

Pasadena Neighborhood Association Meeting
Phoenix, AZ
August 8, 2018

Held at Osborn Middle School Library, Phoenix, AZ

Introductions to the Board: AJ (President), Lexy (Secretary), Michael (Treasurer), Heidi (Member at Large), Leesa (Member at Large), Desirae (Member at Large), Cindy (VP), Peggy (Member at Large & Webmaster),

Block Watch Captains were acknowledged.

Introductions to guests Charlie Vark visiting representing Rebecca Winger who is running for the Justice of the Peace. Renee, principal of the Solano Elementary School and also Juan Flamand, running for an Osborn School Board position.

Introduction to new neighbors in the room.

Jeff Tisot in charge of Christown Mall Security and David Zebro from Security Coordinator at Valley Metro and Lt Jahnke, Phoenix Police Transit visiting as well to talk to Pasadena.

Jeff from Christown Mall Security worked previously at Metro Mall in Security, he is also the president of the Sunnyslope neighborhood association as well. He mentioned that when he first arrived at Christown, he wanted to change the perception of the Christown mall. No loitering allowed now, no panhandling allowed. In the last year, 123 people have been arrested for trespassing in the mall area. Suspicious people are no longer hanging out as much. In July the mall held a safety event (no one from the meeting attended from Pasadena neighborhood). Jeff is encouraging everyone to attend these mall events as they are a lot of fun and great for kids... fire trucks there, Phoenix PD, etc.

Shopping carts are a problem at Christown. The shopping carts were being taken and used by people in Solano Park. Jeff made sure the carts were confiscated back. Now however the people are back. Jeff says they are really working hard on the security at Christown. Jeff says that if the communities do not use the parks, then they fall into disarray and it then welcomes the homeless. The community needs to find ways to use the park. With the element along 19th Avenue, it will be hard to keep crime down completely, but they are still going to work on security issues as they arise. Q & A from Pasadena Neighborhood for Jeff opened up: One resident talked about the Walgreens traffic that have stop signs southwest corner – people run those signs. Jeff said there is actually a code that Phoenix PD can write a ticket for violating and going through stop signs. One resident asked about panhandling – who do you go to? Jeff says you go to a security person at the Christown mall; the phone number for the security at Christown mall is 602-741-3467. If you see something that is suspicious you can call this number. The security guards will check out any issue (they do not carry vests or guns so they will call the police, too, if need be).

Christown Mall Security Tel 602-741-3467

David Zebro from Valley Metro: First wanted to say he congratulates all attending the meeting as when block watches and people get involved, good things can happen. In the last three months we had four million passengers on the light rail. 3 million likely rode just in our area of the light rail. Assault, aggravated assault, homicide robbery, sexual assault, and robbery are the items that he captured in the statistics he is presenting. For just these two stations, 7th Avenue and 19th Avenue and Camelback, in the entire quarter there was one aggravated assault, seven assaults (but four of those were against Allied Universal Security officers and three were against normal riders), the assaults against officers occur when trying to force someone to comply (including slapping, etc.). There were 0 homicides, 0 sexual assaults, 0 shootings, and 1 stabbing in the last quarter. Five of the assaults that occurred were at 7th Avenue and Camelback. In the last three months, there has been a shift in some of the trespassing. Allied Universal can write civil citations and can also trespass people. They security guards do that and capture the tickets adding them into the city's priors log, and tickets can be logged in there for three years. The trespassing is an Arizona Revised Statute – this is a criminal violation. In addition, the trespassing is logged into three cities – in Tempe, Mesa and Phoenix – all different jurisdictions. This was hugely important to Valley Metro. The loiterers are starting to slowly catch on to this and this does increase their priors. In the last couple of months, the Allied

Universal Security has increased the amount of arrests. The trespass thing is really starting to work. There is also an off duty program where Phoenix PD works in off shift times... this also helps the security.

At Dunlap and 19th Avenue the 'Ramada' area was the biggest problem area for a while but has substantially improved since Phoenix PD focused on the area for a month to help clean up the area. There are now three shifts for the security and also there are new salary increases for the officers who have really helped in getting the positions staffed and to get more security officers. Within the next month, there will be 22 new security officers. This will be a 20 to 25 percent increase in officers within four to five weeks. If you see three officers on the rail, there are two who have to be together as they do not allow them to staff a rail alone, and there will also be a trainee coming along. In general, there will be one security from both sides of the platform – this helps as a display of force. There is no way to have an officer for every train. The respect the ride signs have been a big help.

One neighbor mentioned how important the light rail is to the city; it is crucial for tourism. Many corporations coming in to investigate where to settle seek out where there is public transportation. In addition large events, such as Comicon and the Superbowl, investors look for public transportation as well. Although there are bad elements around such as those who are homeless, there is a limit on what can be done if a person has a ticket (and also has their shirt and shoes on!).

AJ asked: what could the Pasadena neighborhood do for the light rail? David says just try to see the good things in it. There were 3 million people in the last quarter who rode the rail. For that amount of time, there were very few incidents that happened. They are trying to make it better and are hiring more security. Ride it and look for the good things.

One other neighbor spoke about the jaywalking coming off the platform at 7th Avenue and Camelback. At Montebello and 19th they put up a railing along that area, so why have they not put it up at 7th Avenue and Camelback? David said that the reason was the amount of room there. Apparently there was a safety issue with regards to the traffic. To change this we would need to go to the City Council.

Seth who is the Lieutenant in Charge of Phoenix Police Transit Unit, just incorporated into a new bureau, which included his unit and the motorcycle police unit. There are 19 sworn officers, 16 of them are on 4 different squads, and the other 3 are on K-9 teams and in addition, they have 23 civilian positions as police assistants that have some arrest prerogatives in the City of Phoenix. This includes all the platforms and all the bus stops in the City. The hours are from 6AM to 1AM to cover the entire city for transportation. The K-9 teams, have a job to go out and sweep the trains and buses for explosives - that is all they do. The 16 officers have worked closely with David and the Allied Universal Security. Those officers are well familiar with the new trespassing laws which are hugely valuable.

Mario our CAO officer shortly interrupted the meeting to indicate he had a prisoner in the back of his patrol car so he would not be able to attend the meeting ☺

With regards to crossing the tracks, there is not much the city can do. Phoenix has to write a specific code to indicate that crossing the tracks is a violation. That is because it is a civil violation only. Phoenix is, however, number one in the nation for pedestrian fatalities and traffic accidents. The traffic part of the Bureau is strongly enforcing pedestrians for jaywalking. This is a new program where they are trying to crack down on pedestrian fatalities which include how drivers act around crosswalks and how pedestrians cross the streets (or the tracks). So Phoenix PD is working on this and they know it is a problem. One resident questioned that there was a federal law on crossing the tracks – however this only applies to heavy rail and not light rail. One time a person tried to stay on the tracks and would not get off of it and they ended up having to arrest him for terrorist activity. The laws are still light on it in Phoenix. The punishment for trespassing (on the rail) is that it is a misdemeanor violation. One person was put away for a whole year just based on trespassing. One resident asked about 19th Avenue and Camelback and has it improved over the last year? Seth said that in the last year the department has done a whole lot. There is still room for improvement though. The Desert Horizon precinct did a crime suppression project and his unit was heavily involved in that doing sweeps, different projects. The improvement though has been substantial since then. Seth said if you see something suspicious call it in:

Crime Stop Number: 602-262-6151

One resident, who has been in the neighborhood for many years, said that the light rail has made a huge cultural shift to the city. AJ said in three to five years, you would not even recognize the area around Camelback between Central and 19th Avenue since there are 3 housing developments in the works. There is a huge change with many new buildings and apartment buildings.

September 23rd, do not forget the Goodwill Drive! AJ's challenge is one bag at least per household.

There are 2 Christown mall events coming up. Please show up at the mall on the Saturdays just to support the events going on (and to help the culture shift).

Raffle ticket was picked.

Meeting adjourned.