS investment account would also help, although Kennedy said he ultimately believed the retirement system would some day have too many benefactors and not enough paying into it — a situation he likened to Social Security.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20180514/victorville-officials-dont-be-scared-by-audit-but-pensions-another-story>

Hesperia City Council meeting: What to watch for

Rene Ray De La Cruz, Daily Press

Posted: May 14, 2018, 11:02 a.m.

HESPERIA — The Council will meet Tuesday to discuss a short list of agenda items including:

- The approval and adoption of a California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Grant Application to the California Department of Parks and Recreation for a total of \$54,512 to support law enforcement operations in Hesperia. Managed by the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department, the OHV team would conduct regular patrols in problem areas, conduct safety programs at schools and local community events, and provide education to citizens through public outlets and the media.
- The adoption of the recent Development Impact Fee Study, a comprehensive evaluation of the city’s infrastructure needs to accommodate new development including fire suppression facilities, vehicles, equipment, police facilities, animal control facilities, city hall facilities, records storage facilities, drainage facilities and transportation facilities
- The receiving and filing of a report that provides information about the current status of the city’s proposed operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year that begins July 1.

- The approval of an agreement for the sale of real property at the southwest corner of Mauna Loa Street and G Avenue. Western International Gas is listed as the buyer of the property that is listed as \$383,328 less commission and closing costs, which will be paid out of sale proceeds at the close of escrow.
- The approval of a workout agreement between the city and residential builder Ozel Developing Inc. for street improvements near the southwest corner of Muscatel Street and Mesa Avenue.

The Council meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Hesperia City Hall located at 9700 Seventh Ave. For more information, call 760-947-1000 or visit www.cityofhesperia.us.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20180514/hesperia-city-council-meeting-what-to-watch-for>