

MINUTES

Area 2 Community Meeting

November 16, 2023 6:30 PM | North Tamarind Elementary School Area Commander Lt. Matt Kraut

In Attendance

Lt. Matt Kraut, Landscape Technician Raul Esparza, Traffic Engineering Ruben Hovanesian, Engineering Shawn Matejcek, Community Policing Technician Amber Smith, Code Compliance Inspector Peggy Fonseca, Community Services Celeste Sanchez, Officer Robert Glace,

Lt. Matt Kraut

- Welcomed everyone to the Area 2 Community Meeting.
- He has been assigned to many units and assignments within the police department.
- The city is broken up into four areas. This area is Area 2 which encompasses everything from the 210 freeway to Foothill Blvd east and west of the city. There is also a little pocket just south of Foothill that belongs to Area 2.
- The Area Commander program was created for the ongoing quality of life problems. When you have an emergency, please call dispatch to have an officer get out there immediately, however if it is an on-going problem then you contact Lt. Kraut.
- Had all of the city staff introduce themselves:
 - Raul Esparza-Public Works Landscaping
 - Peggy Fonseca-Code Compliance- She is one of three inspectors in Area 2. You can submit complaints on the city's new 311 system.
 - Amber Smith-Community Policing Technician with the Fontana Police Department-Reminded everyone to make sure they sign in so they can get up the updates for future meetings.
 - Ruben Hovanesian- Traffic Engineering
 - Shawn Matejcek-Engineering Project Coordinator mainly for Streets and Sidewalk project
 - Officer Robert Glace- Police Department Traffic Unit
- We try to do our best to solve the problems with the resources we have.
- We have five teams with three or four officers assigned to the beat so if you call one day you might not get the same officer as if you called a couple of days prior. The Area Commander Program was put into place to provide the community with consistency, especially if it is an ongoing problem.
- Lt. Kraut advised he is the Watch Commander as well as the Area Commander. He works Monday through Wednesday nights.
- He has been the Area Commander for Area 1, 3 and now 2 but not for 4 yet.
- He would like to know what kinds of presentations everyone would like to see in these meetings:
 - Community Member 1-New development in the area. Maybe we can have Planning come and do a presentation of all the new development that is happening within the city.
 - Community Member 2-Streets, trees, sidewalks, traffic, people racing at night (he can hear it but don't see it) in Heritage.
 - Community member 3- Crime trends residents should be aware of. Lt. Kraut advised as of right now, most crime is down, but simple assaults are up, our response times is down, and our arrests are up.

- Community Member 4- Would like to see top 5 things of main concern from the previous 6 months. Lt. Kraut advised as of right now the top things would be catalytic converter thefts especially from Toyota Prius'. Vehicle thefts is another one, when you park your car at night make sure you lock the doors and roll the windows up. They are checking door handles to see if the cars are left unsecured. Residential burglaries have been down for some time now.
- Community Member 5- Same as the previous resident plus with the helicopter, she can hear them, however, most of the time she can't understand what they are saying, so she usually has to call dispatch to find out if it is something she should be concerned about. Lt. Kraut advised that is fine, just make sure when you do that you are using the non-emergency number and not calling 911, unless it is a real emergency. The community member wanted to know if the police department can invest in some technology to make the announcements clearer so people can understand what is being said. Lt. Kraut advised most of the time when the helicopter is making announcements it is because they are trying to locate a missing juvenile.
- Community Member 6- Advised she lives on Tamarind/Elaine there are lots of cars with expired tags, that have weeds under them and never move. Plus they have problems with people who work at the Amazon Warehouse who are speeding up and down Tamarind. There are also a lot of people who are running red lights especially on Citrus and Miller, people don't respect the laws of the road anymore. Also landscaping all along Fontana and there is so much construction going on.
- Community Member 7- Drug overdoses and community concerns. Lt. Kraut said we have seen an increase of overdoses not only in our community but around the nation it is a huge problem. When we have one in our community we try to get to the bottom of it, we try to find where that person got the drugs from.
- Community Member 8- Would like to see what is going on in the city right now.
- Community Member 9- Would like to see a little bit of everything.
- We have had a long term absence in our Area Commander Program and Sergeant Bowie has stepped in to the Area 1 Commander roll for the time being. Introduced Sgt Bowie.
- Lt. Kraut advised he doesn't work every day, so email might be the best way to contact him. If you need to contact him, his email is mkraut@fontanaca.gov.

Questions

- **With the catalytic converter thefts, has the police department thought about cracking down on the recycling plants who accept the stolen converters?** We have in the past but the problem is that most of the recycling centers are not within our jurisdiction.
- **Do most residential burglaries happen in homes with or without a security system?** Mostly occurs in homes without security systems.
- **How often do break-ins happen while someone is home?** Rarely.
- **With the city constantly growing does the city have any plans to increase the number of officers we have?** Lt. Kraut advised we are trying to hire more officers currently. It is hard to hire quality applicants. We open the position every 2 to 3 months and we usually get about 200-300 applicants. We then invite them to test with us and usually only about 40-50 show up. Half of those will pass the test, so only about 25 will move on to the next phase. From there, they will get a background packet and usually 75% of those get disqualified which means we are down to about 5-7 people from the original 200-300 applicants and that is even before we get to the interview phase.
- **How long is the hiring process?** It is about 2 months from the time we receive the application to the time we schedule the testing. From the test to orientation about 2 more months and the background

portion could be as short as a month or 2 to several months just depending on the applicant and their life experience. Once we hire them then they have 6 months in the police academy. Then from there we train them in real life scenarios, which can be another 6 months. When it comes down to it, it is about a 2-year process from the time of the application to the officer being out on the streets on his own.

- **Does Fontana Police Department ever get any laterals from other agencies?** Yes he have several officers who have lateralled to the police department from other agencies.
- **Say someone is coming from Upland Pd to Fontana, how long will that person be in training and finally on the street on his own?** It depends on the person and their experiences at the other agency.
- **In your time at the police department has some of the duties that officers use to do been moved to someone who is non-sworn?** Yes, we have Community Services Officers, who are non-sworn. They have taken over the simple reports, such as vehicle burglaries without suspect information and non-injury traffic accident reports.
- **Heritage Middle School has temporary no-right turn signs from 7am to 8:30am, is that something the city put in place or is that from the school?** Traffic Engineer Ruben Hovanesian stated that is something the city put in place. They will be working on restriping the area and removing the temporary signs soon.
- **On Liberty Loop the tree roots are coming up in the roadway. Are there any plans to re do Liberty Loop.** Engineering Shawn Matejcek advised there are plans to re do the streets within the next 3 years. Not just the streets will be done but the sidewalks as well because the roots have lifted the sidewalks too.
- **The crossing lights only give 15 seconds for people to cross, advised that is not enough time for him to cross the street in Heritage.**
- **Advised she doesn't see traffic cops anymore. Mango/Walnut has been turned into a racetrack, there has been 2 major accidents there. Miller/Tamarind people are doing donuts. Do the patrol units have license plate readers on them?** Some of the patrol units have them, however, we also have them at intersections which has helped tremendously to solve some hit and runs, stolen vehicles etc. We also have mobile units that we can place in particular areas.
- **A couple of months ago her neighbor had his car stolen and it was found 3 weeks later in Pasadena. Everything was taken out of the vehicle and the officers asked him if he wanted to press charges he said no because the officer told him it's a waste of time plus the suspect will know where he lives and could come back, is that true that the officer would tell him that?** Lt. Kraut advised that is probably not true as the officers wish people would prosecute these people who commit crimes. We want to see these criminals punished.
- **Who does he report a street sign to that has been down due to the winds.** That would be to Public Works. You can also report anything like that on the 311 app. <https://www.fontana311.org/s/>
- **There has been an increase of transients at the North Tamarind Park. Can we get an increase of patrol in the park?** The unit who works the transient issues within our city has found that it is more effective to be in unmarked cars so they might already be doing extra patrol in the park you just might not realized it is officers. He will let them know about the transient issue in the park, but they may already be aware of it.
- **Asked if the lady who was arrested for stealing mail was prosecuted.** Lt. Kraut advised she was, and she is currently out on probation.
- **On Tamarind there is a huge palm tree and a bunch of cars parked along the curb it is hard to see on coming traffic.** Lt. Kraut advised him to speak with Ruben Hovanesian Traffic Engineering or Officer Glace after the meeting to let them know the details so they can check the area.

Next Meeting

March 19, 2024 @ 6:30 PM at Almeria Middle School (7723 Almeria Avenue)