

**CITY OF FONTANA
FONTANA POLICE DEPARTMENT**

TO: All attendees of the Hunter's Ridge Community Meeting
FROM: Lt. George Bloom, Area Commander Beat 1
DATE: October 15, 2007

SUBJECT: Community Meeting Minutes of October 15, 2007

Played the Fontana Police Department Recruitment Video-Joinfontanapd.com

Lieutenant Bloom

- Introductions
- Advised he is currently the Area Commander for Hunter's Ridge Community and everything north of the 210 freeway. If you have any questions, call him at 350-7706 or e-mail him at gbloom@fontana.org.
- For good information go www.Fontana.org, which is the city's website. The city's website has a link to the Police Department's website. Another good website is www.hunters-ridge.com which has a forum where you can ask questions and get answers. That website is viewed by not only Hunter's Ridge residents but by the mayor and personnel of the city.
- Grand Openings: Coyote Canyon Park and also the Fire Station will be having the grand opening November 3rd.
- Community Clean up day is October 27, 2007- It's free to all Fontana City Residents only. You must bring you Burretec Refuse bill. The acceptable wastes are: refuse, appliances, sofas/mattresses, televisions/computer monitors, green waste, tires (limit 4), electronic waste, and hazardous waste. Be prepared to source separate your load. When loading your vehicle keep in mind that items such as metal, appliances, TV's, monitors, tires and household hazardous wastes will be off loaded at different locations. If items can be reused, please check with local thrift stores such as Goodwill or the Salvation Army to see if they will accept these items. For more information please call Public Works at (909) 350-6760.
- We have a new Verified Response policy and also a new Noise Ordinance. The new noise ordinance give officers an option to issue a citation if they get a call at the same residence more than once regarding a noise complaint.
- Department and Area statistics:
 - Residential Burglaries for the last 6 months for the north end of Fontana are way down.
 - Vehicle Burglaries for last quarter were low but this quarter they are high. We had a string of vehicle burglaries at 24 Hour Fitness. On September 24th we caught a guy breaking into vehicles and he came from a group who was breaking into vehicles from Orange County to Barstow hitting all the 24 Hour Fitness's.

- As for Robberies we didn't have any in September. Most of the robberies are bullies going to parks and stealing ipods.
- Vehicle thefts are about the same as last quarter. If you can, park your vehicle in your garage or get an alarm.

Captain Alan Hostetter-Verified Response

- Effective October 1, 2007 the Fontana Police Department is changing their policy on how alarm calls are dealt with. As of today the Fontana Police Department responds to all alarms calls and many are false alarms. Starting October 1st we are going to what is called "Verified Response" (VR). Most alarms are motion censored and are set off by your dog, a balloon moving through your house or even the wind. What happens now with alarms is when an alarm is activated the alarm company usually calls you to see if you had accidentally set it off, if they can't get any response they automatically call the police and we send officers out to the call and usually find out that it's a false alarm.
- *What is Verified Response (VR)*-It places the responsibility on alarm owners/alarm company to ensure burglar alarms are "verified" before police are dispatched to the location.
- *What is considered a Verified Alarm*-Audio verification, video verification, verification by a security guard or an eye witness.
- *Why Verified Response*- In 1998 police in our nation responded to about 38 million alarm activations, which cost an estimated \$1.5 billion. In the United States solving the problem of false alarms would relieve 35,000 officers from providing an essentially private service. During the Fiscal year of 2005/2006 Fontana Police Department responded to 8,529 alarms, 8,507 (99.7%) of those alarms were false! Fontana spent \$255,603 responding to false alarms which is equivalent to having 2 officers doing nothing but responding to alarm calls. Out of the 22 calls which were not false we only made an arrest on one.
- *Attempted solutions*- Ordinance #1356 which was adopted on 08/07/01 was an attempt to relieve officers from responding to an increasing volume of false alarms. After the 3rd false alarm in 12 months a warning letter is issued, any false alarm after that is \$63. The city has also provided door hangers to educate violators. The result of this ordinance was an approximately 24% drop by 2004 and has remained stable since.
- *Where do we go from here*-The problem is clear and also thoroughly researched. Verified response has proven effective in a large and growing number of communities. We are expecting over a 90% decrease in false alarms using the VR approach. After 6 months we will review the ordinance and see how effective it was.
- *Know Jurisdictions using Verified Response*- Broomfield, CO; Fremont, CA; Ventura, CA; Turlock, CA; Modesto, CA; Milwaukee, WI; Eugene, OR; Lane County, OR; Westminster, CO; Burien, WA; Las Vegas, NV; Salem, OR; Arvada, CO; Henderson, NV; Winnipeg, Canada; Breckenridge, CO; Lakewood, CO; Aurora, CO; Dallas, TX; Salt Lake City, UT; Bellingham, WA; West Valley City, UT; Victoria, BC; Yakima, WA; Summit County, CO; South Salt Lake City, UT; and Madison, WI.

- ***What our policy is-*** If you have a verified alarm our dispatcher will take the information and dispatch at least two officers immediately. If the alarm is not verified our dispatcher will do a previous event search if there was no suspicious activity within 72 hours the dispatcher will then send a message to officers in that area stating there is an unverified alarm, if no officers respond to check on the alarm the call is closed out after 15 minutes. If the previous event search shows suspicious activity within 72 hours then two officers will be dispatched to the location.
- ***What your options are-*** Get rid of your monitoring service and rely on signs and an audible alarm. Install a panic alarm, we will still respond immediately to those. Insist your monitoring company provide a verification service (security guard). Or install a verified alarm (audio or video).
- ***Frequently asked questions:***
 1. *Why doesn't the City just charge more for alarms and hire more officers?* This still puts a burden on the police department and the city (in regards to tracking, billing, and collecting) instead of the alarm owners and companies who are responsible for the problem. Also there are drawbacks on hiring officer through an unpredictable revenue stream.
 2. *Why don't we just charge the alarm companies for false alarms and let them collect from the customers?* Alarm companies have threatened litigation against this in the past. Most don't even track false alarm rates unless related to equipment failures. They would have to add new divisions to their organizational charts to deal with this and much like us, don't want to have to deal with the tracking, billing, or collecting on huge numbers of false alarms.
 3. *If you adopt this policy, will my homeowners insurance increase?* A common, yet completely false, scare tactic of alarm companies. Many insurance companies give discounts for alarms and a slightly larger discount for a "monitored" alarm. They are not concerned with who monitors the alarm or responds to check it.
 4. *Should we expect our burglary rate to increase?* No! This had not occurred in the other jurisdictions where VR had been adopted. Fontana should be no different. Considering that over 98% of alarms are false, there is no correlation between alarms and actual burglaries. Owning an alarm can be preventive, police officers responding to the sound of an alarm is not (typically a 15 to 20 minutes response time). Additional free time will be much more beneficial than responding to false alarms:
 - Focus on areas with higher burglary rates
 - Investigative vehicle and pedestrian stops
 - Parolee and probationer follow up
 - Focus on arrests of drug users
 5. *Will people become victimized in their own homes if you don't respond?* Burglar alarms are designed to protect property, not people. Manually activated alarms such as panic/duress alarms, robbery alarms, and medical aid alarms are designed to protect people. We will continue to respond to these alarms and they will continue to be given a high priority.
 6. *I pay my taxes and your salaries; I want my tax dollars being used to respond to my alarm.* The majority of homes in Fontana are not alarmed. The alarms

we are responding to are almost always false. Automatic police response is a personal service to alarm owners that has become detrimental to public at large. Owning and operating an alarm is a private contract with a private for-profit firm, for a private service.

- For more information please visit www.fontanapd.org.

Corporal Brian Heaviside-Traffic Division

- Most of the complaints the traffic unit gets are at the schools in the morning and in the afternoon. The unit is currently working on a system so they can be at each school more frequently.

Councilmember Acquanetta Warren

- Currently working on the Library- if you have friends or family who have memorabilia from the Civil Rights Movement, please have them donate those items to the Martin Luther King Jr. Children's Library. We are hoping this library will do more than teach children how to read but also how to be adults.
- Please drive down Sierra Avenue, the changes there are unbelievable. Please take pride in our city. The city is currently the envy of the Inland Empire if not the State of California.
- Participate in Healthy Fontana, most cities around us are joining in with Healthy Fontana and creating their own such as Healthy Ontario, etc.
- It is so important to get your neighbors together to have a neighborhood watch. Hunter's Ridge doesn't have a National Night Out, Night Out teaches teens that we are not going to tolerate anything. It's important to stick together with your neighbors. Please contact Amber Smith with the Police Department to get a Neighborhood Watch started.

THE ITEMS IN BOLD PRINT REFLECT ACTIONS TAKEN

Concerns of Hunter's Ridge Residents:

- False alarms are a problem but 1% is still an actual burglary, is there a priority classification problem as to why officers are not responding to burglary alarms quicker? ***Captain Hostetter advised before burglary alarms were classified very low in priority, now when we have an alarm which is verified, officers will be on their way immediately. There probably will never be a time when a burglar will go into your house when they know it has an alarm. For a police officer catching a burglar is like hitting the jackpot. If there is a verified alarm call almost every officer within 10 miles will be there.***
- If 99% of all alarms are false are most of the alarms triggered by faulty systems or something else? ***Captain Hostetter advised it could be faulty systems or just by different movements that trigger the alarm such as a balloon or even just the wind.***
- If faulty systems are to blame why aren't the companies charged for it, it should be up to the company to be responsible for faulty alarms. ***Captain Hostetter advised there will probably be some other law enforcement agencies that will look into making the company responsible to pay the false alarm fees as a possible solution for false alarms.***
- Asked when the next meeting will be in regards to Verified Response. ***Captain Hostetter advised it will be next week at the Sierra Lakes/Citrus Heights Community meeting. Some of the letters the Alarm companies sent out said the city***

council didn't listen to the complaints of the citizens. The city council was aware of it but they have nothing to do with it, it's not a voting type of issue it's just a policy change within the department.

- *Asked why have meetings then. Captain Hostetter advised because we want to inform the community so you will have all the information.*
- *Asked if the alarms calls are a waste of time, why are we taking fender bender traffic accident reports because that just a waste of time also. Captain Hostetter advised we keep statistical information from those traffic accidents and from those stats we can receive grants.*
- *Advised if everyone in the city puts in \$3 a year for 2 extra officers wouldn't that be brighter to hire two more officers to deal with alarms. Captain Hostetter advised the home owners who do not have an alarm will not want to pay for 2 extra officers to deal strictly with alarms. What we have chosen to do is to put the responsibility on the alarm companies.*
- *Advised in the letter they received it said there are 3 ways an alarm can be verified but it didn't say anything about a neighbor seeing someone going into your home, will the officers respond to that. Captain Hostetter advised yes a neighbor seeing something suspicious is a verified response.*
- *Asked if neighborhood watch helps with the response from officers. Captain Hostetter advised it's if the alarm is verified the officers will be there right away.*
- *Asked what the competence of security companies are. Captain Hostetter advised all security guards must be licensed by the Department of Consumer affairs.*
- *Asked if the security guards carry weapons. Captain Hostetter advised that will be up to that particular company.*
- *Asked if fire alarms need verification. Captain Hostetter advised those calls will go straight to the fire department.*
- *Asked if medical alarms will need to be verified. Captain Hostetter advised the fire department also goes to those.*
- *Asked if the fire department responded when a dispatcher puts it out over the radio. Captain Hostetter advised a fire call will go to the Fire Departments Dispatch which is a completely different dispatch center than the Fontana Police Department's.*
- *Asked when the library will be open. Council Member Acquanetta Warren advised it will be open April 2008 and the children's library will be open June 2008.*
- *Asked if the library will take a donation of books. Council Member Acquanetta warren advised yes make sure you say it's for the children library.*
- *Asked what the policy about dirt bikes on the street is. Lt. Bloom advised dirt bikes are not street legal. Coming off of county area we have cited numerous people; however we can not write cites in that area because the judge will just throw them out. On the weekends the county enforcement team will be out in that area to make sure there is no riding in that area.*
- *Stated Reservoir Road and Foxbrough there are a lot of speeders. Corporal Heaviside advised beyond those gates we can not enforce anything however we enforce them going down the hill.*
- *Asked when Cherry is going to be done by the freeway. Corporal Heaviside advised there is no specific time but it's within the year.*

- Asked if there are any announcements done about what is going on in the area. Advised she heard there were several break ins with ski masks with knives. *Lt. Bloom advised we talked about this last meeting but haven't heard of any robberies lately.*
- Advised there is an oversized vehicle which is a 5th wheel sticking out on the sidewalk can anything be done with that. *Lt. Bloom advised we will go out and see if it needs to be marked, just call our dispatch.*
- Asked what is happening with the possible name change of Cherry. *Councilmember Scialdone advised there were talks about a possible name change of Cherry from the 10 freeway to the 210 freeway, right now we don't know if it's going to happen however there is a very active group opposing it. It hasn't even been applied for yet.*
- Asked if as long as an RV is on your property it's ok. *Lt. Bloom advised yes as long as it's not blocking the sidewalk.*
- Asked if the statistics from earlier are all of Fontana or just for the Sierra Lakes area. *Lt. Bloom advised it's just for area 1 which includes Sierra Lakes, Citrus Heights, Hunter's ridge, etc.*
- Asked if you are on Cherry where there is a center median and a school bus stops on the other side with the flashing red lights if you are going the opposite direction are you suppose to stop too. *Corporal Heaviside advised if there is a center median and you are traveling in the opposite direction you do not need to stop.*
- Asked if we still have people who are doing the landscaping because they are slacking and also have a neighbor who don't cut their trees and have weeds. *Andrew Belter gave her his card for her to contact after the meeting regarding the city landscaping. Phil Saldana advised that Code Enforcement can take care of the issue with the neighbor just call Code Enforcement and report it.*
- Asked who takes care of water violations such as sprinklers flowing too heavily. *Lt. Bloom advised that would also be our landscaping department also.*
- Asked what is the city's motivation of annexing the area above Coyote Canyon. *Councilmember Scialdone advised the city council's goal is to annex all areas in our spear of influence. We plan on acquiring the area over the next 3 to 5 years.*
- Asked if the area the city plans to annex is zoned for residential or commercial. *Councilmember Scialdone advised it is unknown at this time.*

THE NEXT MEETING DATE IS JANUARY 7, 2008. THE MEETING WILL START AT 6:30 PM AT D.W. LONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (5383 BRIDLEPATH, Fontana CA 92336)

PLEASE SUBMIT ANY ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA BY JANUARY 6, 2008 TO:

AMBER SMITH
FONTANA POLICE DEPARTMENT
17005 UPLAND AVENUE
FONTANA, CA 92335
350-7710
asmith@fontana.org

THE CITY OF FONTANA COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD, KFON CHANNEL 3, GOVERNMENT ACCESS CHANNEL ANNOUNCES THE HUNTER'S RIDGE COMMUNITY MEETINGS' DATE, TIME, AND PLACE DAILY.