

**ANTIOCH CRIME PREVENTION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

Antioch, California
January 17, 2018

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Thurston called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M., on January 17, 2018 in the Antioch Police Department Community Room.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners White, Parham, Eubanks, LaPoint and Chairperson Thurston

Staff: Lieutenant, Tarra Mendes
Officer, Matt Summers
Officer, Tom Lenderman
Coordinator, Hans Ho
Minutes Clerk, Kitty Eiden

3. CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

Chairperson Thurston welcomed everyone to the meeting. He announced copies of a City department phone listing and Police Crime Prevention Mission Statement were available in the community room. He discussed the manner in which the meeting would be conducted.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (November 20, 2017)

Chairperson Thurston amended the minutes of November 20, 2017, page 7, Item 10, second bullet to read: "December Crime Prevention Commission meeting – Cancelled".

On motion by Commissioner Eubanks, seconded by Commissioner Parham the Crime Prevention Commission unanimously approved the minutes of November 20, 2018 as amended. The motion carried the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners White, Parham, Eubanks, LaPoint and Chairperson Thurston

5. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

6. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2018

Commissioner White nominated Harry Thurston to serve as Chair of the Police Crime Prevention Commission.

The Police Crime Prevention Commission unanimously appointed Harry Thurston as Chair of the Police Crime Prevention Commission.

Commissioner Eubanks nominated Commissioner White to serve as Vice Chair of the Police Crime Prevention Commission.

The Police Crime Prevention Commission unanimously appointed Commissioner White as Vice Chair of the Police Crime Prevention Commission.

7. PRESENTATIONS TO THE COMMISSION

“Community Engagement Team” - Officers Summers and Lenderman

In response to Officer Summers, Commissioner Parham stated she had received positive feedback from Sandra Kelly representing the “C” Street Neighborhood Watch group regarding the Community Engagement Team (CET) efforts to address homeless issues in their neighborhood.

Officer Lenderman stated he was in contact with Ms. Kelly and she had been assisting with issues occurring at the Marina.

Commissioner White reported that she had heard that the Community Engagement Team wanted to connect with the community, which she felt was a positive step for the City.

Chairperson Thurston reported that he had received a lot of positive feedback regarding the actions of the Community Engagement Team.

Commissioner Eubanks reported he had been a Commissioner for several months and he had been present during briefings on the team. He stated he had noticed their presence throughout the City.

Officer Summers and Lenderman gave a brief presentation, which included the following information:

- The role of the Community Engagement Team was to deal with quality of life issues for citizens and businesses within Antioch
- The Community Engagement Team did not answer calls for service so that they could respond quickly and meet with people to find a long term solutions
- The Community Engagement Team focused on homeless issues such as providing resources and working with Code Enforcement to abate properties

- The Community Engagement Team respected the rights of the homeless, and served them with encampment paperwork informing them they had 24 hours to vacate. If they failed to do so, they were taken into custody and their property was stored for a certain amount of time. If not claimed within that timeframe, the property was disposed of
- It was important to report homeless encampments so they could be identified and provided services
- The Community Engagement Team provided education to property and business owners on procedures for arresting trespassers and how to make their property less attractive (such as trimming of landscaping, adding lighting, security, surveillance, securing dumpsters)
- Point In Time Count was a National effort requested by HUD every other year to count the homeless in the community
- Contra Costa County conducted Point In Time Counts yearly, this year taking place on January 23, 2018 – statistics on homelessness comes from these counts
- Panhandling was another focus of enforcement efforts – most commonly related to heroin addiction or alcoholism
- Many people were homeless by choice because if they had animals shelters would not take or there was some type of anti-authority or substance abuse issue
- A large number of the homeless were from out of state
- California made it difficult to arrest for crimes such as drug use, theft and shoplifting
- When someone was contacted, resources were offered and they were issued a warning to vacate. If they received a trespassing letter from the owner they were arrested and given a citation. They were then warned that a subsequent arrest could result in a custodial arrest and they would be taken to Martinez
- Sometimes the homeless preferred being in custody so they could have shelter and food in a safe environment

Commissioner Eubanks stated he noticed an improvement with the homeless encampments along the walking trails.

Commissioner White stated she worked for an organization that provided resources for the homeless. She noted they conducted a survey to determine where they came from and the majority of them were from out of state; however they came here due to the perceived resources.

Chairperson Thurston commented that he supported the Community Engagement Team's efforts to go beyond enforcement and offering services in an attempt to end the cycle.

Commissioner Eubanks thanked the Community Engagement Team for their dedication.

Officer Lenderman discussed a family that spoke little English, who panhandled and ran scams within the City for 12 years. He explained that they were Romanian gypsies who used their children while their father waited in a nearby Mercedes. He noted they preyed upon the generosity of citizens. He further noted they were able to identify them and stop it from occurring. He stated another family came in and he was able to identify them and cite them for panhandling. He requested residents refrain from giving panhandlers any money.

Chairperson Thurston urged residents wanting to donate to give the money to a support organization.

Officer Summers agreed with Chairperson Thurston and added that giving the homeless money or items was sustaining homelessness. He reported that he had witnessed a lady leaving a box of food at the bus shelter and he informed her that there were not many homeless in that particular area and animals would get to the food prior to any person. He noted donations to organizations would have more of an impact.

Commissioner Parham stated she would provide Officers Summers and Lenderman information on Dog Scouts who provide care for homeless animals.

Officer Summers explained that the homeless were very attached to their animals. He stated a service center was going to be available that would provide cages for anyone wanting to secure their dog while they attended to hygiene and business issues.

In response to a speaker asking about a person who frequently solicited businesses, Officer Lenderman reiterated that they met with and educated property and business owners regarding this issue. He stated if panhandlers were at off ramps they could use the California vehicle code for a citation. He noted otherwise they had to go by the Antioch Municipal Code and they could not guarantee the District Attorney would file on those cases.

Lieutenant Mendes explained that she was aware that Margie Kubbera solicited businesses; however, she was not homeless and in fact had a caretaker. She urged residents not to give her any money.

Officer Summers reported a lot of homeless received some financial assistance such as Social Security Income and food stamps. He noted there were also several places for them to receive meals. He further noted that he had vouchers for the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) that he gave out so individuals could receive a free ID card and he also offered to provide them with a ride to the DMV. He stated many of the homeless were in a rut and accustomed to homelessness.

Officer Lenderman reported in one case there was a younger couple with a young child who lost their home and Officer Summers would visit their encampment and follow up

with them regularly. He noted he had even shopped for the child; however the parents had made some poor decision and now they do not know where the child was located.

Commissioner Eubanks stated he appreciated everything that was being done to provide services to the homeless.

Officer Lenderman reported Chief Brooks allowed them to give the homeless the respect they deserved. He stated this assignment had taught him how to engage with people.

In response to Chairperson Thurston, Officer Lenderman stated they also filled in wherever they are needed in the community such as extra patrols in high visibility areas, meetings and public outreach.

Officer Summers added they also assist in investigations, traffic and parking enforcement.

In response to a speaker, Officer Summers reported they had been successful at motivating some of the homeless.

Officer Lenderman added that they also measured success when a homeowner was no longer afraid to go out in backyard because they did not know what is on the other side of their fence or when they reported an issue and knew it would be addressed.

Officer Summers announced that they were available for a ride-along and would provide their contact information.

Chairperson Thurston thanked Officers Summers and Lenderman for the presentation. He stated he would like to discuss the possibility of the Community Engagement Team working with the Business Watch Program.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

Business Watch Implementation – Status / issues / next step

Chairperson Thurston reported currently the three areas working to implement the Business Watch Program were the Downtown, Bluerock and 18th Street merchants.

Neighborhood Watch Best Practices Committee

Commissioner White invited everyone to attend the first meeting of the Neighborhood Watch Best Practices Committee at 10:00 A.M. on January 20, 2018 in the Police Department Community Room.

Commissioner Followup on Block Captain Verification Calls

Chairperson Thurston reported the Commission was continuing to work on the Block Captain Verification Calls and hopefully they would be completed by the next Police Crime Prevention Commission meeting. He announced once the data was collected, they would divide the Neighborhood Watch groups into seven areas, one for each Commissioner to mentor.

9. NEW BUSINESS - None

10. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS

Commission

Commissioner Eubanks announced he had been reappointed to the Police Crime Prevention Commission.

Chairperson Thurston congratulated Commissioners Eubanks and LaPoint for their reappointments.

Commissioner Eubanks reported the City Council had adopted a traffic calming policy that allowed residents to apply for speed humps/cushions in their neighborhoods.

Chairperson Thurston added that applications were subject to the approval of the City Engineer as well as the Police and Fire Departments.

Commissioner Eubanks announced that he would be completing his verification calls.

Commissioner LaPoint stated she had handout available that included tips and reviews for residential video cameras.

Commissioner Parham announced the budget for traffic calming devices would cover the cost of 10 humps/cushions to be installed and after that, the cost would be approximately \$7500 per device with costs paid for by the neighborhood. She encouraged residents to apply as soon as possible as applications were being considered on a first come/first serve basis. She noted the devices were pre-made and could be repositioned or removed.

A speaker asked if the City had considered the impact of traffic calming measures on home values.

Commissioner Parham responded that she did not believe they would impact home values; however, there were many speed bumps in the cities of Orinda, Brentwood and Oakley.

The speaker responded that speed bumps had decreased the value of her property in Oakland.

Lieutenant Mendes added that part of the application process was seeking the neighbor's approval, prior to installation.

Commissioner Parham announced the dedication for the kayak launch would be at 10:00 A.M. on January 18, 2018 at the marina. She noted kayak classes for teens would be offered through the recreation department.

Commissioner White reported her Neighborhood Watch groups had been on vacation. She announced a screening of a documentary on human trafficking would be held on January 18, 2018 at the Antioch Police Department Community Room; however the event had sold out. She encouraged residents to attend future screenings and discussed the importance of human trafficking awareness. She stated she would announce future screenings occurring in Antioch and the contact person for this event was Councilmember Wilson.

Commissioner Parham announced Chief Brooks was attending Neighborhood Watch meetings to discuss the results of the Community Issues Survey. She reported that the information was available on the City's website and Chief Brooks would like residents to prioritize their concerns. She stated vehicle break-ins were identified as a major concern and Chief Brooks reiterated the importance of not leaving anything visible in vehicles. She reported the scouts were issuing cautionary warning tickets on vehicles regarding what they observed making the vehicle an ideal target.

A speaker stated he felt warning tickets identified cars for criminals to target.

Lieutenant Mendes explained that it was actually the property being left in plain sight that was marking the vehicle for criminals.

Commissioner LaPoint reported the Antioch Police Department had provided a water bill insert with information on how to prevent auto burglaries. She encouraged Neighborhood Watch participants to share the information with their neighbors.

Chairperson Thurston encouraged residents to think like a criminal when looking at how well their homes and vehicles were secured and to always call police when they witnessed suspicious activity. He reported he had witnessed a lot of jaywalkers in the streets and he cautioned residents to be very careful driving.

Staff

Lieutenant Mendes stated thefts from vehicles were very preventable and there had been a reduction in violent crime and residential burglaries because it was easier to break into vehicles. She noted with the State reducing sentences anyone breaking into

a vehicle would only be issued a citation. She urged residents to secure their valuables so criminals could not see them. She reported two volunteers attended the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Course where they learned how to make property less attractive to criminals. She noted by appointment they were available to evaluate residences and could be contacted by calling 779-6900 and using the employee directory for Mr. Rupani. She stated if a message was left, he would call back to make an appointment to evaluate a property or make a presentation to Neighborhood Watch group. She noted this program was part of the Antioch Police Department efforts to have residents look out for themselves and their neighbors and make themselves less of a target. She further noted that even if items taken were not a big loss, the recovery had a significant impact and it was a violation of their space. She reported that years ago she had been a victim when she left her wallet visible and someone had stolen her personal items. She encouraged residents to secure their belongings prior to getting to their destination.

Coordinator Ho stated Frank Rupani was his patrol partner and if anyone needed to contact him, they could do so through him.

Chairperson Thurston suggested residents place a lock box in the vehicle's trunk to secure their registration.

Chairperson Thurston announced the following meeting/presentation and event schedule.

11. FUTURE COMMISSION MEETINGS / EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS / EVENTS

February 3, 2018 – Neighborhood Clean Up – Jacobson Park
February 21, 2018 – Crime Prevention Commission meeting

12. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Davidson questioned how many Police Crime Prevention Commissioners there were.

Chairperson Thurston responded there were seven Commissioners; however, currently there were two vacancies. He noted the deadline for applications to fill those vacancies closed on January 12, 2018 and interviews would be occurring in the near future.

Mr. Davidson suggested that once the Neighborhood Watch groups were divided among the Commissioners, a map be created showing the areas they covered.

Coordinator Ho stated that even though a Commissioner would be assigned an area, there may be times when boundaries would not be strictly enforced.

A resident suggested garaging vehicles whenever possible.

Chairperson Thurston suggested parking in areas where other cars were located.

Commissioner White reported that recently someone rang her and her neighbor's doorbells at 11:30 P.M. She stated she called out and no one responded and they left her residence. She encouraged residents to respond to people through a secure door so they were aware that there was someone in the residence.

Chairperson Thurston stated his ring doorbell recorded people ringing the doorbell and they would be aware that they were being watched.

Lieutenant Mendes stressed the importance of not opening the door to people they did not know and responding in a loud voice. She also urged residents to report the issue and request a drive by from the Antioch Police Department.

Chairperson Thurston suggested residents designate a safe place in their house and not to confront anyone trying to break in to their residence.

On motion by Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Eubanks the Crime Prevention Commission members present unanimously approved the minutes of January 17, 2018 as amended. The motion carried the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners White, Eubanks, LaPoint and Chairperson Thurston
Absent: Commissioner Parham

13. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Commissioner Parham, seconded by Commissioner White the Crime Prevention Commission members unanimously adjourned the meeting. The motion carried the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners White, Parham, Eubanks, LaPoint and Chairperson Thurston

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M. to the next regularly scheduled meeting on February 21, 2018 at 7:00 P.M.