



# Sand Dollar

Where Business and Lifestyle Work Together

## Message from the Chair:

### Manhattan Beach Women in Business get it in Gear

By David Curry  
Platinum Capital

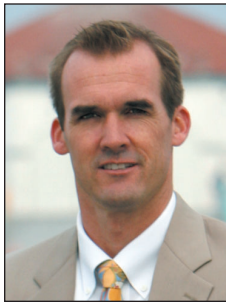
'Tis the season for the Manhattan Beach Women in Business Committee. They'll kick off the year with lunch Sept. 23 and this is one of my favorite Chamber functions to recommend to members and nonmembers alike. The speaker is Manhattan Beach Mayor Portia Cohen and the event begins at 11:30 a.m. at Twelve + Highland Restaurant downtown.

The culmination of the Manhattan Beach Women in Business (MBWIB) year is the annual conference, which is now scheduled for April 16, 2010. More than 500 women and men are expected to attend, and it always has a very special flavor and character. I have been to the conference five out of the last six years and I always come away from it inspired. I don't think I have ever been able to keep a dry eye at the Heart & Soul Award presentation.

But in my opinion, the heart and soul of the MBWIB year are the quarterly events, usually breakfast or lunch, where attendees get to introduce themselves to a more intimate group of 40 to 70 other guests and say a few words about their businesses. I have found these gatherings to be extremely productive networking enterprises for me. The introductions point me to follow up with the

people who have a related business to mine. In addition, the committee always seems to choose inspiring speakers who target our Chamber audience extremely well. Past speakers have spoken about, among other topics, breaking out of your comfort zone and taking the extra step to build your business (which assuaged any insecurities I may have had about being one of three men in a room of 50 women that day). Next month, we have the pleasure of listening to Mayor Portia Cohen, who has been a leading voice on issues facing our city such as business retention and growth as well as budget and environmental concerns.

Being a man who has served on the Manhattan Beach Women in Business Committee in past years, I have always felt welcomed and I encourage other men to get involved. I may be biased as all of my major mentors in the Chamber have been incredible women who have been involved in one way or another with MBWIB. This is one kickoff event not to be missed: Manhattan Beach Women in Business Lunch, 11:30 networking; 12:00 lunch, Twelve + Highland Restaurant, 304 12th St., Manhattan Beach. \$25 Chamber members, \$30 nonmembers. Reservations are required. Please register at [www.ManhattanBeachChamber.net](http://www.ManhattanBeachChamber.net) or call 310-545-5313.



David Curry

## News from City Hall:

### Dear Resident Taxpayers

By Portia Cohen, Mayor  
City of Manhattan Beach

California is once again in the eye of public scrutiny. Some say our state is at a crossroads; many are even calling for a constitutional convention.

Our state legislature painstakingly passed a balanced budget, signed by the governor. But the process left a bad taste. Local governments won't see a return of its funds as those funds are loaned or taken to meet state expenses.

While we applaud the final reduction of the state's general fund budget from more than \$100 billion to \$84 billion in the final package, we at the local level will bear a heavy burden for the state's \$24 billion deficit.

In a nutshell, the state budget sliced \$18 billion in programs (including \$1.7 billion in redevelopment funds); accelerated revenues and fees such as personal income tax withholding, corporate tax estimated payments by \$3.5 billion; and borrowed \$2.2 billion mainly through property taxes from local governments.

Here are the affected local funds:

#### State Will Borrow Local Property Taxes

Under the terms of Proposition 1A (2004), a ballot measure designed to protect local government revenues from state raids except under a fiscal emergency, the state will borrow \$1.9 billion of property taxes from local governments. Eight percent of each local government's share of property taxes will be borrowed. **For Manhattan Beach, this calculates to more than \$1.7 million.**

These funds will be redirected to counties, and will be used for schools K-12, courts, prisons, hospitals and Medi-Cal.

The state is required to pay back Prop 1A funds to local governments, plus interest, within three years after borrowing (by June 30, 2013). The state may do this twice within a 10-year period. This begs the question: with what funds would the state pay localities back? IOUs? Given the fact that the Governor's Office is already projecting a

\$7 billion to \$8 billion deficit for next year, many are convinced that the state will not be capable of repaying the loans, let alone with interest, within three years.

Because these forced loans will place a fiscal strain on many cities and counties, local governments are permitted to bond against the state's "promise to repay" the funds. Budget-related legislation provides that the state will pay all interest (to a maximum of 8 percent) and the costs of issuance of the bond transaction to a set maximum. If

a city decides not to bond against the state loan, the state must pay the city an interest rate yet to be determined, but not to exceed 6 percent. A word about bonds, and borrowing in general: it will compound to increase the debt, and push it off to obligate future generations. Not an appealing "solution." **State May Defer Highway/Road Funds**

Monthly payment of approximately \$2 billion of local governments' Highway Users Tax Account funds may be deferred until January 2010, but will not be permanently seized, as originally written. The uncertainty resides in the Senate having approved a HUTA deferral, while the Assembly did not. Cities are working together to remove the deferral from the final language.

Assuming HUTA is not tampered with, cities can continue plans for the repair of streets, traffic signals, street lights and other transportation-critical infrastructure. This is critical to supporting business, especially at this time.

Local governments and agencies will legally challenge the taking and borrowing provisions of the proposed state budget. Perhaps as you read this column, some legal disposition will have been issued. Nonetheless, we all must continue to pressure California to make responsible leadership and management changes that do not harm our cities. Please pay particular attention to our state legislature, and help Manhattan Beach and its neighboring cities protect our vital resources.



Mayor Portia Cohen

## New Marketing Resource Connects Local Businesses with Consumers

The upside of tough economic times is that it's often a catalyst for finding new and better ways of doing business. Such is the case with the Chamber. We understand that more than ever our members need our help finding and connecting with customers in more efficient and cost-effective ways.

That's why we've partnered with Probrowse.com – an innovative company that's made it their business to help you market and grow your business.

#### Marketing for Small Businesses

Probrowse.com is a business and consumer network that combines the best of two worlds: social networking and direct marketing.

Specifically designed for small businesses, Probrowse.com gives local businesses the online marketing tools they need to reach and engage customers. Every Chamber member who joins the Probrowse.com network receives the following customizable marketing resources absolutely free:

- An easy-to-manage web profile – For some businesses their Probrowse.com profile is the only "Web site" they need. For others it's a great mini-site that enables them to reach local audiences and conduct targeted promotions.



- Marketing tools for creating coupons or other sales announcements to local connected customers and the surrounding community

- The ability to conduct local auctions
- A smart and simple way to receive referrals and feedback from customers

In addition, Probrowse.com employs the latest search engine techniques that help every network member to become more "findable" online.

Beyond the marketing benefits, Probrowse.com helps everyone save money and stay environmentally conscious by delivering targeted marketing without paper, printing and mailing.

#### Go-To Resource for Local Consumers

Want a discount coupon for a local restaurant or retailer?

Looking to find a great massage in your neighborhood?

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**The Official Publication of the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce**  
Mission Statement: The Manhattan Beach Chamber is an association of businesses, other entities and individuals organized to encourage a strong local economy and quality of life by promoting commerce, sound government and an informed membership and community.



Content and opinions expressed in the Chamber publication are the sole responsibility of the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce.

### Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce and El Segundo Chamber of Commerce Announces EXPO 2009

Sept. 17, 2009 • 4:30 to 7 p.m. • Hosted by The Hacienda Hotel  
525 N. Sepulveda Blvd. • El Segundo

#### Exhibitor Benefits

Reserve your space now for the Manhattan Beach Chamber and El Segundo Chamber 2009 Business EXPO & Mixer. Showcase your business and gain maximum exposure at the first joint EXPO featuring businesses and guests from El Segundo, Manhattan Beach and surrounding communities. Traffic should be high because admission is free to attendees. Enjoy great networking, business opportunities and socializing. Wonderful appetizers and a no-host bar provided by the Hacienda Hotel!

**Advertising** – your business will be included in all press releases to local papers, fliers distributed by both Chambers, on the Chambers' Web sites and in weekly e-mail blasts.

**Marketing** – bring your business cards, fliers, brochures, giveaways, coupons and more to EXPO 2009.

**Chamber Member Booth Price** - \$100 for 36-inch x 6-foot draped table and one chair. \$25 for electricity. Limited availability.

**Manhattan Beach Chamber members -- for exhibitor information and to sign up online go to [www.ManhattanBeachChamber.net](http://www.ManhattanBeachChamber.net).**

Registration form with payment must be received by Sept. 9.

Manhattan Beach Chamber exhibitors to date:

Csimplicity Design, Murad Inclusive Health Center & Spa, Rock Goddess Jewelry, Suzy Prudden International