

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the La Mesa City Council  
Thursday, February 2, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.  
Rolando Elementary School Auditorium  
6925 Tower Street, La Mesa, California

---

From 6:00 to 6:30 p.m., members of the public were encouraged to visit informational displays regarding Emergency Preparedness, Neighborhood Watch and various La Mesa Police Department programs, La Mesa e-gov, Community Services programs such as La Mesa Urban Trails, Safe Routes to School, Walk-n-Roll Intergenerational program, and volunteer opportunities on City boards and commissions.

Mayor Arapostathis called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Mayor Arapostathis; Vice Mayor McWhirter; Councilmembers Alessio, Baber, and Parent.

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: City Manager Garrett; City Attorney Sabine; Interim City Clerk Kennedy; Assistant City Manager Humora.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

TOWN HALL MEETING

A MEETING WITH THE COUNCIL AND THE COMMUNITY TO DISCUSS LA MESA  
AND ITS FUTURE

The Mayor and Members of the City Council welcomed everyone to the meeting and made opening comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. John Schmitz, La Mesa, made suggestions regarding the traffic lights at the intersection of Marengo Avenue and Fletcher Parkway, and said the City should restudy the traffic patterns and traffic lights in that area. Mr. Schmitz also suggested the City include a new library in any future studies regarding the development of the Civic Center area.

Ms. Carmen Elisa Holston-Arteaga, La Mesa, spoke about two separate shootings in her neighborhood and expressed her concerns that there was very little police response and no public safety notices regarding the incidents. Ms. Holston-Arteaga also complained about speeding vehicles and cut through traffic on Stanford Avenue.

Mr. Tom Boggs, La Mesa, also complained about the traffic problems in the area of Stanford Avenue. Mr. Boggs indicated there were an inordinate number of construction vehicles on residential streets due to the construction on University Avenue, and said he was concerned for the safety of the pedestrians. He suggested putting traffic cameras on telephone poles to monitor the traffic and asked how to keep non-residents from using the streets.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS – Continued

Mr. Brent Draper, La Mesa, said a medical marijuana dispensary had moved from the corner of 70th Street and University Avenue to 69th Street and University Avenue, less than 1,000 feet from the Kroc Center. Mr. Draper said there was a problem with trash at the new site and large crowds of people that gather at all hours of the night, Mr. Draper also complained about the limited lighting at the Kroc Center and about speeding traffic on Lois Street.

A female resident complained about traffic and speeding vehicles near the intersection of 70th and Tower Streets. She said the traffic light at the corner needed to be synchronized and suggested having a police presence in the area in the morning and afternoon when children were going to and from school.

Ms. Emily Blaisdell, La Mesa, said residents had difficulty turning into and out of Blackton Drive due to the speeding cars on Massachusetts Avenue. Ms. Blaisdell said there were not enough street lights in the evening.

Mr. Bill Lindsey, La Mesa, also complained about the medical marijuana dispensary at 69th Street and University Avenue. Mr. Lindsey asked for more police patrols in the area at night.

Mr. Shawn Robinson, La Mesa, said his concerns were safety, traffic, and infrastructure. Mr. Robinson said his neighborhood needed sidewalks, because children going to and from school had to walk in the street. He asked whether any progress had been made since the completion of the Sidewalk Master Plan and whether any funding was available for sidewalks.

Mr. Steve Laub, La Mesa, said he liked the renovated downtown village and suggested staff look at the commercial zoning in the downtown La Jolla area. Mr. Laub said too much office space was bad for retail and indicated a new and updated Downtown Specific Plan was needed.

Mr. Matt Kirkpatrick, La Mesa, complained about the increased number of medical marijuana dispensaries on University Avenue, and said La Mesa was becoming known as the weed district. He also complained about a bright light from a dispensary that shines into his bedroom window at night. Mr. Kirkpatrick said the area was beginning to be rundown and look forgotten. Mr. Kirkpatrick said business development on University was important, as well as making the area more walkable.

Mr. Ed Kinnaman, La Mesa, said there was a problem with large commercial trucks parked along University Avenue. Mr. Kinnaman said the trucks caused a site distance problem. Mr. Kinnaman suggested residents pay for their own speed bumps to slow down traffic or put in trenches across the street.

Mr. Paul Adams, La Mesa, also complained about the new medical marijuana dispensary at 69th Street and University Avenue. Mr. Adams suggested the Building Department inspect the medical marijuana dispensaries for unpermitted construction as a way to shut down the businesses. In addition, Mr. Adams complained about the increased number of vehicles turning left against red lights and about the excessive speeding on University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS – Continued

Ms. Linda Johnson, La Mesa, complained about the graffiti along the trolley line near Center Street, and said there was an increase in graffiti throughout the city. Ms. Johnson suggested the Sheriff helicopters install a better public address system, because it was difficult to understand the announcements. Ms. Johnson also asked about the cleanup efforts on the property at Jessie Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard.

Ms. Cindi Cavanagh, La Mesa, indicated she had two daytime break-ins at her home in the last year, and said other people in her area have also experienced daytime break-ins. Ms. Cavanagh said it seemed the break-ins were a frequent problem.

Ms. Abby Jarl-Veltz, La Mesa, said there had been four hit and run accidents on Lois Street in the last year. She said there was a lack of police presence in her neighborhood which gave people the feeling that they could do anything. Ms. Jarl-Veltz also complained about the vehicles leaving and entering the medical marijuana dispensary at 70th Street and University Avenue and running the nearby stop sign. She suggested imposing monetary fines for violations of Measure U.

Ms. Cadence Baron, La Mesa, complained about flooding, drainage ditches being blocked by debris, and property damage every time it rained due to a recent construction project in back of her home.

Mr. Ken Sobel, San Diego, said he was a medical cannabis expert and spoke regarding the benefits of marijuana.

Mr. Phillip Proo, La Mesa, said there was a problem of traffic backing up from 70th Street and University Avenue to Massachusetts Avenue and suggested the intersections be evaluated. Mr. Proo also spoke about break-ins in his neighborhood, and said more street lights were needed in the Alamo Way and Toni Street area.

Ms. Nancy Goettler, La Mesa, requested the Climate Action Plan be completed and spoke about the difficulty of Blackton Drive residents turning onto Massachusetts Avenue. Ms. Goettler requested marijuana be added to the City's smoking ordinance and to make the downtown a smoke free area.

Mr. Richard Parcel, La Mesa, said over the years 70th Street changed from a quiet, rural street to a major thoroughfare. Mr. Parcel suggested using roundabouts similar to those installed in the La Jolla area to slow the traffic down.

Mr. John Michno, La Mesa, asked about the possibility of making La Mesa a sanctuary city.

Mr. Andrew Johnson, San Diego, asked about the regulations pertaining to the distance between medical marijuana facilities, and suggested installing more speed limit signs to remind people of the speed they should be driving.

Ms. Jean Costa, La Mesa, spoke regarding the draft Climate Action Plan and asked why the Environmental Sustainability Commission and the public couldn't get a copy of the Plan. Ms. Costa also said there was no need to wait until the completion and approval of the Plan in order to consider a Community Choice Energy program.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Continued

The Council and senior staff members responded to each question and concern from the speakers.

No action was taken by the Council.

The Mayor and Members of the City Council made closing comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Arapostathis adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.



Megan Wiegelman, CMC  
City Clerk