

Greater Rockridge NCPC - Minutes (12Y/13X)
Thursday, February 26, 2009
Rockridge Library 5366 College Avenue
General Public: 7:00-9:00PM

Chris Jackson called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Twenty-six people attended the meeting including the following:

OPD Attendees

Officer Brian Murphy, Patrol weekend day watch officer (moving to beat 13 in March/April)
Officer Julio Pinzon, Patrol weekday day watch officer
Officer Randall Chew, PSO 13X
Officer Pat Gerrans, PSO 12Y
Officer Maureen Vergara, PSO 13Z
Officer Doug Chimpky, College Ave. walking officer

Anna Chang Lai, NSC

OPD requested that the NCPC publish the following description, in the minutes, of the suspect in a recent Craigslist-related robbery (2 men arrived on Monroe Avenue to buy a car, for cash, that had been advertised on Craigslist; they were accosted and robbed at gunpoint):

Black male, 20's-30's, 5'9" - 5'11", approximately 200 lb, dark clothes, dark hood over head, ski mask. The suspect rode a red mountain bike, make/model unknown, and flashed a small pistol. The suspect knew the victims had a large amount of cash, he also took cell phones and wallets. BART security police stopped a similar person College/Keith, but the victims couldn't identify the suspect because of the mask.

Jim Dexter asked to be allowed to make 3 short announcements, as a member of the Community Policing Advisory Board, the Neighborhood Watch Steering Committee, and the United Neighborhood Councils of Oakland.

Regarding the *CPAB*: Organization's purpose is to monitor the state of community policing in Oakland. Various City resolutions define how community policing should exist, and what an NCPC is. There are 57 police beats in Oakland and 52 NCPCs, representing nearly the entire definition of community policing in Oakland. There has been a wide gap between CPAB and the NCPCs. There are now new representatives on the CPAB, he's a member, and is visiting all NCPCs in Area 1.

Neighborhood Watch Steering Committee: This is the first city level representation of Neighborhood Watch. Steering Committee works to get information out to Neighborhood Watch captains. Monthly Steering Committee meetings have presentations of interest to Neighborhood Watch captains.

United Neighborhood Councils of Oakland: This is a citywide organization in which representatives from each Neighborhood Council (NCPC) meet in quarterly councils. The intent is to allow the NCPCs to speak as one group to the mayor, to request changes from civilian residential side, and also to address Oakland city government generally – OPD, public works, CEDA, and other departments. The UNCO voted Tuesday night (2/24/09) to ask OPD to hold Police Service Area meetings in *all* PSAs. Capt. Toribio has instituted such meetings in PSA1, but the meeting in PSA2 is the only one currently active. By June 2009 OPD will have 6 PSA meetings.

All these groups represent the Oakland neighborhoods at various levels and can be used to escalate issues that individual NCPCs can't deal with.

OPD Reports

Chris Jackson asked Officer Chimpky to report – College Ave has been pretty quiet. A few street people have been acting up; Shane Powell is an issue, he walks the street screaming obscenities. We're trying to get him removed. They got him housing downtown but he didn't stay. There was an attempted purse snatching at BART Tuesday night; the thief dropped the purse while being pursued by a BART security officer.

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Chris Jackson noted that there was a robbery based on a Craigslist ad this morning on Monroe.

Officer Gerrans reported that the Water Lounge issue was already on everybody's list. The project is ongoing, the city is looking into the limits of their license, and what permits they need. The upstairs neighbors still have noise issues. The City Administrator's office is looking into it.

On the issue of the drunk driver, the PSO is asking Patrol for help, since the driver tends to park (at Cavour and Miles) between noon and 1 PM, while the PSO comes on duty at 2 PM. The PSO can't do much personally because of the time difference. OPD hasn't yet been able to find him passed out in his car. Patrol will be looking out for the driver, they have the car description. Officer Gerrans suggested that if residents see this driver passed out in his car, they should call the non-emergency number; and if it looks like a medical emergency, call 911.

A neighbor from the Kales Ave. area raised a question about communication with PSOs. NCPC has stated that residents should go through NCPC who will forward messages to the PSOs; Jim Dexter seemed to suggest that residents can call the PSO directly, and use the NCPC for beat-wide priorities. Officer Vergara noted that OPD is streamlining its communications, to improve efficiency and make citizens feel heard. She noted that officers can't be one-on-one with everybody in the community all the time, and the best way really is to go through the Neighborhood Watch, or the NCPC. Chris Jackson commented that some residents were formerly encouraged to use the PSOs as a personal police force, calling the PSO's cell phone direct. Officer Vergara repeated that Captain Toribio wants people to communicate through Neighborhood Watch and NCPC chairs, and work on the 3 priorities set at NCPC meetings; PSOs can't respond directly to everyone. Jim Dexter asked what is the relation between the Neighborhood Watch block captains and NCPC? Officer Vergara stated that Captain Toribio wants block captains to work through NCPC chair. The resident commented that she sent an email and it went into a black hole, she was very discouraged. Officer Vergara commented that the public doesn't know everything the PSOs are working on. They're now being used for much larger projects than they used to be, which takes a great deal of time. OPD is also trying to get the lines of communication cleaned up so everybody knows what to do. The resident complained that people used to be able to communicate directly with PSOs and asked why can't they still? Chris Jackson repeated that Captain Toribio has said from day 1 that all communication should go through NCPC. A resident asked if there is a written policy. Chris Jackson didn't really know, Captain Toribio had told him this personally. A resident noted that the PSO only works 40 hours a week, they can't be there all the time. Chris Jackson promised to get a written statement from the captain on how he wants communication with the PSOs to work.

Neighborhood Issues

Chris Jackson asked the status of the Kales problem house. The resident said the problem couple have been having their screaming fights, off and on. It's less than it was, probably because she's been calling the landlord constantly. The resident noted that the minutes of the next meeting (after the original report) said there weren't any problems – but she had called Dispatch several times. Officer Gerrans agreed that there were several calls, but when Patrol arrives, there were 2 people arguing. This isn't illegal. They've checked the records, but there's no record of narcotics or other crime, the people have no record, their car has no record; they get together and drink and scream at each other. Denise Boisvert-Jorgensen suggested that the NCPC could send an official letter to the landlord stating that the neighbors have been complaining.

Officer Pinzon asked to report: he's patrol, responds to 911 calls, and needs to get back to the street. He was at the robbery this morning. He used to be walking officer in Fruitvale; he has also done sexual assault work, had to quit because he could never prove things. Patrol is 911 driven and overtime driven; they used to be able to respond differently than they can now. He encouraged residents to send emails to NCPC, they do work. This district is twice the size of

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Piedmont; patrol officers are running constantly. PSOs have a little more flexibility. North Oakland is notorious for poor radio reception, which impacts service.

A resident noted that the 2 people who were robbed didn't live on Monroe. Officer Pinzon agreed that they didn't. Resident commented that they've had numerous issues on Monroe with car thefts, and questioned why these guys were on Monroe at all? They were "buying a car" – Monroe residents have had cars stolen, with descriptions of Hispanic suspects. The guys who were robbed *didn't* call 911, a resident called 911.

Officer Chew responded to questions about his attendance at NCPC meetings: he said there's always someone representing him or beat 13X. The one time he missed, he was working undercover. He's gotten a lot of emails from Thomas Ave. He's established 2 car theft incidents in 2009, one in January, one in February, both on the 16th of the month. A resident said they have security footage showing cars cruising the street in the small hours (three to five AM). Cars on Thomas Ave. get rifled every 2-3 months even though they are locked. Not much is stolen but it's annoying. Officer Chew observed that '80s – early '90s Japanese cars are very easy to open up. The resident said that a 2007 Honda CRV is also being opened without marks. Officer Chew said there have been 7 vehicle thefts in all of Beat 13X in 2009. There are several *hundred* cars stolen every month in Oakland.

The Thomas Ave. residents feel they have a pretty good Neighborhood Watch, they communicate with each other; but prevention isn't satisfying when the crimes continue. They'd like to see random patrols in off hours; crimes seem to happen late at night. They feel they do all the right things and they still feel like sitting ducks. People come through casing the joint: these guys have one guy drive slowly down block at 3 AM -5 AM while second guy gets out, and walks into driveways with a flashlight. They have security footage 2 weeks apart, showing the same behavior. Can they get OPD to watch for these guys in the next "window"? Officer Vergara suggested that OPD needs a license plate number and vehicle description. Chris Jackson asked if cameras could be aimed at the street? Officer Vergara noted that while they need evidence, citizens have to be careful, these are criminals, some are very confrontational.

Chris Jackson suggested this can be a priority for the NCPC, we can put it on the PSO's list to follow up.

Officer Chew suggested that parking in a driveway is better than parking on the street; cars in driveways are broken into less often.

A resident suggested that a camera on a tree could get photos. Not a good idea to take photos from your house. Chris Jackson pointed out that if it gets to court, they'll know where the camera was. Officer Vergara said she doesn't want those criminals to know *anything* about her.

A resident asked, does The Club really help? No, because they can cut the steering wheel with bolt cutters and pull it right off. Denise Boisvert-Jorgensen said that anything that looks like it would slow them down is a deterrent, they may go on to the next car.

Chris Jackson repeated that we'll make it a priority. Karen Ivy said it's already there. Officer Vergara said now the PSOs can do the SERA process, and see if they can put something together. They look at crime spikes, similar crimes in the same area at the same time. The Thomas Ave. reports are 3 different types of crime - people who break into cars are *not* the same types of criminal as people who steal cars; people who do robberies are yet a third type.

A resident asked how often patrol cars go down minor non-commercial streets. Officer Chew said the PSOs don't really know, there have 7 shifts and 3 special units. Officer Vergara noted that officers *like* to get criminals off the street, they cruise looking for issues between 911 calls.

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A Thomas Ave. resident reported a success last year with Far West School, the new principal took the problems very seriously, the new fence helps a lot.

A resident noted that they really appreciate that the officers do what they do, and thanked them.

On last month's 13X priorities: the burglaries from last fall are now in the charging phases. Solicitors in the neighborhood are now covered by the legal challenge from Save the Children; Save the Children solicitors, at least, are legally going door to door. Put up a *No Soliciting* sign if you don't want to be bothered, even legal solicitors must obey those.

There was some further discussion of "dropped" calls to OPD. Officer Vergara noted that a call may be dropped where a car was reported rifled, but the caller says he *doesn't want police contact*. Dispatch will drop those. The incident may get broadcast over the radio or sent to the beat officer, but the officer won't necessarily come by right away. They get assigned differently if no response is required. Officer Chew noted that all calls get an incident number. They don't all get a police report. If you want a report, ask for police contact.

Officer Chew reported that the PSOs have been working on a series of armed commercial robberies (Jamba Juice, PetFood Express, Blockbusters, adult bookstores). They think this is the same guy who was hitting the 51st & Broadway shopping center; and they got him *today*. They think he's responsible for 20-30 armed robberies. Officer Gerrans noted OPD don't always tell the public everything because they don't want it to get around to the wrong people. A resident noted that there are various homeless encampments around, and wondered if this perp was from one. Officer Vergara replied no, he's not from an encampment.

Chris Jackson reported that BART will be retrofitting for the next couple of years and they'll be disturbing some of these encampments, watch out for homeless people coming out of places you didn't know existed. Officer Vergara said that CalTrans has a number in the phone book for homeless camps, call it, they're really good on it.

A resident reported *another* 211, car sold on Craigslist that turned into an armed robbery, even as the NCPC meeting was going on.

Officers Gerrans and Chew will have an ask-a-cop column in *Rockridge News*, in upcoming issues.

Priorities

Beat 12Y

1. Water Lounge is causing problems at night: music out of hours, noise bothering the neighbors. Problems are late at night. Upstairs neighbors have complained before. NCPC can send a letter to the owner.

Beat 13X

1. Recurring car thefts on Thomas Ave.
2. Recurring car burglaries on Thomas Ave.

Traffic Priorities - Both Beats

Speeders on Broadway near Manila, and also coming down Broadway Terrace from H'wy 13.

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