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PACIFIC GROVE

Attorney hired to replace Laredo

By Tess Kenny
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PACIFIC GROVE » After last month's announcement that Pacific Grove City Attorney David Laredo was set to leave office at the end of June, Pacific Grove City Council took swift action at a special meeting Wednesday night to usher in his replacement. In a 5-0 decision, with two members absent, the council voted to retain Brian Pierik of Camarillo-based Burke, Williams & Sorensen LLP as the city's new attorney, effective Friday.

Pierik is the current attorney for the city of Carmel, a position that lent itself to expanding his work on the Monterey Peninsula.

"(Working) with the city of Carmel provided me the local knowledge regarding the Monterey Peninsula cities and issues (they) have in common. ...When I did research regarding the city of Pacific Grove, I was impressed with the city and saw it as an opportunity where I would love



Pierik

to work as their city attorney," said Pierik.

Pierik has served as Carmel's attorney since 2019. The familiarity was a selling point for Pacific Grove.

"By virtue of representing the city of Carmel, Brian is familiar with the Monterey Peninsula," said Pacific Grove Mayor Bill Peake. "We share similar issues from time to time with other Monterey Peninsula cities."

Splitting his time elsewhere, Pierik is also currently representing the California cities of Camarillo and Atascadero. Through

his career, he has served as special counsel to over 40 public agencies. Pierik has been with Burke, Williams & Sorensen since 1974 and a partner since 1982.

Pacific Grove's choice in Pierik comes as Laredo leaves the position after more than 17 years as the city's legal counsel. Laredo was appointed as Pacific Grove city attorney in March 2005. During his tenure, Laredo advised the City Council — as well as municipal committees, boards and commissions — while enjoying a varied range of administrative, trial and appellate advocacy assign-

ments. Still, his term was not without challenge.

In the fall of 2020 — just after Pacific Grove voters passed a half-cent sales tax increase — an error on Laredo's part prevented the city from seeing the shift through. It took a year and a half of push-back from the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, second approval from the City Council and ultimately a special election to get the measure passed — again.

Laredo announced his plans to leave the city on June 7.

ATTORNEY » PAGE 2

MARINA HIGH SCHOOL

Planning for a new field, stadium begins



COURTESY MPUSD

The Marina High football team during a recent practice. The Mariners will open the season with a scrimmage against Pacific Grove High and a game at San Jose High.

By Molly Gibbs
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The Monterey Peninsula Unified School District took the first step forward in creating a home field for Marina High School sports at Tuesday's board meeting.

The board approved an agreement with Weston Miles Architects for design services for the creation of a multi-use field and stadium project, at a cost not to exceed \$736,650 of the Measure I school bond expense.

"Marina is one of the few high schools in all of Monterey County that doesn't have

a field to play home football games or home soccer games," the district's superintendent, PK Diffenbaugh, explained. "So the community has really been looking forward to that because I think, in some ways, it's a culmination of a lot of the hard work that the community has put in to really turn the school into a full, comprehensive high school."

After years of Marina High indoor sports teams using Los Arboles Middle School, Seaside High and the Water City roller rink, with practices outside on the blacktop not being out of the question, the school unveiled its new gym in No-

vember 2019.

Currently, Marina High's outdoor sports teams play at various locations around the Peninsula. The football team plays at Monterey Peninsula College, while the softball team plays at Los Arboles Middle and the school's soccer teams alternate between Seaside High and Marina's fields.

The money for the project comes from a \$213 million facilities bond passed by voters in 2018. Measure I provides funds for repairing and updating school facilities, including athletic facilities, stadiums and fields.

In addition to Marina High's

gym, recently completed projects include Seaside High's renovated stadium and track, which was completed in 2020.

Some of the Measure I funds are also set to be used to complete the controversial renovation of Monterey High School's Dan Albert Stadium.

The estimated \$12 million project — which includes a lower softball and multi-use field, a multi-purpose weight room, added visitor bleachers, a new press box, improved accessible seating and safety features and permanent lighting — has an area of contention between the district and res-

STADIUM » PAGE 2

CALIFORNIA

Concealed gun permit applicants exposed

By Jason Green
Bay Area News Group

SACRAMENTO » The personal information of California residents who received or were denied concealed carry weapons permits between 2011 and 2021 was mistakenly exposed this week, according to the California Attorney General's Office.

The data exposure, which could potentially involve hundreds of thousands of gun owners, occurred during an update to the state Department of Justice's 2022 Firearms Dashboard Portal, the office said in a statement Wednesday. The information included names, birthdates, addresses, driver's license numbers and criminal histories, the agency said, but added that Social Security numbers and financial information were not disclosed.

In a statement posted to social media, the Monterey County Sheriff's Office said it does not have a list of local residents whose data was leaked.

"I am very concerned about this data breach and the risk it poses to Monterey County and California's CCW permit holders," Sheriff Steve Bernal said in the post.

Five other state-operated databases were also affected. They included the Assault Weapon Registry, Firearm Safety Certificate and Domestic Violence Restraining Order dashboards.

"This unauthorized release of personal information is unacceptable and falls far short of my expectations for this department," Attorney General Rob Bonta said in a statement.

The office said the DOJ was "investigating the extent to which any personally identifiable information could have been exposed from those dashboards and will report additional information as soon as confirmed."

After making the updates on Monday afternoon, the DOJ learned that the personal information was accessible in a spreadsheet on the portal, according to the office. The DOJ said it took steps to remove the information from public view and shut down the dashboard Tuesday morning. The office said the dashboard and data were openly available for "less than 24 hours."

The office did not immediately respond to a message seeking an estimate of the number of people affected by the data exposure. The Associated Press reported that the breakdown could involve as many as hundreds of thousands of gun owners who applied for CCW permits.

Roughly 40,000 CCW permits were issued last year, down from more than 100,000 during the peak year of 2016, according to the DOJ's website.

Personal information from the errant disclosure may have been posted on social media websites, the Fresno County Sheriff's Office said in a statement Tuesday afternoon. The sheriff's office said it learned about the vulnerability from the California State Sheriffs' Association.

The California Rifle and Pistol Association noted that the data exposure came days after the U.S. Supreme Court threw out New York's requirement that those

PERMIT » PAGE 2

LEGISLATURE

Lawmakers OK budget; taxpayers to get refund

By Adam Beam
The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO » California lawmakers on Wednesday approved a nearly \$308 billion spending plan that includes money to cover abortions for women who can't afford them and the health care costs for low-income adults living in the country illegally while sending cash payments to most taxpayers to help offset record-high gas prices.

The operating budget now heads to Gov. Gavin Newsom's desk, who could sign it by the end of the week before lawmakers leave town for their summer recess.

The budget continues a remarkable turnaround for the nation's most populous state, which just two years ago raised taxes and slashed spending to cover what they feared would be a staggering \$54.3 billion budget deficit caused by the pandemic.



RICH PEDRONCELLI — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Members of the California Assembly meet at the Capitol in Sacramento on Monday.

Instead, California's revenues soared on the back of a roaring stock market that boosted the wealth of the state's disproportionate share of millionaires and billionaires who pay higher tax rates than other states. The top

1% of California earners account for roughly half of all the state's income tax collections.

The result: A \$97 billion budget surplus, the largest in state history.

"Thanks to California voters

who gave California a progressive tax system that ensures the wealthiest among us pay their fair share, this historic budget truly puts California's wealth to work for all," said state Sen. Nancy Skinner, a Democrat from Berkeley and chair of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee.

Republicans bemoaned the size of the state budget and slammed Democrats and the governor for not suspending the state's tax on gasoline — which will increase to 53.9 cents per gallon on Friday to accompany the state's average gas price of \$6.30 per gallon, the highest in the nation.

Republicans attempted to amend the budget on Wednesday to suspend that gas tax, but Democrats rejected it.

"You're basically telling California motorists to take a hike. You're telling everyone struggling to put food on the table

BUDGET » PAGE 2

LEGISLATURE

State advances bid to create drug injection sites

By Don Thompson
The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO » The California state Assembly on Thursday approved a controversial bill allowing Los Angeles, Oakland and San Francisco to set up places where opioid users could legally inject drugs in supervised settings.

The move follows more than a year of legislative consideration, with proponents saying it would save lives and detractors saying it would enable drug addiction.

The Assembly's approval sends the bill back to the state Senate for final con-

sideration in August, after lawmakers return from a monthlong summer recess. Senators approved a slightly different version more than a year ago, with no votes to spare.

The idea is to give people who would use drugs anyway a location to inject them while trained staff are available to help if they suffer accidental overdoses.

The move comes amid a national opioid crisis and spike in overdose deaths particularly if users inadvertently ingest drugs spiked with fentanyl.

New York City in December opened the first two publicly recognized over-

dose prevention sites in the United States, intervening in more than 150 overdoses, although its operation does not have federal approval to operate. Rhode Island approved testing such centers for two years.

The U.S. Justice Department under the Biden administration recently signaled it might be open to allowing the sites with "appropriate guardrails," a turnaround from the Trump administration that won a lawsuit blocking a safe consumption site in Philadelphia.

The measure passed the Assembly on a 42-28 vote, one more vote than needed.

But it had bipartisan opposition amid a sometimes personal debate. Two members, Carlos Villapudua and Freddie Rodriguez, disclosed that their brothers had each died of complications from drug abuse, and they were among Democrats who spoke against the proposal.

"This is not the one thing that is going to stop the fentanyl or opioid epidemic in our state, but it will help. It will help, and it will save lives," said Democratic Assemblyman Matt Haney, a former San Francisco supervisor who represented the troubled Tenderloin neighborhood and carried the bill

Attorney

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, the city's search for new legal counsel began a number of months ago, Pacific Grove Mayor Bill Peake explained at the time of Laredo's announcement. A request for qualifications period officially opened March 1 and closed March 31. The call for legal services yielded 15 responses, according to

a staff report prepared for Wednesday's meeting.

Council members Nick Smith and Luke Coletti, alongside Mayor Bill Peake, formed a subcommittee to review applications, paying particular attention to applicants' California public service, local knowledge, availability and bench depth. The City Council reviewed recommendations from the subcommittee, followed by in-person interviews of leading candidates, the staff report said.

In addition to Pierik, another Burke, Williams & Sorensen attorney — Gregory Rubens — received a stamp of approval from the council Wednesday night to serve as Pacific Grove's assistant city attorney. Rubens has served as the attorney for the city of San Carlos since 2008. Most recently, he stepped in as the interim attorney for the city of Tracy up until April.

Per the agreement for legal services between the city and Burke, Williams &

Sorensen, the firm will receive \$275 an hour for general city attorney services. Special services that require more work will be charged at a rate of \$300 an hour for partners or \$275 an hour for associates.

"We think Brian Pierik and Gregory Rubens will serve the city in an excellent capacity," said Peake. "Burke, Williams & Sorensen is one of the premier public law firms in the state, and so we are happy to have them."

Stadium

FROM PAGE 1

idents in the area.

Despite the district board's unanimous vote to approve the project last year and its completion of a full environmental impact report — which Diffenbaugh said took a year to complete — the proposed renovation has ground to a halt due to multiple lawsuits and battles with residents in the surrounding neighborhood.

"It's an important project for the school community, so we're certainly hopeful that we can break ground soon," Diffenbaugh said. "At this point, we're really somewhat at the mercy of the timeline

of the court."

The main complaint from residents and community members opposed to the project stems from concerns that the stadium and field project would have "significant and unavoidable noise and light impacts on the surrounding resident neighborhoods," according to the lawsuit filed by Preserving the Peace and Taxpayers for MPUSD Accountability.

The environmental impact report completed by the district, with the help of a consultant firm, proposed mitigations to address the concerns, including prohibiting the use of the lights on Saturdays or Sundays; concluding all weekday school-related practices and games at the stadium by 8 p.m.



COURTESY MPUSD

The Monterey Peninsula Unified School District hired Weston Miles Architects for design services for the creation of a multi-use field and stadium project at Marina High.

— except for five nights a year when athletic events will extend to 10 p.m. — and prohibiting any use of the fields on Sundays, among others.

The stadium lights that lie at the heart of the controversy are the

same lights that were used

in Seaside's stadium and track renovation. Diffenbaugh said the response from Seaside's community has been overwhelmingly positive, because the "focus light" design of the stadium lights points directly down

LOCAL STOCKS

Friday, July 1, 2022

	Div	PE	Last	Chg.	YTD Chg.
Amazon (AMZN)	...	33	106.21	-2.71	-36.3%
Amer Water Works (AWK)	2.62f	21	148.77	+2.95	-21.2%
Apple Inc (AAPL)	.92f	23	136.72	-2.51	-23.0%
Bank of America (BAC)	.84	9	31.13	-.73	-30.0%
CH Robinson (CHRW)	2.04	16	101.37	-.08	-5.8%
California Water Svc (CWT)	1.00f	28	55.55	+1.20	-22.7%
Callaway Golf (ELY)	.04	10	20.40	-.04	-25.7%
Century Aluminum (CENX)	...		7.37	-.07	-55.5%
Granite Construction (GVA)	.52	cc	29.14	+52	-24.7%
KB Home (KBH)	.60	5	28.46	+32	-36.4%
McCormick & Co (MKC)	1.48	30	83.25	-2.38	-13.8%
Facebook (META)	...	12	161.25	-2.69	-52.1%
Microsoft Corp (MSFT)	2.48f	29	256.83	-3.43	-23.6%
Nordson Corp (NDSN)	2.04f	24	202.44	+51	-20.7%
PG&E Corp (PCG)	...		9.98	+02	-17.8%
SVB Financial Corp (SIVB)	...	12	394.99	-7.57	-41.8%
SkyWest Inc (SKYW)	...		21.25	+12	-45.9%
Smucker, J.M. Co (SJM)	3.96f	16	128.01	-2.69	-5.8%
Tegna Inc (TGNA)	.38	9	20.97	+04	+13.0%
Twitter Inc (TWTR)	...		37.39	-.41	-13.5%

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Permit

FROM PAGE 1

seeking to carry concealed weapons demonstrate an extraordinary need. That ruling also derailed similar standards in several California counties, though state lawmakers and Bonta

are working to reinforce and codify remaining permit requirements.

Bonta said he immediately launched an investigation into how the data exposure occurred at the DOJ, adding that he plans to "take strong corrective measures where necessary."

"The California Depart-

ment of Justice is entrusted to protect Californians and their data," he said. "We acknowledge the stress this may cause those individuals whose information was exposed. I am deeply disturbed and angered."

The state sheriffs association on Wednesday issued its own alert to CCW permit holders about the

security blunder.

"It is infuriating that people who have been complying with the law have been put at risk by this breach," CSSA President and Butte County Sheriff Kory Honea said in a statement. "California's sheriffs are very concerned about this data breach and the risk it

poses to California's CCW permit holders."

The exposure included information on law enforcement officials including judges, as well as others who had sought CCW permits "like rape and domestic violence victims," according to the rifle and pistol association.

The Attorney General's

Office said the DOJ will notify people whose data was exposed and provide additional information and resources as required by state law. The agency added that people can also protect themselves by monitoring their credit

and placing free credit freeze and fraud alerts on their credit reports.

Budget

FROM PAGE 1

and gas in their car that this Legislature just doesn't care," said Republican state Sen. Brian Jones.

Instead of suspending the gas tax, Democrats who control California's government chose to send cash to taxpayers. Households that earn less than \$500,000 per year and single people who earn less than \$250,000 per year will get between \$200 and \$1,050, depend-

ing on how much money they make.

"We did tax refunds because we value dollars in your bank account versus pennies at the pump," said Assemblymember Phil Ting, a Democrat and chair of the Assembly Budget Committee.

The budget reflects a wish-list of Democratic priorities on health care, education, transportation and climate change.

Now that the U.S. Supreme Court has overturned Roe v. Wade and some conservative states are outlaw-

ing or severely restricting access to abortion, California's budget includes more than \$200 million to support clinics and train providers in the state — including \$40 million to cover procedures for women who can't afford to pay for them.

The budget authorizes the state to pay for the health care of all low-income adults regardless of their immigration status, clearing the way for about 714,000 people who are living in the country illegally to be eligible for Medicaid that will cost taxpayers

about \$2.6 billion per year when fully implemented.

Meanwhile, workers in hospitals and nursing homes will be eligible for bonuses of up to \$1,500, part of the state's strategy to help health care providers retain a labor force that has shrunk because of the stress of working during the coronavirus pandemic.

For California's troubled high-speed rail project, lawmakers agreed to finally release \$4.2 billion in bond funds with a priority to build a section of track between the Central Valley

cities of Merced and Bakersfield. In exchange, they created the Office of Inspector General, a new independent agency with power to audit the project.

The budget includes record-high spending for public schools, including \$2.8 billion to compensate school districts for declining enrollments once schools reopened after shutting down at the start of the pandemic.

Despite the state's record surplus, the budget does include at least one new tax. Lawmakers agreed to tax

the extraction of lithium, a critical component for the rechargeable batteries that power electric cars. Demand for lithium is increasing as electric cars become more popular, and 20% of the tax will go to help restore the Salton Sea, a lake in Southern California ideal for lithium extraction.

Lawmakers also passed several gun-related bills they are hurrying to Newsom before they adjourn for a summer break. That included a bill to let private citizens to sue people who sell illegal firearms.

Classic Car Week 2022



Monterey's Classic Car Week and Concours d'Elegance events attract some of the largest crowds of any event held in Monterey County. This high-end series of car related events brings an audience with the resources to shop and spend during their visit to the Monterey Peninsula.

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