

Winchester/Homeland Municipal Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 9, 2017

Place: Winchester Community Center, 32655 Haddock Street, Winchester

Attendees:

Winchester MAC:

Andy Domenigoni, Chairman; Dirk Meredith, Vice-Chairman; James Horecka, Secretary; Jeff Logan

Ex Officio:

Opal Hellweg, Legislative Assistant for Third District Supervisor

Members of the Public

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

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve: Motion by Meredith; second by Logan. Approved unanimously.

Approval of February Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve: Motion by Meredith; second by Logan. Approved unanimously.

New Business.

- A. Monica Santana from the Riverside County Community Action Partnership presented, regarding a Community Survey. This group is a subset of a nationwide group. This survey is conducted every two years, at every MAC area. Survey participants need not provide their name (anonymous). Financial assistance of up to \$1,000 is available for home weatherization and HVAC repairs. Even for renters, with approval of the property owner. Also available: Community mediation, free tax prep assistance for those who qualify. For repairs, the CCAP subcontracts with local contractors to do the work.

Guest Speaker: New Riverside County Code Enforcement Supervisor: Marr Christian.

Mr. Christian introduced himself with a brief bio. He's been with the County 19 years. Part of his work includes being part of the Special Enforcement Team, handling squatters, illegal dumping etc. He has been working in the City of Perris area, which ends this month. He is now in Supervisor Washington's Third District. He was also a firefighter medic for 12 years. C.E. has to do with land use, on private property. Most common examples included: accumulated rubbish, excessive storage outside, inoperative vehicles, etc. Other problems include homeless encampments, which often amass much rubbish at occupied spots. They'll work with others to help find and offer resources to assist homeless persons, including mental health services, adult protective services, and veteran's services; however, individuals must be willing. Often times, solving a problem in one area is like squeezing a long balloon: The issue just moves to another location nearby. Marr Christian gave his office number: 951-696-1606. His office is located at the County offices at the French Valley Airport. Also see the website, under Riverside TLMA, Code Enforcement, Third District.

Marijuana cultivation: On March 21st, the Board of Supervisors will hear the Cannabis issue. To either regulate it or prohibit dispensaries. So far they have been dealt with through civil litigation: Through injunctions filed. The floor was opened for questions:

- Q: What is the law in Riverside County? A: Riverside County currently prohibits all dispensaries.
- Q: The Board meeting was originally slated for the 14th. A: The meeting was rescheduled for the 21st.
- Q: Why does ousting illegal dispensaries take so long? A: Some take priority. For example, those with close proximity to schools, bus stops, churches and similar; action can be swifter on those of higher risk.
- Q: Outdoor cultivation? A: Governed by State statute (see). He noted that the County is not presently aligned. If a citizen sees more than 25 plants growing, he/she may call Code Enforcement to investigate. Some illegal growers show up on the radar due to constructing greenhouses or other structures illegally, without building permits, or through high electricity use.
- Christian stated that Code Enforcement meets with the County Supervisors every other month. Regarding items of highest important, such as status, permits, their top-twenty issues, etc.

- Code Enforcement activity is primarily “complaint driven.” There is some latitude to be proactive. Much of his job is to educate citizens as to what is not allowed. C.E. can allow time to come into compliance, in limits.
- Q: How many vehicles allowed? A: Zero non-operative.
- Q: When a dispensary pops up, it ends up staying open for many months; why? A: The process of removal often takes a long time. A citizen calls in a complaint. Code Enforcement visits; usually the person at the site won’t allow C.E. to enter. Research ensues. A Notice to Comply is filed; they have 30 days to comply. If no compliance, C.E. packages the case and sends it to civil. That process takes time, involving many agencies. Best advice: Continue to call Code Enforcement.
- Q: Don’t dispensaries have to get Business Licenses? A: Business Licenses are not required in unincorporated Riverside County, for any business. However, that business use is prohibited in unincorporated Riv. County.
- C: Medical marijuana is legal in California. R: Yes, it is; at the State level. Our County has prohibited dispensaries by ordinance.
- Q: Isn’t there a fine for illegally operating a dispensary, of some \$200 per day? A: Yes, or more.
- C: Citizen complained of a parcel near his home, 100 acres, absentee owner; problems include common discharge of firearms. R: Code Enforcement will try to work with the owner to resolve the issues. The Sheriff can be called to enforce fire arms violations.
- C: An owner of large parcels complained that he has been hit with violations, not necessary created by him; the violations can be difficult to have expunged from the records. R: Even if the owner of a parcel did not do the dumping or create the problem, it is the owner of the parcel who nevertheless is responsible. C.E. can offer some resources to help. For specific cases, Christian asked the citizen to call him; he’ll look into it.
- Q: When is the meeting with the Board of Supervisors? A: At the regular published meeting date/hour.
- Q: Trysting? A: Not a matter for Code Enforcement.

All present thanked the presenters. “See something, say something!”

Old Business:

- A. General County update; Opal Hellweg, 3rd District Legislative Assistant:
 - Opal Hellweg out sick: No report.
- B. Sheriff Department update; Corporal McLaurin reporting:
 - Cpl McLaurin introduced himself: 19 years’ service. Perris past 3.5 years; 10 years in Moreno Valley.
 - McLaurin gave updates on crime stats: Jan: 215 calls for service, 5 arrests. Feb: 153 calls, 6 arrests.
 - Various topics were discussed, including crime trends. Hot spots recently at Winchester & Whittier, N & S of Simpson: Vehicle thefts. Metal theft has died down some. Mail theft is rampant.
 - Shooting problems: Sheriff personnel are being trained-up to contend with more calls. They issued 25 citations in February (Section 514). Often people don’t know; they see a parcel that appears as if it is being used in that way (for shooting), & assume it’s the norm and OK.
 - C: A mail theft ring was caught! It was in the paper.
 - Q: A citizen believes that a drone is being used to ‘case’ his neighborhood, for valuables to steal. A: What evidence? Call it in, at least as a suspicious circumstance.
 - Q: What is the distance for shooting? A: Minimum 300ft from a residence; see the text of the law.
 - Q: Shooting is a disturbance. A: Well, it can be. Might be legal, though. Still, one can call in a noise ordinance complaint, or trespassing, etc. Hunters can shoot on parcels, if granted permission.
- C. EMWD Updates:
 - Kevin Pearson stated that the Board on Feb 15th did approve the lessening of water restrictions. EMWD is no longer in an emergency situation.
 - The recovery wells by the ponds are being drilled.
 - Q: Has EMWD looked into eco-sewage treatment schemes? A: EMWD has looked into graywater systems, yes. There are many issues. Graywater systems will not be permitted where sewer service is available. Such systems tend to be improperly set up and improperly managed. Kevin noted that EMWD uses 100% of its recycled water ever year, via their many customers who consume it. EMWD *wants* the sewage; helps them be sustainable.
 - C: Cindy D. noted that Governor Brown has lifted the drought label for just about everywhere in California but down here. A: Actually, Governor Brown does not decide. The matter is decided by Federal agencies (US Drought Monitor, e.g.). Kevin noted that Diamond Valley Lake may be full by summer.
 - The State extended the Emergency Regulations by 270 days. That we are still in drought conditions.

- Director Paule expressed some dismay that we, users in the EMWD service area, hit our marks as far as water use reductions. He stated that he hopes that the EMWD Board will lobby the State, to take us out of the Emergency Regulations sooner rather than later.
- D. Highway 79 Realignment update:
 - No update.
- E. Land Use update:
 - There will be a joint meeting with the Winchester Town Association and the WHMAC on April 13th. This is planned as a meeting with the Planners from the County, for input. No WTA meeting on the 4th.
 - Tentative Tract Map #37119 (part of Winchester Hills SP 293): Pending revisions.
 - Winchester-Homeland General Plan Amendment #1207: Update
 - GPA 1120 Housing Element and Downtown Winchester – TPC 10/5/2916:
 - Slated to go to the Board of Supervisors on April 11th.
 - GPA 1207: Still pending. There will be a Land Use Committee meeting on March 15th.
 - Proposed K-1 Speed CUP 03733: No news.
 - General: A citizen expressed concern about growth he does not wish to see, potential loss of our country atmosphere, etc. He has been living elsewhere for about a decade, and has recently returned. Secretary Horecka reminded him that this MAC has been running for some six years, and the WTA and before it WHOA have been operated by local citizens for decades on end. The best way to stay in touch is to be here, and to actively participate. Horecka also noted that he goes to some length to prepare these detailed meeting minutes so that those who cannot attend a meeting in person may nevertheless stay abreast of what is going on, should they have an interest. Both our Agendas and Minutes are posted regularly on our website. Maps are at each meeting. We urge everyone to stay involved!
- F. City of Hemet update; Jeff Logan reporting:
 - Jeff Logan reported that there were no new issues of significance to our MAC.
- G. City of Menifee update:
 - Andy Domenigoni is still planning to set up a meeting with the new mayor & city manager.
- H. Assemblywoman Melissa Melendez' Office:
 - Brandon Webb represented Melendez. He covered various efforts and bills the Assemblywoman is championing, and others. He noted with dismay the bill for a proposed gas tax. He noted with amusement that AB 1540 has given us a "State Dinosaur." He announced upcoming events of interest (see their website). Including the Community Coffee, coming up on the 17th at Lakeland Village Community Center (left flyers).
- I. Other Old Business:
 1. Valley Wide Parks and Recreation director Dean Wetter visited to say "Thank you" for our support of their position in the proposed Detachment under consideration in the City of Menifee. The LAFCO hearing was continued; it may be rescheduled again in February. He noted that the Public Hearing process is still open for comments.

Open Forum:

1. Mary Plum announced that there is an upcoming Federal Food Bank distribution, taking place at the Community First Church of God, 2nd Monday of the month. Proof of need or income is not required.

Next WMAC Meeting:

The next WHMAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 13, 2017, 6:30 PM, at the Community Center. This will be a joint meeting with the Winchester Homeland Town Association.

Adjournment: The WHMAC adjourned at 8:28 PM.