



Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
Hemet Public Library- 2nd Floor
Thursday, October 25, 2012 – 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM

AGENDA RECAP

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: *Members of the public will be given an opportunity to comment on agenda items at the conclusion of each item, as time permits.*

1. Call to Order- Vice Chair Connie Hall

The meeting was called to order at 3:42 p.m.

Staff Present: Dave Brown – Police Chief
Deanna Elliano – Community Development Director
Mark Orme – Interim City Manager
Steve McEwen – Assistant City Attorney

CAC Present:

Jim Connell	Linda Krupa
Gary Fowler	Norm Kyriss
Eva Gifford	Larry Graves
John Gifford	Mary Ann Mari
Frank Gorman	Robert Masson
Eric Gosch	Michael Ramirez
Mona Groff	Larry Smith
Connie Hall	Valerie Velez

CAC Absent:

Patti Drusky	Sharon McComb
Dan Goodrich	Stefany Nelson

2. Comments or corrections to the September 27, 2012 CAC Agenda Recap (distributed via e-mail to CAC members)

The recap was approved unanimously as presented.

3. Summary Updates on Hemet ROCS Implementation Efforts

a. Public Outreach & Event Coordination – Interim CM Mark Orme & CID John Jansons

Interim City Manager Mark Orme advised the CAC that the 800 number for Hemet ROCS is up, running and accessible at 855-513-ROCS (7627). Any graffiti, shopping carts, etc. can be reported via this line, or if you are just looking for information regarding the program, you can obtain that as well.

ICM Orme further conveyed that the City's website had been updated, in response to both CAC and community input, to include a large Hemet ROCS button at the bottom of the main page. When pressed, that button will take you directly to the Hemet ROCS page and related info. You can obtain agendas and recaps for the CAC meetings, as well as a variety of information.

Finally, ICM Orme informed the CAC that the positive attributes of Hemet ROCS are being noticed by the community, and two donations have been received in the amount of \$100 and \$75. He then turned the meeting over to Community Investment Director John Jansons.

CID Jansons introduced himself, noting that the Community Investment Department had been solicited to help the Hemet ROCS program with community outreach activities, and to notify the public about what Hemet ROCS is, what it isn't, what it's doing and how it can benefit the community. One method that has been devised is the establishment of an information booth that will be set up at the Hemet Farmer's Market events on Saturday mornings. We are going through the stages of putting together the equipment that is needed to implement this booth, including lining up a schedule and group of volunteers. He distributed a calendar for the CAC to pass around, and requested that they add themselves as a volunteer for one of the upcoming Saturdays that might work for them, or make a note in the margin regarding a possible time frame for them to assist in the future. He reverted the meeting back to ICM Orme.

ICM Orme provided an update regarding feedback received on the community newsletter that had been distributed to all city residents, which highlighted the Hemet ROCS program. He noted that 99.86% loved the newsletter, while the other 0.04% consisted primarily of county residents who felt that extra money should not have been spent on postage to include non-City residents in the mailing. He explained that the City had actually saved over \$5,000.00 by mailing to all residents in the 92544 zip code, rather than having to distinguish between city and county residents, which would have required a rearrangement of the format that was used for the mailing.

b. Volunteer Support – CM Mark Orme

ICM Orme advised that a number of volunteer interests had been received via the volunteer form on the website. He plans to meet with those people to move forward in establishing the volunteer program.

c. Field Operations Task Force – Police Chief Brown & CDD Elliano

Police Chief Dave Brown informed the CAC that 25 new police volunteers were recently sworn in and would be assigned throughout the City. The reserve program has been approved and should be posted on the website as an open and continuous enrollment. In terms of Field Operations, we have assigned a police sergeant to supervise the team. The group is meeting every Thursday and has targeted two problem apartment complexes so far. When we started this task force approach concept, we were careful to say that the best ordinances are really only as good as our ability to enforce them, and there continues to be staffing issues in the affiliated departments. Code Enforcement has assigned a couple of officers to be involved with the task force, but it is not their full-time assignment, and with our contingent, the sergeant is the primary affiliate, but the other two police officers are still undergoing training. We are working feverishly toward a fully operational task force, but are still dealing with these staffing issues. Some of the most important ordinances with teeth are in place, but the resources to really put the backbone behind them are still on their way to fruition.

CAC Member Connell: When you say you are targeting two apartment complexes, what do you mean by “targeting”?

Chief Brown responded that the first two, which he had referred to, were previously scheduled inspections by the Fire Department and Code Enforcement Division. The Police Department accompanied on one of them, but they are mainly looking for Code, Health and Safety issues. The primary purpose of our Thursday meetings is to identify and prioritize the areas in the City that are giving us the most problems so that we can target those areas.

Community Development Director Deanna Elliano elaborated on that subject, advising that in addition to the two apartment complexes, the team had also gone out on a code complaint that continues to be in progress, which resulted in a number of units having to be retrofitted. Sometimes this requires tenants to temporarily vacate their units during the retrofitting process, as it did in this case. The task force team also went to a mobile home park today. We are getting our feet wet, fine tuning our procedures, and our coordination meetings on Thursdays, as the Chief mentioned, are to prioritize our inspections. We will continue to report back regarding the task force operations.

CAC Vice Chair Connie Hall indicated that she was a county resident in the 92544 area code, who had received the City’s newsletter. She expressed pride and appreciation for the letter.

4. Presentation: Status of Remaining Hemet ROCS Ordinances and proposed work programs –*Community Development Director Deanna Elliano & City Attorney Eric Vail*

CDD Elliano distributed an updated chart outlining the remaining ordinances and work programs from the initial list. She offered an explanation of each item as follows:

1. A zoning code amendment regarding the Alcoholic Beverage Permit Process & Regulations was discussed at the last CAC meeting, and presented to the Planning Commission as a work study item at their October 16th meeting. A public hearing regarding this project will be held before the Planning Commission on December 4th.
2. Companion to the aforementioned amendment is the “Social Host” Ordinance. CAC Members Michael Ramirez, Valerie Velez, and Gary Fowler have been actively involved in this effort, and provided assistance with research of similar ordinances in other communities. This type of ordinance typically creates a “social host” liability, that imposes responsibility on the social host, or private individual who serves alcohol in a non-commercial setting. In the event that an obviously intoxicated person or a minor to which they served alcohol is subsequently involved in an accident or other activity that causes death or injury to a third party, the social host would share liability. Such an ordinance will provide additional teeth for enforcement of an act that is technically already illegal, and will allow for the issuance of administrative citations as well as the imposition of misdemeanor charges.
3. An update to the existing Administrative Citations Ordinance is underway, which will augment additional collection methods, will give us authority to require payment for multiple re-inspections for which there is currently no cost-recovery, increasing fines for certain violations, and simplifying the lien process. We will be working on this with the City prosecutor, and should have an update for the CAC in January.
- 4A. An update to the existing Abandoned / Foreclosed Property Ordinance will require registration of properties at the time a Notice of Default is filed on a property. This update is also planned to be to the CAC in January.
- 4B. An item not on the previous list, which is more for staff follow-up than CAC action, includes more proactive enforcement of boarded, foreclosed and unfinished construction properties, that have been in their current state for extended periods of time. This approach will be taken utilizing a variety of tools. The CAC will be updated on our progress.

CAC Vice Chair Hall: Regarding 4A, how do property owners know to register with the City?

CDD Elliano responded that before the update could be implemented, the City would have to provide notification to the banking community, advising them of new procedures. She indicated that most lien holders are familiar with the process, generally – just not with the City of Hemet utilizing it. We have coordinated with the County of Riverside, who has a data base for Notices

of Default, so if something is falling through the cracks we can contact them and make sure that everyone is registered.

CAC Council Liaison Larry Smith: Regarding Item 4B, do you foresee in the unfinished construction properties some sort of screening mechanism built into this ordinance to reduce the negative visual impact of ongoing projects that are having trouble with completion?

CDD Elliano suggested that this could be looked into, but the goal would be to get them started on construction again. In the meantime, if they don't have the means or the property is going through the resale process, we could look into adding something into the ordinance regarding screening or fencing that could be done.

5. (Showing as No. 6 on the chart) An update to the existing nuisance abatement ordinance is being drafted, which will add more teeth to the ordinance and streamline the appeal and lien processes. We will return with provisions at the January meeting, and hopefully be ready for City Council review in February.
6. (Showing as No. 7 on the chart) The abatement of prostitution and motel residency ordinance will deal with short motel stays in association with activity that the City does not condone. We are working with the City Attorney's office to see what ordinances are in place in other cities that might be able to assist us in combating this situation. Overall, even with the ordinance in place, we need more proactive enforcement of these problem motels & properties, and we are looking at the task force model to help us work through it.

Chief Brown advised that he was conducting a survey among California Police Chiefs regarding these types of ordinances and what the impact is for their community, so that no time is ultimately wasted on something that's not useful or enforceable. He expects to have information back in time to provide an update at the next CAC meeting.

7. (Showing as No. 8 on the chart) The Rental Unit Registration and Inspection ordinance will create a registration process for all rental housing properties within the City. This includes an annual registration fee, in addition to a business license, allows for City inspection of rental properties, and requires completion of the Crime Free Housing Program. This is a huge program and undertaking, and we have been researching various other cities who have implemented similar ordinances. It also requires a comprehensive database of rental properties, which is being coupled together with various sources. In response to inquiries regarding whether this would be a mechanism that could help fund public safety, unfortunately it can only be a cost recovery program, with no unallocated general fund revenue involved. While it will be a helpful program, it will not be able to generate funds for any police or safety programs, apart from those associated with the inspections.
8. (Showing at No. 9 on the chart) A zoning ordinance to establish city-wide landscape and property maintenance standards is under consideration. Ironically, a foreclosure or abandoned house has higher standards than those that are occupied. The lack of property and landscaping

maintenance leads to an impression of blight, however, we need to establish standards for occupied homes before we can impose them. We are hoping to come to the CAC in February with concepts for this ordinance.

9. (Showing as No. 10 on the chart) An update of the Business License ordinance was being considered, with regards to possible opportunities of updating the licensing provisions for rental units. The current fee is \$40 for up to the first three units and \$1.00 per unit thereafter. An apartment complex is \$1.00 per door. In terms of larger properties, this is a very minimal fee. The downside of updating it through the business license mechanism is that it would be considered a special tax, which must be placed on a ballot, and requires a 2/3 vote of the electorate to be able to implement the update. The potential cost for such an election would be \$50,000, therefore staff has not been directed to pursue this change at this time.

CAC Member Mona Groff: How did the initial \$40 plus fee get passed?

ICM explained that Proposition 218 is what now mandates that we must vote to change the existing business license fee. Prior to that, a vote may not have been required at all. One of the things that the City has done, proactively, is start to compare some of the information that we have in our database with what we receive from the County. Since starting this comparison, the City has captured approximately 434 new rentals that are now paying their fee, which in the past were not.

CAC Vice Chair Hall: Are they new because they are new rentals, or because they've just been captured.

ICM Orme clarified that he was referring to them as new because they have been captured and are now paying. They may or may not have been rentals before.

CAC Member Frank Gorman: I think we need to move forward with this as soon as possible, and believe that the \$50,000 election cost is worth the cost to get the program going. A \$25 per unit fee would simply require that rents be raised by that amount. \$50,000 is a small price to pay for more police protection.

Discussion ensued regarding the number of rental units in the City.

CAC Member Gorman: I thought it had been mentioned that there were 16,000 rental units in the City.

It was discussed that the census had indicated that 43% of the City's 35,000 units were rentals.

CDD Elliano indicated that part of the need to develop a database was to get an accurate accounting of the number of rentals in the community. She noted that apartments and other multi-family dwellings accounted for approximately 7,000 rental units. What continually changes is the single-family rentals.

CAC Member Gorman: So there are at least 7,000 units.

ICM Orme noted that fees were currently being paid for 2,331 rental units according to the Finance Director

CAC Member Eric Gosch: So there are approximately 5,000 units that are not paying fees.

CAC Member Gorman: So if \$25 per unit is not enough, then we should charge \$35. It is a small price to pay for more protection.

CAC Member Mary Ann Mari: Inquired regarding whether research or studies have been completed on Mobile Home Parks or senior Mobile Home Parks. In the past, most of the homes were owned individually, but the park owner was paying the fees. Now we have a lot more parks that have park-owned coaches. Have you looked at any way that this might be applied in Mobile Home Parks? Most taxes and fees are passed through to the residents, and for a lot of seniors in the senior Mobile Home Parks it could be a hardship.

CDD Elliano: In terms of the existing business license tax for rental units, it would apply to Mobile Home Parks if it is set up that way. In a Mobile Home subdivision, where lots are owned individually, it would not apply. This is also part of the database that needs to be looked at in terms of what we're capturing. As far as whether there would be different rates for Mobile Home Parks vs. apartments, or duplexes, etc., we simply have not gotten to the point of determining that yet.

CAC Member Mari: Currently we complete a quarterly form to the City regarding the number of vacant units, the number of park-owned units etc. Are you using that information for the database?

CDD Elliano: For our department we use this information more for our reporting to the State and our inspection stats. This has also been an internal discussion, because different departments have their own databases that we are trying to consolidate in order to share information.

CAC Member Groff: In the last four years, the City has gone from over 400 employees to 283. Wasn't this rental matter an issue when there were more employees? Why wasn't something done then, when there were more resources?

ICM Orme responded that this was one of the reasons that the CAC was so valuable – because we are able to look at the issues right here and now. If the CAC had been around four years ago, when there were a greater number of employees, we would have had the resources to do a lot more.

CAC Vice Chair Hall: We did not have a lot of the problems that we have now, when the City had all of those employees. Regarding the fact that 43% of the units in the City are said to be rentals, and only 2,331 of them are paying fees, is there a plan to help capture the balance?

CDD Elliano responded that she had been having similar conversations with staff and it is one of the reasons that we are attempting to bring all of the various databases together. The one thing we can do regardless of anything else is to try and capture those available revenues, as minimal as they may be.

CAC Member Michael Ramirez: Do we have any idea what percentage of the City's rentals include absentee landlords that do not reside in the community?

CDD Elliano noted that staff was unfortunately dealing with primitive tools. The information is there, but we need time to pull it all together.

CAC Member Gary Fowler: Getting this information compiled will be worthwhile.

CAC Member Gorman: Do we know when the next available date is to get an initiative on the ballot?

Discussion ensued, and it was determined that June would be the next available date.

CAC Member Gorman: I would like to see what the feelings of the City Council are regarding this concept.

CAC Member Norm Kyriss: I have done some research regarding out-of-town property owners, and believe that 43% is fairly accurate. It would not be difficult to do some additional research and provide those numbers. We can track landlords that live both within and outside the City, as well as how many rentals they actually have here. He inquired regarding whether his company license would satisfy the business license need for rental properties that he manages, or if the rental property owners would need to register individually.

CDD Elliano responded that the rental property owners would need to obtain the business license for their individual rental properties.

CAC Member Kyriss: Suggested that perhaps property management companies should share information with the City regarding the properties that they manage, since some owners may not be inclined to willingly register their properties.

CDD Elliano indicated that this information would be very helpful in building the database.

CAC Member Kyriss: My company would be happy to do so. He recalled a time in the 1990's when San Bernardino had a problem with blighted areas. They provided notices to property

owners, and if they did not get a response or compliance, they eventually tore down the problem building and eliminated it altogether. I wonder if we can do something like this in Hemet?

CDD Elliano responded that while the City of Hemet does have the ultimate authority to abate such properties, the problem is funding. It is costly to demolish buildings, and the City would have to front the money. She noted that another option was receivership, and explained how the process worked.

CAC Member Jim Connell: I live in the Nuevo hills and recently received a bill for \$115 for the brush around my home. Perhaps we should look at a way of assessing a fee on all properties in the valley to help the Police Department instead of only assessing it on apartments or rental units.

CAC Liaison Smith: Sixty percent of the City of Beverly Hills is rentals. Maybe we should check with them on how they make it work.

CAC Member Mari: For the past four years I have been paying \$70 per year for a business license in the City of San Jacinto for my rental units. Has anyone checked with them to see what they're using for their database and how they compile their information?

CDD Elliano stated that she would contact both cities.

10. **CAC Roundtable** – *CAC Vice Chair & Committee Members*

(CAC Roundtable is the opportunity for the CAC to state topics of primary concern or interest to CAC members and suggested topics or speakers for future meetings.)

CAC Member Groff: Referred to the prostitution problem on Florida Avenue and asked why the City is not publishing photos of the “Johns” when they’re picked up.

Chief Brown: Explained that both local press entities have been offered names and photos of the Johns, and that it is the publication’s decision whether or not they publish the information. All we can do is provide it to them.

CAC Member Connell: Wondered why the Diamond Inn is still open with all of the issues that it’s had over the years. He suggested that it might be a good idea to make an appointment with the hotel/motel owners along Florida Avenue and explain what actions the City is taking in an effort to curtail prostitution.

CAC Member Groff: Suggested having code enforcement on the weekends to deal with all of the yard sales, cars for sale on the streets, and other issues that tend to happen when no enforcement is present.

CDD Elliano: Indicated that it would be helpful if the online Hemet ROCS forms could be utilized to advise regarding the location of yard sales and similar events. She explained that at

one time the code officers were being rotated on weekends. There was then a period of time where we had only two officers, and they were needed during the week. If it is determined that there is a significant need on the weekends, we can reinstitute the coverage.

CAC Member Gorman: Noted that Supervisor Jeff Stone had spoken of a project where the County would donate vehicles to the City and paint them to utilize for patrols. He wondered if Hemet officials were aware of this program.

Chief Brown: Responded that yes, the City is aware and very interested. We are excited at the concept of acquiring these resources, and when that happens, will work with other department heads regarding where to use them.

CAC Member Gorman: Can we add as a future agenda item to meet with Supervisor Stone and discuss how we can utilize the vehicles and how many we could acquire?

CDD Elliano and Chief Brown: Yes, that can be added to a future agenda.

CAC Member Fowler: I've seen a lot of community participation on the streets that was unexpected. How is it on the streets these days for the Police Department?

Chief Brown: Responded that the community participation was very encouraging.

CAC Member Groff: I follow the Police Department on Facebook and also receive email updates. I am so thankful that you are out there going after the criminals.

CAC Member Connell: I have invited people on Facebook to participate in our community walk through blighted areas in order to see what's really happening out there. I have also asked Mark Orme to join us, and he plans to try and work that out. My wife and I walk regularly with a city employee from San Jacinto who wants to be involved. One other woman has walked with us in the past. We would love to have volunteers participate. The Police Department is also welcome to join in.

CAC Member Eric Gosch: I have been an advocate for code enforcement volunteers, not necessarily on the street, but in the backroom as well. Only two to three people leaves the City very unmanned.

CDD Elliano: Indicated that there is a great deal of administrative activities in the code enforcement unit. A large amount of paperwork is included with each case. Almost every case has to be looked at as if it will end up in court, so a complete record is imperative and requires a lot of time. Volunteers would be very helpful.

CAC Member Gosch: Perhaps a specific request from the City, noting that code enforcement volunteers are needed would be helpful. Regarding the 500+ units that are supposed to be developed on State Street, what does this mean, and how are we going to stop it?

CDD Elliano: I believe you are referring to the North Hemet Specific Plan that is being processed by the County of Riverside EDA. This is a mixed-use project with commercial and residential uses, including multi-family development. We have asked them to remove any reference to affordability that is present in their proposal. It does include some beneficial components, but we are aware that there is concern because of the density.

CAC Member Gosch: There is a definite feeling of consternation and puzzlement at this development proposal.

CDD Elliano: Advised for informational purposes that the first public hearing for the project was held before the Planning Commission on October 16th, and was continued to the meeting of December 4th.

CAC Vice Chair Hall: That is one of the most depressed areas in the City. Does the County just get to come in and build whatever they want?

CDD Elliano: The City still retains local land use control, so they must abide by our rules and ordinances and go through the normal city processes, but as the property owner they do have the right to pursue development of the site as they choose, as long as is is allowed per our codes, or the new Specific Plan.

11. Identification of Agenda Items for Next Meeting- CAC Vice Chair and City Staff

None discussed, other than CAC Member Gorman's request in an earlier portion of the agenda that a meeting with Supervisor Stone be placed on a future agenda to discuss their vehicle donation program.

12. Comments from the Public regarding items not on the agenda – CAC Vice Chair

(This is an optional portion of the agenda at the discretion of the Chair, and allowed as time permits.)

Paula Licitra: Introduced herself as the property management assistant for Casa Del Rey, which is a community with 267 mobile homes. We recently celebrated five months of being crime free in our fully gated community. Shortly thereafter, the east side office was broken into on October 15th. Then a barbecue grill was stolen, a home was burglarized, and an RV in one of our storage units was broken into. After five months with no crime we were plagued with four events in only a few days. We have a neighborhood watch program in place that consists of about 40 people, and all are perplexed as to what happened. We would like to request some additional police patrols in our community for the time being. We just want to see this activity stop since we don't feel safe in this community anymore.

CAC Member Gorman: Inquired regarding the location of the park.

Ms. Licitra: North Lake Street near the Ramona Expressway.

Discussion ensued regarding how the payment of an additional \$25 per month in rent could provide for increased police protection.

Seth Weinger: Introduced himself as the president of Par 4 Properties, LLC, which is a real estate investment company that has been operating in the valley for the past 11 years. I update my business license every year, and have three income properties in the City of Hemet. I just want to say that real estate investors who have been looking at local properties have not been painted in the best light, but rather colored with a very broad stroke. My company's tag line since inception is "Building a Better Community One Home at a Time" and I have no problem paying an additional \$25 per month in rents and passing that cost along. Regarding the investors, we really don't want to discourage them from purchasing and rehabbing these vacant homes, but rather we should find a way to work with them to build a better level of renters. We would rather have these homes fixed than boarded up. I am all for everything that this program is doing, as a landlord. Keep in mind that the investors are serving a benefit, and we would have a lot more empty homes without them. The proper investment will bring more retail and commercial investment, and will benefit the City.

Debbie White: I have been attending the board meetings each month and want to be part of the solution, but I am now a statistic. On October 14th my home on Wright Street was burglarized. It was very frightening to come home and find my house broken into upside down. I have talked to many others who have also been burglarized. Criminals are taking advantage of the decent citizens in the community, and I feel defenseless. She inquired about local defense courses, thanked the Police Department for their timely response to her call and all the other things that they do, and noted that she would be interested in volunteering for the ROCS program.

CAC Vice Chair Hall: Referred Ms. White to Seth Weinger who heads the local Crime-Stoppers Plus program. Also mentioned that there are a variety of martial arts studios in the valley, and she may want to consider getting a dog.

Anonymous Speaker: I am speaking under anonymity to avoid any retaliation. In our residential community we have been having problems with the kids trespassing and destroying property. The parents are often just as bad as the kids. I know several people who simply plan to move out of the valley. The police have been called but have not been very helpful, and did not even interview witnesses. I circulated a petition, but many in the neighborhood do not wish to get involved for fear of retaliation. I live in what was a high-end community, but within the last year it has been steadily declining due to these issues. I also now want to move from Hemet.

CAC Vice Chair Hall: Referred the speaker to Seth Weinger who is the coordinator of Crime-Stoppers Plus – a program established by United Communities Network – who may be able to offer some assistance in combating some of the issues in her neighborhood.

Marcia Scott: Spoke regarding the power outage within the London Spires Mobile Home Park that started on August 18th and continued for four days, followed by the electricity being out for up to three hours per day for the next six weeks. Over the initial four day outage, the residents were told by the owners to go to a hotel, and that they would be reimbursed for food and lodging. To date, they've received reimbursement in the amount of \$51, which was given as a deduction off of their last rent bill. One resident could not afford to pay her rent because of the costs that she incurred as a result of this issue, and is now being charged late fees. Some residents continue to have problems with their electricity. I would like to see something be done to help these people.

Discussion ensued, and it was noted that staff is aware of the situation, and Edison has been dealing with the issue, but the issue that Ms. Scott refers to is a private matter.

Julie Paule: Introduced herself as a representative for the WMA. She briefly addressed Ms. Scott, noting that she was familiar with the situation, and suggested that they speak following the meeting. To the CAC, she stated that she had two concerns regarding the rental increase that was being discussed. In a Mobile Home Park, a \$25 increase would be passed through to the residents. To those on a fixed income, this would be a huge detriment. Please consider this when developing your ordinance. Secondly, regarding the Nuisance Abatement ordinance that was passed a few months ago, I think we should give this ordinance a chance to work before we start charging a blanket \$25 fee.

13. Adjournment to the meeting of November 29, 2012- CAC Vice Chair

Adjourned at 4:53 p.m.