

Public Safety Committee Minutes

December 18, 2007

1) **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order by Keith Worthington at 7pm. Members in attendance: Keith Worthington, Jay Riordan, Robin Kaufman, Brandy Steman, Karen Rott, Gary Carlson, Paul Lennon, Fire Captain Dan Froelich. Other Community Council members present: Ken Michael, Patti Perna. Audience/Guest members included: Diane Peters, Ralph Parris, Jarrod Buchanan, Bob Ilko, Pat White, Neal and Shirley Kendall, Dave Hall, Gus Davis, Elizabeth Himcheck.

2) **Review and Approval of the Minutes:** Unfortunately, the minutes from the previous meeting were lost in the fire.

3) **Reports:**

A) **Police:** Paul Lennon, our Community Relations Officer (CRO) shared the following information:

-Paul asked for input regarding the 7/24 patrol of our community since the October fires. The extra enforcement is being taken away from different divisions, which leaves some of them short handed, especially during the holiday season. General consensus ~ keep graveyard shift present, especially once new home construction begins to deter construction material theft.

-There have been a series of thefts in cars in the Carmel Mountain area. The automatic key frequency is being 'captured' by thieves who then easily break in, without doing damage to the vehicles. They steal the items left in the vehicles. Paul encourages people not to leave any items in vehicles, which tempt theft.

-There was a room break in at the Courtyard Marriott December 12.

-Mr. Charlie's was robbed of miscellaneous items on December 6.

-Two businesses in the Oaks North Shopping Center were broken into on December 6.

-There was a small water bottle bomb in Albertson's parking lot on December 2

-RB Jewelry as well as the hair salon in the Oaks North Shopping Center were broken into on December 2.

B) **Neighborhood Watch (NHW):** Gary Carlson, head of Neighborhood Watch. Report included the following information:

-NHW board of directors met Nov. 13. Topics included the support of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) recruitment. At the present time, none of those who were involved in the now defunct Emergency Preparedness Program have volunteered. Gary, along with Ralph Parris, will continue to pursue this shortfall in January. There is an upcoming CERT training class in February.

-Recruiting ~ Gary reported they have been successful in recruiting this quarter, with new district coordinators for Seven Oaks, Westwood and High Country West.

-Next Crime Committee meeting will be second Thursday of January.

-Formal training seminar for block captains will be on Saturday, March 8.

-NHW is upgrading the existence of NHW signs, using grant money, private donations for 60 signs this year.

-NHW is part of the RB Coalition, assisting with map overlays and working spreadsheets of the community.

-Pat White, training coordinator for NHW reported that they need many more volunteers. She reported apathy, until the fires, seemed to be the key problem. Gary Carlson commented that some recruits are interested in certain things and that 95% of the residents say they are too busy to get involved. Dave Hall commented that NHW seems to want to expand to other things besides crime. Gary Carlson responded that they want to evolve, including communications in the event of a disaster.

C) **RSVP:** While not in attendance, Maria Graver sent the following information:

RSVP has had a few adventures since the Wild Fires. Before the road blocks were lifted we were asked to escort people to their homes, supposedly to pick up medications. The lines were miles long. I believe many just wanted to see what had happened in their neighborhoods. Some were real tragedies where they arrived to find their home burned to the ground.

Then on Friday we were asked to bring box lunches to the 91 officers on duty at burned sites preventing looting.

Our biggest job since the Friday of the fires and which will go on until December 22nd is to staff the reception desk at Brian Mainenschein's Fire Victims Assistance Center. It had been open from 8 am to 7 pm most of this time, although the hours are now 9 am to 6 pm and now is closed Sundays. We staffed two shifts with maybe 5% of help from other RSVP divisions, every day for these 10 weeks, amassing over 1,000 hours of volunteer help. My members have been marvelous about doing this in addition to their regular patrols and other duties. Every member has been over at least twice, and lots go over once a week. I'm proud of them.

SDPD says the Assistance Center is the most important thing going on in Rancho Bernardo at this time and I believe them.

D) Fire: Captain Dan Froelich reported the following:

-the fire fighters at station 33 are getting back to their routine and are now gearing up for erosion situations, helping with erosion control, etc. He gave special thanks to all the dedicated CERT volunteers as well as the outpouring of support from the community after the fires.

As far as the reverse 911, Dan commented that this is just another tool and people should also rely on other means of communication such as CERT, NHW, friends, neighbors, etc.

4) Special Guest ~ Jarrod Buchanon, CERT Battalion Volunteer Leader for North County Inland:

-Jarrod reported that 107 CERT volunteers helped the week of the fires, giving over 3,000 volunteer hours. Some of the duties included: directing traffic, assisting at different levels at evacuation centers, staffing 211 telephone center (211 is the information hotline for non-disaster emergency situations), shuttling fire fighters, shuttling fire vehicles, delivering over 40,000 breathing masks, handling keeping media at a distance, helped prepare fire fighting vehicles, etc. CERT is designed to help in catastrophic events until help arrives. In this case, CERT assisted in logistical support for the fire fighters. Fire fighters were then able to concentrate on fighting the fires.

Patti Perna gave her input on what she did as a CERT volunteer: after being activated, she contacted her NHW coordinator to contact block captains and have them call people to get prepared. She assisted at the 211 call center for three days. In that time, the call volume equaled that of a whole year. The needs of people changed as the days progressed. Example of calls which came in: are we evacuating, where do we evacuate to, which shelters are opened, which take pets, what services are offered, how do we locate family, where is water and what can we do. 211 volunteers directed people to the proper authorities such as Red Cross, SDG&E, etc. Patti reported she initially handled 30 calls per hour and then much lower as time went on.

Resident Guest ~ Mr. Gus Davis:

Mr. Davis, who lives in the Oaks North area, brought the topic of attic vents up at the monthly Community Council meeting and was asked to attend the Public Safety Committee meeting for further discussion. Mr. Davis commented that many homes burned from the inside out as embers were able to enter the ¼ inch attic screens. He feels the openings in the screens need to be made smaller. He also commented that other things, such as bathroom vents, leave large enough openings in the roof/attic for embers. Finer screening around these vents can help eliminate embers from entering. Mr. Davis also commented that corners of roofs/homes also

caught on fire quickly as well as rain gutters which were full of debris. He would like to see laws which would insist on retrofitting existing homes and making all new buildings require smaller screening. Mr. Davis said he met with Councilwoman Donna Frye, who was in favor of a change in City Code. . Ken Michael, Chair of the Community Council's Government Relations Committee, commented that the Government Relations Committee will look into the matter. He said it's a matter of educating the public on these issues. Government Relations Committee will work on getting a grounds swell, speak to authorities and help get forward movement on Mr. Davis' suggestions. Pat White suggested the RB News Journal help share the information. A press release which will be worked on by the Government Relations Committee, was suggested to be developed and sent to NHW, clubs, etc.

Resident Guest ~ Diane Peters:

Diane Peters is a past active Community Council member as well as a past active member of the Public Safety Committee. Diane Peters resided at one of the La Terraza apartment complex buildings which burned in the fires. In researching the apartment complex fire, Ms. Peters discovered the roof structures are false in the middle. The complexes burned from the middle down as leaves and other debris built up in the false roof areas. Ms. Peters is presently working with the City's Development Services Department to help change the design structure of such buildings. She will keep the committee updated on the situation.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectively submitted by Robin Kaufman