

Minutes 5/21/2020

East Ventura Community Council

Zoom gathering, recorded

1. The meeting was called to order by chair Marie Lakin at 7:03pm. There were 61 participants that signed in to the meeting.
2. Commander Ryan Weeks gave a police report. Overall crime is down. Burglary has increased, especially commercial. Patrol has been increased in commercial areas. Because of COVID officers have been reassigned. Example, school resource officers are reassigned as schools are closed. There has not been an increase of child abuse or domestic violence calls, perhaps because mandated reporters (teachers) are not seeing the children and others cannot safely call. The reality is unknown if there an increase in these types of crimes. Neighborhood Watch and video recordings helped to catch a criminal in East Ventura.
3. Jeff Hereford, principal transportation engineer for the City of Ventura, reported on the plans and activity that is happening on Telephone Road and other streets. In response to COVID, signs have gone up on Darling Road to make it easier to social distance, bike and walk. Some of the changes are experimental as a COVID response and some are part of a long-term plan. The decrease of a vehicle traffic lane is also part of a citywide effort to develop Active Transportation (walking, biking) and to encourage a decrease in the number of vehicles and an increase in people exercising and biking to nearby locations. The goal is also more livability, mobility. It is part of a statewide CalTrans plan. Funding is from the gas tax measure. This is also part of the old and newly developing city General Plan.
4. Report from the City. Mayor Matt LaVere shared some information on opening up the city more. The city is coordinating with the county and state as we move forward. Restaurants on Main Street will be allowed to open to the street. Perhaps in other parts of the city, also. This raised a concern about accessibility for those with physical limitations. It is understood that parking is an issue. Councilmember Jim Friedman clarified that some of the beaches are city, some county and some state. There are no clear physical boundaries so it is necessary to work together. Also many are coming from LA and this makes monitoring more difficult. Police are trying to enforce social distancing. There is a desire to increase the number of antibody tests. The tests need to be reliable. Testing is available to anyone who wants to be tested for COVID, free at Ventura College.
Councilmember Erik Nasarenko reported that the city has signed a \$3.7 million water agreement with other agencies and the state for accessing state water. The pipeline should be completed by 2023. A question was raised re: the housing element. Mayor LaVere reported that all has been on temporary hold and is planned to be completed by Oct. 2021.
5. Dr. Roger Rice, VUSD Superintendent, provided an update and some thoughts on moving forward. Pre-COVID the district was working on educational options for students, academic achievement, career education innovations, and a systems review and restructure. With the onset of COVID the district has to immediately focus on school closures, distance learning for both teachers and students, end of school events, severe budget cuts. Pressures and questions

have come from parents on personnel changes, loss of services, end-of-year activities and what will be in the new academic year. Issues also come as directives from the governor, state superintendent, fiscal resources, facility needs and limitations and transportation questions. Options for the coming year are a return to full time in-class instruction, distance learning only or some type of hybrid instruction (most likely option). Decisions will be made from legal directives, student and parent feedback, safety concerns, space options and funding. Need to request that funding be made by the number enrolled, not by attendance. The budget shortfall is about \$17 million. Question came as to how to make the needed financial cuts and still provided the needed and required education. Dr. Rice listed some challenges in addressing the concerns and also some opportunities. The positive may be more and better communication with the community, better trained staff with technology, a leaner district office. In response to questions, there will be more testing flexibility, change in pensions. It has been recognized that parents and students need more time with school counselors on college applications and readiness, planning etc. The district will continue with CANVAS, and will probably not use Engenuity. Looking for a better program for lower grades. Noted that colleges understand the current crisis and are working with students. There is a recognition that child care is a major concern as parents return to work and students will not be in school all day or every day. Dr. Rice knows that the district cannot meet the requests of all and that some parents and staff will not be happy no matter what is finally decided.

6. Chair Lakin thanked the presenters and adjourned the meeting. The next EVCC will be by Zoom on 6/18/20 at 7:00 pm

Submitted by:

Judy Alexandre

Secretary, EVCC