



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Special Meeting held
June 25, 2002

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Van Nostran in the Executive Board Room at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Larry Van Nostran
Vice Mayor Joseph Esquivel
Council Member Wayne Piercy
Council Member Todd Rogers
Council Member Robert Wagner

PLAN FOR LAKEWOOD CENTER MALL COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER

City Manager Howard L. Chambers stated that as a result of the City's close relationship with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, a proposal was brought forth to increase the Sheriff's presence at the Lakewood Center Mall. He noted that Lieutenant Mike Rothans had been working closely with several community groups to utilize a Mall storefront as a community resource center, a place where community-based activities could occur rather than just a sub-station where problems could be reported. He reported that he had received a letter from the Mall ownership offering the use of a storefront space in the north wing of the Mall, where the new Target store would be located.

Deputy City Manager Sandi Ruyle reported that the proposed storefront was approximately 3,125 square feet in space and had an outside entrance. She advised that in addition to Sheriff's presence, the City would run a number of programs from the Mall location, such as the CARE, emergency response training, and LAND, landlord education, programs. She responded to a question from Council Member Piercy by stating that the existing detention space, located about four doors north of the proposed space on the outside of the Mall, would still be utilized for persons awaiting transport to the Sheriff's station.

Recreation and Community Services Director Dave Rodda stated that the location would be utilized as an extension for several human services programs such as CPR/First Aid training and for consulting with the Case Manager on elder issues.

Lisa Rapp, Director of Public Works, displayed floor plans for the new facility and briefly outlined the scope of work necessary to transform the existing space.

Captain Dave Fender, Commander of the Lakewood Sheriff's Station, stated that the community resource center would send a message to the community that Mall safety was a priority to the City and to the Sheriff's Department. He noted that the public counter at the facility would be staffed seven days a week by a Community Safety Officer and/or a City staff assistant. He reported that arrangements had already been made with groups like Su Casa, Lakewood Regional Medical Center, and the Girl and Boy Scouts to use the facility. He concluded by stating that crime in the Mall was down by eight percent and auto theft down by 25 percent.

PLAN FOR MALL COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER - Continued

The City Manager, noting that an initial concern had been to secure a long-term lease with the Mall since remodeling and connectivity issues for the Sheriffs would make relocation difficult and cost-prohibitive, advised that the Mall was offering a three-year lease on the space with a “no relocation” clause.

Responding to a question from Mayor Van Nostran, the City Manager confirmed that the lease amount for the space was also locked in for the three-year term.

Mayor Van Nostran questioned Mall Manager Charles Hallums regarding the impacts of increased Sheriff presence on retail sales. Mr. Hallums stated that he had received many positive comments from both Mall tenants and shoppers. He also stated that while he had no data linking law enforcement presence to increases in sales, that sales were up at the Lakewood Center Mall at a time when sales at both the Los Cerritos and Stonewood Malls were down.

Council Member Piercy inquired about the role of the Mall security force. Lieutenant Rothans responded by stating that he meets regularly with Mall security and that although the Sheriff’s deputies assigned to the Mall work closely with Mall security, they each have their own very clearly defined responsibilities. Council Member Piercy, noting the investment of funds required for this new venture, stressed the need for data to be able to measure the success of the Community Resource Center and justify the expense. Captain Fender responded by stating that there were already several means to gauge the effectiveness of the new Center, such as the level of interest from community groups, public opinion and Mall crime levels. The Captain also noted that there were many area malls which already included a police or sheriff substation.

Council Member Rogers noted that the City had already invested a lot of effort into increasing security, as well as the perception of security at the Mall. He stated that since the Community Resource Center would draw more residents into the Mall, it would provide an opportunity for them to see all that has been done to make the shopping environment safe, and they may stay to shop, thereby increasing sales. He concluded by stating he also felt it would be important to have data available to review and evaluate the Center’s performance.

The Deputy City Manager noted that in addition to community group use, the facility would also be used for law enforcement and fire department training sessions, increasing public safety team visibility in and around the Mall.

VICE MAYOR ESQUIVEL MOVED AND COUNCIL MEMBER WAGNER SECONDED TO APPROVE THE COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER AS PRESENTED. UPON ROLL CALL VOTE, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS: Rogers, Esquivel, Piercy, Wagner and Van Nostran

NAYS: COUNCIL MEMBERS: None

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Van Nostran adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise R. Hayward, CMC

City Clerk