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Council to spend \$900K for new restrooms on Scenic Road

By MARY SCHLEY

BUILDING PERMANENT bathrooms on the bluffs at the south end of Carmel Beach will cost nearly twice what city officials estimated a year ago, according to a contract approved by the city council April 1. The lowest of just two bidders on the project, Tomblason, Inc., will be paid \$619,654, plus another \$92,948 to cover contingencies, to build the bathrooms, which have been in the works for more than a decade.

Designed by architect Rob Carver, the permanent building to replace the porta-potties at Scenic and Santa Lucia was finally approved by the planning commission in November 2012 after multiple hearings and design changes. In last year's budget, the total cost of the project — which will include two flush toilets, a wash basin, janitorial closet, landscaping and a green roof, a rock wall, a drinking fountain and "an interpretive panel on the Coastal Trail" — was estimated at \$379,182, which would be offset by a taxpayer-funded grant from the California Coastal Conservancy.

At the April 1 meeting, the council also voted to accept \$150,000 from the conservancy to put toward the work.

Before the votes on the grant and the construction contract, former Mayor Sue McCloud asked for those items to be pulled off the consent calendar, which can be approved without discussion, so she could comment on them. According to administrative services director Sharon Friedrichsen's report,

See **EXPENSIVE** page 27A

Sand City 'ecoresort' OK'd by coastal commission

■ Developer hopes to start building soon

By KELLY NIX

THAT RAREST of events in California since the passage of the Coastal Act in 1976 — the construction of a new oceanfront hotel — is about to occur. The California Coastal Commission complied with a court order and granted a permit for the Sand City "Ecoresort" Friday.



RENDERING/COURTESY ED GHANDOUR

A new hotel on the site of a former sand mine will be added to the shore of Monterey Bay, after the coastal commission approved a permit for it last week. Highway 1 is at upper left.

The owner of the project, Ed Ghandour, who has been working on permits for his hotel for more than 20 years, said he is hopeful construction crews can break ground soon.

Meeting in Santa Barbara April 11, coastal commissioners voted 10-2 to issue a coastal development permit for the project. The resort includes 184 hotel rooms, 184 condominium units, restaurants and other amenities.

Zoning of the parcel for "visitor serving uses" was approved by the coastal commission in 1986 and later OK'd again as part of a settlement with Sand City that included designating most of the city's beach as open space. Despite that agreement, after Sand City approved the Ghandour project in 1998, the famously strict coastal commission fought tooth and nail not to give it a permit — a battle that included numerous lawsuits and lasted two decades.

"We are elated at winning project approval," said Sand City Mayor Dave Pendergrass. "This was a 21-year war with the coastal commission and all its political maneuvers." Pendergrass said Ghandour had the commission "pinned against the wall" because he won in court almost every time.

After the long battle, Ghandour said he's hopeful he can start building a lot more quickly than it took to get permits.

"We would like construction to begin in less than a year," Ghandour said from

See **HOTEL** page 23A

It really pays to be a meter maid in Monterey

By KELLY NIX

CONSIDER THE following salaries: Parking attendant — \$100,000, street sweeper — \$100,000, meter maid — \$90,000.

Those are just a few very generous pay rates the City of Monterey gives its workers.

Not surprisingly, the city's police officers, firefighters and city hall officials have the city's biggest salaries, with seven of the 10 highest paid Monterey workers in 2012 being Monterey Fire employees, according to the State Controller's Office.

What's more eye opening, though, is the amount other

Monterey workers made.

For instance, who knew that those who man the kiosks at the city's parking facilities were paid so well? Six of Monterey's parking attendants earned total compensation of more than \$80,000 in 2012, with three making \$87,142, \$93,891 and \$100,991. A senior parking controls technician earned a total of \$111,017 while an administrative assistant in the parking division received \$73,451.

Monterey's "parking superintendent" received a total of \$173,977, which included salary of \$135,150 and \$38,827 in health and retirement benefits, the city's traffic engineer

See **GENEROUS** page 24A

Brita Sigourney already planning for 2018 games

By CHRIS COUNTS

TWO MONTHS after finishing sixth in the Ladies Ski Halfpipe finals at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, Santa Catalina grad Brita Sigourney told The Pine Cone she's setting her sights on competing in the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

While the event is four years away, Sigourney is already preparing for it. To earn a medal, she realizes she will need to make a few adjustments in her routine and her approach to skiing.

First off, she will have to avoid getting hurt. She's suffered an assortment of injuries in recent years, including broken bones and torn ligaments. While Sigourney stayed healthy during the Olympics, she lost a lot of training time leading up to the games.

"I've gotten better at staying strong and going to the gym," Sigourney explained. "I've become more aware that I need to stop skiing when I get tired and let it go for the day."

So far, she's encouraged by the results of her improved workout routine.

"I feel great," she declared. "I've never been this healthy at this time of year [since she started competing]. I'm very grateful."

After her performance in Sochi, Sigourney realized she wasn't accustomed to competing in both the qualifying and finals rounds on the same day. As a result, her legs were tired in the finals.

"If I could go back and do it again, I would have paced myself better," explained Sigourney, whose boyfriend, Joss Christensen, took home the gold medal in the Men's

See **SKIER** page 31A



Brita Sigourney

ANOTHER DIVER DIES AT 'MORTUARY BEACH'

By MARY SCHLEY

WITH 20 professional emergency responders training for ocean rescues in the water off Point Lobos last Wednesday morning, a 26-year-old woman who got in trouble while diving at Monastery Beach had the best possible chance to survive. But Melissa Quaresma of Modesto was pronounced dead at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula after extensive efforts to revive her failed.

Emergency workers from California State Parks, Cal Fire and the U.S. Coast Guard had launched inflatable rescue

boats from the Whalers Cove launch ramp in Point Lobos and were in the water practicing simulated swimmer recovery and patient transfer when they noticed something was wrong.

"We were in the midst of boat rescue training, and all three agencies were out on vessels," said state parks lifeguard Erik Landry, when the lifeguards saw two divers about 10 yards off shore at the south end of Monastery Beach and thought they might need help.

"First, it just appeared to be one diver, but we went over,

See **DROWNED** page 26A



Emergency personnel launched an inflatable boat in Whalers Cove for a training exercise Wednesday, shortly before lifeguards noticed divers Melissa Quaresma of Modesto (right), and her father in trouble in the surf. She later died.

