

WILSHIRE COMMUNITY-POLICE ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

June 15, 2023

The in-person and online/telephonic hybrid meeting, over Zoom, was called to order at 7:01 by Mitch Jacoves.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Janice Belson, Shelby Blecker, Susan Considine, Loretta Eason, Medrene Gee, Cherelle Hartley, Mitch Jacoves, Starr Johnson, Julie Kim, Petra King, Diane Manns, Meg McComb, Peter Nichols, Conrad Starr, Amy White, Denise White, John Winther

Board Members Absent: Jacqueline McClellan, Summer Peach,

Board Members Excused: Greg Jones Kari Garcia

Minutes

Mitch Jacoves moved to approve the May minutes, which were approved with corrections.

Opening Remarks – Mitch reported that the Senior Lead Officers were not present due to being redeployed this week.

CPAB Membership Update

Officer Figueroa reported that there were no new members at the present. Please call the Community Relations Office if you know anyone who might be interested. Mitch asked members to encourage neighbors to join neighborhood councils. He also reported that two CPAB members just graduated from the Community Police Academy, Amy White and Julie Kim. Amy, who said it was very informative and a worthwhile experience.

Captain's Report

Lieutenant Mark Ro filled in for Captain Monico, who was on vacation. Lt. Ro is an administrative lieutenant who oversees 30+ detectives, and has volunteered to chair several C-PAB subcommittees.

Lt. Ro reported that violent crime is down from a year ago. There were two homicides, and four traffic-related deaths. He reminded the community that vehicles are 5,000 lb. weapons, and to drive safely with this in mind. He also noted that there were dozens of victims of road rage in the last couple of weeks, and that it's important to cultivate patience while driving. Unfortunately, Wilshire has consistently had the most pedestrian deaths, and we need to address this situation more effectively.

Conrad asked whether investigations of fatalities include consideration of things such as obstructed views. Lt. Ro replied that with any reportable violation, all factors are noted, including tinted windows, especially at night.

Petra noted that in the case of traffic violations, the lack of ticketing implies consent. Mitch commented that residents should pay attention to bills in the CA Senate, such as 553, that would prevent officers from ticketing expired plates. John noted that Beverly Hills tickets even parked cars with tinted

windows, and said that perhaps LA needs to be broken up, because it is ungovernable in its current state.

Peter Nichols asked on behalf of his Board if the LPR system of cameras they have is helpful to the department. Lt. Ro replied that the cameras north and south of Melrose continue to be helpful, especially because they provide photos of license plate numbers. He noted that Rolex robberies dropped sharply because the department was able to make several arrests with the help of neighborhood camera images.

Peter commented that this grassroots effort in the Melrose area is unprecedented, and that they have been contacted by several communities from other parts of the country. They currently have over 20 cameras, and are looking to install 12 more.

C-PAB member Diane Manns reported that trashcans in the area of 3rd, Beverly and La Brea are getting destroyed on a regular basis. Typically, the trash is emptied on the ground and the cans are burned. Conrad reported that he saw a similar incident on Olympic, and noted that this is obviously a public safety hazard and could result in structure fires. Lt. Ro replied that he has had calls with the Major Crimes Division in response to the eight fires in Wilshire, some of which threatened inhabited structures, since May. There has been a slight delay in coordinating with the Fire Department, because both they and LAPD Major Crimes investigate arson. Lt. Ro noted that they caught a serial arsonist who lives in the Valley, thanks to the report of an observant handyman, and stressed that it's important to keep reporting crimes.

Thao Tran requested that members take photos of the vandalized trashcans they see so she can report them to Sanitation.

Mitch asked Thao if CD 5 has any updates on encampments, and Thao replied that they have a map of the most problematic areas so they can prioritize the use of resources. They have addressed the San Vicente encampment, and fencing has been installed to prevent repopulation. Landscaping remedies will also be employed to discourage camping and repair damaged areas.

Regarding La Brea and Willoughby, since it sits on the border of CD 5 and 13, they are organizing a meeting to coordinate a response. Every CD must negotiate for resources, and CD 5 is unique in having no shelter beds. The law states that a credible offer of housing must be made, or it is deemed cruel and unusual punishment to prevent camping on sidewalks. (see the 2006 ruling of Jones v City of LA.) Subsequent cases have strengthened this stance and have also decriminalized public substance abuse. Thao also noted that some residents with large lots are willing to fund physical deterrence's, and CD 5 is trying to expedite the approval process for these efforts.

Petra commented that rulings limiting the ability to remove encampments are in place because lawyers were employed to bring suit, and that those of us opposed to these restrictions need to organize to rewrite the law.

Committee Reports

Sgt. Kirby reported that they would like to form a group of 18-24 year olds to explore diversity and equity issues. If any members know of potential recruits, please contact CRO.

Mitch Jacoves adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

The next meeting is July 20 at 7 p.m.