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**LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL/L.A. COUNTY SUPERVISOR  
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING MINUTES  
February 18, 2010**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Parris called the Special Joint Meeting to order at 8:38 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Council Members: Mann, Marquez, Vice Mayor Smith, Mayor Parris

Absent: Council Member Sileo

**Staff**

Members: City Manager; Deputy City Manager; City Attorney; City Clerk; Assistant to the City Manager; Planning Director; Public Works Director; Parks, Recreation & Arts Director; Economic Development Director; Housing Director

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Vice Mayor Smith

**NB 1. INTRODUCTION OF YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT STUDENT PARTICIPANTS – LANCASTER**

The Recreation Supervisor introduced the students that would be participating in the Youth in Government Program, hosted by the City of Lancaster. Supervisor Antonovich presented certificates to each of the students and gave a brief history regarding the incorporation of Los Angeles County and historical families of Los Angeles County.

**NB 2. STATUS ON REFCO (RESOLUTION FINANCE COMPANY) STRIP REQUEST FROM CITY OF LANCASTER – LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

The City Manager thanked Los Angeles County for working with City staff regarding this matter. The City Attorney stated that City staff has met with County staff; gave a brief overview of the Strip; its worth in 1993; value today; security has grown over time. Established to help backstop the difference between what the County receives for Project Area 7 and the payout for the Sheriff's Station. The County will be made whole by the release of the funds; if the Redevelopment Agency had access to these funds there are many areas where they could be invested. Without the funds, the Agency will be hurt by the taking of funds from the State; everyone will benefit from the projects this money can go towards; positive results will take place; final information will be given to the County soon.

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**NB 2. STATUS ON REFCO (RESOLUTION FINANCE COMPANY) STRIP REQUEST FROM CITY OF LANCASTER – LOS ANGELES COUNTY (continued)**

A representative from Los Angeles County agreed that the meetings have been productive; they are moving forward on this; there are many complexities within the agreement and will have answers for the City next week.

**NB 3. REPORT ON ANIMAL CONTROL ENFORCEMENT OF CITY VICIOUS DOG ORDINANCE – LOS ANGELES COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL**

Representatives from the Lancaster Animal Shelter gave a brief report; presented statistical information on the number of animals that have been impounded; citations that have been written; criminal complaints filed; very successful in getting compliance from the citizens; thanked Supervisor Antonovich for organizing a task force. The shelter became overcrowded so they developed an offsite adoption center which has eased overcrowding and has helped to expand the Lancaster Shelter; looking forward to bigger and better things to come.

Mayor Parris stated that people are now out walking, feeling safer; it's a different community and thanked the County for their successful efforts.

**NB 4. REPORT ON PROPOSED FOX FIELD AIRPORT MASTER PLAN – LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

A County Representative gave a brief overview of the plan; funding of the Master Plan; Master Plan will guide the Strategic Plan over the years to come. Looking for opportunities in the area of Avenue F; committees made up of City and County staff will be working on this. First round of notifications will come out over the next few weeks; inventory is necessary; an inventory consultant will be reviewing the site; the project will go through the CEQA Analysis; there have been many suggestions regarding development; many ideas have been offered and the County is looking at everything. No concrete answers at this time, but answers will come about through the process.

Vice Mayor Smith discussed the future of the area; could be a major industrial area for Los Angeles County; consider bringing it into the Master Plan; consider incorporating the Fox Field Corridor into the plan; a joint ownership will help to increase the amount of revenue; if it is all one entity, then some of the bureaucracy could be cut.

Supervisor Antonovich stated that this is definitely worth looking into.

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**NB 5. STATUS ON LANCASTER DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – LANCASTER**

The Deputy City Manager presented the drawings for the transformation of the BLVD; discussed construction projects; American Heroes Park; the museum; benefits of the downtown; making it pedestrian friendly; family friendly; will show what Lancaster is all about; restaurants; businesses; substantial investment in public funds; community program; festivals; events; farmers markets; typical of a space that is urban and used by all. There will be no doubt that people will be proud of the transformation and excited to be part of the community; groundbreaking in early March, with completion in October; significant amount of construction; this Council has created so many jobs with the decisions they have made.

Mayor Parris stated that the vision is to be the center for the Arts; issues with the Cedar Street Complex, which will be resolved; importance of providing affordable arts and music education; encouraged the County to get involved and see where they could provide assistance. Ultimately, this is for the young people.

Vice Mayor Smith stated that the transformation of the downtown is more than creating a destination; it is about shifting the paradigm for the area; changes in townhomes; people will be able to walk out of their homes and come right over to the downtown area to shop, dine, be entertained.

The City Manager stated that approximately 500 jobs have been created due to this project and the decisions of the Council.

**NB 6. STATUS ON ENTERPRISE ZONE EXTENSION STATE APPLICATION – LANCASTER**

The Economic Development Director presented an overview of the Enterprise Zone; the Agency has assisted over 1100 firms; created over 10,000 jobs; being very pro-active and are preparing an application for the next 15 years. The State is only going to select two zones, therefore competition is high; discussed tax credits; the County is a very valuable partner in this quest.

Supervisor Antonovich stated that he thinks the entire state should be an enterprise zone; discussed facilities that should fall under these zones.

Mayor Parris discussed the vision for the Antelope Valley; recognized that many changes are happening globally; discussed shipping/transportation costs; realizes there will be a demographic shift; importance of having the manufacturing base grow; there is a huge opportunity here; this is a pivotal point in the future of the City; encouraged the County to be engaged in this process as much as possible.

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**NB 7. STATUS OF PROTOCOL IMPROVEMENTS BETWEEN LOCAL  
AUTHORITIES AND CHILD AND ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES –  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

A County Representative and Lieutenant Downton from the Lancaster Sheriff's Station discussed the meetings that have been held; continued cooperation from everyone; great relationship with the people working on this; working with taking care of the elderly who are without housing.

The Contract Services Administrator for the City stated there will be more and more contact with the elderly population; working to establish responses; working to establish partnerships to resolve the issues.

Mayor Parris discussed the issue of children being taken down to the USC Medical facility for exams, rather than receiving them locally. He discussed a particular case where there were two healthy children, one of which died in an accident; the family was grieving; the child and family are driven to Los Angeles for assistance; does not understand why this happened, when the act of removing the children creates stress; there should be a policy in place.

The County Representative stated there is a medical hub at High Desert Hospital for children to receive exams. There may be situations where not everything is offered at this facility; they meet with the Antelope Valley hub regularly; a vast number of cases are seen there; some are seen at USC depending on the specialties that are needed and also depending on where they are placed. A vast majority is serviced in this community; over 200 children a week at High Desert; Social Workers and Mental Health Workers are very involved; work in conjunction with everyone. He explained the resources available; they provide parenting classes; job training; education regarding abuse; much stems from economic hardships.

Mayor Parris expressed his desire to see everyone work together to diminish the caseload; outreach programs; billboards; commercials; educate people about the dangers of the shaken-baby syndrome.

The County Representative also discussed the need for outreach to educate people on the dangers of co-sleeping with their babies; it is quite common and can cause death in the child.

Mayor Parris stated that he would like to meet further with people from the County who can truly figure out how to resolve these issues; important to partner together.

A County Representative discussed medical hosts; office has been working with the County in regards to extending the hours of service – they are aggressively pursuing this.

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**NB 7. STATUS OF PROTOCOL IMPROVEMENTS BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND CHILD AND ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES – LOS ANGELES COUNTY (continued)**

Mayor Parris stated that it may be beneficial to have someone from DCFS on the Criminal Justice Commission at some point in the future.

**NB 8. STATUS ON COMMUNITY GARDEN PARTNERSHIP AT LANCASTER SENIOR CENTER – LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

The City Manager discussed the desire for a Community Garden Partnership in the Trend Neighborhood; developing another one with the downtown, connecting it with the Senior Center and the Children's Center; critical to partner with the County.

The County Representative stated that CSS welcomes the establishment of Community Gardens; must look at liability issues; risk management; submissions to County Counsel; Real Estate Representations; the County will work with the City to see if this can work; hope to have something next month or possibly by the end of April.

Mayor Parris stated that he would like to see a finalized plan for a Community Garden by June 1, 2010; gardens are challenging but excellent for the community.

**NB 9. STATUS ON SECTION 8 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES – LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

A County Representative discussed the positive changes that have taken place; changes to the Administrative Plan; closing out the waiting list, this has been a monumental task to manage; discussed one year lease agreements; tenant/landlord issues; one year renewals for landlords; rent increases; requirements for tenants. Tenants must be home for housing inspections and typically there were three-four hundred no-shows. Now, tenants must meet their appointment and commitment and if they don't they will receive a single counseling appointment, then after that, they can be terminated from the program. Limiting moves to one time per year; responsibilities within the reexamination packages: crime free, drug free; be home for the inspection; required to submit paperwork annually regarding income and family size. If not submitted, this is cause for termination; working on extending the criminal background check and extending it to five years, rather than three.

Council Member Marquez discussed compliance; responsibility; accountability; discussed a story in the newspaper in which a person on Section 8 had been on Section 8 all her life, she didn't need it but it was all she knew. There are people who are frauding the system when there are families and elderly waiting to be approved. There seem to be roadblocks to stop investigators from doing their jobs.

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**NB 9. STATUS ON SECTION 8 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES –  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY (continued)**

The County Representative discussed legal costs; settlement costs; protocols; discussed past policies; importance of getting a good citizen who is compliant rather than someone who is frauding the system. There are many challenges and issues, not only in the Antelope Valley but in many other communities as well; it is an income based program; important to keep the dialog open.

Council Member Marquez stated that there should be incentives to get off the program; what can be done locally.

The County Representative stated that there were no easy answers; under the first Bush administration there was a plan to limit the time frame but this never went anywhere. He hears comments from citizens and the Antelope Valley; Federal Regulations do not limit assistance.

Supervisor Antonovich stated that faith based communities and others need to work together; this cannot just be a government problem; public/private partnerships are needed.

Vice Mayor Smith stated that some cities have taken control and actually have a sunset on the vouchers; many seniors and people with disabilities have been waiting for years.

The County Representative stated that he will look into this and report back; not sure how this supersedes federal requirements.

Further discussion took place regarding investigators; compliance; budget issues; setting protocols.

Mayor Parris stated that the information given is unacceptable; the reality is, that there are Section 8 difficulties here; the program does not work the way it is run today; obvious questions are not being answered; Section 8 should not be a way of life; it is not the best life; must be a way to solve the issues within the federal guidelines. Educate the children and hopefully they will not grow up dependent on Section 8. There is a reason why Lancaster has had the greatest drop in crime; there is a recognition that it is not working.

Further discussion took place regarding what the County has done; what is different; what was once a troubled agency is now receiving the highest operational scores; making great strides; discussed the program of the past and how it has improved; program is heading in the right direction; will continue dialog with cities on how best to handle the resources that are available and get in compliance.

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**NB 9. STATUS ON SECTION 8 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES –  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY (continued)**

Further discussion took place regarding Lancaster having the highest rate of vouchers; do not mind receiving fair share but make sure people are not frauding the system; discussed property values/rental values; standards set by HUD; review comparable rent values; legality issues; market rate rents; Section 8 inflates the rental rates of an area; affordable housing; diversity of housing; more advantageous to break off and become a metropolitan statistical area; payment standards; disparities in rents;

Mayor Parris stated that the program is being operated in a discriminatory fashion in regards to Hispanics; data collecting issues. The Antelope Valley is receiving a disproportionate share; clearly, this population base has special needs that the Antelope Valley is not equipped to handle. As a result, there is a high mortality rate; high disease rate. In many respects, they are being sent here adrift because the valley just does not have the services for them.

The County Representative requested a copy of a letter the City received in 2008 from HUD regarding statistical data. He stated that it is a housing choice program; people choose; regulations are very clear on how these choices are made; there is only so much the County can do; there have been significant changes; have taken a troubled program and moved it to a high performing program; must stay within the federal guidelines.

Mayor Parris stated that hopefully everyone will continue to go in the right direction; move faster. Forgive the impatience but the City does not like the uncertainty or the unpredictability.

Supervisor Antonovich reiterated that these are not government built homes; they are private homes where owners have made the decision; it is an individual property.

Further discussion took place regarding landlords; changes to the Administration Policy; making landlords more accountable; quality standards; enforcement policies.

The City Manager discussed funding programs; the City's strict nuisance property ordinance; aggressive rental program; code enforcement; the City has funded a lot of law enforcement; there is an ongoing dialog; appreciates the information.

The County Representative stated that Supervisor Antonovich has taken a more aggressive stance on this matter; with help from cities and staff, they will continue to work on improvements.

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**NB 9. STATUS ON SECTION 8 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES –  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY (continued)**

Addressing the City Council/Supervisor on this issue:

David Abber – commended Supervisor Antonovich for his great service and leadership; the County is doing a great job; make surprise visits/inspections on the Section 8 people and find out what is going on; be straight forward.

January Ohelo – surprised by some of the comments under Section 8 and the body language she observed regarding this issue; someone on Section 8 is no less desirable than someone who is not; understands the fraud issues; starts with the children; look at the truant children; don't make it a program that is looked down on.

Council Member Marquez – stated that she does not look at colors; discussed a young lady she took to lunch whose family is on Section 8; explained to this young lady that the people eating lunch around her were the ones who were paying for what she gets to enjoy; important to remember that it comes out of the taxpayers' pockets, not the government.

Supervisor Antonovich stated that he would need to be excused due to another engagement.

**NB 10. STATUS ON MULTI-AMBULATORY CARE CENTER (MACC) – LOS  
ANGELES COUNTY**

A County Representative discussed scoping documents; purchase of land for the facility; EIR process has begun; scoping documents will be ready by the end of the year; acceptance of the project is scheduled for 2013.

**NB 11. SUPERVISOR ANTONOVICH AND LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL  
MEMBERS COMMENTS**

None

**NB 12. OTHER ITEMS OF MUTUAL INTEREST**

Council Member Mann stated that he appreciates the County staff and Supervisor Antonovich meeting today; keeping the dialog open. He discussed the downtown transformation; job creation; implored the County staff to look at the REFCO Strip issue because there is so much potential for the use of that money and it will make such a difference in the future of Lancaster.



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**PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR - NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS**

Addressing the City Council at this time:

David Abber – inquired as to the status of the trip to China; takes issue with someone saying there is no discrimination here, because there is.

Mayor Parris stated that the trip to China is scheduled with Supervisor Antonovich on March 8, 2010.

David Paul – thanked Mayor Parris for his apology regarding his remarks on the Christian faith; requested that the Mayor withdraw his support of Measure I.

Vice Mayor Smith stated that the measure is not a Christian ordinance; it is a measure for free exercise; freedom of speech.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Parris thanked everyone for attending the meeting; stated that remarkable things are taking place in Lancaster and adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m. He stated that the next meeting of the City Council would take place on February 23, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

**APPROVED:**

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GERI K. BRYAN, CMC  
CITY CLERK/AGENCY SECRETARY  
Lancaster, CA

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R. REX PARRIS  
MAYOR/CHAIRMAN  
Lancaster, CA

**CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL/REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ of the City of Lancaster, CA, do hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of the original City Council/Redevelopment Agency minutes, for which the original is on file in my office.

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER, CA on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

(seal)

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