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**LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL
LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERVISOR
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Parris called the special meeting of the City Council to order at 8:35 a.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

Staff

Members: City Manager, City Attorney, Interim Assistant City Manager, Assistant to the City Manager, City Clerk, Planning Director, Public Works Director, Interim Parks, Recreation & Arts Director, Finance Director, Economic Development Director, Human Resources Director

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Vice Mayor Smith

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

NB 1. ANIMAL CONTROL – SERVICE AND COST ISSUES

The City Manager opened the discussion with concerns related to too many calls; shelter personnel being non-responsive; concerns regarding a 200% fee increase from the County which has been delayed for one year, however this increase will have a huge impact on the City's budget. Lancaster is being charged 30% more than Palmdale; importance of an audit; importance of meeting on a monthly basis regarding costs.

County Personnel responded that an audit of the system was taking place and should be complete in approximately one month; looking at improving services and allowing for more field officers; more people are being hired in the current fiscal year; stated that they view themselves as a partner with the cities and look forward to working with the City on the budget issues; discussed overcrowding of current facilities and future building needs for the entire Antelope Valley.

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NB 1. ANIMAL CONTROL – SERVICE AND COST ISSUES (continued)

Mayor Parris requested clarification from the County as to how it is determined where an animal is from. An officer must write something on their form as to where the animal was picked up; importance of cross-checking where the animal was found; cities pay for each animal that is picked up and cities are also paying for daily board and impoundment.

County Personnel stated that the County breaks even, they are struggling with costs.

Mayor Parris discussed the pit bull problem that exists in Lancaster; he sees these animals everywhere; animal control must be more aggressive.

County Personnel stated that more field officers are needed for dangerous animals such as pit bulls; by state law, pit bulls cannot be banned; there is a mandatory spay/neuter/microchip law in effect for County areas.

Mayor Parris stated that field officers must become aggressive and stop owners of pit bulls on the street.

County Personnel stated that the law must apply to all dogs not just a certain breed; many gray areas to be considered; shelters will become overcrowded; citizens are entitled to due process of the law; laws must apply to all animals; very problematic to enforce; a better solution would be to increase the number of shelters.

Mayor Parris requested that staff look into having an ordinance on a future agenda regarding pit bulls and discriminating against the same. There should be a policy in place regarding maximum enforcement of pit bulls; waiting for additional shelters takes too much time; County is resisting and in the meantime children and families are being injured, maimed and killed.

Supervisor Antonovich requested that the County conduct a 60-day pilot program which could start September 8, 2008. He requested that the County target the City of Lancaster for 60 days regarding this matter, evaluate the maximum enforcement possible and present a report to the City.

County Personnel agreed to conduct the pilot program and report back to the City.

Vice Mayor Smith stated that the County must look at every dog but the focus needs to be on pit bulls; County must prioritize this matter; importance of being breed specific; consider passing a law regarding strong enforcement.

County Personnel stated that they will handle a 60-day pilot program; discussed the safe neighborhood program in which people can report potential dangerous dogs to the County; officers contact the owner and counsel the owners; state law prohibits a ban on specific breeds.

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NB 2. DISCUSSION OF SECTION 8

The City Manager stated that he is proud of the efforts by the County and the City to work together regarding this matter; local control may allow for more options; Section 8 Commission to be announced on Tuesday, September 9, 2008; working with specialists on this matter; discussed a guide for neighborhoods on how to deal with problem renters; the maximum amount of local control a City can have.

Council Member Marquez stated that it is definitely the desire of the City to take this program over with full force; City of Lancaster means business; appreciates any help the County can provide; Commission nominees are ready to move forward and find solutions.

Mayor Parris stated that for too long, the County has treated the City of Lancaster and the Antelope Valley as a repository for Section 8 and the numbers bear this out; the Antelope Valley is at war with Los Angeles County and the City of Los Angeles; Antelope Valley has the highest death rate in the County; consider basing vouchers on zip codes.

Supervisor Antonovich clarified that Section 8 vouchers can be used anywhere in the 88 cities; County has no control over this; not the fault of the County but the fault of the City of Los Angeles.

County Personnel stated that they want to work with a spirit of cooperation; importance of creative problem solving; have met with City staff and want to continue making progress. They explained the voucher program; effect of fair market rate for renters.

Mayor Parris discussed cost effectiveness; the appeal of Lancaster home prices. There is a huge imbalance in the system and it is severe; this must be rectified; quality of life is plunging and destroying communities; all data and statistics show that the Agency allowed this to happen.

County Personnel stated that they are committed to correcting anything out of balance; they agreed that there is a disproportionate amount of Section 8 in the Antelope Valley.

Mayor Parris requested a committed date as to when this matter will be corrected.

County Personnel stated that they are committed to working together with the City; this is an ongoing process; discussed statistics; discussed how to prevent homeowners from turning their homes into Section 8 properties.

Vice Mayor Smith discussed the City's business license process in regards to rental properties; importance of a moratorium on Section 8 homes until the market rate changes; strict business license regulations.

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NB 2. DISCUSSION OF SECTION 8 (continued)

The City Manager discussed paying for extra enforcement; importance of support from the County; importance of County support for a Section 8 waiver.

County Personnel discussed funding of programs; single-family bonds to help people to refinance; first-time home buyer programs.

Further discussion took place regarding waivers of regulations.

Council Member Sileo requested clarification regarding geographical areas; control of market conditions.

Mayor Parris stated that the County must set goals and must be accountable.

County Personnel stated that they do not hesitate when it comes to going to HUD and performing background checks; more than willing to go with Lancaster to seek whatever legal waivers are necessary; importance of looking very closely at ways to enforce limitations of vouchers.

Vice Mayor Smith discussed HUD regulations and the importance of Lancaster becoming its own reporting region.

Further discussion took place regarding fair market rates and the process; 5-year sunset on Section 8 waivers; different jurisdictions.

Mayor Parris discussed the disproportionate amount of vouchers and the destruction that this does to the City; significant negative impact on this community; discussed laws pertaining to Section 8 vouchers; need to have a commitment to the goals.

NB 3. MACC PROPERTY EXCHANGE (MEDICAL AMBULATORY CARE CENTER) UPDATE

The City Attorney opened the discussion regarding this matter and gave a brief history of the property and the exchange of property connected to property at Front Row Center.

County Personnel discussed the purchase option agreement; working with Economic Development; funds will be deposited; process may take a year.

The City Attorney stated that it has already been two years and looks forward to the completion of this process.

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NB 3. MACC PROPERTY EXCHANGE (MEDICAL AMBULATORY CARE CENTER) UPDATE (continued)

Mayor Parris inquired as to when the facility would open.

County Personnel stated that it would open sometime at the end of 2011 or the beginning of 2012; explained the process for design; land acquisition; CEQA approvals; primary-care process; need for additional funding; analysis regarding the imbalance of the mortality rate.

Further discussion took place regarding infant mortality rates; malnourishment of individuals; problems faced by diabetics; emergency response teams and emergency response times; importance of reasonable cooperation; need for more hospitals; drug use; obesity problems; lack of services; deficiencies in plans; importance of improving the system.

NB 4. EXCHANGE OF PRIME DESERT WOODLAND PROPERTY UPDATE

This matter was continued to a date uncertain.

NB 5. PROGRESS OF AGREEMENT FOR COLLECTION OF TRAFFIC IMPACT FEE FOR AVENUE K AND AVENUE L WIDENING

This matter was continued to a date uncertain.

NB 6. TRANSFER OF ACCUMULATIVE CAPITAL OUTLAY (ACO) FUNDS IN CONSOLIDATED SEWER MAINTENANCE DISTRICT TO CITY OF LANCASTER – REPAIR OF SEWERS IDENTIFIED DURING CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV) WORK BY COUNTY AND CITY PRIOR TO TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITIES.

This matter was continued to a date uncertain.

**NB 7. WATER GOVERNANCE/CONSERVATION ISSUES AND
NB 9. DISCUSSION OF COUNTY WATER WILL-SERVE POLICY FOR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS**

The Public Works Director opened this discussion with matters pertaining to viable water service; local control; urgency ordinance adopted by the City Council regarding water wasting; controls in the unincorporated area; efforts by local Water Works; issuance of citations; encouraging citizens to report water wasting; importance of attention to enforcement.

Mayor Parris requested feedback from the County as to their view of the City taking over the water and consideration of a joint powers authority agreement with the County.

County Personnel emphasized the importance of getting through the adjudication first; look at long term banking and goals; water management.

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**NB 7. WATER GOVERNANCE/CONSERVATION ISSUES AND
NB 9. DISCUSSION OF COUNTY WATER WILL-SERVE POLICY FOR
COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS (continued)**

Supervisor Antonovich discussed water issues; water will-serve letters; Southern California does not have a dependent water resource.

Mayor Parris requested answers as to why water will-serve letters are being approved in Palmdale but not in Lancaster.

County Personnel gave a brief overview of the process for water will-serve letters; discussed the cooperation that is found in Santa Clarita with Castaic Lake Water Agency and four water purveyors; same cooperation is not found in the Antelope Valley.

Vice Mayor Smith and others disputed this line of reasoning as having anything to do with the issue being discussed.

Mayor Parris and the City Council did not agree with this statement and felt that more cooperation, communication and commitment was needed from the County.

Further discussion took place regarding the drought; delta smelt ruling; adjudication.

The City Manager expressed the frustration that is felt in the City and from developers especially when other communities are receiving the will-serve letters and Lancaster is not. This issue must be solved, it is a crisis and is vital to the City's economic development and many developers have waited far too long for will-serve letters.

County Personnel stated that they do not have the ability to get more water to AVEK.

Vice Mayor Smith discussed water availability and the importance of different groups working together; discussed the Integrated Management Plan; need for complete adjudication; City is in a crisis mode.

County Personnel stated that this has been an issue for years and is more of an issue now; restrictions of AVEK; projection of growth from the Integrated Management Plan; County will honor will-serve letters that are already out; importance of conservation; it would be irresponsible to issue will-serve letters to new developments; importance of help and cooperation from the City to go to the AVEK Board with a proposal; issuance of water credits may be from many years ago.

Mayor Parris was excused from this meeting at 10:35 a.m.

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**NB 7. WATER GOVERNANCE/CONSERVATION ISSUES AND
NB 9. DISCUSSION OF COUNTY WATER WILL-SERVE POLICY FOR
COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS (continued)**

Developer, Tim May expressed his frustration in relation to his project; commitments that he has from different companies; must receive will-serve letters; need for the meters on his parcel; discussed the money that is being paid for water at this parcel; property is being penalized because it was not using water 20 years ago; must have cooperation from the County; stated that County Counsel told the City Attorney that the parcels are valid.

Supervisor Antonovich discussed transfer of ownership of the property.

Vice Mayor Smith stated that all of this had become a bureaucratic technicality and that Mr. May was caught in a catch-22 situation.

Further discussion took place regarding the process for will-serve letters; final map approvals.

The Planning Director discussed the establishment of the Water Works policy; subdivisions; increase in water demands; entitlement maps.

County Personnel requested clarification regarding Mr. May's property and stated that the letter is necessary to receive the permits; importance of having documentation; reviewed project approvals and stated that they have approved 15 of 24 projects and will approve new projects if there is some payment for ground water re-charge or similar payment.

**NB 8. DISCUSSION OF AGREEMENT TO PURCHASE RECYCLED WATER
FROM SANITATION DISTRICT**

The Public Works Director stated that purchasing recycled water would be very worthwhile; presented a brief overview of this matter; discussed water availability; recycled water pipeline; Master Plan for backbone system; City of Lancaster has recycled water customers; concerns regarding the restrictions of water per acre feet for Lancaster versus the amount for other areas.

County Personnel explained the agreement and quantities of water distribution; stated that they do not want to get in a situation where they agree to more than can be offered.

Further discussion took place regarding the responsibility of recycled water; Integrated Water Management Plan; stressed the importance of providing water; action is needed as well as continued cooperation along with financial cooperation.

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NB 8. DISCUSSION OF AGREEMENT TO PURCHASE RECYCLED WATER FROM SANITATION DISTRICT (continued)

Council Member Sileo reinforced that the City desires to be the sole source for recycled water; requested clarification regarding pipeline use; customers in Lancaster; the official position of the City; recycled water fees; Water Works District boundaries.

Council Member Mann was excused from this meeting at 11:02 a.m.

County Personnel gave a brief history of the project of recycled water and steps the County has taken; discussed the power plant in Palmdale.

The City Manager stressed that the City of Lancaster wants to be the sole service source.

County Personnel stated that they will need to get an answer from the County Board of Supervisors.

Supervisor Antonovich was excused from the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

NB 10. DISCUSSION OF WAIT TIME AT ANTELOPE VALLEY HOSPITAL
This matter was continued to a date uncertain.

NB 11. DISCUSSION OF TRANSFER OF FOX FIELD AIRPORT TO THE CITY OF LANCASTER
This matter was continued to a date uncertain.

PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Addressing the City Council at this time:

Barbara Mayzels – concerns regarding Section 8; importance of providing Section 8 assistance to the elderly and disabled; importance of removing the Section 8 offenders.

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ADJOURNMENT

Vice Mayor Smith thanked everyone for attending; adjourned the City Council meeting at 11:17 a.m. and stated that the next regular meeting of the City Council would take place on September 9, 2008, 5:00 p.m. at City Hall.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

GERI K. BRYAN, CMC
CITY CLERK
Lancaster, CA

R. REX PARRIS
MAYOR
Lancaster, CA

**CERTIFICATION OF MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL**

I, _____, _____ of the City of Lancaster, CA, do hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of the original City Council 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)
