

Thousand Palms Community Council Minutes

Thousand Palms Community Center
31189 Robert Rd, Thousand Palms, CA 92276

February 25, 2010

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In Attendance:

Fourth District Supervisor John Benoit, Chairman Bob Alcumbrac, Vice Chairwoman Karen Esposito, Secretary Patricia Saleh, Councilman Roy Nokes and Mike Gialdini, legislative assistant to Supervisor John Benoit. Councilman Greg Pinney was absent.

Chairman Bob Alcumbrac called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. After the roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance he called for Staff Reports.

STAFF REPORTS

Lori Hardcastle of the **Riverside County Sheriff's Office** reported that Lt. Pinon put in for a grant from the Agua Caliente Indians for an additional officer in Thousand Palms. This will give Thousand Palms an extra officer for one year. There were calls to the Sheriff's Office on several mail thefts along Shadow Mountain, some vandalism, car thefts, and a mixture of residential and business calls, the majority of which were not actionable.

4th District Supervisor John Benoit

Supervisor Benoit thanked the Council members for their service. He feels strongly that he'll continue having the community council. He told a little about his background and fitting into his new job as Supervisor. A former Highway Patrolman, he ran for the California senate and won. Jobs are his main concern in his new job at this time. He voted against AB32 [the landmark greenhouse gas emissions legislation signed by Gov. Schwarzenegger in 2006] because it goes way too far. We're chasing jobs out of this state and this country at the rate that's alarming and when employers look at the state requirements of AB32 they go elsewhere. We have regulation after regulation in the workplace, mainly to protect the worker, but I don't think businesses should be outlawed from a 10-hour day if that's what the business requires. Over 8 hours a day and an employer has to pay overtime. Benoit said he asked for AB32 to be suspended for 2 years. I submitted an ordinance that would require the County to use 60% local labor when they get a County contract here. He announced the interchange groundbreaking tomorrow. When the Bob Hope overpass bids came in they were 49% less than the planners estimated. It's a sign of the economy because the builders have to keep their men working so you're getting two overpasses for the price of one.

Questions for Benoit:

Saleh brought up the school crossing guard needed for Della S. Lindley Elementary School in Thousand Palms and that there's a doughnut hole in who accepts the liability for a crossing guard. He said that the Highway Patrol is the agency to discuss this with and he said that he will help.

Alcumbrac asked if he would support these spheres of influence and Benoit said that he and Mike Gialdini would make a decision before the March 25 meeting. Ray Blaney asked him if he's heard Thousand Palms' side on the spheres. He said that he had met

with Patricia Saleh and a few others and that he would make a measured decision based on a position he could support.

Benoit responded that there's a five- or seven-year payment that the state pays to the cities based on drivers' license fees and that is part of the question.

Thousand Palms resident Tim Petek asked that Benoit not let Cathedral City take our land into a "sinking ship" since Cathedral City is in bad financial trouble.

Rod Beatty raised some concerns on behalf of his son. His son lives one block from Via Las Palmas and Sunday night his home burned to the ground because the Riverside County Fire Department said they couldn't hook up to the Coachella Valley Water District's water. Only one truck out of 11 that arrived had water on it. The fire killed his son's dog. They waited 15 minutes for a tanker to arrive with water on it. Benoit said he will be on the phone to the fire department to see what happened. Councilman Nokes, a former Thousand Palms Fire Department captain, interjected that it's not ordinary procedure to have a truck without water on it. The Fire Department had been in attendance earlier but they had to leave to attend to a fire so they weren't available for comment.

Code Enforcement

Senior Code Enforcement Officer Hector Guerrero

Officer Guerrero said, "I spent about 2 or 3 hours trying to get a better report than this but the system would not let us do it. We have 27 cases we're working on." He said that the cases they're working on include shipping containers and bees. Abatement cases are related to excessive outside storage and accumulated trash. They did issue 14 citations, he said, and got calls on illegal vending.

Esposito said that Betty Sanchez called her to report on the trash pickup to be held at 8:00 AM on March 13 at Della Lindley School, for all of Thousand Palms. It will be a trash drop-off only with no curbside pickups at individual homes. There will be volunteers that day. Code Enforcement has also partnered with the Desert Recreation District and have gathered volunteers who will be working that day to clean up Thousand Palms. Esposito said that anyone who has any areas in mind that need cleaning up should let her know and she will submit them to Sanchez for special cleanup. Volunteers get a free Disneyland ticket for doing the cleanup, Esposito said. They have about 20 volunteers so far. Thousand Palms resident Michael Ascani said that there is an area off of La Canada and Thelma that needs cleanup. Cheryl Rhodes of the Thousand Palms Childcare Center and suggested that the area in back of Denny's needs cleanup. She asked for flyers to distribute to the parents of the children who participate in the Thousand Palms Childcare Center.

Guerrero said that if people drop off less than five tires they won't have any trouble about it from Code Enforcement. Over five tires they won't take them.

Mike Gialdini said that if people want more information they can contact him.

Fire Department

Pete Blakemore

Reporting on false alarms, he said that when an alarm rings the Fire Department always has to respond. For ringing alarms we always send two fire engines to investigate, so it's important to correct any false alarms immediately.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Workforce Housing Presentation

Project APN #650-020-006-2010, Presenter Thomas Hodgin of Palm Desert Development

Hodgin said that the project is still going forward but it has slowed down a bit because of the economy and the passing away of Supervisor Roy Wilson. Supervisor Benoit has been very busy the last few months, he said and we were assigned a new planner at the County office in Riverside rather than here in the desert. He reported that Mike Gialdini told them that this was good for the project because that planner is excellent. They will present the final plans to the Thousand Palms Community Council in April of this year. If the project is approved, then they'll put it out for bid in July. By the time the Council gets notification and PDD puts a shovel in the ground it will be February of next year. The crux of their problem, he said, is in selling tax credits and there is some speculation that these tax credits might no longer be there. So it would be November of 2011 before it really gets underway.

NEW BUSINESS

Esposito made a motion to disapprove of both sphere of influence requests coming before LAFCO on March 25, Cathedral City and Palm Desert, as they would be detrimental to the future of Thousand Palms. Nokes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Patricia Saleh made reports on new business including the **crossing guard for Della Lindley School** and her intention to appear before the Palm Springs Unified School District to ask them for a crossing guard.

She also reported on the **I-10 Corridor meetings** to be held at 10 AM on March 10 at the Thousand Palms Community Center. I-10 Corridor meetings will be held every second Tuesday at the Community Center.

She also reported that she attended the **2010 Census** meeting and reminded people of how important it is to fill out their census reports and send them in. She said that the reports are confidential for 72 years and information contained in them cannot be turned over to Immigration authorities or Law Enforcement. Disclosing that information would trigger a \$250,000 fine.

She said that she had discussed the k-rail and glare shield that's missing on Varner Road near Jack Ivey Ranch Country Club with Mojahed Salama of the Riverside County Transportation Department and he said that funding has been requested and for previous projects it has taken about four to five months to get approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Thousand Palms Preservation Action Group

Patricia Saleh Reporting

The next LAFCO hearing concerning the Cathedral City and Palm Desert sphere of influence requests will be held at 9:00-9:30 AM, March 25, 2010 at La Quinta City Hall in La Quinta. All concerned citizens are encouraged to attend.

Desert Recreation District

Thousand Palms Community Center Coordinator Rob Carson Reporting

Carson reported that the Thousand Palms Youth Soccer League 2010 season will come to an end March 6 and will start up again in the fall. Carson will also be presenting a self defense class when his teacher is ready. He said that he is always ready to hear new ideas for recreation activities. He does caution that whoever comes up with an idea should have a plan on how to achieve it.

Nokes moved to adjourn. Esposito seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Patricia Saleh, Council Secretary