

**ANTIOCH CITY COUNCIL
QUALITY OF LIFE FORUM**

**Special Meeting/Quality of Life Forum
9:00 A.M**

**March 29, 2008
Nick Rodriguez Community Center**

9:00 A.M – ROLL CALL

Mayor Freitas called the Special City Council Quality of Life Forum to order at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, March 29, 2008 at the Nick Rodriguez Community Theatre.

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmembers Kalinowski, Davis, Simonsen and Mayor Freitas
Absent: Councilmember Moore

A. PRESENTATIONS AND OPEN DISCUSSION ON QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES IN THE CITY OF ANTIOCH

Mayor Freitas welcomed the public and briefly explained the agenda.

1. OPENING COMMENTS: WHAT BROUGHT US TOGETHER

Moderator Larry Bienati welcomed the public to the Quality of Life Forum No. 6 and with the assistance of a Power Point Presentation, briefly spoke to past forums. He then went on to explain the agenda and how he would like to conduct the forum.

2. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Mayor Freitas stated the purpose of those meetings was to promote discussions amongst the public and City, noting those forums could provide the dialogue exchange on key issues, resulting in formal action being taken by the City Council. He also spoke to transportation improvements, economic development, crime and school issues.

Mayor Freitas announced Item No. 5 would be taken at this time.

5. ANTIOCH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

AUSD Superintendent Deborah Sims stated it was the goal and strategic plan of the Antioch Unified School District (AUSD) to raise the bar and close the gap of the student achievement levels for all students, as well as to provide a higher level of education. Ms. Sims noted the core beliefs of the AUSD: 1) academic achievement; 2) excellent school system was an inclusive system; 3) all systems, structures and processes must be coherent and designed to support all teachings and learning; 4) excellence, equity and accountability were the keys to success, and; 5) leadership at all levels.

Ms. Sims further spoke to achievements that had been reached by the AUSD, such as high school reform and elementary and middle school achievements. She further spoke to college preparation for high school students, the opening of the new Dozier-Libby Medical High School and the new AUSD Delta Academy of the Performing Arts. She stated the AUSD was also working towards the creation of a JFK Law School at the Deer Valley High School and hoped the school would create an involvement for students with the State Supreme Court. A parent round table was being developed to guide and focus on academic programs with several different subcommittees working towards school improvement and future goals for parents and teachers.

Ms. Sims noted the AUSD would further work with the City's Police Department, as well as City personnel to work towards the goals and achievements set forth by the AUSD.

A brief question and answer period ensued between Ms. Sims and the public. Ms. Sims noted an Annual AUSD Forum would be held in April and encouraged the public's attendance.

3. DEPARTMENT UPDATES

➤ Police

Police Chief Hyde presented a Power Point Presentation that spoke to:

- Problem Solving
- APD 3 Year Strategic Plan
- City Crime View Program
- Crime Mapping
- Patrol Beat Health Program
- P.A.C.T.: Sycamore Drive Area
- Crime Free Multi-Family Housing Project
- Holiday Safety Project
- Knoll Park Neighborhood Project
- Deer Valley Plaza . 11 P.M. Curfew
- Arrests and Crime Statistics . Jan-Feb 2007 v. 2008
- Crime / Population Statistics
- Number of Calls for Service
- Police Budget & Staffing
- Crime Tip Reward Program
- Neighborhood Beat Alert Program
- Nuisance Properties Brochure
- Traffic Accident Reduction Program
- Highway 4 Bypass
- School Traffic Safety Project
- 2nd Saturday Neighborhood Sweep+
- APD PAL Program
- CERT . Community Emergency Response Team
- Coffee With The Cops

A brief recess was taken at 10:25 A.M. and reconvened at 10:40 A.M. with all Councilmembers present with the exception of Councilmember Moore.

Moderator Larry Bienati welcomed the public back from the break and spoke to upcoming agenda items.

Police Chief Hyde introduced members of the voluntary Crime Prevention Program to the public.

➤ ***Rental Inspection Program***

Neighborhood Improvement Coordinator (NIC) Graham provided a power point presentation that spoke to:

- Code Enforcement
- Vacant and Foreclosed Properties
- Multi-Agency Coordination
- Residential Rental Inspection Program
- 1st Year Accomplishments
- Ongoing Program Development

➤ ***Economic Development***

Guy Bjerke, Economic Development Director (EDD), provided a video and power point presentation on current Economic Development issues pertaining to:

- Jobs & Development Update
- Transportation Update

Brian Nunnally, Economic Development Analyst (EDA), provided a power point presentation detailing events planned for the Downtown Rivertown District area in 2008.

4. UPDATE FROM HOUSING AUTHORITY

Bruce Smargiasso, Contra Costa Housing Authority, discussed potential renter screening issues and stated it was a practice, policy and a priority for the City. He further explained the details of the Housing Choice Voucher program and encouraged ongoing public involvement to make the program a success.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Per inquiry by a citizen, Mr. Smargiasso explained the rental fees regarding Section 8. Councilmember Kalinowski interjected additional language would be forthcoming from Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher regarding rental fees.

A resident asked if a program could be established and tailored towards the youth of the community.

In response to a resident, Mr. Smargiasso explained the new Section 8 rules, as well as the screening process, noting all Section 8 residents currently in the system had been screened five years ago.

Mary Dodson, resident, expressed the need for the preservation of the Rivertown District.

Willie Mims, resident, requested additional information regarding the AUSD Blue Print for Excellence, wherein School Board Member Agopian explained its meaning. He expressed concern to the area where the majority of police service calls were located, as well as police officers working longer hours, per Chief Hyde's previous presentation. Chief Hyde addressed the meaning of high priority service calls noting wellness committees were formed for police officers, in terms of the effect it would have on their family, as well as family support issues.

In regards to the Rental Fees Program, Mr. Smargiasso explained the process. Mr. Mims expressed concern regarding the families displaced from the program. Mr. Smargiasso further spoke to the Contra Costa County Housing Authority's rules. Referring to the 31 families terminated from the program, he stated his obligation to the City was to ensure only those individuals who abided by the rules remained in the program. Those individuals, who chose to violate the rules, had no right to continue in the program.

A resident inquired as to a Nuisance Property brochure availability, wherein Chief Hyde stated the information would be available on the City's Website in the near future.

Per a resident inquiry, Mayor Freitas noted a committee was reviewing the issue of garbage and lack of landscape maintenance along the on and off-ramps within the community and changes were forthcoming.

Sandy O'Leary expressed her concern regarding an area on Cavallo Road, between 18th Street and Kean Avenue, in terms of dilapidated properties and questioned who was responsible. NIC Graham stated the area was currently being reviewed and stated he would follow up on the concern.

A resident commended the City Council and Staff for holding the forum, and felt it was important the citizens understand the community had grown quickly and there was a learning curve. She stated she valued the Council's leadership in this area.

Robin Agopian expressed her concern regarding the graffiti throughout the community and questioned the manner in which it would be cleaned. NIC Graham explained the process of cleaning graffiti was an ongoing issue. Councilmember Davis noted the issue would be further discussed at the next City Council meeting, where he would provide additional information regarding a graffiti reward program.

Anna Morris, resident, spoke to the positive effects of the Quality of Life Forums.

Jesse Zuniga, resident, suggested citizens who wished to become involved in their community could participate in the Adopt-A-Street Program and commended the City Council and Staff for the accomplishments made throughout the community. He requested Code Enforcement place additional pressure on business owners to abate weeds.

Gary Agopian, resident, commended the public for their efforts in caring for the community and encouraged further steps in this direction.

7. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Kalinowski expressed his appreciation of the public's participation. Referring to the City Council's pending budget, he stated should any deficit spending be necessary, the City would, to the best of its ability, not hamper any of the City's goals or objectives. Furthermore, referring to the accomplishments of the Police Department, he commended the entire Police Department for their efforts and actions.

Councilmember Davis also expressed his appreciation to the public for their participation in the community and stated his encouragement to the Police Department and Code Enforcement for their accomplishments and actions.

Councilmember Simonsen spoke to the efforts put forth by City Staff and felt they should be commended. He further spoke to code enforcement issues and requested additional emphasis be placed on street vendors. He further expressed his appreciation to the public for their efforts towards the improvement of the community.

Mayor Freitas spoke to the determination of the *United Citizens for a Better Neighborhood (UCBN)* group and commended the Council for their participation and actions taken due to the feedback from the Quality of Life Forums. He commended the public for implementing public policy, as well as the public's efforts on an ongoing basis, towards the betterment of the community. He also expressed his appreciation to City Staff and all speakers for their time and effort. He added the next scheduled Quality of Life Forum would be held in July.

Mayor Freitas adjourned the meeting at 12:25 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Lawson
Minutes Clerk

Attest:

Donald P. Freitas, Mayor