



Government Affairs

Government Affairs Committee Activities Highlights/Summary Report for 2013

The Government Affairs Committee adopted, and the Board of Directors ratified, the following six goals for 2013. The GAC achievements for each goal are shown in *italics*:

1) Work for accomplishment of the Regional Water Project and for reasonable water policies

Government Affairs and MCHA will: A) aid in every way possible the efforts to realize a regional water supply project that reliably will deliver enough water to the Peninsula to i) offset over-pumping of the Carmel River and the Watermaster-mandated pumping reductions in the Seaside Basin and ii) provide for the general plan needs of Peninsula cities, the Monterey Peninsula Airport District and Peninsula unincorporated areas; B) work for responsible water use policies and rate structures fair to businesses and residents and C) endorse the efforts of and support financially the Coalition of Peninsula Businesses.

The GAC and MCHA, in concert with the Coalition of Peninsula Businesses, have:

- *Continued to work with CalAm, the MPWMD and the MPRWA to bring a completed water project to the Peninsula. This includes regular participation at MPWMD and MPRWA meetings and membership on the MPRWA's TAC. The TAC work is ongoing and is currently working with consultants to vet and compare various water project proposals.*
- *Been granted party status to the Cal Am CPUC application and continues to work actively reviewing and commenting on the governance proposals and CEQA scoping for the Cal Am application.*
- *Actively participated in the CPUC's negotiation and settlement conferences for the current Cal Am application.*
- *Successfully argued for an adequately sized desal plant that will meet the current and future needs of the Peninsula including lots of record and an additional 500 AFY for economic recovery.*
- *Worked with Cal Am and the MPWMD to develop and implement a three category rate structure based on use of best management practices and actual water use for non-residential users to replace the current tiered system.*
- *Worked with the MPWMD to refine and implement water conservation/retrofit ordinances resulting in a simpler ordinance with less stringent compliance dates to assure reasonable implementation of the new standards.*
- *Continued to work actively with the Coalition on all water issues despite limited resources.*

2) Development of critical transportation infrastructure, successful implementation of Regional Taxi Authority

Government Affairs will continue active collaboration with community partners, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, Monterey-Salinas Transit and the Monterey Peninsula Airport District to achieve necessary

local and regional transportation projects and priorities. MCHA's highest transportation priority is to achieve the widening of Highway 156, the primary drive access to the Peninsula. Government Affairs will continue to help achieve successful implementation of the Regional Taxi Authority established in 2010. Government Affairs will support improvements and modifications to the Monterey Peninsula Airport, including widening and lengthening runways, to increase its use and destinations.

The GAC and MCHA have continued to actively support and lobby for the widening of 156. We have been active participants in discussions on the toll road concept both publicly and in private meetings with key decision makers.

The GAC and MCHA have continued to monitor the work of the Regional Taxi Authority. At this time the RTA is fully operational and is successfully operating. Improvements have been noted in service, cleanliness and safety.

3) Active Task Force engagement on issues of major concern

MCHA and Government Affairs will remain committed to Task Forces established in 2010 to pursue A) success of Downtown Monterey revitalization and renovation of the Conference Center; B) widening of Highway 156; and C) delivered water rates fairness.

The GAC and MCHA continue to work with the City of Monterey on plans for the renovation of the conference center and to develop a funding mechanism to pay for the improvements at no cost to the tax payer. As a result the City Council approved the "preferred alternative" for renovation and is proceeding with creation of a conference center finance district.

The GAC and MCHA worked extensively with the City of Monterey to address homeless issues in the city. MCHA and the GAC endorsed the City's current policies of finding and implementing regional solutions to the issues while assuring the public's safety.

The GAC and MCHA strongly supported the approval of the Wharf Marketplace and the Downtown Master Plan.

4) Political Action

MCHA and Government Affairs will continue active collaboration with, and participation in, the Monterey County Business Political Action Committee and continue to work for stronger and better relations with government officials. The efforts of the MCBPAC to affect beneficial business-friendly changes in local elections have been successful, but more participation and increased financial support is necessary to achieve even more improvement in the Monterey County business climate. MCBPAC identifies and promotes qualified candidates for election to local offices and raises the funds necessary for successful campaigns. Increased MCHA member participation in, and financial support for, the MCBPAC will ensure the successes continue and increase.

MCHA and Government Affairs will participate in and collaborate with the Monterey Peninsula Issues PAC to identify those issues that will potentially affect the Peninsula. Participation will include work on issues, advocating positions, influencing officials as well as providing financial support for the PAC.

2013 was not a heavy year for elections. Nonetheless the GAC and MCHA interviewed and endorsed candidates for the MPWMD Board. One of candidates, Bill Thayer, was elected. The other, Dean Provence, was unsuccessful in his bid losing a close race to the incumbent.

5) Work for success of tourism marketing and promotion funding

MCHA and Government Affairs works with the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau to continue the success of the countywide Tourism Improvement District and work to maintain secure sustainable, increased funding for tourism marketing and promotion. Government Affairs and MCHA will continue collaboration with other community partners to assure the ongoing success and improvement of that effort and continue working for increased California funding for tourism marketing and promotion.

This work has continued. The MCCVB has undergone numerous changes, including a new President/CEO, and is “a work in progress.” The GAC and MCHA will continue to be active participants in the leadership of the MCCVB.

6) Special event coordination and promotion, economic development

Government Affairs will continue MCHA involvement, participation in, and monitoring of the county special events policies to assure special event planning and coordination remains primarily voluntary and in the private sector. Government Affairs will also coordinate industry promotion for, and support of, additional added-value events and industry-enhancement opportunities such as development of “wine corridors.” Government Affairs and MCHA will actively promote economic development programs and policies consistent with its adopted Economic Development Policy.

This work is ongoing. The GAC and MCHA have followed the County’s work to develop a “special events ordinance.” The early draft of the ordinance indicated significant regulations and constraints on events would be forthcoming. GAC representatives successfully argued for changes and lobbied elected officials to not proceed with the ordinance as drafted.

The progress of the wine corridor continues to be monitored. It is currently stalled as a result of lawsuits filed in regard to the County general Plan.