

**LANCASTER CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION
MINUTES
March 13, 2013**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Vierra called the meeting of the Lancaster Criminal Justice Commission to order at 10:05 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commission Members: Pickens, Valaskantjis, Vice-Chairman Fuller, Chairman Vierra

Absent: Commission Members: Chelette, Brown, Smith

Staff

Members: Senior Criminal Justice Analyst, Public Safety Manager, Assistant City Clerk

Additional

Attendees: Vice Mayor Crist, California Highway Patrol Acting Commander Rob Lund, Head Deputy Robert Sherwood Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, CJC Liaison Rob Parris

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Vierra

At this time Chairman Vierra welcomed Christy Valaskantjis as the newest member of the Criminal Justice Commission

PRESENTATIONS:

Vice Mayor Crist and Chairman Vierra thanked California Highway Patrol Captain Steve Urrea for his service to Lancaster and for his work in helping reducing the crime rate and presented him with a plaque; Captain Urrea has been transferred to the Baldwin Park area.

Los Angeles County Sheriff Lieutenant Kroeger gave a presentation regarding a 'mental health crisis' in the Antelope Valley; focus from law enforcement is to improve response to mental health issues; the presentation included information and statistics for mental health and homeless individuals in the Antelope Valley; statistics for suicides, attempted suicides and the number of reports taken at the Lancaster Sheriff's Station were given; statistics comparing mental illness to other crimes were given and statistics for mental health related calls compared to other Sheriff stations were given. Lt. Kroeger gave an overview of the current practices for law enforcement personnel, he discussed a forecast regarding mental health issues as it relates to AB 109 and AB 117, returning troops and the economy; the objectives of a successful mental health response were discussed.

Judy Cooperberg, Executive Director of Mental Health America discussed services needed to address the mental health issue and discussed current services available in the Antelope Valley. Ms. Cooperberg discussed resources available in other cities. She requested a letter of support from the Commission which will be sent to Sheriff Lee Baca and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health requesting support for training for deputies in the Antelope Valley.

PRESENTATIONS CONTINUED:

Discussion among the Commission included; Vice Chairman Fuller stated the issue affects the entire community and offered to personally write a letter and encouraged the commission to support this request.

At this time Vice Chairman Fuller made a motion to support the task force and to send a letter of support; unanimous support from the Commission was given.

APPROVAL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION CONSENT CALENDAR

CC 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 13, 2013

On a motion by Vice Chairman Fuller and seconded by Commissioner Pickens the Commission approved the Consent Calendar by the following vote: 3-0-1-3; AYES: Fuller, Pickens, Vierra NOES: None; ABSTAIN: Valaskantjis; ABSENT: Brown, Chelette, Smith

At this time Chairman Vierra stated the Commission would hear the report regarding Crime Statistics prior to discussing NB1.

COMMISSION/ STAFF UPDATES

1. CRIME STATISTICS UPDATE

The Senior Criminal Justice Analyst provided crime and arrest statistics for February 3, 2013 through March 2, 2013 and provided the weekly crime event average and median for February and March. The Senior Criminal Justice Analyst provided information for the most active reporting districts for part-one crimes for February 3, 2013 through March 2, 2013. Crime trend information for specific part-one crimes for a 52 week time period was given and a spatial trend analysis comparing February 2013 to January 2013 was discussed. The Senior Criminal Justice Analyst provided a list of the top ten repeat calls for service for the period of February 3, 2013 through March 2, 2013 and discussed a part-one crime forecast for March.

NEW BUSINESS

NB 1. Discussion of 2013 part-one crime statistic goal

Chairman Vierra stated the Commission's previous year's goal for part-one crimes was 300 and the end of the year information reflected crime statistics were 276; Lee D'Errico discussed information given to the Commissioners reflecting crime statistics from 2005 through 2012 which included statistics for specific crimes and the crime rate related to those crimes; important to understand the information behind the numbers and look at the types of crimes that are being reduced; Lt. Kroeger stated he and Captain Nelson discussed a 5% reduction goal as being a realistic goal.

Additional discussion included: FBI statistics for a 'Safe City' designation is 300 part one crimes or less per 10,000 residents; retaining the 'Safe City' designation and reduction in crime rate are the ultimate goals; Vice Mayor Crist recommended setting the goal at 250; the City's crime rate was in the high 400's 4-5 years ago and at that time it was believed 300 was an unrealistic goal; this goal holds other agencies responsible; 300 is a number to be proud of; originally the number was believed to be out of reach. CJC Liaison Rob Parris discussed the concern about being able to ever hit the goal of 300 and believes the goal should be 250.

AB 1. Discussion of 2013 part-one crime statistic goal continued...

On a motion by Vice Chairman Fuller and seconded by Chairman Vierra the Commission approved the goal of the Criminal Justice Commission for 2013, with the assistance of law enforcement and the District Attorney and the City of Lancaster, is to reduce part one crimes to 250 or below per 10,000 residents in the City of Lancaster by the following vote: 4-0-0-3; AYES: Fuller, Pickens, Valaskantjis, Vierra; NOES: None; ABSTAIN: None; ABSENT: Brown, Chelette, Smith

COMMISSION/ STAFF UPDATES

2. ARREST STATISTICS

Los Angeles County Sheriff Deputy Ruiz presented statistical information for February for various patrol units including TOP/CORE, the Burglary Suppression Team and the LAN-CAP team; additionally statistics for the areas most wanted taggers, felony and misdemeanor arrests and Narcotics Team statistics related to search warrants, arrests, and narcotics seized were given.

3. CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL UPDATE

California Highway Patrol Acting Commander Rob Lund provided statistics for collisions and total arrests for February 2013; statistics for collisions, DUI collisions and DUI arrests as compared to 2012 were provided.

4. DISTRICT ATTORNEY UPDATE

Assistant Head Deputy Darren Levine from the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office discussed recent activity for the DA's Office. Mr. Levine gave a brief history of his career; stated he has been impressed with the Lancaster Station, the Palmdale Station and the CHP over the past 6 months; his goal at his office when he arrived was to create the first formal 'Early Disposition Program'; results of this program show the backlog of cases in the Courthouse is dropping; each courtroom is carrying approximately 260-300 felony cases as compared to Van Nuys courtrooms which average 60 cases; the 'Early Disposition Program' is designed to get more leverage on negotiating a plea. The program, involving the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department, Los Angeles County Probation, Los Angeles County Superior Court, the Public Defender's Office and the District Attorney's Office, allows defendants five days after an arraignment the chance to appear before the early disposition program; at that time a seasoned Deputy District Attorney will make the defendant aware that the best offer that will ever be given will be offered that day and it will not be offered again. Best leverage exists in the beginning; resolving 12% more cases with this program; higher sentences are being given as opposed to waiting until the case goes to trial. The District Attorney's office will work with law enforcement to meet 250 crime statistic goal. Mr. Levine stated Bob Baker, District Attorney Lacey's Law Enforcement Liaison, is committed to the Antelope Valley and would like to establish a relationship with Law Enforcement partners in Lancaster and Palmdale.

Discussion among the Commission and staff included:

Discussion regarding the mentally ill and jail time for those who need treatment for a mental illness took place; additionally Mental Evaluation Teams were discussed and the importance of individuals taking their medicine as it is prescribed was discussed.

5. BUSINESS WATCH SUBCOMMITTEE/ PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

The Public Safety Manager discussed a letter which was sent to businesses for the Business Improvement Group (BIG); Mr. D’Errico introduced the individual who will be handling the program; the first targeted district is 10th Street West and Avenue K; subcommittee members will be invited to the first meeting. The Public Safety Office is working with the District Attorney’s Office on a case for the US Supreme Court regarding the City’s graffiti cost restitution model; the case may be precedent setting for cities in California; goal is to set an established model for recovering restitution money related to graffiti for the city. The Public Safety Office continues to work to address quality of life issues and an administrative citation program which is an alternative program to hold parents accountable for the crimes committed by their children; working with the Department of Probation with the RFP process to establish a local reentry program and the office continues to work on public awareness and the Neighborhood Watch program related to addressing larcenies which can be addressed with better public awareness.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR - NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS

None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

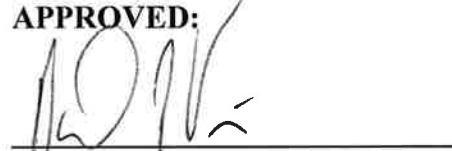
Chairman Vierra adjourned the Criminal Justice Commission meeting at 11:32 a.m. and stated the next meeting of the Criminal Justice Commission would take place on Wednesday, April 10, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

ATTEST:



BRITT AVRIT
ASSISTANT CITY CLERK
COMMISSION SECRETARY

APPROVED:



DAVID VIERRA
CHAIRMAN

**CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES
LANCASTER CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION**

I, _____, _____ of the City of Lancaster, CA, do hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of the original Lancaster Criminal Justice Commission 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 _____, _____.

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