

CASA CONEJO MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES of January 19, 2011

The Casa Conejo MAC held an official meeting Wednesday, January 19, 2011, 6:00 P.M.
Walnut Elementary School, 501 Dena Drive, Newbury Park

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by *Jennifer Clark* at 6:07 P.M. MAC members *Jennifer Clark, Clara Ann Deemer, Janell Smith* and *Edward J. Villa, Jr.* were present. *Bobbi Ross-Neier, Dustin Woomer,* and *Megan Sandoval* were absent.

2. Flag salute

Jennifer Clark led the salute to the flag.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The adoption of the agenda, with the change that the Information item was moved up to follow item number 5, passed 4-0 on a motion by *Jennifer Clark* seconded by *Edward Villa*.

4. Approval of the minutes of November 17, 2010

The November minutes were approved 4-0 on a motion by *Edward Villa* seconded by *Clara Deemer*.

5. Comments of Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks

Supervisor Parks said that the County welcomes a new Sheriff. He was sworn into office with other County officials, and Supervisor Parks was also chosen to serve as Chair of the Board of Supervisors for the coming year. She also said that the County was closely reviewing decisions being made at the State level, in particular regarding the early release of State prisoners and budget cuts to health care. She said that County services would become more accessible to residents in her District with the opening of a new clinic at the site of the former Borders book store, providing health care, public health and behavioral health services, and programs for seniors. Easier access would also result from the planned move of Human Services Agency offices to the Under One Roof facility on Hillcrest Drive. She expressed best wishes for *Megan Sandoval* as her recovery continues after her surgery, adding that she knew Megan had really wanted to be at this evening's meeting.

8. Information items

a. Introduction of Ventura County Sheriff Geoff Dean and Assistant Sheriff John Crombach

Sheriff Geoff Dean said that he was honored to serve as the nineteenth Sheriff of Ventura County. He noted that Casa Conejo was his "beat" thirty-two years ago as a deputy. He introduced *Assistant Sheriff John Crombach* who most recently served in Oxnard and enjoyed a brief retirement, and he added that his department's other *Assistant Sheriff Gary Pentis* had grown up in Casa Conejo and had deep ties to the community. He expressed his commitment to providing excellent service to Casa Conejo. One of the great challenges facing his department involved the State's budget crisis, and he said that he had cut his command staff in half and that they were working very long hours. He also expressed his concerns about the possibility of the State's early release of State prisoners into the community. *Clara Deemer* asked whether it wouldn't be possible to have these prisoners moved to Mexico, and he replied that it was not an option. *Nathan Borin* asked whether they could be taken instead to other states, and he said that except for prisoners in the federal system this probably was not legal. *Nathan Borin* asked whether new laws eliminating as an infraction the possession of less than an ounce of marijuana should cut the numbers of prisoners. *Sheriff Dean* replied that there were few people in jail for that. *Nathan Borin* congratulated the Sheriff on reducing the command staff, and asked if the cops on the street would also be reduced. *Sheriff Dean* replied that they were already working very hard now, but were also benefitting significantly by help from the department's volunteers. He then inquired whether any State funding would be provided to cover the cost of State prisoners released into communities, and the Sheriff said that this was uncertain. Finally, *Nathan Borin* asked if raising the cost of fines could help, and the Sheriff explained with examples how much of the current cost of fines already goes to the State. *Supervisor Parks* noted that a goal of the new Sheriff was to reduce by 75% the rate of recidivism among criminals, and she said that the Board of Supervisors had recently voted to support programs to advance that goal. *Sheriff Dean* said that the VCSD was working on crimes involving vehicle burglaries in Casa Conejo. In the past month there had been almost thirty of the burglaries, and he emphasized the contributions residents make in solving these crimes.

He said that residents need to be watchful and call his department if they notice unusual activity in their neighborhoods. **Wayne Schuetz** said that a vehicle of his had been broken into that week, and that several days earlier he had alerted the VCSD about a suspicious male near his home who disappeared before deputies arrived to investigate. He felt that a faster response time could have helped prevent the crime, and Sheriff Dean said that calling the watch commander could also be useful in such cases. **Sergeant Jeff Miller** and **Captain Brent Kerr** spoke about the listing of crimes in unincorporated areas including Casa Conejo available on the VCSD “e-watch” electronic service, which residents can subscribe to at ecsheriff.watch@ventura.org. People who sign up receive e-mailed alerts, a regular newsletter with information about their community, and can also assist in fighting crime by sending the department tips about neighborhood incidents or unusual activity. The phone number (805) 654-9511 was also provided for residents to contact the VCSD on weekdays. **Assistant Sheriff Crombach** also stressed how residents can help the department and function as a “force multiplier”, and that the current emphasis on community policing is effective. **Wayne Schuetz** cited the example of communities in Los Angeles County that suffered when their law enforcement agency cut services with the passage of Prop. 13. **Captain Kerr** said that partnering with communities was important. **Janell Smith** commented that people should park their cars in their garages to discourage crime. **Wayne Schuetz** asked about the process for dealing with graffiti on private property, and whether there was any cost apportionment from the department when it was cleaned up. **Captain Kerr** responded that any vandalism to property needs to be called in to the VCSD immediately. **J. Verges** said that the traffic signal at Wendy Drive and Old Conejo Road was slow in changing lights during non-peak hours, and **Jennifer Clark** replied that this was in the City of Thousand Oaks and the comment would be referred to the City engineer who often attends the MAC meetings. Another resident commented that law enforcement needed to cite motorists at that intersection for failing to stop. **Supervisor Parks** spoke about the VCSD’s “Reverse 911” emergency notification program, and distributed brochures for signing up for it. **Rick Coplin** described his efforts to stop unsolicited advertising materials and newspapers from being left on his property, and he requested the County’s help. He termed it “driveway spam” and said that he had estimated that 900 tons were annually left on residents’ property in the Thousand Oaks area. He said that County codes made this activity illegal as a public nuisance. **Sheriff Dean** suggested that he contact Ventura County Code Enforcement with his complaints. A resident commented that the passage of Prop. 13 was not responsible for problems associated with funding cuts in law enforcement.

6. Public Comments

Rick Coplin requested Supervisor Parks’ and the County’s help in stopping “driveway spam”. **Nathan Borin** commented on the arrows painted on the Frankie Drive in front of a home that had been hit three times by cars. The owner of the home was present and indicated that he appreciated having the arrows. **Nathan Borin** said that he would like to have a CHP speed feed back trailer returned to Ruth Drive. **Clara Deemer** said that she was looking into having speed humps installed on Ruth Drive. A resident requested that 25 mph speed limit signs be added at both ends of Ruth Drive, as well as on Jenny Drive.

7. Council Comments

Jennifer Clark expressed appreciation that the City of Thousand Oaks had solved the problem of the left hand turns in front of Sequioa Middle School that had been discussed at earlier MAC meetings. **Clara Deemer** said that she was working with an arborist on compiling a list of trees that are most suitable for planting in Casa Conejo.

8. Information items

- a. **Introduction of Ventura County Sheriff Geoff Dean and Assistant Sheriff John Crombach** (above)
- b. **Presentation on So. California Edison service, SCE Region Manager Rudy Gonzales**
Many tips for conserving energy and lowering bills were described by Rudy Gonzales. He detailed the advantages of programs such as the SCE summer discount plan, the upcoming “smart connect meters” and new “time of use” tier rates structure, and the SCE public information sessions on solar systems. He said that SCE was working on streamlining the permitting process locally for installing the different outlets that the next generation of plug in electric vehicles will need. He said that SCE was committed to

removing graffiti from its facilities within 1-2 business days, and he answered questions about transmission lines and trees near them.

c. Update on library service

Supervisor Parks spoke about the benefits to unincorporated residents of the County library system being newly accepted into the Southern California Library Cooperative, which also includes all public libraries in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. The Director of the Thousand Oaks Library **Steven Brogden** spoke about cuts to library funding that are being proposed by the State of California. **Nathan Borin** said that suggestions put into the City library's suggestion box are ignored.

d. Dial-a-Ride service

Supervisor Parks spoke about the Board of Supervisors' recent vote to contract with the City for all Dial-A-Ride services to unincorporated areas that include Casa Conejo. **Nathan Borin** asked if fees would rise, and she replied that the cost would remain the same. She also described the work by the Ventura County Transportation Commission to better coordinate the routes used in public transportation so that residents can travel more efficiently through the county.

e. Update on Borchard wetlands

Supervisor Parks said that an estimate for the value of the wetlands property had been completed by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. **Clara Deemer** asked if there would be any benefit to residents paying flood insurance if the wetlands were used by the Watershed Protection District for flood control, and Supervisor Parks said that there would be, and that by the next MAC meeting she should have a feasibility study for this use ready from the District.

f. Casa Conejo CERT

Clara Deemer said that a refresher course would be useful for the CERT graduates.

g. Casa Conejo graffiti removal in public and private areas

Edward Villa noted that a new training session was being planned, and that the graffiti removal team need keys to access the channels.

9. Committee updates

There were none.

10. Action items

There were none.

11. Suggestions for future agenda items

There was a request for information about postal service, as well as having an item on public transportation issues.

12. Adjournment until the March 16 MAC meeting

Jennifer Clark adjourned the meeting at 8:05 pm until the March 16 meeting.