Safety key in Boeddeker makeover
First meeting to get residents’ ideas on $8 million redesign

**BY TOM CARTER**

It was ironic — two dozen people stargazing during a public meeting about how to spend $8 million on Boeddeker Park when the place had been locked up for more than a week because the city couldn’t afford to open it.

The 1-acre park in the Tenderloin has had problems galore over the years related to drug dealing and drinking. That was the time a $438 million city deficit had shut it down. “It’s very frustrating — we may have new hours here but then the park’s not open at all,” Friends of Boeddeker Park Chair Betty Traynor said.

Only a handful of people at the May 13 meeting were neighborhood residents. An Oakland couple, who happened to be in the neighborhood, were former residents. The rest were city employees and staff members of park-related nonprofits.

“Ideas surfaced slowly for the coming grand makeover, ranging from an open-space-care-the-clubhouse brainstorm to a costly roof garden,” Traynor said.

“People feel like the park is a fortress.”

Nearby resident

Boeddeker Park, recently reopened, as seen from the front entrance.

**PHOTO BY TOM CARTER**

City agencies are legally obliged to produce an annual report, but many don’t and most that do are out of compliance, a Central City Extra investigation shows.

**INFORMATION GAP**

Annual report obligation gets short shrift at City Hall

**BY HEIDI SWILLINGER**

In his bid to become California’s governor, Gavin Newsom’s main selling point is his record as mayor of San Francisco. His Website touts a long list of accomplishments in education, health care, the environment, public safety, fiscal practices and government accountability.

But voters will have to take his word on that, because his administration has largely stopped producing annual reports, which could give people the information they need to assess the city’s progress for themselves.

San Francisco law — spelled out in the San Francisco City Charter and Administrative Code — requires departments, boards and commissions to issue annual reports that describe their activities. To make that information accessible to all, each report must be posted on the Public Library’s Website, as well as the agency’s.

But a Central City Extra investigation of 69 city agencies reveals that only 6 are in full compliance with annual report mandates — they’ve produced a current annual report, posted it on their Website, and posted the link to the Public Library’s Website — and 63 are out of compliance in some way:

• 35 do not have a current annual report posted on their Website.
• 13 have not posted an annual report since 2007.
• 49 have no link to their annual report on the Public Library’s Website.
• 14 have out-of-date reports on the library’s site.

The reports are required to inform the public about the work of each major unit of city government and how much those activities cost. Moreover, annual reports provide an irreplaceable historical record.

Noncompliance with the laws regarding annual reports is a problem Newsom is familiar with. It’s been a concern of two civil grand juries during his tenure as a public servant, beginning with his 1998 election to the Board of Supervisors. Despite his stated commitment to improve accountability in government, Newsom has failed to use his powers as mayor to address red flags raised by civil grand juries over the state of the city’s annual reporting procedures.

**ROLE OF THE CIVIL GRAND JURY**

The state Constitution requires each county to have a grand jury. In San Francisco, the Superior Court’s presiding judge impanels two each year, the Indictment Grand Jury, which has jurisdiction over criminal indictments, and the Civil Grand Jury, which serves as a watchdog over the functions of government. San Francisco’s Civil Grand Jury consists of 19 members who serve for one year, from July through June. They decide for themselves which aspects of government to investigate. At the end of its tenure, the jury issues rec...
CIVIC CENTER
With “boarded up” becoming the status quo for more and more central city buildings, it’s really nice to know that the old Federal Office Building on 5th Plaza, shuttered since 2007, will be upgraded with $121 million in stimulus funds. GSA regional offices housed at 450 Golden Gate will move into the new digs in about six years. The 1936 Beaux Arts building will get a seismic upgrade, and new heating and electrical systems. The plaza itself got a small makeover in 2005 with a $1 million federal Department of Transportation grant that attempted to resolve some problems uncovered by a U.N. Plaza Working Group — gang activity, garbage piles, drug sales, a homeless gathering place. The fountain, designed by landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, came in for a lot of criticism, was threatened with demolition, was fenced off, then un-fenced off. Today, crime is down in the plaza, legal activity is up and just plain folks also sit around the fountain, which must please Halprin. In 2014, he told the York Times Times the plaza needed to be saved. “The U.N. needs strengthening all around the block. The first thing is to get the hell out of Iraq. The second thing to do is this.”

TAYLOR STREET
Eight laurel trees now gracing Taylor Street were surplus from a presentation to drive 18 seniors to the “cobrahead” streetlights with more historic streetscape improvements project that began May 1. Scheduled to be completed by August and stretching from Turk to Sacramento streets, the Polk Street project will replace 22 unhealthy trees and add another 120 — for a total of 27 queen palms, 72 magnolias and 55 cherry trees, some in planters and some planted in the sidewalks. With funding for the $1 million project from a federal Department of Transportation grant and matching city funds, the project also calls for replacing all the “cobblehead” streetlights with more historic-looking fixtures.

WOMEN IN THE HOOD
Alliance for a Better District 6 has opened applications for its Women of the Year Awards, a new initiative to recognize District 6 women who have a passion for community service and have championed causes in six categories: youth, seniors, health, arts and media, education and community development. Anyone can nominate candidates for the awards, which will be announced in October, by going to the Website www Thông the Year Awards. The award is $1,000 and open to all women in District 6. The award winners will be honored at a luncheon in October.

THEATER LOVERS
EXIT Theatre is poised to expand its innovative, live year-round offerings. May 1 it signed a lease for the next-door storefront at 156 Eddy, a 1,700-square-foot space where it will build a 49-seat theater, its fifth performance venue in the Tenderloin. Renovations should be complete by the end of 2010. “EXIT Theatre will present 646 performances this season,” said Richard Livingston, EXIT co-founder and executive director. “Rosemary and sage replace garlic and ginger. We get the money and the space, then work. “We’ve got to bring the audience back.”

GREEN THUMBS OF BOEDECKER PARK
Dozens of old-timers from Presentation put on a 2009 Community Hero Award May 2 by the Crissy Field Center in the Presidio. The award recognizes groups that protect and restore community environments. Awarded by Rec and Park since 2003, the Friends have worked with volunteers from Presentation next door to transform and beautify Boedeker Park. They meet on the third Saturday morning of each month and work three hours. The average Presentation volunteer’s age is 80 and most are Chinese. Their contribution is worthwhile. People in the park, and especially with their loved ones, like to have flowers in flower beds is remarkable. Even some with disabilities work. “Rosemary and sage replace the needles and syringes that once littered the garden beds,” the center’s Website says of their work. “It helps them stay healthy and I hope they’ll motivate others,” said Friends Chair Betty Traynor. For the award ceremony, the center sent two vans to Presentation to drive 18 seniors to Crissy Field. A video exhibit at the center showcases the veterans and describes their contributions.

Mental Health Gala nets $60,000
BY A. ALBERTO CASTILLO ABELLO
It was a wonderful evening at the Mental Health Association’s Annual Awards Gala May 15. Silent auction, food, drinks and happy faces everywhere. The evening raised just under $60,000 for MHASF. Jeff Bell, KCBS radio personality, opened the evening, describing his personal experience with mental illness. Bell then introduced MHA Executive Director Belinda Lyons, who presented the Champion Award to Mayor Newsom. Newsom, longtime central city mental health advocate, and the Foundation Leader Award to the Van Loben Sels Rembrandt Rock Foundation, recognized for its decades of commitment to mental health. There was a special tribute to late Judge Herbert Donaldson for his lifelong contributions.

The highlight of the evening was keynote speaker Joe Pantoliano, the eccentric mobster Ralph Cifaretto from the “Sopranos,” a role that won him an Emmy for best-supporting actor. “I was dazed, confused, addicted to painkillers and alcohol, and I found myself shopping.” Pantoliano said, describing his bout with what was later diagnosed as clinical depression. “I didn’t know what was going on and I was angry with myself. I began to blame others for my illness.”

He mentioned a time when he interviewed for a role and was要求 to take a physical. Like most of us, he faced general health questions. Pantoliano was amazed to find what medications he was taking. He gave them the list, including his anti-depressant. The next day, he received a call telling him that he was a high risk for the industry because of his diagnosis of mental illness, and the only way he could work or be in the movie was if he signed a waiver. It stated that if his mental illness kept him from finishing the movie, he would be financially responsible for the movie.

Pantoliano was amazed that the industry was more worried about his mental state than his physical state, he said. “I could have had a stroke, a heart attack or dropped dead. I was taking medication for high cholesterol and other physical conditions and that would have been okay, but when it came to my mental illness, it became an issue.”

Today, Pantoliano is an advocate fighting against the stigma associated with mental illness. He recently started his own nonprofit organization, “No Kidding, Me Too!” When I asked about the name, he said there was no better way to end the stigma. With that, Pantoliano panned off for another event. You can check out his Website nokiddingmetoo.org and see a preview of his NOKM2 docuseries on YouTube.
Boeddeker makeover meeting stresses safety

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of income and open space. Within a half-

mile radius of Boeddeker Park, according to a California State Parks report, are more than 11,000 families who live below the poverty line. The report puts the area's aver-
age income (based on 49,000 population) at $30,800, half the city average. Total park acreage in the area averages only 0.16 of an acre per 1,000 population; the ideal ratio is 3 acres per 1,000 population.

“’This qualifies perfectly for that money,” and now Rec and Parks at Boeddeker has Boeddeker’s highest priority,” said Gilchrist, accompa-
nied by Recreation and Parks Director Rob McDaniels and architect Brian Allman. Gilchrist recalled attending his first Friends of Boeddeker Park meetings three years ago, when the trustees were looking for a director to improve the park.

“Homes Valley and Balboa parks are also getting trust ren-

ovation money.”

“We know that the park is not being used to its fullest potential now,” Gilchrist said in his introduction, “and it’s a tough facility to manage and run programs in it.”

The awkwardly designed building of less than 4,000 square feet is mostly an open floor with few rooms and is acoustically awful. It has an uninsulating ground floor entrance door on Eddy Street and, rising 12 feet higher at its north end, another door opening to inside the park.

“You can’t run a program and see what’s going on outside,” Gilchrist said. “And you can’t have two conversations going on in the building at the same time.”

The trust staff, referring to easels display-
ing dozens of interior and exterior park pho-
tos and diagrams, pointed out many of the park’s shortcomings. Among them the thick, dark fencing impairs visibility into the park, the staff’s lack of sight lines out of the clubhouse, inefficient use of outside space that’s divided into many special use sections, and the building’s tall west-facing windows that allow in a harsh afternoon sun.

VisIBILITY and safety were key issues.

“I spend 20% of my time on paperwork and I can’t see anything outside of my office,” said park Director Rob McDaniels, recently reassigned to his beloved Boed-
dekler after a year at nearby Tenderloin Rec Center. Boeddeker Director Al Winburn was recently assigned to the Richmond area.

One man who said he has lived near the park for nine years said its north gate on Ellis Street was permanently closed a few years ago because unruly crowds scare people away.

“It’s a certain element not necessarily in the park but on the parking lot,” he said. “People feel like the park is a fortress. They won’t walk down the middle because it’s a gateway they go through when they’re drug dealing and they don’t want to deal with it. Outside, young and old people wasn’t walk on the sidewalk around the fence because they’re scared of people who hang out there.”

“I see safety as the No. 1 issue.”

Some said the nice aspects of the park should be retained. For example, the garden space at the park’s high north end was tout-
ed as the most tranquil spot in the park. It has been kept spiffy over the years by Rec and Park volunteers and dozens of elderly volunteers from the adjacent Presentation Senior Community who recently were hon-

ored at the Presidio. (See Good News.)

“Not have a building,” said Gilchrist. “Right.”

The meeting adjourned, with particulars of the next meeting on the makeover to be announced later.

Boeddeker opens with supervision weekday mornings

BUDGET uncertainties that closed Boeddeker Park for two weeks and the mystery of its operating hours for the neighborhood have been resolved, and a new schedule effective May 26 opens the park to adults for 15 hours a week.

The park and clubhouse are open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday with a director on duty, Boeddeker’s Rec and Park Manager Steve Cismowski announced. Director Rob McDaniels, reassigned in May to Boeddeker, told The Extra he will be cre-

ating programs for seniors. In the after-

noons, he heads to Tenderloin Recreation Center two blocks away to work there.

Kids fare a little better at Boeddeker.

“Kids are a little better off,” Gilchrist said. “There are some listening to evangelist Barney Wiget at the clubhouse, who regularly use the park.

“Not have a building,” said Gilchrist. “Right.”

The meeting adjourned, with particulars of the next meeting on the makeover to be announced later.

This leaves the park available to be rent-
ed for special events. About $200 buys four hours, a day permit and a Rec and Park cus-
todian. Cismowski said Rec and Park is lay-

ing off 78 directors and some would be happy to work weekend days.

The park opened May 19 because the clubhouse was a polling place. McDaniels, the director on duty, lined up for a free hot dog and small food bag distributed by Liz Wong of Calvary Mountain Church.

For about 18 years, CS Ministries has been at the park each Tuesday to feed peo-
ple and the last Saturday of the month, when they also give away sleeping bags, blankets and clothes. Wong is the widow of Rev. Edmund Wong, who started the pro-
gram. Wong once was a junkie who shot heroin in the park, but kicked the habit to be a “flaming evangelist.”

boeddeker on the weekends is another

track, a full basketball court that would

allow in a harsh afternoon sun.

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“Any time you eliminate a station it is going to have an impact. It could be considered Russian Roulette.”
— SF DEPUTY CHIEF GARY MASETANI

A 2005 study by the San Francisco Fire Department concluded that response times were slower in 22 of 24 areas of the city where fire stations were “browed out.” Longer response times put our neighborhood safety at risk — the faster the response time to emergencies, the greater the chance of saving lives and preventing damage.

But the San Francisco Board of Supervisors is considering a new plan that would cut funding and “brown out” more of our neighborhood firehouses, our first line of defense in the event of fires, medical emergencies or any major disaster.

Visit www.SaveOurFirehouses.com for instructions on how to call or email your local Supervisor to urge them to protect your neighborhood safety and Save Our Neighborhood Firehouses!

SAVE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD FIREHOUSES

1. Join online at www.SaveOurFirehouses.com
2. Join the Save Our Firehouses page on Facebook
3. Fill out and send this card to:
   1139 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY   STATE   ZIP
PHONE
EMAIL
Bedbugs: The stuff that bad dreams are made on

BY ED BOWERS

Dedicated to William Burroughs
In charge of the Insect Trust Corporation
I am just a word tangled with words.
Bedbugs are invisible words.
They hide under mud.

Bedbugs
Fill mind with anxiety.
Prisoners in churches
Singing about crimes,
Conceal bedbugs in souls,
Shapped out, burned out.

Life and death is all that counts.
I am hiding between depression and ecstasy
Between the sheets of my Tenderloin hotel.
I sleep with bedbugs.
I pay rent.

Oh! how boring and stupid I am!
Bedbugs are the boring insignificant itch and scratching
Of body and soul.

I am a poet.
I am a bedbug.

My words crawl inside fear.
I am a bedbug in the United States of America.
Scratch me! I am an American poet.

Excerpts from

Bedbug poems written while having anxiety attacks

BY JONATHAN NEWMAN

City attorney: Supe’s neighborhood press law is a ‘bad idea’

Doug Comstock of the Westside Observer chided Herrera, calling the city attorney’s office ‘a major impediment to the enforcement of the sunshine ordinance’ because it was doing nothing about Mayor Newsom’s failure to publish his daily calendar. The Sunshine Ordinance Task Force found that to be a violation, Comstock said, but the city’s Ethics Commission had refused to do anything about it, and he thought Herrera should take legal action. Herrera disagreed. He said he publishes his daily calendar, and his office is ‘light-years ahead of all other public offices’ in terms of transparency, and difficulties enforcing the sunshine ordinance should be addressed to policymakers. Citing attorney-client privilege, Herrera wouldn’t disclose any advice he may have given to the mayor about the calendar issue.

Comstock persisted. Whether the mayor’s daily calendar is subject to the sunshine ordinance or the state Public Records Act, it’s still a document created by public servants at public expense and should be published, he insisted. Herrera told Comstock he had a right as a citizen and taxpayer to take the issue to court.

‘The sunshine ordinance has no mechanism for enforcement — no real teeth,’ Herrera said.

Asked about the looming city budget cuts, Herrera said he wasn’t sure how they would affect the city attorney’s office, but when his tenure began in 2004, he had 225 lawyers and now is down to 185, with potential layoffs pending. To help offset cuts, he instituted new budget and billing procedures designed to match the efficiency of major private law firms, essential because his office is called upon to advise and counsel more than 100 city agencies and commissions and several elected officials, he said.

Herrera noted how that contrasts with his time as a private lawyer, responsible for every aspect of the case at hand, like a chef perfecting a meal. His duties as a public official overseeing myriad legal matters is more like a short-order cook contributing only a little to each dish. His most rewarding moment as city attorney, he said, was getting a $1 million Section 8 housing suit settlement in 2004. The city supplemented the settlement with funds from the mayor’s office, the S.F. Giants and the 49ers, and used it to build the first Boys and Girls Club in Hunters Point, which opened in 2008.

His most difficult task, he said, was navigating the contentious dispute that erupted between the Civil Service Commission and the Elections Commission over the firing of Elections Director Tammy Hurlbutfull in 2002.

And yes, Herrera acknowledged, he is running for re-election and is gathering campaign funds, though he is currently unopposed. He vowed to campaign, opposed or not.

‘It’s an insult to the public not to campaign. I do my job and give the voters the opportunity to agree or disagree,’ he said.
Continued from page 1

CENTRAL CITY EXTRA / JUNE 2009

Only 6 city agencies in full compliance

REPORTING TO THE PUBLIC

The report shall contain a general summary of the department’s services and programs presented in terms and format accessible to the average citizen. Boards, commissions and department heads shall post the reports on the City’s official website, and transmit the URL for each report to the Public Library. ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, SEC. 1.56.

CENTRAL CITY EXTRA contacted 69 departments, boards and commissions listed on www.sfgov.org requirements, the City’s Website, to learn why annual reports haven’t been produced. Responses fell into five general categories, listed in order of frequency:

1. Agency staff are unaware or unclear about annual reports requirements.

At 17 agencies, staff said explanations for missing reports revealed confusion or lack of knowledge about requirements. A spokesman for the Entertainment Commission, for example, said he wasn’t aware that he is required to post a report at the city’s and the Public Library’s Website. A spokesperson for the Human Rights Commission simply said, “We are a city and county agency and thus don’t have an annual report.” At other agencies, including the Department of the Environment, staff referred to a 2003 ordinance stipulating that annual reports be posted electronically rather than printed on paper, incorrectly interpreting it to mean that annual reports are no longer required. The Port Commission and Asian Arts Museum appeared to be unaware of the ordinance, each saying their office stopped producing annual reports because they are too expensive. “I miss the annual report,” said a Port spokesperson. “I used to look forward to it. It was a nice way to inform the public of what we do.” Although the city attorney’s office distributes a Good Government Guide that mentions mandates on annual reports, it is not required reading, and it doesn’t say what to put in the report or when it is due.

2. Agencies produce other reports instead.

At 15 agencies, staff said they no longer do annual reports because they produce efficiency plans, strategic plans or financial statements instead. This was the case at the Elections Department, for example, whose spokesperson mentioned the Extra and copy of its efficiency report, which is not posted online. A spokesperson at the Human Services Department also referred us to her agency’s comprehensive efficiency plan, which is updated bi-annually.

3. It’s in the works.

In 10 cases, staff members said their agency’s annual report is either being worked on or is finished but hasn’t been approved. Staff at the Police Department and medical examiner’s office, for example, said they are aware of the annual report. “One of the roles of the mayor, in making sure city agencies comply with the Code requires of them,” said Deputy City Attorney Buck Delventhal. “That city law requires a wide variety of reports from departments does not relieve them of the obligation to prepare a specific report,” says Deputy City Attorney Buck Delventhal. “One of the roles of the mayor, in the event that this is brought to his attention, is to make sure city agencies comply with the obligation the City Charter and Administrative Code requires of them.”

ACCOUNTABILITY IS US

When Newsom campaigned for mayor, he promised to create better systems of accountability, and he’s touring progress in that area in his bid to become governor. San Francisco has used technology to cultivate an ongoing conversation with San Francisco residents and to put city services online to increase accessibility and transparency,” states his Website. This was also a key motivator for the civil grand jury. “We were very into accountabil-

ty,” said Karen Rose, a 2007-08 juror. “It was a hard thing to wrestle with. We almost gave up on the subject, because how do you go about proving accountability?”

The jury decided to tackle the issue by applying the standards of a well-run business. It homed in on how city agencies — which spend the city’s $6.5 billion budget — are overseen by the mayor and Board of Supervisors, and it used annual reports as a jumping-off point.

“Annual reports are important for tracking what departments are doing and assessing their effectiveness. What did you do with the money we gave you, and do we want to continue that?” said Rose, adding that a thorough report should answer those questions.

What Rose and her fellow jurors discovered dovetailed with the conclusions of the 1999-2000 Civil Grand Jury: A number of city agencies are failing to produce reports, and no one at City Hall is holding them accountable.

According to its final report, “The 2007-08 Civil Grand Jury determined that neither the mayor, nor the Board has a process to track over annual reports.”

For one thing, the Administrative Code — which outlines how the City Charter is to be applied the standards of a well-run business.

MOST AGENCIES OUT OF COMPLIANCE

Of 69 city agencies studied, 63 were out of compliance in some way. Agency representa-

atives gave Central City Extra a variety of explana-
tions. In general, they reflected confusion over annual report requirements, lack of staff or resources required to produce them, or the belief that annual reports are meaningless (see sidebar). Their excuses, in essence, underscored the weak grand juries found. There are weaknesses in the city’s Administrative Code that need to be shore up.

For one thing, the Administrative Code — which outlines how the City Charter is to be applied the standards of a well-run business.

THE GRAND JURIES OF 1999-2000 and 2007-08 took the city to task for a host of issues regarding annual reports, including vague require-

ments and confusion over laws governing pro-
duction. Both juries hammered the city for lack of an oversight process to ensure that reports are timely, meaningful, reviewed by decision-
makers and accessible to the public.

The 1999-2000 jury report, titled “Neglect of Reporting Requirements,” got a nod of acknowledgment from then-Mayor Willie Brown. His office said it would explore the feasibility of establishing an oversight committee to track the production of annual reports. A decade later, the 2007-08 Civil Grand Jury found that this crucial role remains unfilled.

Newsom appeared to dismiss concerns outlined in the 2007-08 report, titled “Accountability in San Francisco.” He did not respond to Central City Extra’s repeated requests for comment on this matter. But in its official response to the jury’s report, his office stated that it relies on efficiency plans and performance management tools, rather than annual reports, to gauge city departments’ efficacy.

Efficiency plans, however, unlike an annual report, don’t necessarily sum up agencies’ and programs in a way that’s easily understandable to the average citizen. Nor are they specifically required to be posted on the library and city agencies’ Websites, as are annual reports. But what’s relevant here is that the mayor is obliged to uphold City Charter mandates on annual reports, no matter how superior the alternative means to measure the successes and challenges of the city’s various commissions and departments.

Earlier this year, The Extra began investigating how agencies comply with annual report mandates. There are 164 units of gov-

ernment on www.sfgov.org. Not all are required to produce an annual report. The Extra winnowed the list to 69 that we contact-
ed to determine the status of each agency’s annual report.

When we also checked the site to find out whether the reports had been posted, and whether a link to the report had been sent to the Public Library, as required by law.

Of 69 city agencies studied, 63 were out of compliance in some way. Agency representa-

tives gave Central City Extra a variety of explana-
tions. In general, they reflected confusion over annual report requirements, lack of staff or resources required to produce them, or the belief that annual reports are meaningless (see sidebar). Their excuses, in essence, underscored the weak grand juries found. There are weaknesses in the city’s Administrative Code that need to be shore up.

For one thing, the Administrative Code — which outlines how the City Charter is to be
Agency that produce reports, the lack of specific of this directive results in annual reports that are all over the map in terms of usefulness to the public. The 2007 annual report of the Transporta- tion Authority, for example, included relevant information and, provided extensive budget information, about annual reports and other Departmental reports to assure there are objective measures of perfor- mance.

Sally Baack, associate professor of manage- ment at the College of Business at San Francisco State University, described the role of annual reports in the business world. ‘The annual report gives the company a chance to brag or explain the previous year — its accomplishments in 2008. Sprinkled with tidbits about the department’s performance and activities; and it gives the com- pany a chance to explain what it will be work- ing to achieve in the coming year and how it plans to achieve its goals,’ said Baack in an e-mail to The Extra. ‘In the case of a city, I don’t see any reason for there to be any major differ- ences. In fact, a city doesn’t necessarily need to worry about withholding key strategic informa- tion, as it doesn’t have true competitors. It may be even more important to outline specific details — including personnel issues, budg- ets, etc. — all of which a company wouldn’t do, due to strategic protections. In addition, in the case of a city, it may offer a great opportu- nity for the message from leadership to be compared with the annual report.

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS

Other loopholes in the City Charter and Administrative Code help explain why agen- cies are lax or lackadaisical about annual reports. ‘The Charter doesn’t set time limits to file an annual report,’ says Bob Plunkitt, a four-time Civil Grand Jury member who served in 1999-2000, as well as 2007-08. ‘It allows bureaus to drag their feet. The fact that there’s a timeline also means there’s no penalty — no admonishment, no letter of warning or reprimand, no loss of funding for failure to do an annual report.

But the fact that the Charter lacks penalties for a particular stipulation is not unusual, nor is it an excuse for flouting the law, says Delventhal, of the city attorney’s office. ‘The Charter assumes that if agencies aren’t doing their jobs, the mayor can step in and com- pel them to comply, he told The Extra.

In a particularly odd quirk, the Adminis- trative Code helps explain why agencies are required to produce an annual report must post them on the city’s official Website, as well as the Public Library. As the 1999-2000 and 2007-08 civil grand juries noted, the mandates are confusing and vague, and no one tracks the production or posting of annual reports. To determine which agencies are required to produce them, Central City Extra reviewed an index produced by the 1999-2000 Civil Grand Jury, and consulted the Board of Supervisors’ list of active boards and commissions, as well as the city and county’s Index of Records, which specifies how long agencies are required to keep records they produce. The Extra then had to determine whether reports were up to date. These checks were conducted in February and March; a final status review was made May 18 and 19.

In cases where annual reports, minutes or agendas were significantly out of date, we contacted each department, board and commission to verify our findings and learn why reports hadn’t been done.

City agencies’ annual report status

The San Francisco Charter and Administrative Code mandate that city departments, boards and commissions prepare annual reports detailing their activities and post them on the city’s official Website — www.sfgov.org are exempt. The charter doesn’t specifically require the mayor’s office or the Board of Supervisors, for example, to produce an annual report.

Agencies that are required to produce an annual report must post them on the city’s official Website, as well as the Public Library.

Agency Latest annual report on agency’s Website Agency’s latest report accepted at Public Library

> CONTINUED ON PAGE 8
City Hall snubs key findings of 2 civil grand juries

Continued from page 7

board or commission shall be deemed to be official misconduct and any violation of the provisions of this Section on the part of any employee shall be deemed to be inattention to duties and considered cause for suspension or dismissal from service.

Central City Extra’s investigation shows that 14 city agencies are current on their annual reports but have not sent their link to the library. According to Section 8.16, this is a fireable offense.

The library certainly has no enforcement power, said Greg Kelly, a document librarian at the Government Information Center, which maintains a too-short list of the annual reports it receives. Kelly says he occasionally chases after city officials if he learns an annual report has been produced, but he’s not inclined to “Our responsibility is to put their URLs on our site when they send them, not beg for them to send them.”

Former library Director Susan Hildreth says San Francisco’s problem with delinquent annual reports is long-standing — and adds that it’s just the tip of the iceberg. Hildreth, who was director of San Francisco’s library from 2001-04 and until recently headed the state’s library, says bureaucratic and technical issues in the digital system used by the City are not easily found or accessed by the public in perpetuity.

“When reports were printed on paper, people sent a copy and that was it,” she says. “Obtaining those documents when they are digital is a problem. We have a hard time [getting] state departments to do that. It’s a challenging matter on all levels.”

Without leadership from the mayor, mandates like those covering annual reports come to nothing, said Charles Davis, executive director of the Public Information Coalition, a nonprofit alliance that also includes journalists, societies and attorneys. “Government can make all sorts of laws and proclamations, but if no one’s in charge of making sure they take place, they won’t take place. Or they may take place for a few years and then drop off.”

S.F.’s lapse a surprise

Ironically, Davis noted, San Francisco is a “watchdog,” she said. “You can’t trust [government officials] to do what they say they are going to do. You can’t just take them at their word.”

Fielder, a tour guide whose speciality is the history of the Tenderloin, noted that the failure to be in possession of an annual report is particularly important. Details abound when a city project or program is high-profile, but those surrounding the city’s everyday inner workings are harder to unearth. “Annual reports are important because they’re likely to flesh out historical events,” he said. “If reports don’t exist, it closes the books for historians, especially if no one’s alive who witnessed the events.”

For Francis Yanak, adjunct professor in Golden Gate University’s public administration masters program, the issue boils down to respecting the law. “When we enact legislation, there’s a purpose for it. We want our public officials to carry out the laws,” he said.

Two civil grand juries in the last 10 years have waved red flags to alert the mayor about problems with annual reporting procedures, and provided recommendations for fixing them. So why has nothing been done? Perhaps in part because the reports garnered little attention from the media mass, which lessened the pressure on public officials to take action.

“It’s really hard to get someone interested, even though it’s really important stuff,” said jury member Nick Gaffney. “Unless you nail subjects of these reports right between the eyes and there’s no wiggle room, people tend to ignore them.”

Gaffney noted that other reports issued by the jury — particularly one that explored homelessness in the wake of Newsom’s Care Not Cash program — got more media attention than the one that raised concerns about annual reports. He believes the jury’s accountability report was shunted off by the media partly because the topic “is too obseque — it’s too hard a story to tell. It’s not dramatic enough to have been reported before … it shows a systemic problem, which is basically that government doesn’t work well.”

“Not much came of it, because that’s typically what happens to the Civil Grand Jury,” he added.

San Francisco’s library from 2001-04 and until recently headed the state’s library, says bureaucratic and technical issues in the digital system used by the City are not easily found or understood by the public. The Jury finds that City cannot easily discover what strategic goals the City is pursuing, nor what progress is being made in reaching them. Ironically, Newsom might have less to defend this year had he followed up the concerns of last year’s jury and ensured that agencies were following the mandates of measurement. Informative annual reports the public can use to ascertain what City agencies are doing with taxpayers’ money.

The mayor’s office response to the current grand jury’s report speaks volumes. Spokesman Nathan Ballard told a reporter at another San Francisco newspaper, “The grand jury doesn’t know what it’s talking about. The mayor, evidently, knows better. Just trust him on that.”

Resources

- List of city agencies and their Websites: www.sfgov.org
- List of the Public Library’s links to annual reports: http://sfpl.org/librarylocations/main/gic/annualreports.htm
- Civil Grand Jury reports and official responses to them: http://www.sfpl.org/site/coutry_p/ images/as/880
- San Francisco City Charter and Administrative Code: http://www.municode.com/Resources/ClientId,1,TheCityOfSanFrancisco/id=580&cid=4201
- Gavin Newsom’s campaign for governor Website: www.gavinnewsom.com/home
She was a social worker 35 years and started in the Philippines, said Canon Kip Kip Senior Center for case manager Estelita Catalig who died unexpectedly of a stroke April 2. Her death sent a shock wave through the Episcopal Community Services Center at 702 Santa Ana St. where the devoted Ms. Catalig had worked for two years, sometimes seven days a week, friends said.

“Friends of Leonardo Dizon bid the World War II veteran farewell in a lengthy Catholic memorial service March 31 at the Alexander Recreational Center where he lived 16 years. Mr. Dizon, whose forebearers came from Pampango Province on Luzon, came to the Residence where he lived 16 years. He was 89.

Mr. Dizon was deeply religious but wasn’t Catholic. It made no difference to The Rev. Virgil Bartolome of St. Michael’s parish, who had been invited by social worker Betty Durant. He celebrated a Mass during which the 25 mourners—all but four were women—prayed often for Mr. Dizon, took Communion, and sang songs, one of them, ‘Santo,’ in Tagalog.

One man said that he had amused Mr. Dizon every time he saw him. “When I first met him I called him Leo DiCaprio,” the man said. “Every time I saw him I called him that and he’d laugh.”

But little was learned about Mr. Dizon during the 75-minute ceremony.

Dulcy Cahabog, a middle daughter of Mr. Dizon’s six children, here from the Philippines, said afterward that her father had not been eligible for the Filipino vets benefits contained in President Obama’s stimulus bill. Mr. Dizon had just completed the state’s 38-hour Health Skills trainer in Gilroy for four years before coming to Canon Kip to Senior Center and held several caseworker jobs. Caseworker James Powell sang a cappella ‘His Eye Is on the Sparrow’ in a rich bass voice and finished in a dramatic falsetto.

“I’m just so grateful that he didn’t have to die on this earth,” said manager Jackie Wilson. “He was here, among people who cared so much for him.”

Several people used less-than-complimentary words to describe Mr. Dizon — ornery, grumpy, a hoarder who was kicked out of a hotel for bad habits. “Rarely he just made me crazy,” said Mike McGinley, Curry Senior Center case manager supervisor.

But mostly they recalled his wittiness and generosity. Years on the street had given him the taste for free food and the resourcefulness to get whatever he could find. He’d ‘do all the routes,’ said Ms. Catalig, who had been a social worker 35 years and started in the Philippines. “He always amazed me when she would say, ‘There’s so little time for helping,’” Lagbao, a Homeless Connect volunteer said. “I didn’t know what to do. He would do everything seven days a week. And I promise, in her memory, to do more.”

Prayers were said at the memorial, scripture was read. There was group singing with sheet music provided, and songs from the five-piece Canon Kip Senior Center band plus several caseworkers. Caseworker James Powell sang a cappella ‘His Eye Is on the Sparrow’ in a rich bass voice and finished in a dramatic falsetto.

The ever cheerful Ms. Catalig had been healthy the past two years, sometimes seven days a week, friends said.

“Korki Lagbao felt the same. He was Ms. Catalig’s close friend and called her ‘Telly,’ the nickname she used in her email address. They often dined at Filipino restaurants and he took her once to Pacifi, where she had not been. He told the group he had visited the unconscious woman at the ICU ward close friend and called her “Telly,” the nickname she had just completed the state’s-38-hour Health Skills trainer in Gilroy for four years before coming to Canon Kip to Senior Center and held several caseworker jobs. Caseworker James Powell sang a cappella ‘His Eye Is on the Sparrow’ in a rich bass voice and finished in a dramatic falsetto.

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“The boy had a really strong handshake, and one of his sons, a College of San Mateo student, remembered birthdays were within a day of each other—June 5 and June 6, respectively. Goodman said the men were more acquaintances than pals, but their recent history on the streets was different. Fifteen hotel residents and staff, and medical personnel sign-in board still listed her name. The boy had a really strong handshake, and one of his sons, a College of San Mateo student, remembered birthdays were within a day of each other—June 5 and June 6, respectively. Goodman said the men were more acquaintances than pals, but their recent history on the streets was different. Fifteen hotel residents and staff, and medical personnel sign-in board still listed her name. The boy had a really strong handshake, and one of his sons, a College of San Mateo student, remembered birthdays were within a day of each other—June 5 and June 6, respectively. Goodman said the men were more acquaintances than pals, but their recent history on the streets was different. Fifteen hotel residents and staff, and medical personnel sign-in board still listed her name. The boy had a really strong handshake, and one of his sons, a College of San Mateo student, remembered birthdays were within a day of each other—June 5 and June 6, respectively. Goodman said the men were more acquaintances than pals, but their recent history on the streets was different. Fifteen hotel residents and staff, and medical personnel sign-in board still listed her name. The boy had a really strong handshake, and one of his sons, a College of San Mateo student, remembered
Imagine walking down the streets of the Tenderloin, where hundreds of people at odds with each other are going their own way, and then an anonymous, sneaky creature comes up to you on the corner of Turk and Hyde, and whispers into your ear where you can go to get a real connection with the universe.

He’s not selling crack or ice or heroin. This is a mystery beyond religion, politics or men.

The tapestry exhibit has left the Tenderloin, but it tours. I can’t think of a better exhibit for teenagers interested in bringing the exhibition to your site, call the Faithful Fools at 474-0508 or email them at info@faithfulfools.org.

Our Hotels Provide More Than Great Hospitality

Revenue generated by San Francisco’s hospitality industry helps provide essential services to all San Francisco residents. From law enforcement to fire fighting and from parks and recreation to care for the less fortunate, the hospitality industry plays a critical role in keeping San Francisco moving. So whether you call San Francisco home, or you’re just visiting, our hotel industry is on the front lines, making sure San Francisco will always be... Everybody’s Favorite City.

To learn more from the Hotel Council of San Francisco, visit www.hotelscouncilsf.org or call 415.391.5197.

SPECIAL EVENTS
Feisty Feminist Theory Series. June 11, 7 p.m., New Valencia Hall, 625 Larkin St. Suite 202. Educational program on Marxism/Socialist feminism and black revolutionary feminism presented by Radio and Video. $7.50 general, $5.50 served before the program at 6:15 p.m. Info: RadicalWomen.org. For child care, call three days in advance: 864-1278 or barbaric- women@lethon.net.

NEW ART EVENTS

COMMUNITY: REGULAR SCHEDULE HOURS
Supportive Housing Network. 3rd Thursday of the month, 3-5 p.m., location TBA. Contact: Kendra Fuller, 421-2926 x306.

Tenderloin Police Station Community Meeting. 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m., Location changes monthly. To receive monthly information by e-mail, contact Meital Amitai, 538-8100

COMMUNITY: REGULAR SCHEDULE HOURS
Supportive Housing Network. 3rd Thursday of the month, 3-5 p.m., location TBA. Contact: Kendra Fuller, 421-2926 x306.

Tenants Associations Coalition of San Francisco. 1st Wednesday of the month, noon. 201 Turk. Community Room. Contact: Michael Nulty, 339-8327. Resident unity, leadership training, facilitate communication.

SCHOOLS
Boeddeker Park cleanup. 3rd Saturday of the month, 9-noon, organized by the Friends of Boeddeker Park. To RSVP to work or for information, call Betty Traynor. 931-1126.

Central City Democrats. meets four times a year. 1st Sunday Edy St. Community Room. Addresses District 6 residential and business concerns, voter education forums. Information: 309-VOYE (8663) and centralcitydemocrats.org.


Friends of Boeddeker Park. 2nd Thursday of the month, 3:30 p.m., Boeddeker Rec Center, 240 Edy. Park plan events, activi- ties and improvements. Contact Betty Traynor. 931-1126.

Gene Friend Recreation Advisory Board. 3rd Thursday of the month, 5 p.m. Board works to protect SfHA resources for children, youth, families and adults. Gene Friend Recreation Center, 270 Sixth St. Information: 538-8100 x302.


North of Market/Tenderloin Community Benefit District. Call District Manager Elaine Zamora for times and dates. 290-4812.

SoMa Leadership Council. 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m., The Art, 1500 Howard St. at 11th. Emphasizes good planning and development proposals, vibrant, complete neighbor- hood. Contact: Jim Meko, 642-4399 or jim.meko@comcast.net.

South of Market Project Area Committee. 3rd Monday of the month, 6 p.m. 1035 Folsom, between 6th & 7th Sts. Health, Safety and Human Services Committee meets monthly on the first Tuesday after the first Monday, 1035 Folsom. Info: 415-267-2166 or www.compassc.org.

Tenderloin Futures Collaborative. 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10 a.m., Tenderloin Police Station community room, 301 Edy, Call 358-9598 for information. Network of residents, nonprofits and businesses taking on neighborhood development issues.

SENIORS AND DISABLED
Mayor’s Disability Council. 3rd Friday of the month, 1-3 p.m., Hall, City room, 404. Call: 554-6789. Open to the public.


The bookstore was founded by Jock McDonald in 1924 and was bought in the 1950s by Volansky’s father, who ambitious- ly added to the inventory. The father died in 1979 and left it to Volansky and his sister. For years the dusty labyrinth of overflowing second-hand shelves on two floors was high and low li- tery adventure for street people, students, bibliophiles, even celebrities and movie- prop researchers.

April 9, the police threw up a barricade across the storefront, which Edwards had asked to have removed. The day after, in front of the Winston Arms Hotel next door, Volansky was sitting on a chair surrounded by people waiting for opportunity to knock. Three hand trucks leaned against the building and three men stood by trying to recall the final and sixth role-name of actors who played the Three Stooges. Volansky was paying the men to relieve volunteers at the park. When they carried out, then to cart them to 116- 118 Turk where he dreams of one day reopening his store.

“I really want the shelving, too,” he said.
San Francisco is teeming with colorful characters.

Meet some of them on Neighborhood Free Days at the California Academy of Sciences.

Discover an aquarium, planetarium, four-story rainforest and natural history museum—all under one living roof.

June 2009 Neighborhood Free Days

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<tr>
<th>NEIGHBORHOOD</th>
<th>ZIP CODE</th>
<th>FREE DAYS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chinatown, Tenderloin, Downtown, SOMA, Potrero, Treasure Island, Mission Bay</td>
<td>94103, 94107, 94110, 94111, 94105, 94108, 94104, 94102, 94138</td>
<td>June 5, 6, 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Castro, Noe Valley, Diamond Heights, Miraloma Park, Cole Valley, Haight</td>
<td>94117, 94114, 94131</td>
<td>June 12, 13, 14</td>
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Check the complete schedule on [www.calacademy.org](http://www.calacademy.org) or call 415.379.8000 to confirm your Neighborhood Free Days.

Each visiting adult must prove residency by showing a driver’s license or a utility bill. On each scheduled date, only residents from the specified zip codes will be admitted free of charge.

As part of Bank of America’s longtime support of museums and local educational programs, the Academy offers Neighborhood Free Days to San Francisco residents.