

# LATEXTRA

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2010 :: LATIMES.COM/LANOW



Photographs by GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

**HEATED:** Maywood residents brought signs and impassioned opinions to the City Council meeting Monday night, where officials were considering whether to find a new contractor to run municipal operations. Resident Rafael Castro, 69, right, supports the council's outsourcing efforts but wants Bell out of the picture.



## Maywood may try to fire Bell

Some leaders say outsourcing services to the neighboring city was a mistake.

HECTOR BECERRA

Maywood, whose political marriage to the city of Bell made national headlines, is considering a quickie divorce.

In late June, Maywood fired most of its workers and turned over operations to its neighbor city. But the scandal over eye-popping salaries in Bell has become a "distraction" and Maywood leaders say they may look for someone else to run their affairs.

"We're caught in a situation where we need to move forward," said Maywood Councilman Felipe Aguirre. "We don't want to be distracted by things that are not germane to our city."

Aguirre said he doesn't want Maywood to "become a laughing stock of a city," a term used to describe Bell by one of its own embarrassed council members.

On Monday night, the Maywood City Council met before an overflow crowd of upset residents waving signs criticizing the Bell partnership before adjourning to a closed session to try to sort things out.

Late Monday night, the City Council decided it would select from among five interim city manager candidates on Thursday. The interim city manager will then lead efforts to hire a new interim city attorney and to pursue contracting municipal services elsewhere.

Council critics and supporters muttered to one another in Spanish and English but reserved much of their anger for Bell residents who showed up at the Maywood meeting.

"Go to your own city to do your protest," one Maywood resident said in Spanish amid a crescendo of catcalls and applause. "Mind your own business!"

Maywood officials said they had no idea about Bell's problems when they agreed to hire the city.

"We were not aware of these salaries. They were a complete surprise to me," said Maywood Mayor Ana Rizo. "I'm still digesting it

all." The Maywood City Council is also expected to replace Angela Spaccia, an interim city manager they borrowed from Bell.

Spaccia was being paid \$376,288 a year as an assistant Bell city manager, much more than most city managers. When her benefits package is added up, Spaccia's salary more than doubles, to \$845,960.

But that pales in comparison to Bell City Manager [See Maywood, AA7]

## SALAZAR RECORDS WON'T BE RELEASED

ROBERT J. LOPEZ

Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca said through a spokesman Monday that he was refusing to release eight boxes of records regarding former Times columnist and KMEX-TV News Director Ruben Salazar, who was killed by a deputy in 1970.

The Times filed a California Public Records Act request with the department in March seeking records that might shed light on the circumstances involving Salazar's slaying, which left an open wound that has yet to heal 40 years later.

Salazar had been covering a huge anti-Vietnam war rally in East Los Angeles that exploded into rioting when deputies and protesters clashed along Whittier Boulevard on Aug. 29, 1970. The newsman, who was taking a break in the Silver Dollar bar, died instantly after he was struck in the head by a tear-gas missile fired into the bar by a sheriff's deputy.

The documents identified in response to The Times' request include investigative reports and other files on the journalist, according to Baca spokesman Steve Whitmore.

[See Salazar, AA5]

### ELECTION 2010

## Flaws cited in Whitman plan

A group of economists says the Republican's policies would deepen the state budget crisis.

SEEMA MEHTA

Meg Whitman's economic policies are based on a flawed understanding of the challenges California faces, and the Republican gubernatorial nominee's

proposals would make the state's troubles worse, according to an open letter to Californians signed by a group of mostly Democratic economists from throughout the state.

"The evidence and theory that Whitman uses to diagnose California's problems are unscientific and an unsound basis for policy," the economists write. "As a result, her diagnosis and her proposed economic policies are both deeply flawed. If im-

### U.S. Chamber backs Fiorina

Business group's support could give the GOP Senate nominee a boost. AA3

plemented, her policy proposals will deepen California's budget crisis and are likely to reduce employment and economic growth."

The letter and an 18-page report detailing their find-

ings will be released Tuesday by the advocacy arm of the Center for American Progress, a left-leaning non-profit think tank in Washington. The professors who signed the letter are well regarded in their fields and include Kenneth Arrow, a Stanford University economist and Nobel laureate.

Whitman's supporters said the report was tainted by partisanship.

"The same people who are engineering our nation's blundering economic recovery are now criticizing candidates who are committed to balancing budgets through spending cuts, targeted tax relief and job creation," said Crystal Feldman, spokeswoman for the California Republican Party. "If these guys were so smart, maybe unemployment wouldn't be at 9.5% and our national deficit wouldn't have ballooned to over \$13.3 trillion."

A spokeswoman for Whitman declined to comment.

The study, written by UC Berkeley economist Michael Reich, analyzes the 48-page policy booklet Whitman unveiled during the primary campaign. Reich said he saw the book and instantly noticed statements that he knew were inaccurate, so he rounded up fellow economists who were willing to scrutinize it.

"She claims to have a plan that's very detailed and [See Economists, AA5]

## Whitman accuses Brown of Bell-style mismanagement

MICHAEL MISHAK REPORTING FROM SACRAMENTO

Republican gubernatorial nominee Meg Whitman on Monday accused Democratic rival Jerry Brown of presiding over a Bell-style salary scandal while he was mayor of Oakland.

The charges, aired in a new mailer and radio ad aimed at Los Angeles County voters, come as Brown, the attorney general, gains political traction with his office's expanded investigation into the Bell controversy. Three of that city's top

administrators have resigned.

At a news conference Monday, Brown announced that his office was serving a second set of subpoenas on nine current and former Bell officials to compel them to give depositions. Separately, he called for a complete review of how local governments determine public employees' salaries.

Brown said the case "highlights the danger of secrecy and lack of accountability and calls into question the adequacy of our protections and standards."

Whitman is seeking to blunt the political advan-

tages for Brown, who has run a shoestring campaign, largely reliant on his high-profile office and labor-affiliated groups to take his name and his message to voters.

Although experts said Whitman's accusations don't amount to Bell-style excess, they raise questions about Brown's management skills that will be heard by millions of Californians at a time when outrage over public salaries and benefits is driving the political debate.

Bell has been the focus of national attention since The Times revealed that many of its officials were paid unusu- [See Whitman, AA5]



TIM BERGER News-Press

### Helping trees in Verdugo Mountains

Glendale volunteers have been tending pine saplings planted after a fire in 2005. Above, Dave Moreno teaches Teagan Carlson how to care for one. AA4

### Uh-oh, someone didn't stay seated

A JetBlue flight attendant cursed passengers, took some beer and then fled down an emergency slide, police say. AA2

### Long Beach officer charged

Damian Ramos is accused of stealing weapons that had been turned over to the city's Police Department. AA3

Complete index .....AA2  
Lottery .....AA2  
California .....AA3  
Obituaries .....AA6

Weather: Morning fog, then clear skies. Downtown L.A.: 78/61. AA8



### Patricia Neal's life of highs, lows

The actress, who died Sunday, won a Tony and an Oscar, but also endured several personal tragedies. AA6

## Visa denials for performers prompt industry outcry

Officials vow to investigate and speed up the processing of petitions by artists.

TERESA WATANABE

The nation's immigration chief has launched an effort to quell the outcry from Hollywood and the performing arts community about a spike in visa denials, processing delays and requests for evidence to support their petitions to bring in leading foreign artists for U.S. performances.

In the last year, immigration attorneys across the nation have loudly complained about mounting roadblocks for performance visas from the California service center, which processes petitions for so-called O and P visas for artists and researchers of extraordinary ability. The Skirball Cultural

Center in Los Angeles had to cancel scheduled performances last year of an Argentine music group because California immigration officials challenged whether its fusion of Jewish klezmer music and tango met the requirement to be "culturally unique."

In other cases, California officials also challenged visa petitions in the last year that aimed to bring in an Indian group to perform at a California festival honoring the Hindu goddess Durga, a Chicago opera company seeking to bring in a Spanish singer and an African musical group.

"In the past year and a half, what we've seen is petitions that previously and typically were approved are being denied," said Heather Noonan of the League of American Orchestras.

"It impacts the whole range of arts disciplines. The cumulative effect makes the [See Visas, AA5]