

RiverPark/ Towncenter Neighborhood Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 14th, 2010 @ Rio Vista Middle School

Call to order at 6:37

RiverPark Board Members

Chair – Michelle Pyfrom

Vice Chair – VACANT

Secretary/Treasurer – Gina Herkel

Member at Large – Kristen Looby

Member at Large – VACANT

Scheduled Guests

Police Chief of Oxnard – Jeri Williams

Senior Beat Officer Daniel Shrubbs, Beat 12 Coordinator, Oxnard Police Department

RiverPark Residents: sign in sheet on file

I. Welcome – Michelle at 6:39

- Since the location for this meeting changed, her husband is over at the other area, directing people here, so we will get started in a few minutes.
- There is signage up to direct folks to the right location.
- We have the new police chief here tonight to talk about a lot of changes, what she can do, etc. in addition to the Beat Officer and the Neighborhood Watch Patrol. This is a reminder to please be polite when speaking and when talking to each other; please also remember this when you are posting on FB that in the heat of the moment, the comment is still there, we are all neighbors, please keep that in mind.

II. Guest Speaker – Oxnard Police Chief Jeri Williams

- She is from Phoenix, Arizona, regardless of what you read, she doesn't go home every weekend, the last time she was home was May 19th, she hasn't gone back since then; she has been married for 21 years and has 2 sons.
- She was with the Phoenix Police Department for 22 years and retired as Assistant Chief. It was one of the busiest police departments; she worked with SWAT, canine, air, flag, community, training; there was a lot of responsibility; managing it all along with having a family is test of character.
- When selected here in Oxnard, it was a very arduous process; she came to this City and found a well run machine at the department; this is a great department and she is very blessed.
- First thing she would like to address → Mello Roos
 - She is aware the community pays a mello roos and is aware there is an expectation that some of it is to go to the police, some is earmarked for parks, streets, etc.
 - In studying this area, we found out that the police service has not done what we were supposed to do; there were supposed to be positions allocated and this has not been done; she is aware there has been a spike in vehicle burglaries, traffic issues, etc. and frankly, we are here to make you feel safe where you live and if we don't, then we need to tweek and change what we are doing. Customer service is a big issue and we have not been able to meet the demands because this District is huge.
 - Measure 0 allocated ten positions to be split between district 11 and 12, with 5 in each; these will be coming; however, we will not see the fruits of that labor for 12 – 18 months because these individuals are in the academy and in training. In the interim, will take people and use some overtime to increase officer presence until they are here full time.

- They are coming up with a plan to be more visible in the area, but be aware that comes with a cost to you as well, because there will be zero tolerance, meaning → it could be you that gets a ticket. So understand there is a give and take, a cause and effect with what you do, so that we all can feel safe.
- There have been 14 burglaries in vehicles; some ownership must be given to you; this is a joint partnership and we can do it together; you cannot leave iPods, purses, things of value, in your vehicle. Even if you are only going to be a minute. The car that was stolen had the keys in it. We need your assistance in that respect; If you see something out of place, please call them, their job is to make contact with whoever that is; it is your neighborhood, so call and let us know what we can do to help.
- Bottom line is we haven't been serving you the way we are supposed to, but we will increase our presence. You will see more increased officer presence on Monday (09/19), you will not get full time folks for 12 – 18 months; however, they will take people and use some overtime to increase officer presence in the meantime.
- **QUESTION:** Is there any interaction between private security and Oxnard PD?
 - Officer Shrubbs will answer this question.
 - We have been meeting with Securitas; in addition, Securitas has been contacted by the master HOA.
 - Officer Shrubbs was also previously not happy with it and he brought the issues to their attention as well.
 - They have started doing more work and a lot more logging; keep in mind, they are still driving around while folks in the community are sleeping. It is one more set of eyes and ears keeping watch, but please still make those calls for help or if something is out of the norm.
- **QUESTION:** With the traffic control if you drive around RP, there are no posted speed signs, maybe one at the beginning? In general we know the limit is 25, but a lot of people need to see a sign or they just go down Oxnard Blvd going 40 or 45 to get on freeway; that is an issue.
 - Write down to contact Streets
 - What she can do involves only the law enforcement side of it; however on the "streets side" of the issue, she can contact her fellow department heads to discuss the issue. She also does encourage community members to contact their elected officials, they are your voice so be sure you are heard. The only thing she asks is that if it is police related; please give her a chance to correct the issue first.
- **QUESTION:** Resident would like to recognize Oxnard PD for being very responsive when he has contacted them; however, yesterday, there was a guy in East Park, he appeared to be paranoid and asked the resident if he was the police; the individual took off his clothing and started climbing on the slide. He was told when he called not to contact the individual and nobody ever came. Resident requests assurance that it is not okay for "druggies" to hang out in our parks.
 - No, it is not okay for druggies to hang out in the parks; she can understand why he was advised to not make contact with the individual, because we do not know what is going to happen; but if we are telling you to contact them (the police), we also don't want to chide you for calling or make you feel bad for calling on the issue.
 - Please continue to call us; it shouldn't have happened that way, but do know too, if it a crime against a person or property, that is Priority One, so that may have been a Priority Two or Priority Three call; you should have had better service, but just keep that in mind.
- **QUESTION:** The traffic circles; there are many close calls.
 - These are designed to slow people down.
 - Email to the traffic engineer to get more signs posted since there not enough posted; they have also addressed the issues of the trees blocking signage.
 - 805-357-4470
- **QUESTION:** Speed bumps- we were told we would have to pay for them ourselves and then some residents didn't want them; so that was another issue.

- She says talk to our elected officials; others utilize their voice on a routine regular basis, but those are the folks that get responses; they need to hear our concerns so they can make changes;
- **QUESTION:** If there are certain folks that live here that always speed in their cars or have Harleys and have them loud and tear out, is it in appropriate to take a picture of their license plate and report it that this person does it?
 - Not inappropriate to make documentation.
 - Example given: Received call regarding a speeder, the caller said what time it occurs, gave description of the vehicle; the police were able to go out and catch the driver speeding in the act; if you have a problem person, give us a call, we will send someone out to follow that person coming out, revving their engine and/or speeding; give the time, a description, and we will come out.
 - Call traffic office at 385- 7751, leave message if need be.
 - Not recommended you make that personal contact
- **QUESTION:** Is there any kind of vehicle code about bicycles on sidewalks; resident walks with dogs on sidewalks and is nearly hit by bicyclists.
 - There is a city ordinance against it, if see it they do cite it. Typically see it in residential areas more often where there are bigger streets and cars are going faster; they can cite folks.
- **QUESTION:** Buses what about that and the bikes.
 - The bike lane goes through that bus stop, you normally want the bus to give right of way to biker; and soon as the biker goes through, the bus should pull in.
 - Normally don't want bikes on the sidewalks because you have pedestrians, animals, etc.
 - In reference to bus area, the officer will get back to folks because he is not familiar with it since it is new, but the bikes should be following the rules of the road as other motorists.
- **QUESTION:** With the three traffic circles, the varying speed limit signs and the school at the end, it makes it very confusing for someone that doesn't live here to get a feel for what the real speed limit on the street is; you see 35 and directly next to it is a school, less than ten feet away is a 25 mile; it is very confusing for the casual driver that comes down the street to know what the speed limit is. What is the speed limit in the school zone and how is it designated?
 - The 25 mile school zone speed limit is during school hours; so on weekends, the speed limit could be higher.
 - Aware of the issues at the Thames/Forest Park intersection during school hours; a traffic light has been approved.
- **QUESTION:** Fire hazards; people park in front of the fire hydrants; same car always parks in this location.
 - Take a picture and send it in.
 - Cars should park ten feet from the fire hydrant.
 - These are things we need to be vigilant about; parking in the alleys, parking in front of the fire hydrants; we need them to do this, these are the things where residents would like to see more activity; with this new plan we will see more of that.
 - Fire hydrants will have signage once turned over to city.
- **QUESTION:** Is there a certain time a person playing in a band can play their music? A resident indicates from around 9 am until 1 am, their neighbor is playing with his band. What do you do after you have called so many times; folks were even knocking on their garage door and yelling that is was enough, and still, no response.
 - This is a disturbance, there are things in place to address this issue; they will get disturbance card initially, if they have to respond again, will get fined.
 - It can be reported as a disturbance at anytime, no specified hours, if it is disturbing you and your quiet enjoyment; even a loud television.

- However, don't expect them to stop if music too loud and overheard while they (the police) happen to be driving by, they will not automatically stop, someone else must call and say they are being disturbed; it cannot be the police who are being disturbed.
- Remember you have a HOA, so you can also file a complaint.
- **QUESTION:** With the turning over of the streets to the City and then doing all this paving and painting, what will this mean if Shea (resident alleges) is pulling out when they sell their last unit, will that mean the streets are going to just sit here unpaved.
 - Officer Shrubbs indicates he believes it has to be % developed to be turned over, it doesn't have to be occupied, just built, he will check.
- In close, Police Chief Jeri Williams
 - Thank you for being here, it says you care about your neighborhood, more than twenty plus residents at every Neighborhood Council meeting she has attended; if we can do better, please let us know and if we are doing a great job, please let us know.

III. Beat 12 Officer Report-Daniel Shrubbs

- Officer Shrubbs passed out the map of incidents; he will just take a couple minutes.
- The map is a three month period; if you have been to a meeting previously, the typical number of instances is about five to six; if you look at this map, you will see a total of 23; keep in mind these are these are the summer months; while it looks like it was busy, everything north of Lakeview had nothing.
- One of stolen vehicles was recovered, the keys were locked inside the car; this was a crime of opportunity; the car was recovered the next night.
- If you are looking at the map; look towards the center left near Serenade Apartments; the apartments are working on the parking issues; there are garage audits to make sure folks are parking in the garages; once the new plan is initiated, they will be able to concentrate more on that area.
- Commercial burglary; this was garage maintenance; not a retail store.
- Most of the crimes are auto, 14 out of the 23; 2 were residential burglaries in Serenade; a lot of these issues will be addressed with more police officers; hopefully at next meeting see difference.
- 385-8241 – Officer Shrubbs
- **QUESTION:** Who is in charge of the dump trucks parking where they are not supposed to be? This truck parks on Moss Landing, it is usually there from 2 until like 5; it has tore up the street because it is leaking all over.
 - Give Officer Shrubbs the address and the information and he will check it out tomorrow; if it is leaking fluid, then it is a hazard.
- **QUESTION:** We keep hearing things will be paved; this has been going on for three plus years; his back alley has not been paved, surrounding alleys have had up to two coats; children can't ride bikes/roller skate unless you want them to fall due to the uneven pavement.

IV. Neighborhood Watch

- Deborah
 - Individuals that attended/volunteered during Neighborhood Watch meeting, agreed on a passive patrol, this is not where we have folks walking with vests.
 - Be the nosey neighbor; as drive in and out, look around, see what is going on; they will be handing out fliers quarterly.
 - Encourage you to join the FB; it is really a great place to connect with others; the most important thing is watching out for each other.
 - Another sheet handed out, game called Six Degrees of RiverPark; if you know your neighbors, it is easier for you to know who is around; know their car, etc, if you have their number or are their friend on FB then you are ahead of the game.

- We need to take care of each others; it is not just me, not just my neighborhood; we just need a lot of this looking out and knowing who each other are; as long as taking care of each other, we are ahead.
- November 17th having another NW meeting.

V. Questions/Concerns

- Swampy grass due to sprinklers going on too often.
 - Sprinklers are controlled, they may be set off by something, if you see one of the Gothic workers, they will look at it; otherwise contact Randy.
- Residents rides bike around neighborhood, is an Avon rep; doesn't go on FB; many of the Hispanics are unaware of the meetings and do not know what is going on; also, the fliers are not printed in Spanish.
 - Verifications of where residents unaware of the meetings reside asked; resident is unsure.
 - Spanish is not printed on the back of the fliers, it can be; however, we would need a volunteer who is bilingual; none of the members of the Board speak Spanish. Someone would need to translate at meetings, emails, minutes, etc; we would need a very active volunteer; so if anyone is willing to volunteer, it is a possibility out there for anyone that wants it and is willing to help.
- City Corps was to disburse the fliers this month and they will do it for community organizations; some residents did not receive their fliers this month; unsure what happened with City Corp delivering them.

VI. Proposed Specific Amendment

- Passing out the proposed specific amendment from Shea at this time; this was also posted on the FB site.
- The RPNC requested the facts of what the amendment was, including pictures, and this is what was received.
- Prior to the City Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 13th regarding the proposed specific amendment, the developer requested the RPNC provide them a letter of support of this proposed specific amendment. The developer was advised the RPNC would not provide either a letter of support or opposition to the proposed specific amendment because we did not have the appropriate amount of time to let the residents vote on the issue. The RPNC represents the community as a whole and therefore cannot take a stand on any issue without following the proper procedures and letting the resident home owners vote. While each RPNC Board Member may have their own opinions as residents, the NC represents the community as a whole and therefore, all resident/homeowners must be given a say.
- The City Council meeting was then continued to October 4th.
- The RPNC has had issues lately getting information because there are a lot of other groups stepping up and saying that they are speaking for all the residents of RiverPark; however, the RPNC is the place to speak on behalf of all the residents; lately when RPNC has asked for information, we are being told ..."we already had a meeting with you guys and that info was to be passed to all the residents" when they did not have a meeting with us and the information is not being passed along to all residents. The proposed specific amendment being passed out is directly from the developer, it is not anyone else paraphrasing or summarizing the submittal. Read it over and form your own opinion, the City Council reads their emails, whether you are for it or against it, email them if to voice your opinion. Lately the RPNC has had no voice because other groups have represented that they are the voice for all of RP.

VII. Misc

- Next RPNC meeting
 - December meeting
 - This meeting will be an election meeting only, no guests are scheduled.
 - At this time, none of the current board members plan on coming back on; therefore, if you are interested, please attend the meeting.

- If the Board is empty or there or not enough volunteers, it will disband.
- Bathrooms
 - They are not open during the day; they were closed previously due to drug use, prostitution, etc going on while open.
 - That can be voted to change as well; you can also call the city parks to have them open it.

VIII. Adjourn at 8:04