

Informal and unofficial Notes from the Aug. 13, 2014 Neighborhoods Commission (NC) mtg.
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(The official agendas are posted on the City's website,
<http://sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=3562>

The approved minutes are supposed to be posted there as well, but there aren't any recent minutes, and the older ones posted were quite brief.)

This was the first meeting of the term, and was the first meeting for the newly appointed Cmsnrs from the odd-numbered districts.

A Ceremonial Swearing In had been agendized; however, due to staff schedule conflicts, this matter was handled beforehand. There was no introduction of new Cmsnrs, nor a public welcoming. [I hope this will be remedied next month!]

After Approval of the Minutes and Open Forum (none spoke),

Council Liaison Report (Ann Grabowski, aide to Councilmember Don Rocha - D9):

- * Sales Tax Measures were not approved for placement on the Nov. ballot
- * Council Cmte work-plans have been approved. (Can be used as guidance for NC work plan)

Election of Officers.

- * I had expressed an interest in serving as Chair, was unopposed, and was elected.
 - * Matt Wahlin (D8) volunteered to serve as Vice Chair, also unopposed and also elected.
- [unexpected: we were immediately seated, and we took over the running of the rest of the mtg.]

Legal Training

Very thorough briefing on intricacies of Brown Act, Sunshine, Conduct of Meetings, Conflict of Interest, etc.

Discussion on how we can work, what our schedule and work rhythm can be, our "deliverables", how to report out without wasting our limited amount of mtg time.

We're still feeling our way here. At least I can still give these informal out-briefs to D6...

Report on roll-out of SJ Police Community Service Officers (CSO):

- * 25 were hired. (Budget was for 28.)
- * program just starting: a couple more weeks of on-the-job training and then they're ready to serve
- * will be based in the new South Station, to serve entire city. (Main police force will remain stationed downtown, to serve entire city.)
- * CSOs to handle lower-priority calls, freeing up time for the sworn officers for higher-priority.
- * CSOs can be trained in 5 wks, mainly on report-writing; sworn officers require 6 months.
- * CSOs handle burglary calls, theft, vandalism, vehicle theft, missing persons, crowd control
- * CSOs on two shifts: 12 serving M-F 8-4, other 12 M-F noon-8: overlap for busiest part of day.

(25th person shifts to fill gaps)

- * will drive white city vehicles, much like parking enforcement, but won't issue citations.
- >> perhaps I can get Sgt. Andrew Harsany to repeat this briefing for the D6NLG mtg...

Work Plan:

NC has to schedule, in a general manner, what we'll be working on over the coming year. Plan then has to be approved by Council Rules Cmte.

- * some matters can be anticipated:
 - discussion next spring on City Budget. (Will next Mayor want input?)
 - next spring, review the effectiveness of the Community Service Officer program?
- * some things just come up:
 - community opinion of police drones? recommend guidelines for use?
 - impact of Medical Marijuana regulations?
 - dealing w/ drought? recommend changes to blight ordinance to permit brown lawns?
- * possibly nghbrhd issues (to be discussed in which month?):
 - leaf blowers
 - interface w/ urban villages
 - homelessness crisis
 - hoarding
- * and maybe selections from Council's "top-ten concerns"
(these all fit within charter: "transportation, public safety, code enforcement, budget")

Should NC concentrate on one single topic (e.g, maintenance of street trees), research it and become the expert? Or should NC be a forum to discuss any number of nghbrhd-related issues?

Should NC have Saturday mtgs "out in the communities" in addition to the monthly mtgs downtown, to increase public awareness of NC?

Main topic for next month will be finalizing the Work Plan.

- * input from Cmsnrs and the Public are welcome:
- >> send to Ernest Guzman at ernest.guzman@sanjoseca.gov for compilation
- * David Dearborn (D6) is chairing an ad-hoc cmte to collect & discuss Work Plan components. members: Gary Cunningham (D1?); Pete Kolstad (D3); Matt Wahlin (D8); Nick Labosky (D10).

Next mtg: Sept. 10th.

We still have to figure out best process for sharing our output.

- * Informal briefing to our districts works fine for those w/ viable Nghbrhd Leaders Groups (like the D6NLG) and for those Cmsnrs willing to write notes.
- * Annual report to Council is fine for official record-keeping, but does not give timely feedback.
- * Will have to work to develop a process for providing a more formal yet more frequent feedback to Mayor, Council & City Manager.

>> These are informal notes: corrections, additions, and other feedback are most welcome.
~Larry Ames, a D6 representative (and Chair) of SJ NC; 8/14/14.