

**CITY OF SAN CLEMENTE
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
JANUARY 25, 2022**

**City Hall
First Floor Community Room
910 Calle Negocio
San Clemente, CA 92673**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Berkuta called the Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Committee of the City of San Clemente to order at 3:02p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee Member Joe Janis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Committee

Members Present: Chair Nick Berkuta
Vice Chair Charles Hightower
Rick Loeffler
Joe Janis
Captain Benfield, Orange County Sheriff's Department
Chief Capobianco, Orange County Fire Authority
Marine Safety Captain Mellott

Committee

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Cecilia Gallardo-Daly, Community Development Director
Rebekah Brewster, Administrative Assistant

People Present: Robert Viera, CARE Ambulance Managing Director

Present Via Zoom: Brenda Wells I-5 Freedom Network
Chris Duncan, City Council Member

4. REGULAR ORDERS OF BUSINESS / REGULAR PRESENTATIONS**A. Special Presentation on Human Trafficking by Brenda Wells of I-5 Freedom Project.**

Brenda Wells gave a presentation to educate the committee on the types of human trafficking and how to respond. She described how the I-5 Freedom Project works to educate the public, advocate for legislation, and help survivors get back on their feet.

Chris Duncan and Nick Berkuta asked Brenda what specific recommendations she had for City Council.

Brenda suggested that the Council consider hosting an event to raise public awareness, where an expert could give an educational presentation.

Chris Duncan asked the Public Safety Committee to continue working with Brenda Wells on ideas for how Council could address the issue.

5. MINUTES**A. Minutes from the Regular Public Safety Committee meeting of November 23, 2021.**

MOTION BY COMMITTEE MEMBER LOEFFLER, SECOND BY MEMBER HIGHTOWER, AND CARRIED 4-0 to approve the minutes from the Public Safety Committee of November 23, 2021 as submitted.

6. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

No written communication was received. No additional oral communication received.

7. REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**A. OCFA FY22 Quarter 1 Performance Measures**

Chief Capobianco described how OCFA performance measures have remained consistent through the last several years, even during covid and when facing the unique geographic challenges of San Clemente.

B. CARE Ambulance Service FY22 Quarter 1 Performance Measures

Robert Viera gave a presentation on CARE Ambulance performance measures. To offset the hospital closure, CARE is contracted with the City to provide two ambulances. They are dispatched by OCFA and are staffed with EMTs.

8. NEW BUSINESS**A. Catalytic Converter Theft Enforcement Report by Captain Benfield**

Captain Benfield gave a presentation on the reality of catalytic converter theft. The purpose of a catalytic converter is to reduce toxic gases that come from a combustible engine. They are attractive to thieves for their precious metals, which can be easily sold to scrap yards. The challenge to law enforcement is how quick the theft can happen and the difficulty of tracing specific parts to specific vehicles. Criminal groups actually work at the speed of a NASCAR pit crew. They bring their own jacks, saws, and other tools and are done and gone long before police can arrive.

Captain Benfield suggested that they ask the City Council to consider an ordinance on unlawful possession of catalytic converters. He referenced the municipal ordinance created by Irvine as an example.

He also encouraged them to consider holding a community event where a local mechanic volunteers to etch license plate numbers on catalytic converters. This can help the mechanic get their business more known in the community and hopefully attract more customers.

MOTION BY MEMBER LOEFFLER, SECOND BY MEMBER JANIS, AND CARRIED 4-0 to recommend to the City Council to work with the Chief of Police and City Attorney on developing a municipal code addressing unlawful possession of catalytic converters.

B. Communications and Disaster Preparedness Project Update

The Committee discussed various types of communication methods and radio frequencies available if a disaster had eliminated normal communication.

Chief Capobianco described the types of radios used by OCFA to communicate with staff, the police and Camp Pendleton. That OCFA regularly practices drills to make sure communication would continue during a disaster. There is also a mutual aid agreement between OCFA and Camp Pendleton for assistance in time of need.

C. Homeless and Best Management Practices for Public Safety Personnel Project Update

Member Loeffler reported that the City will be able to hire an additional Homeless Outreach Coordinator due to receiving additional grant funding. The City is interested in using the additional grant funds to provide transportation for homeless people to local shelters.

D. Legislative Review Project Update

Member Loeffler reported on a new California law for police departments to make public when a police officer is fired and why it happened. The law also provides for ways to decertify them so they cannot transfer to new jurisdictions.

Member Loeffler described that when he was working as a police officer in Los Angeles, he had seen other cops who had problems with excessive use of force or issues like stealing. They were allowed to resign instead of being fired and ended up working at other jurisdictions.

Member Loeffler believes this new California law might help prevent that from happening.

E. Neighborhood Watch Project Update

Member Janis reported that he has been working on a website with William Kreutinger of the Human Affairs Committee. The idea is to provide educational info and resource links to the public.

F. Human Trafficking Project Update

Chair Berkuta reported that City Council had created a subcommittee of Council Members Duncan and James to draft recommendations for this issue.

Member Hightower reminded them that Council Member Duncan had requested the Public Safety Committee to work with Brenda Wells on ideas for the Council subcommittee of Duncan and James to review and present to Council.

G. Traffic and E-Bicycle Safety

Member Loeffler reported that the City Council is working to ban E-Bicycles on the beach trail and pier. Bike racks would be provided at the base of the pier to

allow residents to continue riding their bicycles to the beach and have a safe place for them. He also reported that Council might consider banning E-Bicycles on sidewalks in hopes of protecting pedestrians.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

10. REPORTS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STAFF

- A. Police Services – Orange County Sheriff’s Department Captain Benfield
- B. Fire Services – Chief of San Clemente Fire Services, Chief Capobianco
- C. Marine Safety – Marine Safety Division Captain Mellott
- D. Committee Chair
- E. Committee Members
- F. City Staff

Captain Benfield reported that OCSD is working on obtaining license plate readers to assist in identifying criminals. The contract is in progress. Once finalized, it would be about two months from contract signature to when the readers would be up and running.

He also reported a decline in RSVP volunteers due to concerns about covid. He hopes that more members of the public would be interested in volunteering for the program.

Chief Capobianco reported that due to the growth of Rancho Mission Viejo, OCFA is adding an additional fire station near Antonio and La Pata. He described that because San Clemente once had its own fire department, the City has transport rights for OCFA to bring in ambulance support from outside the City when necessary. He also reported that they are bringing onboard a new fire engine #60.

Captain Mellott reported that covid had affected marine safety. However, they were able to continue providing lifeguards because seasonal and part time lifeguards volunteered to cover when full time staff was affected by covid.

Member Janis left the meeting at 5:18pm.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY CHAIR BERKUTA, SECOND BY LOEFFLER, AND CARRIED 3-0 to adjourn, in honor of firefighter Jonathan Flagler, at 5:35 p.m. to the next Regular Meeting of the Public Safety Committee scheduled to be held on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 3:00pm in the Community Room at City Hall 910 Calle Negocio, San Clemente, California.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Berkuta, Chair

Attest:

Cecilia Gallardo-Daly, Community Development Director