

OLD LAS PALMAS NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2009 O'DONNELL GOLF CLUB

OLPNO Chair John Williams opened the meeting at 6:15 pm with introductions of Board members Louise Hampton, Candis Richmond, Doug Donenfeld and Alan Cashman and also welcomed Palm Springs City Council member Rick Hutcheson, City Manager David Ready (who arrived later) and Lee Husfeld, Director of Neighborhood and Community Relations.

John Williams then introduced Sergeant Don Fallon, PSPD who described the Neighborhood Police patrol program and introduced the two officers assigned to Old Las Palmas:

Officer Steven Grissom – steven.grissom@palmsprings-ca.gov

Officer Brent Coon – brent.coon@palmsprings-ca.gov

Sergeant Fallon answered questions from the audience of more than 100 residents including how best to report noise complaints and the frequency of police patrols in the neighborhood. He also reminded us that the e-mail addresses were not intended for urgent or emergency situation – only for routine reports and information that might be helpful to officers on patrol.

John Williams provided the membership report as Rick Moran (Membership Chair) could not attend: 146 residents of a possible 272 are paid members with 5 renewals/ new memberships at the meeting.

Treasurer Dog Donenfeld reported that the Organization is in sound financial health with over \$21,000 on hand. The balance is high at present as a result of membership renewals but will be used primarily to pay for the next round of street median improvements by the Beautification Committee in collaboration with the city. Al Rollins noted that four medians, including Prescott, Merito at Prescott and the Via Las Palmas triangles, were targeted for improvement. Louise Hampton suggested that residents in those areas might “adopt a median” to help with the cost.

In response to a question for the Beautification Committee it was noted that some repaving had been done of the worst street surfaces in the Old Las Palmas but the city has no funds for any more re-paving at present. One resident suggested that street sweeping was not needed and that eliminating it or reducing its frequency would save money for the city. Another resident asked about the cost of burying utility services and eliminating poles and overhead wires. Louise Hampton noted that, though desirable, this is a complicated, expensive and lengthy process (one resident paid \$80K for his

own property and it took more than a year to complete). It was suggested that groups of neighbors may wish to tackle this together which may reduce individual expense.

John Williams noted that several Neighborhood Organizations were proceeding to install neighborhood identification signs which are mounted on top of street signs at the primary entrances to the neighborhood. OLPNO board has decided to "wait and see" how these are accepted before committing to signs for Old Las Palmas. Anyone interested can view signs already installed in the Movie Colony and El Mirador neighborhoods.

Candis Richmond gave the Security Committee Report noting favorable comments on the improved visibility of the Maxwell patrols. Together with the police patrols, crime reports in Old Las Palmas are significantly reduced. Candis introduced Al Rollins as the new chair of the Security Committee and John Williams introduced Chris Crist and Bob Elsner as nominees for the Advisory Board.

John Williams then introduced our guest speaker - Michael Braun of Wessman Development - who described the \$50 million remodeling proposal for the Desert Fashion Plaza (DFP) which would include a 14 screen movie theatre with a high-end bowling alley on the lower level. The maximum height of the frontage along Palm Canyon Drive would be 60 ft. Michael explained Wessman's position that a street connecting Indian Canyon Dr and Palm Canyon Dr at the location of the Town and County Center was essential to the success of a remodeled DFP. Reclassification of the Town and Country Center to Class 2 would be required to allow its demolition. The DFP project is anticipated to take 2-3 years post-approval by the city until opening. A hearing on the proposal was scheduled for May 13th at the City Council meeting.

City Manager David Ready, who had joined the meeting late, revisited the question of street re-paving by noting that funding (\$1 million) for this was a key component of the City's budget, scheduled for May 6 discussion. Neighborhoods need to provide a list of priority streets for repair. Another questioner asked about the possibility of designating Old Las Palmas as an historic neighborhood. David responded that this was unlikely to happen; historic designation is given to individual properties, not neighborhoods in Palm Springs. Regarding undergrounding utilities, David suggested that neighbors who agree to address this jointly might qualify as a special assessment district. Finally, David noted that the many undeveloped sites in the city as a result of the economic slowdown could be landscaped, if only temporarily using re-development funds. A study session to address this question will take place shortly.

There being no more questions, John Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:30pm.