



Monterey Police Dept. Neighborhood Meeting

Wednesday, March 6, 2013

6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

Monterey City Council Chambers

Update by Sean Brownlee, Vice President
Del Monte Beach Neighborhood Association

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Attendees

In November of 2012 the Neighborhood Associations of Monterey requested a special meeting with the Monterey Police Department to discuss the issue of increasing crime on the Peninsula and how this crime impacts our communities. This meeting was held on March 6, 2013 at City Hall. In attendance were the Police Chief Phil Penko¹ and the Majority of his staff of officers. Board representatives and members of different neighborhoods were in attendance as well. From the Del Monte Beach Neighborhood the President Richard Lind, Vice President Sean Brownlee and Block Chairs for Surf Way and Surfside Apartments representatives Sue and Dino Boland were in attendance.

Police Presentations

The Monterey Police Department showed two separated presentations. The first presentation by Sgt Marty Hart showed the response times from Dispatch for different categories of calls. Whether the calls were for non-emergency related matters or a crime in progress each response time was shown as an average based on the classification of the call. The response times were based off of the time the officer received the call from Dispatch and arrived on-scene. It is important to note that when a citizen calls the police and reports an

¹ <http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=news/state&id=8392414>

incident to Dispatch their incident is placed in a queue. It is then given to an officer on the beat when the number pops to the top of the queue. Therefore, the average response time in Monterey is around five minutes from the time the officer receives the call from Dispatch, but the time could be much longer from when the citizen calls due to other incidents being reported and the priority level of their call.

Sgt Bill Clark of the Narcotics Task Force gave the second presentation. He drew a correlation between the drug use in the area, residential burglaries and who the perpetrators were. While commercial and vehicle burglary rates dropped over the last year (2012), residential burglaries increased. Fortunately, most of the burglaries are committed by “Serial Burglars.” The investigators are able track these criminals through on-scene evidence and in many cases the perpetrators are convicted. Many of these criminals will focus on more affluent communities such as ours and then move on to similar communities throughout the state.



Understanding the mindset and motivations of criminals is important to protecting our communities. Most burglars are non-confrontational and simply wish to steal jewelry and other high-end goods from your home. Therefore, they usually strike in the middle of the day when most people are at work. Many of these criminals will run tests to see if you're home by knocking on your door. If you answer they'll typically say something like they lost their puppy or are looking for work. If you feel that it is in any way suspicious call the police. It is also key to note that usually after a crime is reported a neighbor will typically say that they noticed something suspicious about the behavior of an individual that is usually the suspect. This is most definitely an important point for our community. We have an open, public beach access here in our community. This attracts all types of individuals wishing to enjoy this wonderful area. There are also those who wish to perpetrate crimes here as well. The shooting that took place on January 31st here in our neighborhood might possibly have been prevented if citizens had called in suspicious activity. The police reported at this meeting that during the investigation a neighbor had seen a car acting suspiciously just prior to the shooting. This is typically the case. In the words of Police Chief Phil Penko “People say they don't want to bother the police. Well, we're here to be bothered!” The more people call when they have a concern the more information the police have and the better they can assist with keeping our neighborhoods safe. The first line of defense is being a good neighbor.

Police Updates

The Monterey Police Department currently has 51 police officers and 17 professional staff. Since 2003 there are 18 fewer officers on the force. This reduction in force was made up of “extras” such as Public Education Officers and did not affect critical billets such as those officers that patrol the streets. Every officer is encouraged to patrol every street on his/her beat.

In order to keep the community safe and stay involved with neighborhood groups, the Monterey Police Department started the Community Policing Initiative in 2005. The city has been divided into 20 Community Policing Areas, or CPAs. Each CPA has one or two officers assigned to their area, along with a civilian support person and a sergeant. Our neighborhood interacts with Officer Clark and is listed as number 16 on the CPA Base Map².

There is a new task force called PRVNT³ (Peninsula Regional Violence Narcotics Team) that was formed in November 2012 to help combat gang activity in the area. Eight different agencies are represented in this task force. To date countless gang, drug and other criminal activities in the area have been investigated and curtailed due to this new inter-agency task force.

The Monterey Police Department has added a few new vehicles to its' inventory. The first is a new electric motorcycle manufactured by Zero⁴. It is capable of stealthily patrolling areas in an environmentally sustainable fashion. Also added were two new UTV's⁵ (Utility Terrain Vehicles), which are basically four wheelers, that are street legal and can patrol the beaches and bike paths.

²

<http://www.monterey.org/Departments/Police/CommunityOutreach/MontereyCommunityPolicingInitiative.aspx>

³ <http://www.thecalifornian.com/article/20121103/NEWS01/311030028/New-task-force-targets-Monterey-Peninsula>

⁴ <http://www.gizmag.com/zero-2013-police-security-electric-motorcycles/26280/>

⁵ <http://www.ci.blaine.mn.us/index.cfm?id=40479#.UTzcARnsfO0>

Ways to Communicate

The police department keeps and summarizes a daily log of all crime reports taken by the Monterey Police Department. In most cases, the identity of the victim has been removed to protect his or her identity. The Daily Police Log is removed from their website after three months of posting. The log can be found by following this link:

<http://www.monterey.org/en-us/departments/police/getinformed/policelog.aspx>

Remember, if you have an emergency call 911. If there is a non-emergency related matter you can call the Monterey Police Department at their non-emergency number: 831-646-3914. Simply ask for dispatch and relate your concern. It is helpful to gather as much detailed information as possible before you make the call. The make, model, color and license plate number of a vehicle and the description of the occupants (color, approximate age, what they're wearing) is crucial in assisting officers.

We are all lucky to live in such a beautiful and peaceful area. Let's all do our part in helping to keep it that way.