

**Joint Meeting, Rockridge Community Planning Council and  
Greater Rockridge NCPC (12Y/13X) - Minutes  
Thursday, June 20, 2013  
Rockridge Library, College and Manila, Oakland  
General Public: 7:30-9:00PM**

**RCPC:**

Zabrae Valentine – Chair  
Christopher Chin – Vice Chair  
Bernie Baltaxe - Treasurer  
Laura Schlichtmann - Secretary

**NCPC:**

Frank Castro – Chair  
Barbara Minton – Vice Chair  
Denise Jorgensen – Treasurer  
Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer

At 7:30 PM Frank Castro explained about the evening's packed agenda and that we'll take questions for the speakers on 3x5 cards since we only have 40 minutes for Q&A. Barbara Minton, of the NCPC, and Laura Schlichtmann, of RCPC, passed out and collected 3x5 cards.

At 7:35 PM Frank opened the NCPC meeting. OPD was represented by Officers Donald Lane (PSO, beat 12), Jason Trode (PSO, beat 13), and Lt. Chris Bolton (district 2 operations chief). Frank briefly explained the NCPC's meeting schedule and how we work with our PSOs.

One hundred eighteen people signed in to the meeting, and the sign-in sheets note that another 8-10 people hovered out in the hall and didn't sign in as they couldn't get seats.

**Crime Stats**

About 6 people at meeting were from beat 13X; they raised their hands in response to Frank Castro's question.

Because of the abbreviated NCPC schedule, the PSOs incorporated parts of their reports with the discussion of recent crime trends.

Crimes against the person are way up from April-May. Beat 12 had 4 in that period and 21 in May-June; property crimes showed the same trend. Only auto crimes were about the same. [See printout for numbers.] Crime trends are generally up over last month.

Robberies are about the same as last year, burglaries (home and auto) are way down from last year, 4-5 versus 15 or so. Most of the calls this year were suspicious person calls.

A resident asked if neighborhood crime statistics are available? Lt. Bolton said it shouldn't be that hard to find out about crime in the neighborhood. Area 2 now has its [own web page](#): you should be able to put in your beat and download the data to Excel. OPD is working with [Crimemapping.com](#). He suggested we be careful of the CrimeWatch site – he's had trouble with the data. He wants to improve both access and data quality.

Q: When the crime list says "robbery with firearm", does that mean the gun was fired and/or someone was hurt?

A (Lt. Bolton): There's no way to tell. We need to improve the statistics. If a gun is fired during a robbery, it's reported as a firearm discharge, not as a robbery. For all of district 2 in the last 28 days, we had no more than 10 firearm offenses, none in either of this NCPC's beats.

Frank Castro commented that he's on the Community Police Advisory Board, which is working with an intern to try to improve crime reporting data.

Q: What's being done about the series of robberies the other day?

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A: There was a carjacking, and shortly after that, multiple robberies on beat 12, all done from the stolen car. It was a light blue BMW, we still haven't found it. We can't go into much detail but are getting good cooperation.

Q: If 2 people are held up a gunpoint in a 6 block area, is that "residual crime"? Are you working on it? We couldn't have prevented this just by phoning in.

A (Lt. Bolton): I've never seen a meeting turnout like this. Suspicious person calls (code 912) are very important, keep calling them in. OPD is trying to understand linkages and connections. We're also trying to get funding for bicycle and walking officer patrols. But – too many people are walking around wearing headsets, wearing earbuds, staring at a phone. A smartphone brings \$200-\$400 on the black market. When you see a friend doing this, *tell them to stop*. You wouldn't walk around waving \$400 in bills.

Frank Castro encouraged people to *make* the telephone call. Don't just fake it; some people pick up a phone so the suspicious person can see them, and then when he runs off, they don't finish the call. If you don't call, the incident never happened. And don't be a victim. The new A16 restaurant has windows that roll up, right by the sidewalk – don't put your purse right by the open window.

A resident complained that her neighborhood reports all kind of stuff and no one ever comes by – active prostitution, drug deals. Nobody ever comes, and Dispatch asks us questions like we're doing something wrong. It's not a good feeling. We want to help, we know you're understaffed. Listen to us, we have license numbers, we have photos. It's not happening. (applause)

A: We don't always have the resources to respond, but the reports *are useful*, we use the data. Calling non-emergency is less efficient, but it isn't a wasted effort. For drug deals call 238-DRUG and leave all the details you can, it's fully anonymous. Sign up for Nixle – you can not only get reports, you can send anonymous tips from your cell phone.

## **Guest speakers**

*Sean Whent, Interim Police Chief*

I'd like to echo what Lt. Bolton said, this is a terrific turnout. I've never seen an NCPC meeting like this. Crime goes down when the community doesn't tolerate it; you obviously don't tolerate it. Apathy leads to more crime.

We know response time could be better; we're working on ways to improve it, using non-sworn employees to free up officers. Also, we have people in field training, another academy in progress now, another one in September, and another one in December. But we have work to do. The status quo is not acceptable, anywhere in the city. We want to know the community's concerns, we need to know where we're failing.

We had a press conference on the district policing plan today. Lt. Bolton represents Capt. Toribio, in charge of this area of the city. They are held accountable for crime in the area. They'll be getting new resources: crime response teams, more PSOs, neighborhood investigative units. We'd like to identify cameras that could get photos, and do other follow-up. Our robbery section is way overloaded, the PSOs do a lot of that but they have other duties. Beat 13 is too big to walk across in a 10 hour shift.

The biweekly CompStat meetings hold captains accountable: they must know the status of cases in their area; they must explain what they are doing about robbery patterns, about shooting patterns. They have a license to be innovative. They're expected to reach out to the community – to meet with merchants, with NCPCs. We want to know whom they are talking to.

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We hope these changes will lead to better crime reduction. We also hope we've turned a corner on federal oversight; we're about to streamline internal affairs, and free some people to do crime suppression. We hear your concerns. We aren't there yet, we'll keep at it. I'm really encouraged by the number of people here – I get a sense of community, and dedication to the community.

*Jean Quan, Mayor of Oakland*

Where are we in the plan? I became mayor in the depth of the recession; we were trying to keep police numbers up. Police and fire were 75% of budget; when they paid into their pensions (for the first time) the percentage went down to 63%. We got COPS grants to keep numbers up in the recession. We took most of the money from the recovery and invested it in 3 police academies. We've changed the kind of recruiting we do, we've changed the candidate pool – a quarter of the cadets in the academy are women. Chief Whent has promoted more women to positions of power in OPD than we've ever seen. There is now a female SWAT commander, a second in command, a CID commander, and many more. This is not tokenism, it's real change. To relate to the community, OPD must have a female presence.

For the first time, half of the academy candidates are bilingual, in many languages. For the first time, the majority of candidates are minorities. The current officers are stepping up, but the force is getting more diverse, and more local. We have the first LGBT community trainers.

We can't just hire a police officer – it takes a year to grow one. More police is our number one priority. The current budget allows for 2 academies a year, if we get grants we will add a third.

We're working with kids, we want to make them into interns, and grow them into the community.

We got the California Highway Patrol to step in and help with patrols. Right now we're paying them, and trying to get a match from the state. We expect to need 4 days per week of CHP patrols until we get to 700 officers; they're critical in shutting down sideshows. I was on a ride-along during that sideshow the other week.

We're asking for more 911 operators. We've been asked why we can't add them now, since we have vacancies. We train dispatchers in clusters, like police academies; it takes 45 weeks to train dispatchers. We also have to teach residents to ask the right questions. The Wasserman study found that 1 in 3 calls to 911 were for illegal dumping, which isn't OPD's responsibility – it's public works. People use 911 as a general switchboard, we can't support that. We have to teach people the right numbers to call.

We need to add more civilians, especially police technicians to take burglary reports. When you get home and find you've been burgled, the crime is over, and it's the police officer's busiest time of day. Civilians could respond to burglary calls during busy policing periods. The council has approved this, we're moving ahead to hire up to 40 new civilian technicians.

We'd like to add a civilian inspector general. Chief Whent was once an inspector general. It takes an outsider to do this right, not a former officer. It's a form of check and balance. We'd also like to civilianize lower-level complaints against the police; some residents don't feel free reporting police misconduct to another cop, due to history in the city. I was at the Oscar Grant showing today [Ed. Note: the opening of *Fruitvale Station*]; I reminded them, that was the BART police, not OPD!

Our problems are not *only* the number of police. We've brought in experts; I've been to the White House asking for help on police issues. We've found children in possession of illegal guns with over 50 bullets in the magazine. We have to stop the guns. We have Federal agents helping clean up; an ongoing rotating group of Feds is working with us. We also have a team working on human

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trafficking and prostitution. Fines of \$15,000 *aren't enough* for this, the pimps can make thousands trafficking children.

We started a Ceasefire program last year. We offer the worst offenders big opportunities to turn their lives around. I've lent Reygan Harmon to run the Ceasefire program, she was my public safety point person. The next round of Ceasefire will start soon, we're starting to see differences.

We're starting the first phase of district policing this weekend. I want to add a metro unit, because downtown is different. We want floating crime reduction teams for each district. We're pushing investigators down to the districts, they need to be based in the areas they serve.

We also have to do different interventions: we've funded interventions on the sexual exploitation of minors with Measure Y funds. We offer alternative housing and counseling; we get to know the kids and encourage them to move off the street, if necessary into witness protection. The pimps are also the ones breaking into houses, and robbing people on the street. We'd like to make Oakland the place where you can *not* get underage hookers. If you have license plates, we have a "dear John" program. We can send a car owner a letter saying, you were seen on this day at this time and place. We've shut down motels; it takes time, and a lot of community cooperation. Most of this work has been done on International, but it could work here.

I'm challenging all NCPC volunteers to get involved in 2 school activities each, meet new people, expand the community. Knock on doors where kids aren't showing up. If kids miss 20 days of school, they'll probably drop out, and end up in juvenile hall. Over a 4 year period, 66% of the kids who dropped out got involved with OPD.

We have a plan, we need funding for support dispatchers and civilian techs.

### ***Question and Answer***

Q for Chief Whent: What specific steps are being taken for beat 12?

A (by Chief Whent): We're assigning a crime response team to area 2. This dedicated team is a new resource, we used to share it with 2 other districts. We're also able to use patrol officers to deter crime.

Q for Chief Whent: What is the consultant doing? How are his proposals different from Batts' proposals, particularly the youth curfew?

A (by Chief Whent): There's nothing in the consultant's plan about a curfew. They aren't getting any resistance; we paid them to review our operations and recommend improvements. We're looking at the recommendation to see how much we can do with what we have, and what we think will work for us.

Mayor Quan: When crime went up last summer, we realized we had to improve. We brought the Bratton/Wasserman team in, the best in the country; people in LA were very comfortable with Mr. Bratton on civil rights. The focus has been on using CompStat plus district policing – he's been coaching OPD, the department now uses data better than they did before, due to coaching. Rockridge needs to camera up; we have so many freeway entrances. Chinatown merchants put in cameras, and there's now an area with *no* robberies. The pros know where the cameras are. We're looking for a federal grant to expand that. We're talking to Rockridge merchants, BART, other people in the area with cameras. AC Transit buses caught a recent robbery on bus cameras.

There's a lot of controversy over curfews. Much violent crime is *not* committed by kids under 18; criminals are mostly 18-25, and they aren't hit by a curfew. If you do pick up kids at 10 or 11 PM, that's when the burglars are out and the sideshows are going, the cops are busy. And you can't just throw the kids in jail; you need to pay for a place to put them. We don't know why they're out

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on the street. We're talking to OUSD about a truancy center, will probably cost at least \$500K to run.

Q for Mayor Quan: What about the 47 vacant positions in OPD, despite funding? Why were they not filled?

A (by Chief Whent): 20 of those positions are police service technicians, who were approved to be hired, but not funded until next year's budget. The city's HR department has been depleted like everyone else, they're less able to cope, and their priority is hire police officers. Hiring for the non-sworn positions got delayed. Also, some of those people were crossing guards, and so on. It sounds worse than it is.

Mayor Quan: The Council has approved some new dispatchers and evidence techs but not funded the positions until next year. We can't just hire them off the street, we have to train them. We're looking for civilian interviewers for the September police academy. The HR department is one-third the size it was when I became mayor. We hope to get some criminologists hired in July and August; we hope some police techs will start in January. All these positions take weeks of training.

Chief Whent: Crime lab people are scientists, they're very difficult to hire.

Q (for Chief Whent): What do you mean by "turn the corner on federal oversight"?

A (by Chief Whent): Recent audits have been very positive. I expect the July report to show several new tasks in full compliance. We have 22 tasks that are in "partial" compliance (we need 90%, we have 89%). We're making every effort to meet the hard deadlines in the report, we're on track to meet them. I believe official compliance is forthcoming.

Mayor Quan: We've published the status on the compliance tasks and a lot of them are short by very small percentages. We're making every effort to help police come into compliance. We just signed a contract for software to track racial profiling; the negotiations took months. I think we'll be down to maybe half a dozen items; but we have to be clean for a year before we're off the hook. The federal monitor and compliance officer are now doing much more current coaching. Previously they'd review old data, take more time to write a report; the report was not real time. The current compliance officer is the one we hired to do compliance on Occupy, he's giving very good feedback. I expect a much better report.

Frank Castro reminded the audience that "the budget" hasn't passed yet. Nothing is set in stone. The next budget meeting is 6/27, turn up and tell them what you think.

Q: (for Mayor Quan) if more police is main thing we need, why are you looking at raises for non-police?

A (by Mayor Quan): They haven't had a raise in 5 years, they gave back a lot, it's fair to give them something back of what they've 'lent' to us.

Q (for Chief Whent): I've heard that OPD emergency radios don't talk to the radios used in surrounding communities, when will this be resolved?

A (by Chief Whent): We have a standard P25 radio system but it's a *different P25 radio* than the Sherriff's. Our channels are on their radios.

Q (for Chief Whent): We're putting up surveillance cameras on our houses, can we link to OPD to share data? What are OPD's plans for camera sharing?

A (by Chief Whent): We're converting a domain awareness center to monitor cameras. [Sic] Plans are in the works.

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Mayor Quan: We have a federal grant to get BART and OUSD security cameras to feed into our system. We hope to tie it all together.

Lt. Bolton: I'm working on a community camera collaboration project. We'd like to have a social media connection, so we can tell people to look at their cameras and see what they have. Call me if you are interested.

Q (either): How many police does Oakland need? 800? 1000?

Mayor Quan: How many police can we afford? Our police cost about \$200K each with benefits and overtime. This is twice what East Coast cops get. Our economy is growing, and we hope crime will come down so we'll need fewer police. My goal is to get to 800 police by the end of the next budget cycle (2013-2014). I think we can do that without killing libraries, parks and rec., senior centers, and so on, *if* the economy continues to grow and *if* we keep expenses under control.

Chief Whent: I agree, getting back to 800 officers is job one. Right now we have no traffic division and only a handful of foot patrol people. Necessary units have been depleted or eliminated.

Q: (either) How do we train the dispatchers not to snarl at people? What are you doing about that?

A (by Chief Whent): I've heard this complaint before. Over the last 6-8 months, we've added additional 'customer service' training for the dispatchers; they handle 3 times everybody else's calls. Many of the calls they get aren't police calls at all (illegal dumping, for instance, should go to Public Works). The dispatch supervisors are auditing routine phone calls more often. If the situation continues, it's a disciplinary issue.

Q: When should someone call the emergency number versus the non-emergency number versus 911?

A (by Chief Whent): Call 911 for medical emergencies and crimes *in progress*. For crimes that are not urgent (the criminals are not there) or life-threatening, call the non-emergency number. Don't call 911 from a cell phone, call 777-3211.

### ***Priorities***

Due to the very crowded meeting, the NCPC did not revise its priorities for the month of June.

#### **NCPC Priorities for June 2013:**

##### **12Y:**

1. The illegal auto repair shop on 63<sup>rd</sup> St. is active again
2. Canning between 58<sup>th</sup> and 61<sup>st</sup> area – robberies, burglaries
3. Pedestrian shot and robbed, 5300 block of Manila

##### **13X:**

1. Auto burglaries near the school around Golden Gate and Ocean View.
2. Parking past the *No Parking* limit sign on Golden Gate is making it really hard to drive up the street.

*NCPC meetings are normally the SECOND Thursday of the month.*

*Next NCPC meeting is **Thursday, July 11, 2013** at 7:00 PM  
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*See you there and stay safe!*

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