



## **PUBLIC SAFETY CITIZEN TASK FORCE PUBLIC MEETING**

**Wednesday, June 26, 2013**

**6:00 p.m.**

Santa Cruz Police Department Community Room  
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

### **MINUTES**

- I. Chair Reyes Call to Order
  1. Meeting called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Chair Reyes
  
- II. Approval of June 12, 2013 Minutes
  1. June 12, 2013 Minutes approved.
  
- III. Chair Reyes to Discuss Prioritization Process and Introduce Treasurer Keeley
  1. Chair Reyes thanked the TF and those present for their attendance, briefly discussed the previous TF meetings in regards to future meetings, thanked Susan O'Hara and Scott Collins for their efforts
  2. A concern was raised by TF member C. Coleman that the members had not been educated enough to set priorities. Chair Reyes clarified that priorities had not been set.
  3. TF member K. Long suggested that the TF be conscious of the TF charge and what the group will be capable of doing over 6 months.
  4. TF member K. Stoner raised the Assumption College Letter. A decision was made to not answer questions raised by Assumption College Professor regarding Santa Cruz public safety until further educated.
  5. Treasurer Keeley was introduced.
  
- IV. Treasurer Keeley to Discuss Prioritization Process
  1. Treasurer Keeley discussed three points: 1) Focus on behavior as opposed to status, 2) being that the City of Santa Cruz is the County Seat, it places it in a unique position where the County can and should easily be included in most decisions, and 3) who can animate the TF's decisions: likely City, County, neighborhoods and voters.
  2. Focus on changing ordinances or laws.
  3. First address themes, then discuss questions to see answered in the next few meetings.
  4. Plan to spend the next six meetings educating the TF, then the next four meetings working on recommendations for City Council.
  
- V. Chair Reyes Led Discussion on Prioritization Process

1. TF member C. Coleman: Themes for study or priorities? These are themes of study.
2. Staff S. O'Hara: Keep educational themes as broad as possible, when we learn more, we can be more pointed in our analysis.
3. S. O'Hara discussed overview of process for developing themes and questions.
4. Four different themes of suggested study, all very interrelated.
  - a. Theme 1: the environmental, social and fiscal impacts of excessive human waste and inappropriate behaviors affecting our City's parks, open spaces, beaches and businesses districts
  - b. Theme 2: substance abuse and related crime
  - c. Theme 3: gang violence and violent crime.
  - d. Theme 4: criminal justice system and governance structure
5. TF member R. Libbey raised the concern that Theme 1 is symptom and Theme 2 is a cause. Would like to be educated more about homeless and the relationship of the homeless to Theme 1 and 2.
6. TF member D. Tracy-Proulx: behavior vs. status, we may not be able to solve homelessness, but might be able to change behavior around Theme 1 related to homeless individuals.
7. Chair Reyes: We will try to stay away from status.
8. Vice Chair Howes: Not all homeless are criminals.
9. TF Member K. Long: Should not dismiss some stereotypes, even if not politically correct.
10. TF Member D. Long: Important to be educated about the homeless, wants to focus on behaviors.
11. TF Member S. Schlicht: Can't solve every problem. Focus on behaviors.
12. Chair Reyes pointed TF to original 4/9/13 City Council Staff Report and charge of the TF.
13. TF Member K. Long: Change Theme 2 to Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Related Non-Violent Crime
14. TF Member C. Coleman: Regarding Theme 2: concern over connection of petty crimes and substance abuse. A high number of petty/non-violent crime is conducted by substance abusers.
15. TF Member K. Long: Request for hard crime statistics.
16. TF Member Deb Tracy-Proulx: Request to address sexual assault either separately, or specifically as opposed to blanketing under violent crime. Keep it under Theme 3, not called out.
17. TF Member S. Schlicht: We can drill down further for each of the four themes.
18. S. O'Hara: Focus on difference between prevention and mitigation. Will be time consuming but able to better focus questions.
19. TF Member C. Coleman: Discussion of the term social degradation, consider socially inappropriate behaviors. Another way to express that? Push towards the inclusion of the terms illegal and threatening. Environmental degradation and behavior-related issues were decided to be one of the themes.
20. TF Member K. Stoner: With regard to Theme 2: Discussion over the use of the term transients. How to delineate between transient and homeless. Transient a behavior, homelessness is a status.
21. TF Member S. Schlicht: In order to address potential of creating a draw to come to Santa Cruz. Perhaps divide #1 and #2 into two different meetings.
22. TF Member D. Long: Increase in meth use on top of other drawbacks. Consider this as a major connection to other issues in PSTF. Can be reoccurring through different themes.

23. TF Member K. Long: Heroin addiction, especially in youth should be another important factor considered.
24. TF Member S. Schlicht: Should code enforcement be considered a theme? Decided to be part of the questions.
25. Amended themes: 1) Environmental degradation and behaviors that engender fear and lack of personal security in the City's parks, open space, beaches and business districts, 2) Drug and alcohol abuse, drug trafficking, and related nonviolent crime in lieu of petty crime, 3) Gang violence and violent crime, 4) Criminal justice system.
26. Chair Reyes asked for a motion to approve these themes
27. TF Member D. Smith moved approval of the themes
28. TF Member K. Long seconded
29. Motion unanimously approved by TF.
30. Ten minute break
31. Chair Reyes requested a motion to amend Theme 4 to add the word governance.
32. TF Member R. Golder moved the amendment to add the word governance to Theme 4.
33. Seconded
34. Motion unanimously approved by TF
35. General discussion amongst all TF members
  - a. Perhaps we should do substance abuse first, before Theme 2.
  - b. Devote 3 meetings to Theme 1 and 2.
  - c. A desire to learn more about background of available services to community. Do these services attract or address the problem?
  - d. Desire to divide concerns between public and private sectors.
  - e. Speakers from DTA and Seaside Co. are requested.
  - f. What is the cost to the City of the behaviors and activities we're focusing on?
  - g. Another desired speaker to come from Parks and Recreation or non-governmental organizations that deal with open spaces in parks.
  - h. Desire to hear from a recovering addict/alcoholic, and someone that deals with these problems first hand (on probation, ex-gang member).
  - i. Desire to hear from a downtown business owner who has been in business for a while.
  - j. What are the churches of Santa Cruz doing in relation to camping? Is the City permitting/disallowing these sort of camping to happen? Policies?
  - k. Desire to see someone from the school district, a principal, a teacher, etc.
  - l. Desire to hear from someone from the courts/jails.
  - m. A concern is addressed that there is not enough focus on gang behavior, too much of a focus on homelessness/transiency.

**Adjournment** -- The Public Safety Citizen Task Force will adjourn from the public meeting of June 26, 2013 to its next meeting: July 10, 2013, 6:00 p.m., Santa Cruz Police Department Community Room.

*The City of Santa Cruz does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. Out of consideration for people with chemical sensitivities, we ask that you attend fragrance free. Upon request, the agenda can be provided in a format to accommodate special needs. Additionally, if you wish to attend this public meeting and will require assistance such as an interpreter for American Sign Language, Spanish, or other special equipment, please call the City Clerk's Department at 420-5030 in advance so that we can arrange for such special assistance. The Cal-Relay system number: 1-800-735-2922.*

*Public Safety Task Force meetings will be recorded for the purpose of preparing minutes.*



## ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

June 14, 2013



My name is Richard Gendron. I am an associate professor of sociology at Assumption College in Worcester, MA. I was a graduate student at UC, Santa Cruz, in the late 1980s and into the 1990s, and I wrote my doctoral dissertation on the rebuilding of downtown Santa Cruz after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. That dissertation was subsequently turned into a book (*The Leftmost City: Power and Progressive Politics in Santa Cruz*, 2008, Westview Press), which I wrote with a co-author, Professor G. William (Bill) Domhoff, Emeritus Professor of Psychology and Sociology at UC, Santa Cruz.

I am writing to request that you consider being interviewed for a research paper that Bill and I are working on about the increase in violence in the city of Santa Cruz. We are first of all interested in how the recent increase in violence in the city related to the longstanding problems of public disorder in the downtown commercial core. We are also interested in analyzing how the public's reaction to these recent high-profile crimes in the city might be affecting local politics and municipal policies on homelessness. As a member of the Santa Cruz Public Safety Task Force, your opinions on these issues are of great interest to us.

I will be in the Bay Area from June 22 until July 15. If you are amenable to being interviewed and will be available during that time frame, would you please reply to me by e-mail ([rgendron@assumption.edu](mailto:rgendron@assumption.edu)) or by telephone (603-547-0753), and we can arrange for a specific date, time, and place for the interview. (If a face-to-face interview is not possible, a telephone interview would work.) I have also enclosed a copy of the questions to be asked in the interview. This is to give you a better idea of the issues that our research project will explore. It also makes it possible for you to send me written replies to those questions if you are not available for an interview during that time period.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Richard Gendron

Associate Professor of Sociology  
Assumption College  
Worcester, MA 01609-1296

### Questions for Members of the Public Safety Task Force

- 1) What prior experience and expertise do you bring to the Task Force?
- 2) In your opinion, what is the most important issue that the Task Force must address?
- 3) What do you think about the slogan "Keep Santa Cruz Weird," which has become quite popular in recent years?
- 4) When was the last time you went into downtown Santa Cruz?
- 5) How often do you go into downtown Santa Cruz?
- 6) Why do you go to downtown Santa Cruz?
- 7) What do you like about going to downtown Santa Cruz?
- 8) What do you dislike about going to downtown Santa Cruz?
- 9) What is your opinion of the effectiveness of the current city council in dealing with the widely-discussed problems of crime and public disorder in the downtown area of Santa Cruz?
- 10) In your opinion, is there anything else that is not being done now that should be done to deal with the problems of crime and public disorder in the downtown area of Santa Cruz?
- 11) In your opinion, does a city that offers more services for the homeless become a "magnet" that attracts more homeless persons to the city?
- 12) What would you say is the largest single reason why people become homeless?