

Winchester/Homeland Municipal Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 14, 2016

Place: Winchester Community Center, 32655 Haddock Street, Winchester

Attendees:

Winchester MAC:

Dirk Meredith, Vice-Chairman; James Horecka, Secretary; Jeff Logan, Jimmy Sheldrake; Andy Domenigoni absent.

Ex Officio:

Not present: Opal Hellweg, Legislative Assistant for Third District Supervisor

Members of the Public

Call to Order: Call to Order by Dirk Meredith at 6:30 PM.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve Agenda: Motion by Sheldrake; second by Logan; approved, unanimous.

Approval of March Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve: Motion by Logan; second by Sheldrake; approved, unanimous.

Guest Speaker: Community Action Partnership (CAP); Raquel Williams and Doris Godinez.

The duo briefed attendees on what they do: CAP covers the entire County. The assistance programs are income-based. They include home improvements for energy efficiency, such as weatherizing windows, replacing old water heaters, etc. They have some solar water heaters, although the work must be in-kind (solar now, solar when done); not a change. Electrical panels not allowed. There is a set list of items that are eligible, and they must stick to contracts. But there seems to be a broad range: For example, they will even provide wood if that is the primary source of heat for a home. There is a matching savings program; see them for details. They offer job assistance training for youth. They offer tax preparation services, free, for those with income of \$50k or less (agents are screened). They offer dispute resolution services, to help settle issues via mediation. They have some programs for veterans, such as assistance with job placement and clothing. Their mission is to strive to eliminate poverty. See their website for additional objectives. They have a satellite office in Hemet, which out to be convenient for folk in our area. Funding is via Community Service Block Grants, the DOE, IRS, City of Riverside, SoCal Gas, SCE, others. The majority of funding is in the form of grants. Raquel and Doris emphasized that CAP is a program that many people can use, provided they meet the income thresholds.

New Business.

A. County General Plan Amendments – Applications accepted 4/4/2016 through 6/2/2016.

- Dirk attended the WTA Land Use Committee (LUC) meeting. Gregg & Dirk said that the County is going in the process of amending the General Plan. If a property owner wishes to change the zone of his parcel, you can file a request. Amendments to the County General Plan may be owner-initiated. There is a window of time in which this can be done (see above). You would do this if you felt that your property is currently “the wrong zone” for what you have in mind for the future (for example). Olivia will compile a list of property owners in our MAC who have filed for such.
- The GPAC will review these. There will be three advisors from each of the five Districts. Citizens can apply to be on the board. Gregg Cowdery has applied. If interested in applying, see Olivia, with the Supervisor’s office. Winchester, of course, is especially interested in our hopes for Downtown.
- Gregg reminded us that the General Plan Amendment process only happens once every eight years. This is a “Foundation Change.”
- The last cycle, back in 2008, had hundreds of applications for zone changes. Some of those got approved without us knowing, including some “odd” requests.
- The hope and intent is to get the Community Plan and Downtown Core Plan in for consideration. The process is typically long and expensive.

B. Other: None.

Old Business:

A. Update – Opal Hellweg, 3rd District Legislative Assistant:

- Opal not present.

B. Sheriff Dept.:

- Edward Chavez, new Lieutenant. Lt. Chavez introduced himself, then briefed us on various topics. He has over 27 years experience, much of that in jail services. He reported that they had one of their crime analysts run the

- numbers for the past few months in our area. Updating from last month: March had 159 calls, 4 arrests. Part I crimes were nil. A few assaults, burglaries and vehicle thefts. The study included both Winchester and Homeland. Mail theft is still a big issue; use common sense. Residents expressed concern with drugs, as usual. Two women from Sage (not in our MAC) complained about drug-related problems in their area; growers, etc.
- C. EMWD Updates:
- Kevin Pearson & Phil Paule.
 - The Board of Directors last week voted to back off on water restrictions: Now Stage 4B. The Board acted swiftly, once news came down from the State. The Board will review the matter again in June.
 - The Winchester Pond Site Recovery Project is months away yet.
 - There is a new recycled water storage facility being built at the headquarters property in Perris.
 - Recent rains have helped the drought situation somewhat. Restrictions on use due to be lessened a tad.
 - EMWD feels that the State has been over-penalizing EMWD, given all the strides they've made in conservation.
 - The State Water Board will vote on revisions in mid-May.
 - EMWD has a new "look": New logos, bills, website, etc., as part of their on-going public outreach program.
- D. Highway 79 (realignment) update.
- No news. Residents still curious as to what the grading at SW corner of 79 & 74 is for.
- E. Land Use:
- La Ventana project, GPA 1129: No news.
 - GPA 921, 78 acres, Scott Rd & El Centro. This has now been approved by the Board of Supervisors.
 - GPA 1120 Housing Element and Downtown Winchester: Gregg Cowdery reported that we have been in touch with our Consultant. He'll help with proposals. Staff at the County is aware of the \$80,000 that we have put into planning studies for our downtown to date (not to mention time & effort of citizens).
- F. City of Hemet update:
- An initiative will be coming up on the June 7th ballot, proposing a one cent sales tax increase in order to fund additional police and fire protection. Paul Raven, Mayor pro-tem of Hemet, was present, and commented briefly on the topic, within limits. He told the facts, including: Estimated to raise ~\$10M in revenue. 2/3 would go to police, 1/3 would go to fire. There would be a separate budget for these funds, subject to proper management verified by audits. A 2/3 majority vote is required to pass the initiative. There seems to be a positive response..
- G. City of Menifee
- Andy not present; no report from him. However, Dirk stated that Andy Domenigoni has scheduled a meeting with the Mayor and City Manager of Menifee on April 25th, along with another member of the WHMAC.
- H. Other Old Business:
- Paul Raver, Hemet Mayor Pro-Tem, again brought up the importance of the Highway 79 Realignment Project to our valley at large. He has been in some contact with RCTC, in an effort to try to push this forward. Raven stated that Hemet intends to form an ad hoc committee to focus on Hwy 79. They will ask someone from the MAC to be on the ad hoc committee, recognizing that we also have a stake in the project. Plans are being made to that effect. The Supervisor will contact us.

Open Forum:

1. At the meeting with Senator Jeff Stone, Gregg Cowdery inquired into the status of the MWD issues surrounding Diamond Valley Lake. Stone had made a proposal for body contact at the lake. Marianne Edwards, with Jeff Stone's office, reported that there is a Hemet committee, which only Hemet may participate in at this time (studying Hemet interests). They noted that under present treatment, up to 100,000 persons per year could use the lake. Paul Raver is on that ad hoc committee. They invited Valley Wide Parks & Recreation, and others, to focus on the original plans that were put out by MWD way back. Their main focus is the eastern part and the western part; Hemet is most interested in the eastern part. The conclusions will be made public. At present, the position of MWD is that they are "in the water business, not the recreation business." Stay tuned for more info to come.
2. A County staff member has tallied up the total area in the Winchester/Homeland MAC; he reported the total area as being approximately 40 square miles (over 25,000 acres).

Next WMAC Meeting:

The next WMAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 12, 2016, 6:30 PM, at the Community Center.

Adjournment: The WMAC adjourned at 8:25 PM.