



**MINUTES  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
ROSSMOOR COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**

**REGULAR MEETING**

RUSH PARK  
3021 Blume Drive  
Rossmoor, California

**Tuesday, November 1, 2016**

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**A. ORGANIZATION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 P.M.**

- 2. ROLL CALL:** Directors Kahlert, Nitikman, Maynard  
President DeMarco  
Director Casey had an excused absence

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**4. SWEARING IN OF NEW BOARD MEMBER**

President DeMarco conducted the swearing in ceremony for newly appointed Director Mark Nitikman. Applause ensued.

**5. PRESENTATIONS**

**PRESIDENT DEMARCO REQUESTED THAT ITEM A-5b. SUPERVISOR MICHELLE STEEL REPRESENTATIVE, TIM WHITACRE RE: REGIONAL HOMELESS ISSUE BE TAKEN OUT OF ORDER AND MOVED AHEAD IN THE AGENDA AT THIS TIME.**

b. O.C. Supervisor Michelle Steel Representative, Tim Whitacre Re: Regional Homeless Issue

Tim Whitacre addressed resident fear and concern regarding the increasing visibility of displaced homeless populations and encampments located in the Caltrans area adjacent to Rossmoor as well as the potential impact of these populations on crime and public safety.

Mr. Whitaker indicated that as the County has become aware of the concerns of residents, they are giving the various agencies and departments an opportunity to address those concerns and, so far, are very pleased with the results. He went on to explain that in order to serve the residents of Rossmoor, the County public works department has repaired three flood control channel gates that were not in County jurisdictional boundaries. They also repaired the one coyote gate that is located in Rossmoor. This was done to protect pets by keeping out the coyotes as well as to

prevent homeless people using the flood control channels as community access points. The County also repaired an additional access gate.

Mr. Whitacre stated that the County works with special districts such as Rossmoor sharing resources, experiences and ideas to address the constituents concerns in the matters of health and public safety—specifically, lately as they relate to the homeless issue. In order to address the homeless issue countywide, last month the County hired a Homeless Czar named Susan Price. Mr. Whitacre remarked that the County has a great relationship with the RCSD and surrounding communities. He concluded by assuring the public that Supervisor Steel was committed to doing her best to serve the community and if the County can't solve the problem themselves, they are happy to call upon the necessary agencies to help. Applause ensued. The presentation was received and filed.

a. O.C. Sheriff's Department Lt. Jeff Puckett Re: Quarterly Crime Statistics. (moved to 2<sup>nd</sup>)

Lt. Jeff Puckett introduced himself to the board and community. He announced that he would be addressing the crime statistics, the homeless issue, but most importantly he intended to address resident concerns by providing the facts and answers they desired. Lieutenant Puckett reported on the quarterly crime statistics. The facts indicated that crime was trending down more than 10% in Rossmoor. He pointed out the reality that at least 50% of community crime was due to crimes of opportunity.

Regarding the homeless issue, Lt. Puckett stated that it was his belief that the citizens of Rossmoor have a legitimate complaint about the homeless issue that is happening outside the community's boundaries. He stated the Sheriff's Department would be establishing a community policing program in Rossmoor to keep citizens informed. He introduced his team of deputies to the community, which included a new Homeless Liaison Officer. Lieutenant pledged to initiate a prevention plan which included monitoring the coyote gates and keeping them repaired. He added that homeless issues in the City of Long Beach were outside of his authority, however, he had assigned a Deputy to communicate with the City of Long Beach to see if they could deploy some directed patrol into the homeless encampment areas on their side of the county line. He added no one should be in the flood control channels—it is a safety issue. Therefore, anyone found in the flood control channels of Rossmoor will be arrested for trespassing. He added that it was his personal pledge to notify the community each month by posting on Nextdoor, both the previous month's crime statistics and the Sheriff Department's progress with these issues. He concluded that if the plan doesn't work out, they will find another solution. Lt. Puckett offered to be available after the meeting for questions in order to put the citizens at ease. He also invited the community to the Coffee with a Cop event, later in the week, so they could share concerns and ideas with him.

Discussion ensued relative to the distinction between homeless, mentally ill and vagrant populations and criminal activity. Lt. Puckett stated that the County was in the process of assembling a task force consisting of representatives from each community; however, the situation was still unfolding. Section 5150 was the tool to address mentally incapacitated individuals who may pose a danger to themselves or others.

Director Nitikman asked for a description of the coyote gates. Lt. Puckett answered that they were made of chain link and were being cut through by vagrants. The problem was systemic and countywide. Director Nitikman asked if they could be reinforced or replaced with a more substantial material and whether or not cameras could be installed in the flood control channels. Lieutenant Puckett stated that he did not have the answer at this time but would continue to pursue solutions.

President DeMarco asked if it was a crime to be in the flood control channels or the streets of Rossmoor. Lt. Puckett stated that it was considered trespassing to be in the flood control channels where 'no trespassing' signs are posted and either a citizen or law enforcement would have to witness the event. Walking the streets was not a crime. The presentation was received and filed.

#### c. Pete's Plumbing Re: Residential Sewer Best Practices and Responsibilities

Tony Hillis, with Pete's Plumbing discussed residential sewer maintenance and educated residents regarding foods and substances that damaged drains—especially during the holiday season. He stated that with the drought, the trees and roots are looking for water in the sewer lines. Roots are the main problem with sewer lines. He suggested maintaining sewer lines by adding Rootx or Root Destroyer about every six months in order to prevent blockages. He also cautioned against flushing things like medications, wipes, etc. down the toilet. Medications are better disposed of at community drug take back events. Mr. Hillis also remarked that the old clay pipes were exceptionally vulnerable to tree roots and damage. Newer plastic pipes are sturdier and less vulnerable to damage. Discussion ensued relative to the location and composition of the sewer lines. Mr. Hillis stated that many are composed of porous clay and the homeowner is responsible for the main line beginning from their home to the city connection. The presentation was received and filed.

### **B. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA—None**

### **C. PUBLIC FORUM:**

Jill Thorndike opined relative to the homeless issue stating that the community's objections were not directed at the innocent homeless who were down on their luck, but rather with the vagrancy, the drugged out homeless and the mental problems. She added that she didn't have the answer and appreciated the vast complexity of the problem, but felt the answer was not to be complacent. She further opined that the Santa Ana Homeless problem was allowed to fester with no response which enabled it to grow. She concluded that she wanted to nip the problem in the bud. Homeless don't care what jurisdictional boundaries they are in. She also believed the gates needed to be made of stronger material more resistant to damage.

Seal Beach resident Enea Ostrich had comments relative to the homeless issue. She stated that she had experience with homeless populations as she had worked in Los Angeles as well as in San Pedro at the harbor. She agreed with Mr. Whitacre's comments and indicated that she was pleased Rossmoor was taking action. There were homeless issues in Seal Beach as well. There was no easy solution. Fences and walls may not work. She concluded that if she could say anything to Supervisor Steel's office it would

be that citizens need a coordinated effort and they need it soon. She thanked the County and District for their diligence and for taking the issue seriously.

Gerald Wilkins also had comments relative to the homeless issue. He opined that he did not agree with Mr. Whitacre's comment that it was a perceived issue. He stated that he had personal encounters with the homeless both at his residence and at a McDonald's Drive Thru with his son in the car. He notified the Orange County Sheriff's Department and they responded very quickly. He agreed that gates would not solve the problem. Homeless are using bicycles to travel through the neighborhood. He suggested some low cost methods such as utilizing the Nextdoor social media site and installing a Ring Doorbell system. He also recommended utilizing resident's WiFi for video monitoring. He concluded by welcoming Lieutenant Puckett.

President DeMarco stated that he and his fellow board members were all Rossmoor residents and he knows that he speaks for all of them in acknowledging that this is a very important issue. The Board has heard from residents and read the comments on Nextdoor. The Board functions as a whole at Board Meetings and have limited jurisdiction. Rossmoor is an unincorporated County area so there is a process for doing things. He urged the public to share their concerns and suggestions for improvement with the RCSD Board so they might better serve the community and implored residents to attend the monthly board meetings. He concluded that the homeless issue is a complex one that exists across the region and encouraged residents to keep talking about it. He stated that he is impressed with Rossmoor's new Lieutenant Puckett and was confident that he was going to proactively address resident's concerns within his jurisdictional powers. He thanked General Manager Jim Ruth for assembling all of the guest speakers and coordinating the meeting tonight in such a short amount of time which allowed residents access to County leaders to share their concerns. He concluded that the RCSD Board was concerned about what was going on beyond their wall and were doing everything in their power to remedy the situation.

Beverly Houghton announced that she and Dorothy Fitzgerald had met with Lieutenant Puckett. The Lieutenant had impressed upon them the importance of a strong and active Neighborhood Watch Program. Currently there were 70 Blocks or 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the community, covered by the program and many openings still available for Block Captains. Beverly praised Dorothy for all the work she did in organizing Rossmoor's Neighborhood Watch program and encouraged others to volunteer.

**AT 8:20 P.M. PRESIDENT DEMARCO CALLED FOR A 5 MINUTE RECESS.**

**AT APPROXIMATELY 8:25 P.M. THE BOARD RECONVENED.**

**D. REPORTS TO THE BOARD:**

**1. RECEIVE AND FILE QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT.**

The General Manager reported on the progress for the quarter. He discussed progress on the Rush Park Tot Lot Canopy Project, Montecito Road Lighting Upgrades, etc. The report was received and filed.

**2. RECEIVE AND FILE QUARTERLY RECREATION REPORT.**

Chris Argueta reported on the District's recreation program, summer events program and the progress made by this year's Rossmoor Winter Festival Planning Committee in preparation for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Rossmoor Winter Festival. He announced that donations would soon be taken for the 4<sup>th</sup> annual toy drive. Discussion ensued relative to community surveys and responses. Chris Argueta stated that surveys had been done in the past, but most feedback regarding summer events had been received via word-of-mouth. He added that he would research additional options in the future. The report was received and filed.

### **3. RECEIVE AND FILE QUARTERLY TREE REPORT.**

District Tree Program Specialist Mary Kingman's report was reviewed. The report was received and filed.

#### **E. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

#### **DIRECTOR MAYNARD REQUESTED THAT ITEMS E-1a. AND E-1b. BE PULLED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR AT THIS TIME.**

Director Maynard indicated that the board would, once again have to postpone voting on the Minutes, as they still did not have a quorum of Directors present this evening who also attended those same meetings. He noted that the September 13<sup>th</sup> minutes had inadvertently been omitted and requested that they be included in the December agenda packet. The Administrative Assistant agreed to Director Maynard's requests.

Discussion ensued relative to how many times the board was permitted to abstain from voting on the minutes and postpone action on approval of the minutes, due to lack of a quorum. General Counsel stated that at some point those Directors who were not actually present could be asked to view the video version of the meeting and subsequently participate in approval of the minutes. Motion by Director Maynard seconded by Director Casey to approve Consent Calendar Items E-2, and E-3 as submitted and postpone action on Items E-1a. and E-1b. to the December 13, 2016 regular Board Meeting. Motion passed 4-0.

#### **1a. MINUTES SPECIAL BOARD MEETING—September 6, 2016**

#### **1b. MINUTES REGULAR BOARD MEETING—October 11, 2016**

#### **2. REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORT—SEPTEMBER 2016**

#### **3. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION RE: LONG TERM/NON PROFIT USER PERMIT RENEWALS FOR USE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY**

Motion by Director Maynard seconded by Director Casey to approve Item E-3 on the Consent Calendar as submitted. Motion passed 4-0.

#### **F. PUBLIC HEARING—None**

#### **G. RESOLUTIONS—None**

**ORDINANCES—None**

**H. REGULAR CALENDAR—None**

**I. GENERAL MANAGER ITEMS:**

The General Manager reported regarding the update of the County Emergency Management Plan which outlined the County's roles and responsibilities. As soon as the plan was finished he would provide the RCSD and RHA Boards receive a copy. He discussed the Orange County Sanitation District's plan for updating their sewer lines and pump stations. It was quite an extensive project and the EIR has been made available for review. The EIR report will define the scope of work and indicate the location of any traffic interruptions. The OCSD will be doing extensive outreach and is requesting that agencies respond to the EIR within 45 days. Mr. Ruth stated that as soon as the District received said information they would share it with the Board.

**J. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:**

Director Maynard thanked everyone for taking the time out of their busy schedules to attend the board meeting this evening. It was a packed house. He stated that he understood the community concerns surrounding the homeless. He thanked Tim Whitacre and Lieutenant Puckett for their presentations. He added that crime is down and could be reduced even further if everyone eliminated crimes of opportunity by locking doors and securing valuables. He also reminded everyone to set their clocks back one hour this weekend. He concluded by welcoming newly sworn in Director Mark Nitikman and added that he looked forward to working with him.

Director Kahlert thanked Tim Whitacre and Lieutenant Puckett for their insightful presentations. He remarked that he has faith that they will come up with an action plan. He also thanked Tony Hillis from Pete's Plumbing for his informative presentation on sewer line best practices and responsibilities. He reminded the public that if they still have old clay pipes, issues are bound to occur. He encouraged everyone to maintain their sewer lines with either Rootx or another sewer line maintenance product. Director Kahlert congratulated Director Mark Nitikman and thanked him for stepping up to serve his community. He looked forward to working with him. He also thanked Chris Argueta for managing a great summer event program this year. Finally, he invited everyone to attend the free Rossmoor Winter Festival event on Friday, December 9, 2016. He provided a brief overview of the entertainment and activities planned, including live reindeer.

Director Nitikman thanked everyone for being so welcoming. He inquired as to what steps were being taken to ensure that the new trees being planted in the community had both drought tolerant and native properties. He added that southern California was a desert landscape and he wanted to be sure the District was considering this fact when planning for the future of its urban forest. As a way to further reduce traffic, Director Nitikman also requested that the District communicate with the Orange County School of the Arts (OSHA) to see if it was possible to pick up and drop off students in the shopping center location, rather than at Rush Park.

President DeMarco thanked Tim Whitacre and welcomed Lieutenant Puckett to Rossmoor. He stated that he appreciated their attendance and looked forward to working with them. He congratulated Mark Nitikman on his new appointment and thanked the General Manager and staff

for organizing the meeting. He announced that the three burned out light poles located on Foster Road and Piedmont had all been replaced by Edison. He thanked residents for sharing their concerns with the Board and community and stated that the Board was always open to ideas and suggestions. He encouraged everyone to get out and vote on Tuesday, November 8, 2016 and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

**K. CLOSED SESSION—None**

**L. ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Director Maynard, seconded by Director Kahlert to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:30 p.m.  
Motion passed 4-0.

**SUBMITTED BY:**

**James D. Ruth**

**General Manager**