

Winchester/Homeland Municipal Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES

Date: May 14, 2015

Place: Winchester Community Center, 32655 Haddock Street, Winchester

Attendees:

Winchester MAC:

Andy Domenigoni, Chairman (late); Dirk Meredith, Vice-Chairman; James Horecka, Secretary; Jimmy Sheldrake; 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 6:32 PM.

Flag Salute. Introductions.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve: Sheldrake; Second: Logan. Approved, all but Andy (late).

Approval of January Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve: Sheldrake; Second: Logan. Approved, all but Andy (late).

Guest:

Mike Hestrin, new District Attorney, County of Riverside. Mr. Hestrin gave a brief autobiography of his 19 years of service with the DA, then delivered an informal presentation. Top priorities: Dealing with crime problems, including new ones that are basically side effects from AB 109 "Realignment," Proposition 47 and issues with marijuana laws at various levels. He discussed various matters relating to each of these subtopics. In some areas, high crime is a major concern of citizens; e.g. Desert Hot Springs, San Jacinto, Hemet. He also told of their efforts: For example, a new "Organized Crime Unit," featuring highly-trained investigators and prosecutors. Deployed to serve zones with serious gang problems. There are 390 gangs in Riverside County, with about 12,000 gang members. Hestrin listed various stats, efforts, existing and new initiatives. Noted that the DA's office has about 340 lawyers and 700 employees. After his presentation, Hestrin fielded various questions from members of the audience. Marijuana matters were among the topics. A Code Enforcement officer present also chimed in with a little insight. Hestrin noted the top priorities in the DA's office, in efforts to deal with violent crimes, gangs, drugs, guns, human trafficking, etc.

New Business.

- A. Town Hall Meeting with Winchester Town Association and Winchester-Homeland MAC with 3rd District Supervisor Chuck Washington. The WHMAC meeting will be on THAT date. Flyers will go out.
- B. Other New Business:
 - None.

Old Business:

- A. Update – Opal Hellweg, 3rd District Legislative Assistant
 - Fitch upgraded the county's credit from Negative watch to Stable; will save \$7M in debt service.
 - The Hospital is expected to move into the black.
 - Staff for new Superintendent: Opal, Vern & Olivia still there; also some new faces.
- B. Sheriff Dept.;
 - Lieutenant Guillen: MJ problems continue...
- C. EMWD Updates; Phil Paule:
 - We are still in a drought, despite the (small amount of) rain.
 - Stage 4 drought plan will kick in. See EMWD website for details. Will go into effect June 1st.
 - In open discussion, Paule noted that some communities in California don't even have water meters. He also noted that the reduction in water means lower sales of water, which results in lower revenues.

D. Highway 79 Realignment update.

- There was a workshop in Hemet recently. The alignment appears to remain unchanged. The EIR process is still moving forward. This project is still out 15-20 years or more.

E. MWD Proposed Solar Farm:

- No news. Action: Drop.

F. Land Use:

1. Downtown Core Planning. Sheldrake reported. The presentation went very well: A strong grassroots detailed study. The aim is to get pushing to get the ideas into the upcoming revisions to the County General Plan. The Rural Village Overlay and Downtown Core ideas were well received. It was stressed that we need to stay engaged with the County and keep out community-driven efforts moving forward. Cindy Domenigoni noted that there will be a Land Use Committee meeting coming up. They will try to have a representative from the County Planning Department there. Opal will assist with this; perhaps Jerry Joliff or Matt Strake. The meeting is slated for May 26th, 2:30, at Cindy's office. See her for details. A citizen reminded us that we also need to study the Homeland and Green Acres areas; otherwise those might not make it into this cycle of GP revisions, and would have to wait another eight years. It was suggested that we lobby to get some funding to get Planners to assist us. The Hemet City Councilman present at this meeting said he was impressed with our recent presentation, especially our strong sense of community. He applauded our efforts. Noted that Gary Thornhill (Planner) now works for the city of Hemet.
2. Riverside County General Plan Amendment No. 960: The County is going through comments from the EIR.

G. City of Hemet update:

- A Hemet Councilman present spoke briefly from his seat. He noted that Hemet is working on their Budget hearings. They are working to expand public safety, a big concern these days. He commended our group and local citizens, whom he said demonstrate a strong sense of community pride. He also urged us, "Don't ever give up your identity!"

H. City of Menifee

- Andy reported that Menifee broke ground on the Scott Road widening project.

I. Winchester Post Office:

- Moved bulk mail operations to Hemet. Action: Drop.

J. Other Old Business:

- None.

Open Forum:

1. The State sent out Fire Tax bills. Property owners have 30 days to appeal, if desired. See bills for details.
2. Vehicle License Fees (portions) are going back to certain cities.

Next WMAC Meeting:

The next WMAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 4, 2015, 6:30 PM, at the Community Center. This will be a joint meeting with the Winchester Town Association. Special Guest: 3rd District Supervisor Chuck Washington.

Adjournment: The WMAC adjourned at 8:27 PM.