



## OAK PARK MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

*Members of the Council:*

Chair Jane Nye

Vice Chair JL Diaz

Seema Chandra

Alon Glickstein

Janice Smets

### OAK PARK MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

July 28, 2022

The Oak Park MAC held a meeting on Thursday, July 28, 2022 at 7:00 PM  
via Zoom Online/Teleconference.

#### 1. Call to Order of the meeting

The meeting was called to order by **Chair Jane Nye** at 7:01 PM. MAC members **Seema Chandra, JL Diaz** and **Janice Smets** were present. MAC member **Alon Glickstein** was absent.

#### 2. Flag Salute

**Jane Nye** led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### 3. Adoption of the Agenda

**Seema Chandra** moved to adopt the agenda as submitted. **JL Diaz** seconded the motion, it was approved 4/0.

#### 4. Approval of the meeting minutes of June 30, 2022

**JL Diaz** moved to adopt the minutes as submitted. **Seema Chandra** seconded the motion, it was approved 4/0.

#### 5. Public Safety reports

**CHP Lt. Jeremy Key** reported three solo collisions since June on Kanan Road, one was a DUI crash into a tree, one was a driver who fell asleep, and the last was a distracted driver on a cell phone. He said school will be starting in August and CHP will have extra enforcement on the roads to ensure safety.

**Ventura County Sheriff Senior Deputy Christopher Jones** reported that the South American theft groups have started targeting specific individuals, such as jewelry or restaurant owners, slashing tires at the business to ensure someone must leave the home to assist, then burglarizing the home. He said reporting suspicious activity is very important. **Janice Smets** asked how individuals are chosen to be targeted. **Officer Jones** said it could be through public information with home information attached to their businesses or being followed home. He said the Sheriff's Office recently arrested six South American nationals. Lastly, he said Sheriff's Deputies will also be on patrol when school begins, and that signage and red curbs will be repainted.

#### 6. Patrick Maynard, Director of the Office of Emergency Services (OES), Regarding Evacuation Routes and Emergency Services in Oak Park

**Mr. Maynard** provided a seasonal preparedness update, including fuel moisture levels, rainfall totals, fire history, and potential fuel beds susceptible to fire in Ventura County. He also discussed recent changes in evacuation terminology from "mandatory" and "voluntary" evacuations to "Evacuation Order" for imminent danger and "Evacuation Warning" for danger not yet imminent. He urged residents to anticipate delays during evacuations and to leave early during fast-moving events, particularly those who require extra assistance. He discussed evacuation challenges in Oak Park due to limited ingress and egress in the community. He said that because fires are so fast-moving, he urged residents to heed all evacuation warnings and orders, leave early if necessary, create a plan, and anticipate delays. He said OES is acquiring software to better plan evacuations and will further assist public safety. He said residents can sign up to get emergency alerts by registering at [www.vcalert.org](http://www.vcalert.org) or calling (805) 648-9283. Residents can also get up-to-date information at [www.vcemergency.com](http://www.vcemergency.com), which is a multi-agency website with an incident dashboard that has current information on all incidents, including evacuations and public safety power shut offs (PSPS). He discussed the reasons for PSPS by Southern California Edison (SCE), and that they anticipate a decrease in the need for them. He also talked about how OES assists with getting information to residents when they happen. He said residents needing to power for medical devices in the event of an outage can enroll in the SCE battery backup program. Lastly, he announced a revamped preparedness website

at [www.readyventuracounty.org](http://www.readyventuracounty.org) that helps residents plan for disaster events. He urged residents to get involved in local organizations such as CERT to stay prepared for any disaster.

**JL Diaz** commented on the newly formed Oak Park Fire Safe Council and said he would like to coordinate with him moving forward. **Mr. Maynard** mentioned that OES received a notification about a \$380,000 grant received for evacuation planning in high fire severity areas and will work with local Fire Safe Councils.

**Seema Chandra** asked about gas shut-off valve installation.

**Janice Smets** asked about evacuation sites. **Mr. Maynard** discussed coordination points with partnering agencies that will work with families that can be found on the [VCemergency.com](http://VCemergency.com) dashboard. He said the closest site to Oak Park is in Thousand Oaks at the teen center.

Residents **Carolyn Cass-Barton, Janna Orkney, Lynn Rollo, Michelle Santucci, Sep Hendizadeh, Anna Grishchenko** and **Mark Piesco** commented on their concern about the impact of the Agoura Hills housing element on the Kanan Road evacuation route for Oak Park residents, concern about back-up and access to the 101 Freeway during another disaster event, whether there is coordination with the City of Agoura Hills, and the evacuation of school children. **Mr. Maynard** responded that OES regularly communicates and coordinates with LA County on incidents and they try to get notice as early as possible because often incidents are fast-moving. He said they have acquired newer technology that can assist with real-time planning, but they also rely on residents to respond quickly. He said they can also determine any impact from housing using the new software tools and modeling techniques. He said OES and the Fire Department have discussed potential development on Kanan Road and can reach out to relay these concerns. He also discussed reducing hazards by using home hardening techniques available through Fire Safe Councils. **Supervisor Parks** discussed the after-action report from the Woolsey Fire and the need for good communication and planning during evacuations, which will be enhanced by the new modeling tools available to OES.

#### **7. Report on Volunteers in Policing Services in Oak Park by Yessenia Meza-Ceja, Ventura County Sheriff's Office, Thousand Oaks Police Department**

**Ms. Meza-Ceja** discussed Volunteers in Policing (VIP) services in Oak Park. She said that her volunteers are typically retired community members and took a break from policing during the COVID pandemic. She said VIP services resumed starting in May 2021 but only with half of the staff. She reported that this year VIPs provided 89 extra patrols with citizen contacts, as well as vacation house checks when residents are away at no charge. She said residents can contact the Sheriff's Resource Center or her directly to schedule a house check. She said the VIPs are limited in staff at the moment but are typically in the community three days a week and make a point to visit the Oak Park area.

**JL Diaz** asked how many requests VIPs got from Oak Park in 2021. She responded there were three vacation house checks, 216 extra patrols, and two service calls where they took reports. **Janice Smets** asked how to get in touch with VIPs. **Ms. Meza-Ceja** responded that residents can call the non-emergency dispatch line at (805) 654-9511, for a vacation house check they can call her directly at (805) 371-8398. **Seema Chandra** said the MAC is reviewing the impact the VIPs have in the Oak Park community and asked what hours the VIPs work, if they can be parked in a visible spot, and whether the Sheriff's Office is recruiting more volunteers. **Ms. Meza-Ceja** said that since the VIPs are volunteers, they can make their own schedule, but are typically out on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8am to 1pm, as well as other days depending on availability. Also, they tend to drive around rather than sit at one spot. She said they are actively recruiting to get the volunteer numbers back up.

#### **8. Comments of Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks**

**Supervisor Parks** said the Board of Supervisors approved the CSA 4 budget as recommended by the MAC, and they also approved a County flag with the new seal. She said the Agricultural Commissioner provided a report to the Board saying that strawberries are still the number one crop and that Ventura County produces more lemons than anywhere in the United States. The Agricultural Commissioner has also been working with the Resource Conservation District to distribute native milkweed plants for monarch butterflies and has worked with the State to prohibit growing and selling tropical milkweed because it hurts the monarch butterflies. She discussed the Ventu Park Fire Safe Council working to prohibit street parking on Red Flag days, which would be enforced by CHP. She also congratulated the Oak Park Fire Safe Council for achieving their funding goal for a community assessment and now working towards becoming a Firewise Community. **Vanise Terry** provided a description of the newly installed no-right turn sign at Los Arcos Drive and Kanan Road reporting it was installed as a result of ongoing safety issues for the neighboring elementary school and was coordinated with Superintendent Jeff Davis,

Oak Park Unified School District staff and the CHP. She said the Public Works Agency will release communications through social media for the surrounding neighborhoods, and traffic staff will be present during the first week of school to verify that the safety enhancements are effective. **JL Diaz** expressed interest in Red Flag Days and said the Oak Park Fire Safe Council is looking to organize another town hall and would like to coordinate with the Supervisor's office.

## **9. Council Comments**

**JL Diaz** said the Fire Safe Council is fully funded for the community assessment, which should finish the end of September. He said they are also raising more funds for fuel abatement and other activities to reduce fire risk in the community, and will begin a campaign to promote home assessments for the coming fire season. He also reported that the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (RSRPD) Board approved the use of drones in parks, but the Oak Park Committee voted to not have any drone use in Oak Park.

**Janice Smets** expressed concern about a poisoned dead rat she found in her yard and said others were found in Mae Boyar Park. She said Vanise Terry noted that RSRPD said they are using ground squirrel abatement which could also impact rats. **JL Diaz** noted that the Oak Park Committee approved the use of chemicals for abatement, and **Jane Nye** asked if he could follow up with more information.

**Jane Nye** reported that the first day of school will be Tuesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>. Regarding Triunfo Water and sanitation, she said as the drought continues, they are communicating with customers and working with larger HOAs, schools and RSRPD to use recycled water. She said potable water usage is down 23% and recycled water usage is down 25%. Following up on a request from Janice Smets to add a recycled water fill station in Oak Park, she said the decision by Triunfo was to not add another station due to the cost to staff it and close proximity to the existing fill station 7 miles from Oak Park. She said residents don't need to make a reservation to receive the recycled water but do need to take a training class and bring labeled containers. She said there was a recent Water Wise class at the Mae Boyar Recreation Center on drip irrigation, and there are four more free classes coming up on Saturdays from 10-11am, including July 30 (replacing lawns), August 6 (fire smart and water wise), August 13 (growing California natives) and August 20 (drought tolerant gardening). Also, on Saturday, August 13, 1-4 pm, the Pure Water Demo Facility will offer a gelato tasting made from the water at the facility.

## **10. Public Comments**

**Vanise Terry** read written comments submitted by **Brian Mattson** regarding three issues: (1) three steel plates creating a hazard issue at Golden Eagle Drive and Trousdale Street, (2) landscaping on Bowfield Avenue and Hawthorne Drive, and (3) concern about recent sidewalk repair work on Hawthorne Drive at Rockfield Street. She also showed photos provided by Mr. Matteson. Ms. Terry said issues one and two have been referred to Public Works Agency - Roads and Transportation, and that she will respond to Mr. Mattson regarding issue three with information on the reason for the non-standard repairs on Hawthorne Drive.

**Carolyn Cass-Barton** commented on her concerns about the revisions for the County's sidewalk standards saying she would like clarification from the County on the guidelines, and discussed options she has researched for alternative repair methods for sidewalks. She said she was happy to see the repair work on Hawthorne Drive because it saved the tree from being cut down.

## **11. Advisory Matters**

### **a. CUP Request for Oak Park Fire Station No. 36, 8555 Deerhill Road (PL22-0044)**

**Christopher Alberts, Ventura County Planning Division**, presented information on Oak Park Fire Station at Kanan Road and Deerhill Road. He said the proposed Conditional Use Permit (CUP) would authorize a new 81-foot public safety radio tower, 72-square-foot communication shed, and Tower FAA light mounted at 60 feet. He said the reason for the tower is to allow for better emergency communications and that the proposed tower is taller than the existing tower to reach signals in a better capacity. **Seema Chandra** commented that the tower looks very industrial and is in a prominent spot on Kanan Road in the community. **JL Diaz** asked if it would be possible to camouflage the tower. **Breann Apalategui, Ventura County Fire Department**, said they did look at the stealth option, but decided to go forward with the standard option for consistency with other towers across the County. However, she said she has taken note of the MAC's comments to discuss further. She said the stealth option would mimic a tree. **Ms. Chandra** said she supports better communication for the Fire Department but would appreciate consideration of the stealth option because it is in a residential and prominent location. **Mr.**

**Alberts** said they would provide an update at a later meeting and that the public will be notified via mail before it goes to the Planning Commission.

**b. CSA 4 Landscape Priority List**

**Valerie Lopez, Ventura County Public Works Real Estate Services**, reported that the Public Works Agency is focusing its resources on turf removal and planting with drought tolerant plants in Oak Park, as directed by the MAC. She noted that these two priorities are substantial and will be addressed prior to other landscaping issues. She reported they are currently submitting an application for the turf removal program.

**c. Recycled Water Sign Options for CSA 4 Landscape Medians**

**Valerie Lopez, Ventura County Public Works Real Estate Services**, showed and discussed the options for recycled water signage provided in the agenda packet and said they would be ordering 25 signs. The MAC agreed that it would be best for the Public Works Agency to choose a sign for Oak Park. **Janice Smets** asked when the MAC would know what plants will be proposed for landscaping. **Ms. Lopez** said once they are finished measuring, they will receive a contract from GSA to create a landscape plan that will be brought to the MAC.

**12. Information Items**

**a. Update on CSA 4 Enhanced Landscape Contract**

**Valerie Lopez, Ventura County Public Works Agency, Real Estate Services**, said each month they are presenting contracts that are within the CSA 4 budget and this month is a review of the contract with Enhanced Landscape. She said the contract term is set for this year, but they can review again for next year.

**b. Proposals for the Removal of Dead Trees in the CSA 4 Landscape Area**

**Valeria Lopez, Ventura County Public Works Agency, Real Estate Services**, reported on the removal of three dead trees in Oak Park. She said they were told trees were damaged in the Woolsey Fire but not initially removed in the hopes that they would recover. She said the cost of the removal is less than \$10,000. **Jane Nye** mentioned another dead tree in the median at Los Arcos Drive.

**13. Written Communications**

**Jane Nye** discussed communications she received from Debbie Novak regarding new graffiti and rusty irrigation boxes, Harry Medved regarding hazardous equipment on Kanan Road and Spanish Oak Lane, Janice Smets regarding a dead rat found in her neighborhood, and Janna Orkney regarding the Agoura Hill Housing Element. Lastly, she was notified that Public Works fixed the deteriorating street dividers at Medea Creek Middle School and she forwarded that to the school's facilities staff.

**14. Future Agenda Items**

**a. RSRPD Squirrel Abatement**

**15. Adjournment**

**Chair Nye** adjourned the meeting at 9:02 PM.