

Winchester-Homeland Municipal Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 13, 2020

Place: Winchester Community Center, 32655 Haddock Street, Winchester

Attendees:

Winchester-Homeland MAC:

Andy Domenigoni, Chairman; Dirk Meredith, Vice-Chairman; James Horecka, Secretary.
Jimmy Sheldrake absent. Jeff Logan resigned. New board member Gary Long sworn in.

Ex Officio:

Opal Hellweg, 3rd District Legislative Assistant.

Members of the Public

Call to Order: Call to Order by Andy Domenigoni at 6:30 PM.

Flag Salute. Introductions, during which Horecka read our Mission Statement.

Approval of Agenda:

Proposal by Chairman Domenigoni to amend the agenda as follows: Insert Dean Wetter of Valley Wide after approval of minutes; insert Sheriff report after installation of Gary Long; defer all Old Business: Motion by Meredith; second by Horecka. Approved unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve January Meeting Minutes: Motion by Meredith; 2nd by Horecka. Approved U.

Dean Wetter, General Manager of Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District, introduced their Board of Directors President, Nick Schouten. He thanked all for continued support. He also thanked Robert who cares for this Community Center facility. He noted this center is in its 18th year.

Third District County Supervisor Chuck Washington swore-in Gary Long to our Winchester-Homeland Municipal Advisory Council, replacing Jeff Logan, who resigned.

Deputy Showalter delivered the Sheriff report: December: 207 calls, 3 arrests. Jan: 240 calls, 5 arrests. He noted that thefts are up; lock up, watch for your neighbors.

Guest Speaker: Third District County Supervisor Chuck Washington. Highlights as follows, in brief:

- Our district is very large: 500,000+ residents. He has served five years, with a great team & staff.
- Noted Opal Hellweg, Michelle (Chief of Staff, Juan Perez, the Sheriff, Marr of Code Enforcement, etc.
- Moved Aviation out of EDA to TLMA. Washington has been flying for 40 years.
- Noted that Susanne Holland has accepted responsibility for leading the EDA.
- We have three new libraries in the works. Noted the road improvements locally in Winchester.
- Noted that about 2 million live in incorporated cities in Riverside County.
- Noted the 25th anniversary of the Winchester Poker Ride.
- Washington came to Beard in early 2013. At that time, County Health was losing \$1M/week; \$52M/year. Now more efficient. Built new Medical Surgery Center; adds to health system, more efficiently. Outpatient services can be done there, rather than in the hospital. New F.W.H.C.s through the county. The system is not losing money anymore.
- County budget is a challenge; seeing some positive changes. Reserve funds are up \$75M from previous.

Susanne Holland gave a presentation on the new library in French Valley, at Sky Park east of Winchester Road. The libraries, 36 in the system, serve 3.4 – 4.3 million patrons a year. We're among the largest in California and the USA. The library will feature Opportunity Rooms, Maker Spaces, more. The budget for books is \$3.2M. Two other libraries are in the works: A 20,000 s.f. library in Menifee, and a replacement library in Desert Hot Springs.

• She fielded questions, including:

- Q: How are libraries dealing with problems with homeless persons on-site, mental illness, teen issues?
A: Difficult challenges; "Civility is dead." Everyday people give staff a hard time. Challenge continues.
- Q: Will there be computers? A: Of course; state-of-the-art.

Brenda presented: Community Block Grant District (CBGD)

She noted that the total allotment was bumped up \$1M, to \$8M. \$2.5M for home repairs. Years ago, Congress did away with earmarks. Yet Ken Calvert has been able to get funding. Got \$50M (+\$80M state) for the freeway interchange in Temecula. Some for realignment of SH 79. She noted that Chuck Washington is working to support the CBGD. Noted that the Census is coming up, and that representation if based on the population distribution; similar with funding: Important to count all.

Questions for our special guests:

- Q; Charlie: Future railroad? A: We can't duplicate what we did in Perris. That was way over budget & time. The existing rail exists, but is substandard now. There may be alternative vehicles that might use the rails, someday. Juan Perez stated that RCTC purchased the rail line for \$54M back in the Nineties. He noted that a Metrolink type system would cost far too much; but there may be other alternatives. The county is keeping an eye on the area as being a hub, someday in the distant future.
- Q; Kathy Ling: She heard that Menifee is interested in expanding their sphere of influence. A: Two persons from Menifee were in the audience. A: Supervisor Chuck Washington stated clearly that he "...would not support an expansion of the sphere of influence (of Menifee) from the 5th District into the 3rd District." Washington mentioned our MAC Mission Statement, and stated that our community already has a really great plan.
- Q; Dusty O'Carroll: What about the realignment of SH 79 (concerns, etc.)? A: CW briefly described the route. There was also some concern about busy intersections, such as Haddock St at SH 79 (at the school), and Stowe Road at SH 79; both perceived as dangerous.
- Q; Gregg Cowdery: What about MWD's (broken) promises at the reservoir? Can we get a little help?
A; Washington: MET will say they didn't make those promises. His predecessor had tried to take that on at the state level; didn't get far. Washington told Gregg that he will take whatever 'proof' Gregg has.
- Q: What is the purpose of the new 'dividers' (medians) on 74? A; Washington: Highway 74 is a state highway, under CalTrans. He stated that, in Temecula, he worked closely with CalTrans to add medians, in an effort to improve safety; their effort was a huge success. The medians will improve safety! If the active construction is causing grief, please call Opal.
- Q: Citizen stated that neighbor runs a generator non-stop; 2.5 years; can't sleep. A: Code Enforcement?
- Q: Wants a traffic signal at Sultanas at 74? A; Perez: 'Warrants' are required by CalTrans for signal.
- Q; Bob Gibbens, former head of Harvest Valley: He noted that their citizens, too, are strongly against expansion of the City of Menifee. There is concern about any proposed expansion of their sphere of influence. A; Washington: Menifee would have to go through the proper process, including LAFCO, etc. Just because they have an idea doesn't mean it will happen. An expansion of their sphere of influence would require review and actions through LAFCO. However, LAFCO likely would not call for a public vote for an expansion in a sphere of influence. Compare to a new incorporation or annexation, where a public vote would be taken; Temecula Valley, for example. Proposals are one thing; processes another. For those who feel strongly: Organize, and have your voices heard!
- C; Angela Little: Thanks to those who came out this evening in opposition of the proposed expansion of the sphere of influence of the City of Menifee. A letter from the Winchester Town Association was deliv-

ered last night to the various parties. She noted that the Land Use Committee is on top of this, and reminded Supervisor Washington, "We are fully engaged!"

- C: Regarding a signal at Sultanas x 74: There is already a strategy in place: When new development occurs in the area, Sultanas will eventually be closed; a new street, called Norma Jean, will be constructed, and its intersection with SH 74 will be controlled by a traffic signal.
- All in attendance applauded our esteemed guests for the evening's meeting!

Open Forum:

- February 29th, at Double Butte: Free Clean Up Day! There are flyers in the back.
- There are flyers in the back for the Winchester/Homeland Town Association. That is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, benefitting our community. Please become a member!
- Suggestion: Please update our Winchester websites!

Next WHMAC Meeting:

The next WHMAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 2020 6:30 PM, at the Community Center.

Adjournment:

The WHMAC adjourned at 7:53 PM (DM/GL/Un).