

Hemet ROCS

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting

Hemet Public Library
April 5, 2012 - 3:30 PM

AGENDA RECAP

1. Welcome & Introductions- *City of Hemet Mayor Robert Youssef*

a. Introduction of Council Liaisons and Government Agency Liaisons- *Mayor Youssef*

City of Hemet Mayor, Robert Youssef, thanked the attendees for their participation in the Hemet ROCS program and advised that Council members Larry Smith and Linda Krupa would be the City Council liaisons who would report back to the Council regarding the Committee's efforts and recommendations. He then turned the meeting over to Council Member Smith.

Council Member Smith thanked the volunteers and the citizens for their attendance. He noted that the City was hoping to get as much governmental support as possible for the Hemet ROCS program, and gave recognition to the presence of State Senator Bill Emerson and his representative Joseph Gonzalez; Will Burger from Congresswoman Mary Bono Mack's office; Tom Wilson from Assemblyman Paul Cook's office; and San Jacinto City Manager Tim Hults; with mention of Hemet Unified School District Superintendent Steven Lowder, whom he knew was planning to attend.

Mayor Youssef then introduced City Manager Brian Nakamura, and turned the meeting over to him.

b. Introduction of Hemet Technical Advisory Team Members (TAT)- *City Manager Brian Nakamura*

City Manager Nakamura provided some background information regarding the Hemet ROCS program, whose concept was embraced by the City Council and the City's executive team. He discussed how it would move the City forward and then asked the TAT members to introduce themselves as follows:

- Police Chief Dave Brown – Hemet Police Department representative
- Detective Lieutenant Duane Wisheart – Hemet Police Department representative
- Community Development Director Deanna Elliano – representing the Planning, Building & Safety, and Code Enforcement divisions
- City Attorney Eric Vail – representing the City in general (introduced by CDD Elliano)
- Principal Planner Emery Papp – representing the Planning and Code Enforcement Divisions (introduced by CDD Elliano)

- Interim Building Official Tim Steenson – representing the Building & Safety Division (not present for this meeting, but mentioned by CDD Elliano)
- Fire Chief Joe Morris – Hemet Fire Department representative
- Community Investment Director John Jansons – representing the Community Investment Department, including the Housing, and Community Development Block Grant Divisions
- Housing Specialist Edna Lebron – assisting CID Jansons and representing the Housing Division
- Carla Callahan – assisting CID Jansons and representing the Community Development Block Grant program
- Crime Free Multi Housing Specialist Brent Cain – assisting CID Jansons and representing the Housing Division
- Engineering Technician Nancy Beltran – representing the Engineering Division
- Geographic Information Specialist Tim Darden – representing the Engineering Division
- Utility Billing Supervisor Jackie Vaughan-Codiga – representing the Utility Billing Division of the Finance Department
- Finance Director Rita Conrad (not present for this meeting, but mentioned by City Manger Nakamura)

City Manager Nakamura thanked the TAT and other representatives for their participation.

c. Introduction of Citizen Advisory Committee Members (CAC)- Community Development Director Deanna

CDD Elliano asked the members of the Citizen Advisory Committee to briefly introduce themselves and indicate what segment of the CAC they were representing.

- John Gifford – Planning Commission Representative; representing the Hemet Planning Commission; wishes to bring a new perspective to the Planning Commission
- Gary Fowler – Faith-Based Organization Representative; representing First Christian Church; also affiliated with the Community Resource Center
- Jim Connell – Apartment Owner Representative; also a former landlord
- Norm Kyriss – Real Estate Agent/Broker Representative; affiliated with Brubaker & Culton Realty representing landlords and tenants; also involved with Habitat for Humanity
- Frank Gorman – Public Service/Non-Profit Agency; serves as President for Valley Watch, sits on the Board of Directors for both Valley-Wide Recreation and Lake Hemet Municipal Water District, and is involved with both the Action Group and Exchange Club
- Connie Hall – Public Service/Non-Profit Agency; serves as Vice President for the Central County United Way, and President of the Ramona Humane Society
- Patty Drusky – Chamber of Commerce Representative

- Daniel Goodrich– Mobile Home Park Resident Group Representative; serves as President of the Sunset Rotary Club, and is involved with the Ramona Humane Society
- Michael Ramirez – Hemet Community Action Network Representative
- Stefany Nelson – Resident At-Large; holds a masters degree in social work
- Mary Ann Mari – Mobile Home Park Owner Representative; currently manages a mobile home park in the Valley, and has been a resident since 1973
- Sharon McComb – Resident At-Large; serves on the Board of Directors for the Valle Hermosa Home Owner’s Association
- Mona Groff – Resident At-Large; educated in human resources, business and planning
- Robert Masson – Resident At-Large; resident in the valley since 1991, President of the Riverside Sheriff’s Association

CDD Elliano made note of the members who were unable to attend this meeting:

- Eric Gosch – Business Owner Representative
- Valerie Velez – Hemet Unified School District Representative
- Eva Gifford – Property Owner At-Large Representative

2. Meeting Framework & Role of the CAC - CDD Deanna Elliano

CDD Elliano advised that the CAC would be meeting once a month for approximately six months, with the date and time to be determined by a majority vote of the CAC. She indicated that an effort would be made to keep the length of the meeting to a 1.5 – 2 hour maximum. She asked the CAC members to please provide notification if they would be unable to attend a meeting, or if there was a need for them to resign from the committee due to other conflicts. She indicated that communication, including agendas and agenda recaps, would be coordinated by e-mail, and that updates regarding the program would be posted on the City’s website. She referred to the binders that had been provided to each CAC member and reviewed the organizational chart and other contents.

CDD Elliano explained the role and purpose of the CAC, referring to them as a working group that would partner with staff and elected officials to provide a practical review of the proposed ordinances and implementation programs. She advised that one of the most valuable things the City wanted to get from the CAC was their perspective regarding the direction in which efforts were being focused, noting that the City wished to take strategic and deliberate action to promote change and put an end to as much detrimental activity as possible through strategic intervention that would result in long-term, sustainable solutions.

CDD Elliano expressed thanks for government liaison attendance. She stated her belief that the CAC would provide a huge benefit to the City and the Hemet ROCS program, and that she hoped the CAC would also get a benefit from their participation.

3. Nomination and Election of CAC Officers - CDD Deanna Elliano:

a. Chair

CDD Elliano requested nominations for the Chair position.

Mona Groff nominated Dan Goodrich for the Chair position, which was confirmed by a unanimous vote.

b. Vice Chair

CDD Elliano requested nominations for the Vice Chair position.

Frank Gorman nominated Connie Hall for the position of Vice Chair, which was confirmed by a unanimous vote.

CDD Elliano presented the gavel to Dan Goodrich and placed the microphone in front of him so that he could take over the meeting.

4. Adoption of Tentative Meeting Schedule - CAC Chair:

a. Day of the Week: Monday

The CAC concurred that Monday would be the preferred meeting day.

Chair Goodrich noted that Mondays presented a conflict for him, but that if the CAC agreed to meet at 3:30 p.m. he could make that day work. He added that Vice Chair Hall could start the meeting if he should happen to be late.

b. Time: 3:30 p.m.

The CAC concurred to meet at 3:30 p.m.

c. Set week of the month: 3rd week

The CAC voted unanimously to set the meeting schedule as the 3rd Monday of each month at 3:30 p.m.

5. Presentation: "Overview & Current Status of the Hemet ROCS Program"- CDD Deanna Elliano and Police Chief Dave Brown

CDD Elliano and Police Chief Dave Brown jointly provided a Power Point presentation (*provided to CAC members at the meeting*) outlining the Hemet ROCS program, and including the following items:

- Hemet ROCS Organizational Chart
- What is Hemet ROCS?
- Restoring our Community Premise
- Benefits to the Community
- Ordinance Status Report
- Drug & Gang-Related Crime on Residential Property
- Chronic Nuisance Properties
- Implementation
- Hemet ROCS Ordinance Adoption Process
- Joint Agency Opportunities
- Next Steps for the CAC

Chief Brown provided informational statistics on the Florida First Program, citing approximately 800 activity incidents recorded by the Police Department, including at least 58 arrests and 320 citations issued.

Jim Connell inquired regarding the date range of the statistics provided by Chief Brown.

Chief Brown indicated that the noted statistics had occurred between September 2011 and the present.

Following the presentation questions were invited by CDD Elliano and Chief Brown.

Frank Gorman – Do you plan on having standards that are sent in writing to landowners, notifying them of what is happening on their property? It could be very hard to prosecute landlords for criminal activity they may be unaware of.

Chief Brown – Agreed that prosecution may be difficult. Whether the City will be reactive to ordinances, or proactively enforce them is a question that is being entertained. With current resources there will be a more reactive response, with some proactive. Under the chronic nuisance ordinance there will be documentation that property owners are aware of criminal activity. There are tools in the toolbox, but work needs to be done behind the scenes to make sure the resources are in place for implementation.

City Attorney Eric Vail – The City will not be going after property owners in a criminal sense, but rather a financial one in an effort to deter them from continuing to allow criminal activities to take place at their property.

Jim Connell – When there is a report of drug sales, for example, will there be communication to the landlord to advise them of the report? In Anaheim we often spoke directly with the landlord to discuss possible resolutions to the problem, and often utilized volunteer resources to smooth things over.

Chief Brown – The 4th violation will trigger formal notification to landlords, and fines will begin to be imposed with the 5th violation.

Chair Goodrich – Can you elaborate on apartment complexes? If there are multiple units that have incidents, will the 2nd unit that has an incident also constitute the 2nd incident? If there are incidents at four separate units, will that trigger the formal notification?

Chief Brown and City Attorney Vail – Currently we are continuing to work through this issue of notification in the draft ordinances and will report our conclusions back to you.

Chief Brown – The type of incidents will be considered in this sort of situation.

Kim Ochoa (member of the audience) – Sometimes those engaging in criminal activity will jump from unit to unit; many of them also have police scanners and they disperse and/or discontinue their activity before the police have a chance to arrive.

Chair Goodrich – Suggested that public comments be reserved for the appropriate section on the agenda.

Frank Gorman – How will this work with the District Attorney's office? If they can't prosecute the actions that are taken, and the criminals know this, how will anything be resolved?

Chief Brown – This program and ordinance relates to the use of administrative citations and penalties, which is separate from criminal actions that we do coordinate with the District Attorney's office.

John Gifford – Would like clarification regarding citizens that may accuse the City of using this as a way to get more money.

Chief Brown – Referred to the Power Point slide entitled, "Restoring Our Community Premise". The purpose is to "hold responsible", not just for absentee landlords. The goal is to promote responsible property ownership.

John Gifford – Who makes the final determination regarding whether there has been a violation of the ordinance?

Chief Brown – I am the authority, but the administrative portion does have a hearing process built into it.

Michael Ramirez – If a property owner is aware of a situation and starts the often timely process of eviction, how will you determine whether the property owner is cooperating or not?

Chief Brown – If the property owner can show that efforts are being made to rectify a situation, that would definitely be considered.

Vice Chair Hall – Commended the City for their efforts at starting this process.

Discussion ensued regarding tenant screening.

Unidentified CAC Member inquiry – Is there a way to tie the incidents to the tenants as well? They will often move around and cause the same problems at their new location within the valley.

Frank Gorman – Concurred that problem tenants truly do move around and cause problems wherever they go. Suggested that this is a valley problem and should be addressed valley-wide.

Chair Goodrich – How does the City propose to resolve problems when a rental property is not necessarily a rental any longer, but in the process of changing ownership hands, and there is no final owner.

City Attorney Vail – When there is no final property owner, the property is typically owned by the bank. This is an issue we will have to work on.

Sharon McComb – If we can get property owners to participate in the Crime-Free Multi-Housing Program, it goes a long way in preventing problem tenants from moving to other properties. Tenant screening is critical.

Chief Brown – Asked that the CAC provide their suggestions, ideas and feedback regarding funding possibilities and the concept of an aggressive approach to implementing the ordinances. We have applied for federal grants, and will keep the CAC updated on their status.

CDD Elliano – Remember that we still have criminal ordinances in place to deal with many of these issues. The proposed ordinances will be in addition to existing ordinances. We are looking for agency cooperation. Many of our departments do not even have the resources to deal with some of this currently, and we are looking for volunteers and suggestions for funding mechanisms.

Vice Chair Hall – Backtracking, I would like to refer to a point of contention for residents regarding current ordinances, such as the sign ordinance and the shopping cart ordinance. We

have many dilapidated signs that are eyesores, and shopping carts are still seen on city streets. It seems that some of the ordinances we already have are not being implemented.

CDD Elliano – In early 2009, the then City Council suspended the hand-held sign ordinance provisions due to the economy, but it is currently in the process of being reviewed by the Planning Commission. Regarding shopping carts, we have recently been working on the retailers providing a Shopping Cart Containment Plan that the City approves.

CDD Elliano referred to joint agency opportunities and current collaboration efforts regarding ordinances and implementation strategies with the City of San Jacinto and the County of Riverside. She mentioned the possibility of a San Jacinto Valley ROCS program.

CDD Elliano discussed the next steps for the CAC, and asked for comments or feedback from the CAC and government agencies or representatives, as well as comments from the public. She noted that the CAC could regulate public comments as they saw fit.

CDD Elliano concluded the presentation.

6. Feedback on Program Components - CAC Chair:

a. From CAC members

There was discussion amongst the CAC members regarding the benefits of cleaning up the City, and the fact that it would keep businesses in the valley. It was noted that the business base would be enhanced with the implementation of the Hemet ROCS program.

Frank Gorman – I am happy to see government representatives present, and hope that they will assist in the efforts to locate funding for this cause. I applaud the City Council and City staff for getting the first ordinances passed so quickly. As things come online, I would like to have the City report back regarding how many citations are being issued, and how much funding is being generated in fines as a result of this program.

Patty Drusky – We need to clean things up. The Chamber of Commerce works closely with Senator Emerson's office, Supervisor Stone's office, and Assemblyman Cook's office. They are very good about sending letters of recognition when extraordinary things happen. As we clean up, if we can focus on and communicate with government officials we will get recognition.

Mary Ann Mari – We need to identify the problems, localize them, and treat them, in order to prevent problem tenants from moving from place to place. We need a way to put it on the books so that other landlords can see the problems that these tenants have caused elsewhere and be hindered from renting to them.

Jim Connell – Regarding the establishment of a list of problem tenants for landlords to refer to during their screening process, he noted that he'd been advised such a list could not legally be established. He advised, however, that if a tenant left owing money to their former landlord, the debt could be placed on their credit report as a mechanism of warning potential future landlords.

b. From Council Liaisons and Government Agency Liaisons

Larry Smith – It is so good to hear that this is what our community wants. As ordinances roll out we will learn how to work together. This process is helpful to me, as an elected official. I will be working closely with Chief Brown on the funding efforts. This is important to me, and I thank you all for your participation.

7. Comments from the Public - CAC Chair

Kim Ochoa (a member of the audience) – Introduced herself as the owner of property at State St. and Kimball Ave, and noted that the house adjacent to hers has always been a problem. The surrounding criminal activity often prevents her from getting much sleep. There are times when she has had to call the police multiple times in one night, but those causing the problems have scanners and know when the police are coming so they disperse. She wanted to know what would constitute a chronic nuisance?

Chief Brown – Multiple calls accompanied by a resident's statements, even without officer knowledge to back them up, would constitute a chronic nuisance.

Julie Pauley (a member of the audience) – Introduced herself as a representative of Mobile Home Park owners throughout California. Hemet ROCS will obviously be a program that impacts us. We have a narrow ability to evict some of the mobile home park residents, since they are home owners who merely rent the land. The Crime-Free Multi-Housing Program is often something that mobile home parks can't enforce. If there's a way to put language into these ordinances that will allow mobile home parks to also benefit from them, it would be helpful.

8. Future Agenda Items

CDD Elliano advised that the next meeting would include additional information on upcoming ordinances. She suggested that if the CAC wished to embark on a presentation regarding the Crime-Free Multi-Housing Program, it was a big topic that CAC input and feedback was needed on.

Jim Connell stated that he was not in favor of a civil authority overlooking individual rental ownership businesses, but would like to see a discussion on how they could work together to police themselves. Also, regarding the criminal activity statistics presented by Chief Brown, I

would like to know if the numbers that he cited for the time frame that they applied to were excessive for a city the size of Hemet. What is Chief Brown's opinion or recommendation on how to bring those numbers down and reduce crime in the City, and what additional resources are needed to make this happen?

Chair Goodrich suggested the licensing process as a future agenda item.

Frank Gorman suggested that funding was an important item that should be discussed, and asked that any ideas be presented for discussion.

Other suggested agenda topics included shopping carts, temporary signs, parking violations, inoperable vehicles, front yard parking, the Crime-Free Multi-Housing Program and Rental Registration.

CDD Elliano suggested a discussion of the Abandoned Vehicle Abatement program.

Mary Ann Mari asked if there was a way to make the public more aware of their ability to submit complaints to the City regarding many of the problems they observe, and to use the complaint form on the City's website.

Council Member Smith stated that he would like to offer a moment for comments from the attending public representatives.

State Senator Emerson addressed the Committee, and discussed the concept of collaborative efforts among agencies .

Various members of the audience addressed the CAC to offer suggestions (*speakers were inaudible*).

Mona Groff mentioned that she had been involved in the extensive efforts regarding the ownership of the hospital. She noted that Dr. Simpson was one of the valley's greatest doctors, and that if the City of Hemet and the San Jacinto Valley did not shape up, he planned to relocate elsewhere.

9. Adjournment to the meeting of May 21, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. – CAC Chair

The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 p.m. to Monday, May 21, 2012 at 3:30 p.m.

CDD Elliano noted that the next meeting would probably be held in the downstairs library meeting room, and that Minutes would be emailed upon completion.