



The voice of our community

Board Meeting
January 21, 2025 – 4:00 PM
MINUTES

In-Person at the Montecito Community Hall/Library
And Virtually Via Zoom

I. Call to Order 4:12 PM by President Black, Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Present: Babbitt, Black, Bollay, Denson, Duran, Herting, Lundgren, Macfadyen, Miller, Newquist, Pennino, Prince, Rockenbach, Serrani, White, Wittman

Absent: Trosky

II. Approval of December 10, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

Duran/Miller

Motion Approved

III. Appointment of 2025 Officers. Action: Vote.

Inken Gerlach presented the proposed slate of officers

President-Doug Black

1st VP-Leslie Lundgren

2nd VP-Patrice Serrani

Secretary-Andrea Newquist

Treasurer-Bill Macfadyen

Slate accepted and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda- Patrice Esparza, gallery leader of Restoration Hardware in Montecito and are new to the neighborhood. She expressed happiness to present the gallery to the community. She said it is a perfect mix of what they do, which is interior design and hospitality, and mixing it with a smaller community. It is perfectly designed to feel and look like a home, and invited all to the store, and they have espresso and coffee available. She is looking forward to partnership with the community and she is local and not from corporate. She introduced Emma, who is part of the hospitality leadership team and manages the restaurant.

A question was asked about the danger of people crossing the street at night to get to the store. Esparza explained that she is in partnership with the properties in the area and they have parking behind the gallery. She encouraged all to contact her with concerns.

V. Community Reports

Sheriff Report-Rich Brittingham Recap of the month included: multiple burglaries with a pattern in the Montecito area. There was an incident at Casa Dorinda with subjects using threatening language about a gun to a security guard. Suspect fled and sheriffs found them on Butterfly Beach and all three were arrested. There was a shooting in the arm of a couple that was walking a dog, 911 was called and subject was arrested, posted bail and released. There's a South American theft group, the dinner-time bandits, which are very quick, break windows, steal, and leave. He urged all to lock doors. The theft group are putting cameras and jammers around homes and when the homeowners leave, the house is broken into. Sheriff Brittingham believes the community needs to be proactive and get a license plate reader product to monitor. He requested that the MA host a presentation to give info about the cameras to the Board. He recommended the cameras should be compatible with other communities. The cost of a camera in a community is approximately \$3,500 per year. The county will not fund cameras, but Montecito should be proactive. The thefts are of jewelry, and they are cutting into safes. He encouraged all to use motion lights and give gate codes to the sheriff.

Cold Spring School-Amy Alzina Reported that they experienced a lot of families coming to Montecito due to the recent fires in Los Angeles area. They held a welcome event and enrolled seventy students and expect enrollment to go to two hundred students. Their readathon is in process and they are doing benchmark assessments, and the students continue to score in the ninetieth percentile.

Montecito Water District-Nick Turner Recognized staff that were in attendance. The water outlook is favorable even in draught, the water levels are robust. The trend for rain is dry with near record-low rainfall. Santa Barbara is in severe draught conditions. MWD remains committed to water levels and has readily accessible water with twenty-three million gallons stored. Daily, they have ability to fill supply by two thirds. As a team, they closely monitor the weather and increase the storage levels when in high fire situations. They maintain valves on fire hydrants on a regular basis. The reservoirs are full for backup when needed. Generators are in all facilities for uninterrupted water in emergencies. Confirming existence of wells is mandated and underway with good compliance from community. They have received about three hundred out of seven-hundred-fifty registries. There is no moratorium on drilling new wells but need to inform when new ones are drilled.

Montecito Union School- Anthony Ranii They have twenty new students enrolled from the Los Angeles fires and another twenty-five students to start. They have a committee putting together care packages for students. Continuing to focus on literacy growth and all teachers are enrolled in course called Shifting the Balance. Safety is an ongoing focus and changed custodial behaviors in the evening to be safer. They added three security cameras, fences, and gates. An AI application is under consideration.

Supervisor Roy Lee-Deputy Chief of Staff-Aida Thau Introduced herself to the community and is looking forward to supporting the needs of the community.

VI. Conference Agenda

Montecito Fire Protection District –Chief David Neels

Chief Neels' Presentation consisted of an update to the Palisades and Eaton Fires as well as steps that the department is taking to ensure that Montecito can both prevent and be prepared for fires.

The Montecito Fire Department still has members in the LA region fighting the fires and they will hopefully return in a week. They have a partnership throughout California with other fire departments and when there is a need, they up-staff their department and do not wait for outside money or orders, and that was done for this fire.

Two evacuation studies were recently conducted by MFD, and they redid evacuation zones as well as working with emergency management to redo the zones to capture which residents to evacuate. The residents in the mountains need to evacuate early. A presentation about the new zones is being planned for the community.

The MFD is working to implement no parking days during Red Flag Warning events. They have increased staffing and continue fire prevention work in the community.

Fire safety and the need to stay vigilant were emphasized by the chief. There are many red flag warning events, and the following are things to do, stressed by the fire chief:

- * All residents need to learn alternate routes out of the area.
- * Sign up for messaging.
- * Phone trees work, organize with your neighbors.
- * Participate in the MFD chipping program.
- * Call non-emergency sheriff number at 805-683-2724 if you see cars blocking fire hydrants.
- * Clear your path of branches and hedges in driveways so that engines get through.
- * Download the Watch Duty App.

VII. Executive Director Report- Houghton Hyatt Reported 567 votes in the Board election and five new members with Leslie Lundgren for a new term. Requested all board members bring binders to the board retreat and sign that they have read materials. Receiving ongoing membership renewals after switching to a new database. Point in Time count is January 22 to count the homeless in the county. The holiday parade had twenty-six vehicles participate. Stakeholders meeting with Representative Carbajal and key partners scheduled for February 3 and will discuss the hot springs issues.

VIII. Treasurer's Report-Financials will be up to date in February.

IX. Committee Reports

a. Land Use / Transportation-Land Use-None

b. Events-Mindy Denson reported that Lower Manning Park is reserved for July fourth, Brian Titus would like to play again. May have a new location for Beautification Day. Planning holiday parade, menorah lighting and holiday tree.

c. History-Trish Davis-Welcomed new members and invited all to visit History office to get familiar with resources.

d. Outreach-None

e. Safety Response Subcommittee-Looking for a new location for a substation for Sheriffs in Montecito. Actively looking at two locations that meet their needs. Looking for a place with a dedicated bathroom, place for computers and two officers and a deputy.

f. Hands Across Montecito-Andrea Newquist looks forward to assistance from Union Pacific Railroad, without their permission, can not clean out encampments and is hopeful for Rep. Carbajal's help.

X. Old Business-None

XI. New Business-Would like to agendize naming a mayor of Montecito for them to be involved with the supervisor's office. Sponsor a class on personal protection.

Adjourned 5:50 pm