

**Annual Joint Meeting – Rockridge Community Planning Council and  
Greater Rockridge  
Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (12Y/13X) – Minutes  
Thursday, August 10, 2023  
Rockridge Library and Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
General Public: 7:00-8:30 PM**

**Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC):**

Michael Ubell – Chair

Vice Chair position is open

Eric Neville - Treasurer

Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer

Officer Nathanael Estifanos – Community Resource Officer, beat 12Y

Officer Silvestre Triana - Community Resource Officer, beat 13X

**7:00 PM – 7:05 PM Introductions**

At 7:07 PM Mike Ubell asked people on the Internet to mute. Ten people signed in to attend the meeting in person, and 22 people attended on Zoom. Mike announced the meeting, and asked Casey Farmer to introduce Elliott Jones from MACRO. Captain Lisa Ausmus from OPD attended the meeting. Neither CRO attended, they were both on assignment (see Captain Ausmus' presentation below); but they did send the crime statistics for both beats.

**7:05 PM – 7:35 PM MACRO presentation**

Casey Farmer, of the Rockridge Community Planning Council, introduced the speaker, Elliott Jones from the Mobile Assistance Community Responders of Oakland (MACRO).

*Elliott Jones:* I'm an Oakland native, my mother worked for the city, I grew up in schools and public libraries. I'm the manager of MACRO, which I consider giving back to the city. This program was demanded by Oakland citizens to reduce the load on the police of low-level calls that they shouldn't really handle. MACRO is still a pilot program until October 9, but it shows every sign of continuing; it is an example to other areas. I didn't bring a PowerPoint, but all our data is on the MACRO website ([City of Oakland | The Mobile Assistance Community Responders of... \(oaklandca.gov\)](http://City of Oakland | The Mobile Assistance Community Responders of... (oaklandca.gov))), look under [Impact reports](#).

The MACRO program started 4/9/22, which was my birthday; the city administrator told me to pick a date I wouldn't forget. The program launched from the Oakland fire training center, where our offices still are. We deployed teams to the 2 original impact areas, deep east Oakland and west Oakland. It quickly became clear that the specified early restrictions on service zones weren't going to be enough. Members of the west Oakland NCPC brought me to a meeting and asked, you won't cross the street to help me? If I'm a block too far over I won't get help? I challenged the team to expand the zones. The original east Oakland zone was High Street to the San Leandro border, below 580; and west Oakland was Brush to West Grand, all the way to the estuary. The people on the other side of West Grand were the first ones to challenge the boundaries. We then expanded into Fruitvale, downtown, and eventually to Temescal and Rockridge, and Piedmont Avenue. We were city-wide by July 2022. This was a tribute to the MACRO service people, and also to the Oakland library staff, because the

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library staff do very similar things to what MACRO staff do, in helping people. We started out with Nina at the library and the people who were camping around the main library. From there we learned that if you want to help, you must be there daily. You have to check in with people – you must slowly persuade them that you can help them. We’ve cleared the campground around the main library – at first there were 15 people camped, now there are none. Libraries can email MACRO if they need help, people go into libraries looking for support almost daily.

We also do a lot of work around Oakland public schools – not *in* the schools but outside around them. Schools are often a windbreak, people want to take shelter behind them. Instead of asking the school to engage, a MACRO unit will come by, and suggest better options including medical resources, food, clothing, shelter, etc.

We realized we needed a way for Oaklanders to reach us directly. When we started we didn’t have dispatch yet. We send a team driving around, looking for people who visibly need help; and when the team sees one, they engage directly and set up a relationship. We truly believe this has kept calls from getting to the 911 system. We don’t see why you should have to wait for a 911 call to get help. The goal is to engage up front and prevent problems, not let them get where you need to de-escalate. We encouraged people to call 911 for MACRO starting in August last year – it’s not how many calls we get, it’s what the team can respond to. We regularly contact local NCPCs and business investment districts asking about issues. Now we have email, as of November 2022; if you email MACRO while we’re in service, you’ll get a response within a few minutes.

A phone line is coming soon. Really. But we then need to train the dispatchers, because it’s not like being a police dispatcher. And we’ll have to staff up with new dispatchers.

If you call the police, they ask you who/what/where/are there guns – The Fire Department just asks, Where are you? We hope to have a phone line by September 2023, with a few dispatchers. We know that OPD is also adding dispatchers; they’re very good. Dispatch is a VERY challenging job. Without the dispatcher, nothing works. The Oakland dispatchers are the best in the business, in my opinion. The fire yesterday (the Schnitzer Steel fire at the port on 8/9) was handled by 3 OFD dispatchers!

Currently we have 11 MACRO responders; 1 is injured, so we have 10 people to cover Oakland 7 days a week. We can’t keep this pace up – we now have 18 new open MACRO positions, and we got over 209 applicants. People want to do this. The better MACRO can respond, the more support they can give OPD and OFD. It’s a much better job than what cops have to do. MACRO works with OPD and OFD. The best calls are from fire or police people who say, “this is better for MACRO.” We need OPD for the Crisis/Assessment/Triage Team (CAT), but we don’t have to do 5150 holds very often. Mostly we see people accepting a voluntary transport to John George, and we can easily initiate that. MACRO Operations hours are now 6 AM – 14:00, we’d like to make that

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6 AM to 16:00. We eventually want 18 hour/7 day coverage, 6 AM to 9 PM, but we need more people, and Oakland is not fast at hiring. We're still working on it, for public safety in Oakland. We've proved there is space for these programs – Parks has a similar solution [*Ed. Note:* I couldn't get the exact name], and the police are working on a similar program.

Please keep inviting us to NCPC meetings, we'd like to have district and neighborhood reports. It can take 10, 15, 20 plus times to engage with someone on the street before they accept the help. We will always talk to them the next day. If we want this to grow we have to keep supporting it. The pilot has been going 16 months, it has a couple of months left. We think this program is unique to Oakland; Berkeley has asked for a consult, so have other towns. They want to know what Oakland is doing. I hope we can keep it going for 5 or 10 years. We've laid a foundation. I'll take questions.

**7:35 PM – 7:45 PM    MACRO Q and A**

*Resident:* Do you have hard data of how much you've taken off OPD's back?

*Elliott Jones:* Not at the moment. We're still collecting the data, we'll need to do a comparative data analysis. Same for fire. But anecdotally, OPD and OFD are saying, I used to see this guy 15 times a week, it's now 3 times a week. People call for all kinds of reasons, they call because they're aggrieved about something. The longer we're in service the more we hope to take those calls off OPD.

*Mike Ubell:* question online – please explain the qualifications for trained MACRO responders.

*Elliott Jones:* MACRO responders work in teams of 2, an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician, licensed and certified in the state of California) and a CIS (Community Intervention Specialist). In the field, EMTs ask about medical problems FIRST. We can provide transport if needed, or give some level of immediate wound care if they don't want to go. A lot of people have unhealed wounds. The CIS position requires being service minded, having a connection to Oakland, and having experience dealing with the problems we get called for. Their role is to help break down the barriers after years of trauma– they have to talk like you, understand you. We had a guy the other day, when he started talking, he told us his whole life story. I don't know the last time he'd had a real conversation. He needed a medical workup; he hadn't been to a doctor in 20 years. We got him to a doctor.

*Resident:* MACRO was originally a pilot, with 2 more months to go; it looks like you're funded beyond 5 years. What's your funding status, and what data do you have that justified expansion?

*Elliott Jones:* We have 3 funding sources now: the largest funding source is a \$10 million grant from the state of California, which we have to spend within the 2-year budget cycle. We'd like the city council to commit to a multi-year budget program. The state grant gives us time to look at the local budget and plan ahead. The grant

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lets us get many fixed costs (vehicles, equipment) out of the way up front; we'll need more later but this helps. The state grant also helps with recurring staff costs. As for data – we have response data on the MACRO web site on city of Oakland. [Ed. Note: Links are on page 1 of the minutes.] We've made over 13,000 contacts in Oakland, which probably would have been made by police or fire, or not at all. We're looking at what is the average that a team can do. We're learning every day – what do they need? How old are they? Do they need housing? MACRO doesn't force anything – you don't have to accept a blanket and a bottle of water. But MACRO will give them, and they help. The more connections we make to service providers, the more we can help. Data is a problem in Oakland, we're working on it, so are other departments, and all the data should be public. This is an ongoing discussion.

*Resident:* I have 2 questions: Can you go into homeless areas and shelter areas? Also, OFD has a dispatch unit, why not use that instead of 911?

*Elliott Jones:* We have gone into homeless encampments, the larger ones, but that's usually done by the Encampment Management Team from Homeless Management Services; that team has rules they have to follow which are set in law. Macro does better with individuals than groups. There are legal layers around groups. We prefer to work with one or two individuals who may be ready to get service. But not with groups.

As for using OFD dispatch over 911 – the Fire Department and the Police Department have a totally different set of dispatch rules. The police have a specific set of questions to ask, they have a union. They've supported us from day 1, but they also push back. Fire dispatch training takes about 6 months to complete, it now has a MACRO piece integrated, they'll have to rotate people into the MACRO line. We couldn't ask them to do this without OPD support; Fire has to trust what OPD sends over for MACRO. We hope a dedicated MACRO line will help with this. A lot of calls are from people who just want to talk, they don't need anything. Adding that has to be decided down the road.

*Mike Ubell:* online question – what needed services aren't available to MACRO now?

*Elliott Jones:* The city and county have multiple crisis teams. We know it's not always a true crisis – when it is, there are teams we can call, but not directly. We use OPD to call the CAT team. We prefer to get to people before desperation sets in. Service provider intake processes vary, we have to collaborate with “gatekeepers” who may not always accept people. We try to make what's available work better. We must know their processes. When they come to know us, they know the more people they take in, the more money they can get.

*Brian Guenther, Rockridge Library:* Thank you from the Oakland Library. Can you give us more detail on the range of issues you try to address, where do you start? And does MACRO work with the Department of Violence Prevention?

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*Elliott Jones:* I'll answer the second one first. We've met with the new DVP director, amazing guy. We try not to step on their toes; we work under different models. They're often inside schools trying to avert gang activity and violence. MACRO deals with nonviolent issues at its core. DVP has a different model, it's hard thankless work.

The most common call types are homeless issues. This guy is sleeping at the school, or on my porch, or in my yard. Maybe he's not sleeping. We hear about people walking around talking to themselves, walking around naked and/or barefoot. We had a call for someone dancing in front of a bus, who wouldn't move. People come into libraries – they may lock themselves in the bathroom. Some parents call about older children who have issues; often we get calls about someone who isn't taking their meds. We just keep talking to them. We show up the next day and talk to them again. The final issue is our connection to the service community, so we have places to hand them off.

*Resident:* About the limits of what you guys do - a neighbor said there was a guy in his yard, then in my trees. I asked him to leave, he seemed to leave but he came back. He wasn't trying to break in. Are you guys the people to call if something like that happened again?

*Elliott Jones:* Call us as soon as you realize there's an issue. The earlier we're called, the better, especially if we can see the people and talk to them. And if they cross the wrong line, another team has to come, and it may be OPD. At one point Fenton's was trying to close, the guy wouldn't leave, he smashed a sugar jar when we told him the police might come. He vanished, but the MACRO team found a guy having a crisis at the church across the street. The fire department. in 1903 was not the same as it is in 2023. Over time with more people, we'll have more we can do.

*Mike Ubell:* From online - how many calls do you get from 911? Do you know what percent of 911 calls go to MACRO?

*Elliott Jones:* About 50%. We prioritize the calls on the radio first. The email is kind of like a queue. We don't really know the percentages.

*Online closing question:* What's the best way for a concerned resident to reach MACRO?

*Elliott Jones:* Call the OPD non-emergency line. You may have to wait. Or you can email [macro@oaklandca.gov](mailto:macro@oaklandca.gov). If it's an emergency call 911. If it's not an emergency, we'll get to it.

*Resident:* What's the non-emergency number?

*Elliott Jones:* It's **510-777-3333**.

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*Karen Ivy:* It's on the front page of our web site, <https://rockridgencpc.com>.

**7:45 PM – 8:00 PM OPD reports from Community Resource Officers**

The Community Resource Officers were unable to attend the meeting but sent these crime numbers.

Crime Stats in Beat 12Y—Auto/Residential/Commercial Burglary, Stolen Vehicle, Grand Theft, Assault w/  
Deadly Weapon, Robbery, Petty Theft

CRIME TYPE	JUN - JUL 2022	JUN - JUL 2023
ROBBERY - GUN	2	2
ROBBERY - KNIFE	1	0
ROBBERY - STRONGARM	8	2
ROBBERY - ALL OTHER	1	5
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	3	7
BURGLARY	34	36
LARCENY - FROM VEHICLE	51	181
LARCENY - ALL OTHER	55	49
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	28	66
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>358</b>

Crimes Stats in Beat 13X—Auto/Residential/Commercial Burglary, Stolen Vehicle, Grand Theft, Assault w/  
Deadly Weapon, Robbery, Petty Theft

CRIME TYPE	JUN - JUL 2022	JUN - JUL 2023
ROBBERY - GUN	1	0
ROBBERY - KNIFE	1	0
ROBBERY - STRONGARM	8	1
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	0	1
BURGLARY	8	6
LARCENY - FROM VEHICLE	5	17
LARCENY - ALL OTHER	11	9
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	10	21

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CRIME TYPE	JUN - JUL 2022	JUN - JUL 2023
TOTAL	36	55

**8:00 PM – 8:15 PM Captain Lisa Ausmus, area 2 – Q & A**

*Mike Ubell:* I'll introduce Captain Lisa Ausmus, who started as Area 2 captain 2 months ago. She'll say a few words and answer some questions. We'll try to get out of here by 8:30.

*Captain Ausmus:* I'm newly promoted to area 2 captain. Area 2 hasn't had a permanent captain for a few months. I'm a 23-year OPD veteran, 2 months in Rockridge. I was a beat officer here around 2003?? I'm not sure, it's been a while. I'm trying to get to meetings to meet people and show my face. Before I was with OPD I worked on Medicare in Oakland; I've been here a long time. I love my job, I hope to serve you guys, and I hope you'll hold me to task if I don't take the pitches for you. I didn't come with an agenda, I just wanted to talk to you and get to know people. The CROs are on surveillance on a homicide. I will come to meetings. What do you want to hear from me?

*Karen Ivy:* The CROs did send me the crime reports and I'll put them in the minutes. And I don't know who decided to bring back the Socrata database, but I want to thank them, because I've been using it for years. The crime report for June is awful.

*Resident:* An elephant in the room is last week's meeting with the DA. How are OPD, the DA, and the council working together to fix this?

*Captain Ausmus:* I wish I could blame the DA but it's not her fault. We need to learn how to present the cases to her so she can charge them. That's my responsibility. What information does she need? It won't work if we're all blaming each other. We have to work out a way to cope – maybe diversion plans? What data will allow her to charge cases? What kind of sentencing do we want? We're working with her on this. She's going for a reform approach, not so much incarceration, and we need to know how to help her.

*Resident:* I was at that meeting with the DA, and I have no hope for auto burglaries. That meeting said nothing can be done, they happen too fast, and they can't get any evidence. I'm hoping you'll figure out a way to deal with it.

*Captain Ausmus:* Auto Burglaries are out of control. I'm trying to get one walking officer on College, I hope to get a second, and one on Piedmont as well. It's like catching lightning in a bottle, it's really hard. Chris Jackson sends me 50 emails a day about auto burglaries that are happening. It would be a lot easier with half a dozen more officers. We're hoping to get tech that will help us catch people in the act, and hopefully stop this. We

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could try a bait car (under surveillance). We'll try that. I'm working with Captain Burch. I'm learning city resources that can help me. I'll tell the truth; you may not want to hear it.

*Resident:* What exactly is your job?

*Captain Ausmus:* Right now I don't have many resources – I have the CROs, some walking officers, and patrol officers. OPD also has a Violent Crime Operations team, a Ceasefire team, and a Criminal Investigation team. My job is to put resources in the areas that are having crime spikes. And I'm responsible for administration. I read and answer a lot of emails. I report weekly to the chief and to the area sergeants. I oversee where my resources are and where the crime is.

*Mike Ubell:* The captain manages an area. There are 5 areas in the city. Each area has several beats. There's one officer per shift patrolling Rockridge and Temescal (beat 12). Violent crime is not part of the captain's team, but she works with them.

*Resident:* Are the people with mental health problems the ones committing violent crimes? I know a lot of people who are homeless or with mental health problems and I don't think they are.

*Captain Ausmus:* I don't think there's a big overlap. There's some overlap, but violent crime doesn't overlap a lot with encampments and homelessness. We rely on mental health officers to calm things down. The Violent Crime Operations Center and Ceasefire aren't under me, but they help out. We have someone in custody for recent home invasions; we think he might be the primary and we're trying to build the case for a charging. That's primarily in the beat 13 area.

*Carolyn Burgess:* Was that Caldwell? San Francisco let him go.

*Captain Ausmus:* It's not Caldwell, he's out and they're still trying to find him.

*Resident:* Why is it so hard to charge the people that just clean the Walgreen's out? And it was happening with the catalytic converters too; didn't the governor change something to make it harder to sell catalytic converters?

*Captain Ausmus:* If they steal less than \$950 it's a misdemeanor (petty theft); for petty theft, we can't jail them if they have ID, we can only cite. Also all our drug calls are now misdemeanors, we don't charge, we don't enforce the marijuana laws. I just met with Whole Foods, they're having a big problem, they're working with the DA, they hope no trespass orders will help.

*Resident:* If it's a state law, how does the city council come in?

*Captain Ausmus:* The petty theft law is a state law. The no marijuana arrest policy, that's the city, they've made that a low priority, I can't control that. You all have to tell the city council what you want the police to do. I'm

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learning the politics of the city. I'm not a politician. I try to use the police resources to make it work here. It'll take all of us.

*Karen Ivy:* If you don't call in the break-in on your car, the police don't know it happened. I walk around the neighborhood; I've talked to people who didn't report a car break-in because they didn't think anyone would come.

*Captain Ausmus:* OPD is very stat driven. I need statistical data to support my budget requests. Right now I have about \$300K that I can use for everything including administration. Area 2 has less crime than other areas; I have to have the reports, the data, to show that we need more. I want to be out with resources and understanding the neighborhood. But I can't do everything, and the city has a budget problem. If you don't have a computer to report a crime online, you can use the computers in the library, they all have them.

*Mike Ubell:* If I see a car break-in, why can't I report it if it's not my car?

*Captain Ausmus:* That's a state law – only the registered owner of a car can report a break-in. If you see one, email the NCPCs, and email me. My email is [lausmus@oaklandca.gov](mailto:lausmus@oaklandca.gov).

*Resident:* We have to step up and take action. I'm Janine Firpo – I'll host a meeting here in a couple of weeks, of neighborhood people who want to do something. We can't rely on the NCPCs.

*Mike Ubell:* Did you come to the NCPC and ask for action?

*Resident:* I've come to lots of meetings, As a group we need more people to step up. This is a cross-city problem, it's not just Rockridge. We need to get a lot of people across the city taking action.

*Karen Ivy:* What do you want the community to do? That's not clear to me.

*Resident:* I want people to go to city council meetings, learn the issues, investigate people running for office, make our voices heard more loudly.

*Captain Ausmus:* We need a new Citizen's Police Academy. People need to understand what OPD does and how we do it. I want you to understand, I love the idea of involved citizens, but I don't want you to put yourself in danger.

*Resident:* What if I told you I have a solution? I can lessen the load on OPD. I'm launching a project, called the Lighthouse project, it's grassroots, it's feet on the street. The community gets out there. The concept is the lighthouse and the beacon. I've been trying for months to get some attention on this. I'm funding it myself, it brings people together in a simple easy way. It's all preventive. I've picked up bloody people off the sidewalk. I

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have a charter that explains everything, and I need help. I'm where MACRO was 3 years ago. I'm partnering with Safer Rockridge, talking to Angela Moore, and I have a contact with MACRO now.

*Captain Ausmus:* It's important for communities to come together. Right now OPD is hiring for dispatch, we need more dispatchers. You just have to be able to type 40 words per minute and talk at the same time, which disqualifies me! We'd like to bring people into the com center to see what dispatchers do, and how things are triaged. We need to publicize what we do, so people understand the processes.

*Karen Ivy:* I'd like to say, I took a citizens' police academy about 10 years ago, and if you haven't done that, you really don't understand how they work.

Mike Ubell closed the meeting at 8:45 PM.

## **Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Priorities for June 2023**

### **Beat 12Y:**

1. *Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Priority:* Car break-ins on College Ave., especially in the library parking lot.

### **Beat 13X:**

1. *Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Priority:* No current priority.

*Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council meetings  
are normally the SECOND Thursday of even-numbered months.*

*Next meeting **Thursday, October 12, 2023** at 7:00 PM*

*Rockridge Library and virtual meeting*

*Zoom link is available at <https://rockridgencpc.com>, NEXT NCPC MEETING*

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