

**CITY OF FONTANA
FONTANA POLICE DEPARTMENT**

TO: All attendees of the South Fontana Community Meeting
FROM: Eric Wendt, Lieutenant
DATE: October 8, 2007

SUBJECT: Community Meeting Minutes of October 4, 2007

Lieutenant Eric Wendt

- Introductions
- Advised he is the Area Commander for the south end of the City (Interstate 10 to the Riverside County Line). Call him at 350-7708 or e-mail him at ewendt@fontana.org with questions pertaining to the City or to the Police Department. If you need the police to respond to a call, call the police dispatch center at 350-7700.
- Advised community meetings are held every quarter. Community policing addresses not only law issues but quality of life issues as well. Advised the problem might not always be a police issue but Lt. Wendt will point you in the right direction of who to contact or contact them for you.
- Advised the city is broken up into four areas. The Area Commander for north of I-210 Freeway is Lieutenant Bloom, I-210 freeway to Foothill is Lieutenant Weissmann. Foothill to Interstate 10 is Lieutenant Aulis, and from Interstate 10 to Riverside County Line it's Lieutenant Wendt.
- Advised the Police Department's website is www.fontanapd.org. Visit the website for useful information.
- On the city's website there is a link to Community Connection, click on the link and it takes you to a page which has a lot of information in regards to the city and upcoming events. You can sign up for Community Connection and it will be emailed to you in the future.
- Advised the City website is www.Fontana.org. It is a good source of information, such as "Who Ya Gonna Call" link which has numerous city telephone numbers and also the Graffiti Hotline (350-GONE), also a link on PD website-www.fontanapd.org. If you see any shopping carts in the area please call 350-6760 with a good location so the shopping cart can be picked up by City Yards (also a link on the PD website). Also 357-OUTT is the city's Lights Out phone number, if you see any street lights that needs repair or maintenance work done, please call 357-OUTT with pole number which is located on the Edison pole approximately six feet above the ground (also a link on the PD website). 428-DUMP is a phone number to report illegal dumping, however if you see someone in process of illegally dumping call the Fontana Police Department.
- The CAP Program (Community Assistance Program) has a link on the Fontana Police Departments website. The CAP program is run by the Water of Life Church in conjunction with the City of Fontana. The CAP program offers low to no cost

services for the citizen's of Fontana. **Go to the website www.fontanapd.org. Click on CAP (the puzzle at the top of the page) for information and resources.** Last year over 1600 people were assisted by the CAP Program.

- Advised the community meeting minutes are on the website. You may print out a copy of the minutes. A copy will also be e-mailed to all attendees within two weeks before the next meeting date. **Go to the website www.fontanapd.org. Click on “community meetings”, and then click on “community meeting minutes” (at the bottom of the page).**
- The Police Department Website has information about the Citizen's Academy, CERT and other programs we offer.
- The city annexed more property two weeks ago, south of Foothill from Cherry to Hemlock.
- CONSTRUCTION UPDATES:
 - Home Depot opened.
 - The Fontana Library will open early next year
 - The Cherry project should be complete by April 2008.
 - The Overpass projects will be starting soon, starting with the Cypress Overpass, and then moving on to the Citrus Overpass which will be completely knocked down. Once the Citrus Overpass is complete then the Cherry overpass will be worked on, that one will also be completely knocked down.
 - There have also been talks about the old rest stop becoming an on ramp.
 - The Jurupa extension from Etiwanda to Tamarind will have signals every ½ mile.
 - 2 hotels will be constructed at Sierra and Slover. They will be the Hilton Gardens and the Holiday Inn Express.
- The new noise ordinance should go into effect this month. This gives our officers an additional option with dealing with noise complaints. What will happen is the first call the officer gets the will give a warning and the 2nd time the officer has to go out there they will get a citation.
- Police Personnel update: 200 approved sworn positions, 187 of those positions are filled. The city's population is currently 182,257.
- October 27th is Fontana Clean Up Day-Free to Fontana City Residents Only. You must bring you Burrtec Refuse Bill. They will accept Refuse, green waste, appliances, Tires (limit 4), sofas/mattresses, television/computer monitors, electronic waste, and household 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. Mid-Valley Landfill will be open for free this day also from 8 am to 5 pm.
- September 12, 2007 our traffic division held a sweep in south Fontana. 143 citations were issued, 15 abandoned vehicles were tagged and numerous vehicles were towed.
- Foreclosures are on the rise. If you see one call our Code Compliance Department.

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 alarm 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 eyewitness.
- *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 respond to alarm calls. Out of those 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 computer 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:***
 - *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 to hiring officers through an unpredictable revenue stream.
 - *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.
 - *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.
 - *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
 - *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.
 - *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

THE ITEMS IN BOLD PRINT REFLECT ACTIONS TAKEN

Concerns of South Fontana residents:

- Asked where the money for the overpass at Cypress is coming from. ***Councilmember Scialdone advised the money is coming from various places. Cal-trans, the Transportation Department and the city. Advised we have a coalition with Colton, Fontana, San Bernardino, Rialto and San Bernardino County. Cypress is completely funded, Citrus is mostly funded and they are already working on Cherry. Advised the big hurdle is always environmental but we have the environmental clearance for Citrus.***
- Advised there is a lot of damage on Cherry from big trucks. ***Councilmember Scialdone advised the road structure is a design from 1950 and the design standards are much different then they are today. Sierra had that same problem and it was redone.***
- Asked within the next ten years all of the overpasses should be complete. ***Scialdone advised yes they should all be complete.***
- Asked what other projects are going to be worked on. ***Scialdone advised from Etiwanda to Tamarind on Jurupa there will be a signal every 1/2 a mile. There is going to be two hotels at Sierra and Slover they will be the Hilton and the Holiday Inn.***
- Asked what restaurant will be across from Home Depot. ***Scialdone advised that will be IHOP.***
- Asked why we can't work with Burtec to pick up bulky items on clean up day. ***Scialdone advised Burtec will pick up bulky items twice a year.***
- Asked what about when they charge you to remove hazardous waste because most people don't want to pay they will just go to the hills and dump them there. ***Councilmember Roberts advised City Yards will accept hazardous wastes.***
- Asked who is responsible for trucks between Etiwanda and Mulberry. The trucks are making u-turns right in front of you. They come out of the driveways without stopping, asked if we can do enforcement on those trucks. ***Lt. Wendt advised we have a commercial enforcement officer who will deal with issues such as those. Call the Fontana Police Department when that happens.***
- Advised he gives credit to the City and the Police Department for graffiti removal program it is working really well.
- Advised there is still a problem with the Jurupa park. ***Lt. Wendt advised we have addressed that issue and we have informed officers that they can lock the park if it's left open all you need to do when you see it open call the police department.***
- Asked if a Neighborhood Watch group can do it. ***Lt. Wendt advised he will look into it.***
- Asked if the ordinance about the ice cream trucks has a certain number of feet that they need to be away from a school. ***Lt. Wendt advised the ice cream trucks are suppose to be 1000 feet away from schools and they are not allowed to play music, we can cite them for that.***
- Asked if an officer is called out to what the alarm company says is a verified alarm and it turns out to be false, will the resident be billed for that false alarm. ***Captain Hostetter advised yes after 3 false alarms you will get billed.***

- Asked with the new alarm policy what shift of man power changed, asked if it will affect the coverage in the area. *Captain Hostetter advised it will not affect the coverage in the area, but what we are expecting is for a reduction in response time.*
- Advised in 2001 he purchased his house for \$180,000, the value went up to \$560-580,000 but now has dropped to \$480,000. Advised we need to keep our grass green, we need to worry about the quality of life that should be the most important thing to us. Advised they pay high taxes and need to stay onto of stuff like that.
- Advised the Don Day Center and the Ralph's Shopping Center is a magnet for bad people, teenagers and kids who possibly are in a gang. Advised there are people hanging out in front of the doughnut store and 99 Cent store drinking and exchanging drugs. Asked if the police can stop by to check things out. *Lt. Wendt advised the shopping center and the park is a project right now and we have officers who are on top of the problem.*
- Advised none of these problems happen in Mission Viejo or Laguna Hills because the police there are on top of things like this. *Lt. Wendt advised we can not just pick and choose who we stop just by the way they look.*
- Advised the stores near Target are so filthy. *Lt. Wendt advised there is not much that can be done with privately owned businesses, however if it was a restaurant we could contact the heath department.*
- Advised there are always kids hanging out at Shadow Park and also the school. One day a police officer came to her house asking who graffiti'd something about the police, advised there was graffiti on her new car and on the garage door. Advised she never had a problem until one certain family moved into the neighborhood. Asked what she can do. *Lt. Wendt advised her to talk to him after the meeting. Advised the officers have Shadow park on their list to check weekly.*

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON JANUARY 10, 2008, AT 6:30 P.M. AT SOUTHRIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL (14500 LIVE OAK). PLEASE SUBMIT ANY ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA BY JANUARY 9, 2008 TO:

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