

Santa Cruz' Information Officer

What Does Brenda Meehan Do?

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What does the city's information officer do to earn her keep at city hall?

Well, Information Officer Brenda Meehan anticipated that question would be asked sooner or later among the thousands that are asked annually, and she has prepared a report on that subject, too.

For instance, from April to July of this year she logged the following among numerous other activities . . . and if the city council reads the list, that's great:

MEETINGS AND FUNCTIONS - Attended eight staff meetings, prayer breakfast April 2, council recognition dinner April 3 (after arranging it), attended two planning commission meetings, a Citizens Committee meeting, six city council meetings, two Project SCOUT meetings, three Women's Leadership breakfast meetings.

On June 25 Meehan arranged an all - day meeting on the Pacific Avenue Garden Mall for 35 visitors from Modesto, including the city manager and council members.

Meehan also provided aid for PROD's work on the senior citizen's housing program by visiting various homes of applicants and notarizing papers.

NEWS - Municipal information was channeled to four area newspapers, two radio stations and a television station, all on a regular basis.

Press releases and stories were prepared and issued by Meehan on beach safety, city licenses, the Sister City programs, swimming pool operations, the Aptos library, wage negotiations, traffic safety, FBI training course, vacancies on city boards and commissions, information service numbers, budget reviews, appointments and lifeguard safety suggestions.

Other work included setting up press conferences and performing individual research and obtaining specifically wanted material for reporters from different media.

RESEARCH - Projects for the city included research and reports on the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District, boards and commissions, the Pacific Avenue Garden Mall,

the city sewer treatment plant.

GOVERNMENT - Projects for the mayor and the city council included research, clerical aid, letter writing, investigation of complaints, setting up interviews for commission and board appointments.

SPECIAL - Special assignments included answering letters of complaint received from the public, corresponding with other governmental bodies to give information on the city, preparing and writing City Hall briefs, a newsletter sent out regularly to 10,500 homes with utility bills, preparing and writing City Newsletter, writing columns for the employees' newspaper, revising informational booklets.

PUBLIC - Meehan handles a broad diversity of service needs of the public, ranging from providing information on a city facility to maintaining up-to-date lists, booklets and brochures of public interest.

Calls for information have been telephoned from Passaic in New Jersey to Seattle, Wash.

In summing up her April - July activities, Meehan said: "Some of the calls and requests for information are completely



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out of the realm of this office. I've been asked for advice on how to sue a landlord, for instance, and someone else wanted to know how to eliminate the oak worm. I usually refer people to the agency I think can solve their problems."