

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
May 11, 2009**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments' (CVAG) Public Safety Committee (PSC) meeting was called to order on Monday, May 11, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Alan Seman, Councilmember, City of Rancho Mirage, at CVAG offices, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Conference Room 119, Palm Desert, California 92260-2516.

Chairman Alan Seman stated that the Committee would like to send a message to Program Assistant Valarie Franklin that the Committee misses her and wishes her good luck.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

At the request of Chairman Seman, Councilmember Patrick Mullany, City of Indian Wells, led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

A roll call was conducted and it was determined that a quorum was present.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilmember Alan Seman (*Chair*)
Councilmember Chuck Vasquez
Mayor Eduardo Garcia
Mayor Pro Tem Scott Matas
Councilmember Patrick Mullany
Councilmember Ben Godfrey
Councilmember Terry Henderson
Mayor Bob Spiegel
Councilmember Lee Weigel
Sheriff Stan Sniff, Jr.

AGENCY

City of Rancho Mirage
City of Cathedral City
City of Coachella
City of Desert Hot Springs
City of Indian Wells
City of Indio
City of La Quinta
City of Palm Desert
City of Palm Springs
County of Riverside

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

EX-OFFICIOS PRESENT

Brad Ramos, Chief
Ignacio Otero, Deputy Chief
London Pickering, Sergeant

AGENCY

Indio Police Department
Riverside County Fire Department
Indio Police Department

Blake Goetz, Chief
Matt Jimenez, Lieutenant
Ron Miller, Division Director
Patrick Williams, Chief
Michael Singh, Agent-In-Charge
Rod Pacheco, District Attorney

Palm Springs Fire Department
Indian Wells Police Department
County Probation Department
Desert Hot Springs Police Depart.
U.S. Border Patrol - Indio
County District Attorney's Office

OTHERS PRESENT

Sara Danville, Assistant District Attorney
Lynda Gregory
Jim Navarro, Lieutenant/Asst. Chief of Police
Mel Windsor, Personnel Director
Mark Wilson, Vice President
Bruce Barton, EMS Agency Director
Kim Saruwatari, Chief, Emerg. Prep. And Response
Barbara Cole, Director, Disease Control

AGENCY

County District Attorney Office
Supervisor Roy Wilson's office
City of Rancho Mirage
City of Rancho Mirage
WatchSystems.com
Riverside County Public Health
Riverside County Public Health
Riverside County Public Health

CVAG STAFF PRESENT

Larry Parrish, Interim Executive Director
Aurora Wilson, Community Resources Director
Jacob Alvarez, Management Analyst
Patty Nevins, Interim Program Assistant

- 4. **FINALIZATION OF AGENDA & ADDITIONS AND REVISIONS** – None.

- 5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** - None.

- 6. **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEMBER AND DIRECTOR COMMENT** - None

- 7. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Jacob Alvarez noted that correspondence approved by the Committee had been sent to local public safety agencies regarding consideration of the purchase of a Graffiti Reduction & Interception Program (G.R.I.P. Systems) for graffiti abatement software. A copy of the letter was included in the agenda packet.

8. **MEETING MINUTES**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MAYOR ROBERT SPIEGEL, CITY OF PALM DESERT, AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER PATRICK MULLANY, CITY OF RANCHO

MIRAGE, TO APPROVE THE MARCH 9, 2009 AND APRIL 13, 2009 PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. PRESENTATION ON “OFFENDER WATCH” WEB-BASED TRACKING SYSTEM

Mark Wilson of Watch Systems presented the web-based system “Offender Watch” to the Committee. Mr. Wilson stated that this system helps law enforcement register, track, and monitor registered criminal offenders including sexual offenders, gang members, arsonists, career criminals, etc. It also helps law enforcement disseminate information to the community in a way that is citizen-friendly. Past information on offenders can be imported when they move out of one jurisdiction and into another, and information is confidential and secure. Desert Hot Springs is currently using the system. In response to questions by Councilmember Mullany, Mr. Wilson reviewed his company’s background, noting that they operate in 38 states and have had background clearances in each state that they conduct business in.

Brad Ramos stated that this item could be referred to ARCCOPS (Association of Riverside County Chiefs of Police and Sheriffs) for consideration. Councilmember Scott Matas stated that Desert Hot Springs is pleased with the system, and indicated that utilization of systems that provide for collaboration between jurisdictions is consistent with the goals that the Public Safety Committee has discussed. Sheriff Stan Sniff concurred that this should be considered by the law enforcement community.

Brad Ramos suggested referring this item to the Association of Riverside County Chiefs of Police and Sheriffs (ARCCOPS). This was approved by consensus with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: Councilmember Chuck Vasquez, City of Cathedral City; Mayor Eduardo Garcia, City of Coachella; Councilmember Scott Matas, City of Desert Hot Springs; Councilmember Patrick Mullany, City of Indian Wells; Councilmember Ben Godfrey, City of Indio; Mayor Pro Tem Terry Henderson, City of La Quinta, Mayor Bob Spiegel, City of Palm Desert; Councilmember Lee Weigel, City of Palm Springs; Mayor Pro Tem Alan Seman, City of Rancho Mirage; Sheriff Stanley Sniff, Jr, County of Riverside.

No: None.

10. DISCUSSION AND ADOPTION OF GOALS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009/2010

Jacob Alvarez reviewed the Public Safety Committee’s potential goals for 2009/2010, noting that the current proposal incorporated recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Subcommittee which consisted of Mayor Pro Tem Alan Seman of Rancho Mirage, Councilmember Scott Matas of Desert Hot Springs, Councilmember Chuck Vasquez of Cathedral City, Bill Soqui, Cathedral City Fire Chief, and David Dominguez, Palm Springs Police Chief. Original goals considered by the subcommittee were a regional reform & re-entry program for parolees, youth intervention program, and Safe Routes to

Schools master plan. Subsequently, the subcommittee met, made changes to the draft goals, and arrived at the draft goals presented by Mr. Alvarez as follows:

1. Support and Encourage Collaboratives - leverage resources on regional Issues
2. Promote Youth Intervention – target at risk youths
3. Support Regional Reform & Re-entry Program for Parolees
4. Support Regional Community Engagement for Fiscal Year 2009-2010

Mr. Alvarez noted that direction and formation of subcommittees would be needed in order to achieve desired outcomes for each of the goals.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER BOB SPIEGEL, CITY OF PALM DESERT, AND SECONDED BY CHUCK VASQUEZ, CITY OF CATHEDRAL CITY, THAT THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE ADOPT THE AD HOC COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDED GOALS OF 1) SUPPORT & ENCOURAGE COLLABORATIVES, 2) PROMOTE YOUR INTERVENTION, 3) SUPPORT REGIONAL REFORM & RE-ENTRY PROGRAM FOR PAROLEES AND 4) SUPPORT REGIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009-2010.

District Attorney Rod Pacheco suggested that prevention programs be added to goal #2, noting that prevention programs generally start with kids at a younger age than intervention and are not currently as widespread.

COUNCILMEMBER TERRY HENDERSON, CITY OF LA QUINTA, RECOMMENDED REWORDING GOAL #2 TO ADD "AND PREVENTION". THE AMENDMENT WAS ACCEPTED; THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Yes: Councilmember Chuck Vasquez, City of Cathedral City; Mayor Eduardo Garcia, City of Coachella; Councilmember Scott Matas, City of Desert Hot Springs; Councilmember Patrick Mullany, City of Indian Wells; Councilmember Ben Godfrey, City of Indio; Mayor Pro Tem Terry Henderson, City of La Quinta, Mayor Bob Spiegel, City of Palm Desert; Councilmember Lee Weigel, City of Palm Springs; Mayor Pro Tem Alan Seman, City of Rancho Mirage; Sheriff Stanley Sniff, Jr, County of Riverside.

No: None.

Abstain: None.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

11. PRESENTATION ON "OPERATION FALLING SUN"

Chair Alan Seman introduced District Attorney Rod Pacheco and Patrick Williams, Police Chief for the City of Desert Hot Springs. Chief Williams stated that the operation's success was a tribute to the professionalism of all involved and expressed appreciation

for the large commitment undertaken by the Sheriff's and District Attorney's offices for Operation Falling Sun. Mr. Pacheco reported on Operation Falling Sun, which took place on March 27, 2009 and was the largest gang suppression operation in the history of Riverside County. He acknowledged the Riverside County Sheriff as well as CVAG Interim Director Larry Parrish who supported gang task force formation while working as the Riverside County CEO. Mr. Pacheco stated that approximately 700 police officers were involved, and 35 different law enforcement agencies participated. 38 arrest warrants were executed, over 120 arrests were made, and 185 probation and 100 parole searches were conducted throughout the day. The day's activities also included drug and firearms seizures. It was noted that there were no injuries during the entire day. Councilperson Patrick Mullany, City of Indian Wells, inquired as to why there were fewer federal cases than others; Mr. Pacheco responded that when federal and state laws both covered a particular crime, they went with the law that carried the harsher penalty. He added that they would likely see more federal prosecutions in the future. Sheriff Sniff stated that the success of operations such as this may cause people to think that law enforcement efforts can be decreased. He noted that it is important to maintain law enforcement levels and efforts and not downsize law enforcement when budget issues arise and added that collaboration and sharing of resources between jurisdictions is critical.

In response to questions regarding building of a prison or jail, Sheriff Sniff stated that discussions are currently taking place regarding this. He reviewed existing staffing, noting that the Sheriff's department alone currently has 600 vacancies based on a County hiring freeze; the majority of these are deputy sheriffs. Sheriff Sniff pointed out that to fill the proposed Whitewater jail would require 400 staff positions in the first phase alone; to fill the Banning jail expansion in December, he would need to hire over 100 positions. He added that before June 16th, discussions will go back and forth over needs relative to the proposed budget and stated that representatives need to go forward, expanding law enforcement, rather than falling back.

12. EX-OFFICIO MEMBER UPDATES

12.1 SHERIFF/POLICE CHIEFS

Brad Ramos thanked the Sheriff's office, the Palm Springs and Cathedral City police departments, and County Fire and CalFire for their assistance with the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival.

12.2 FIRE CHIEFS

Chief Ignacio Otero reported that Chief Dennis Dawson was retiring after 37 years of service. He provided an update on the fire currently burning in Santa Barbara which is affecting 8700 acres and is currently 70% contained. 25 engines from Riverside County are assisting, along with helicopter personnel and others.

12.3 CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL - None.

12.4 BORDER PATROL

Michael Singh, Agent in Charge for the U.S. Border Patrol stated that 270 reportable aliens had been taken into custody since his last report. Thirteen individuals were detained for drug-related transport and possession. Agent Singh noted that the Border Patrol is working with the Indio Police Department to identify individuals. He reported that the past month had seen substantial drug interdiction, including 1200 pounds of marijuana, 700 pounds of cocaine, and heroin and meth; all for a street value of just under 3 million dollars. Agent Singh noted that Wednesday would mark the Border Patrol's 85th anniversary, and that Chief Caljoun would be recognizing Chief Brad Ramos from the Indio Police Department and Chief Dan Wilham from Palm Desert for their outstanding partnership activities. Agent Singh added that a joint operation with the City of Indio - Operation CCOGS (Career Criminal Offenders and Gang Suppression) - would be initiated to pool resources to identify specific gang members and career criminal offenders with the agencies' jurisdictions.

12.5 DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Assistant District Attorney Sara Danville reviewed National Crime Victim's Rights Week celebrations which included candlelight vigils in Temecula, Palm Desert, and the Historic Courthouse in Riverside, a march with over 2000 participants, and a Guardians of Justice luncheon. Ms. Danville also reported that she is this year's Chairperson for the Law Enforcement Appreciation Committee which is a primarily west-end committee that honors law enforcement personnel in the west end. Their dinner will be Wednesday, May 27th at the Riverside Convention Center.

12.6 COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT - None.

13. INFORMATIONAL

13.1 COACHELLA VALLEY GANG TASK FORCE – Item being held over until next month.

13.2 COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE RECORD – An attendance record was included in member's agenda packets as an informational item.

13.3 COMMITTEE GOALS FOR FISCAL YEAR 08/09

Goal #1	Burglary Task Force East/West Valley and Property Crime Prevention Education Programs to Decrease Auto Theft and Reduce Property Crimes and Crime Free Multi-Housing Task Force Unit.
Goal #2	Traffic Safety through valley-wide Enforcement Strategies as it relates to Speed Enforcement Programs; Collision Reduction and Enforcement of Hazardous Driving; Teenage Drivers; and Seatbelt Enforcement.
Goal #3	Gang Intervention Programs and Task Force Support from all Cities and Help Obtain Funding Grants.
Goal #4	Disaster Preparedness Program that includes Coachella Valley Safety Personnel Participation in the State OES Golden Guardian Earthquake Exercise in November 2008 with progress reports; Locate and Develop Disaster Equipment Caches; Identify out of Area Contact Points for Public Safety Personnel; Prioritize Primary and Secondary Roads; Unified Command Training for Public Safety Personnel (ICS 3000 & 400 level).
Goal #5	Communications Upgrade and Support 800 Radio System Interoperability for both ERICA and RSO, and Provide Mobile Data Computer Interoperability; by tracking fire resources, sharing data (streets, fire hydrant data, preplans and aerial images).

14. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Alan Seman reviewed the following announcements:

CVAG's General Assembly will be held on June 29, 2009 at 6:00 pm at Spotlight 29 Casino, 46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella, California. The cost is \$40.00 per person. RSVP to Joanna Stueckle by emailing jstueckle@cvag.org.

The next regularly meeting of the Public Safety Committee is scheduled for **10:00 a.m.** on **Monday, June 8, 2009** at the CVAG offices, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 119, Palm Desert.

15. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting of the Public Safety Committee was adjourned at 11:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Nevins, Interim Program Assistant
Department of Community Resources (DCR)