

PRNC Meeting Minutes: June 15, 2004, 7pm

The Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council (PRNC) held its regular monthly meeting on June 15th at the Shepherd of the Hills Church. The turnout at the meeting was very good in spite of the fact that the PRNC was competing with the Laker's final game and the Police Commission's meeting at the Greek Church on Balboa. The PRNC featured Mr. Jon Kirk Mukri, General Manager, of the City's Department of Recreation and Parks and Battalion Chief Rose of the Los Angeles Fire Department as its guest speakers of the month. The PRNC featured business of the month was Shock U Electric owned and operated by Mr. Marc Warga. The Board of Directors took action on the PRNC's budget, raised public safety concerns, and made a number of public announcements.

The PRNC gave Mr. Jon Kirk Mukri, General Manager, of the City's Department of Recreation and Parks a warm welcome and expressed their gratitude for taking time out of his busy schedule to speak to them. Mr. Mukri spoke about his vision for the City's park system in the northwest San Fernando Valley and maintenance of the City's parks in Porter Ranch given the budget crisis.

Mr. Mukri addressed a number of concerns raised by the community including: PRNC participation in park planning; need for patrol by a Park Ranger; and more frequent park maintenance and repair. The community was especially concerned over the poor maintenance and standing water in Limekiln Canyon Park in light of the recent reports of the West Nile Virus in the San Fernando Valley. The community also requested accessibility to Limekiln Canyon Park from Corbin Avenue as well as better coordination of sidewalk and street cleaning with the Bureau of Street Services.

Mr. Mukri will prepare an estimate of the cost to clean up Limekiln Canyon Park and will go over the estimate with the PRNC. Mr. Mukri will also look into how his Department can assist in implementing the PRNC's recommendations into the design of the Reseda/Rinaldi Pocket Park that was recently named Rinaldi Street Park by the City.

A member of the community offered to provide heavy equipment to solve the standing water problem in Limekiln Canyon Park. Mr. Kevin Regan, Superintendent of Recreation and Parks Operations, of the Department of Recreation and Parks offered to work with our volunteer to solve the problem. The PRNC also offered to partner with the Department of Recreation and Parks in the planning and implementation stages of all future work.

Battalion Chief Rose of the Los Angeles Fire Department also received a warm welcome from the PRNC. He addressed the PRNC's concern over the proposed loss of the ambulance service (two Firefighters who are also trained as Emergency Medical Technicians) at Station #28 on Corbin Avenue from 8:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M. on a daily basis starting on July 11, 2004. The PRNC was surprised by this proposed reduction of staff and equipment because of the extreme fire danger in the area, need for ambulance service, and since it came at a time when the PRNC is raising money for the "Adopt a Fire Station" program for Stations #28 on Corbin Avenue and Station #8 on Tampa Avenue. Battalion Chief Rose stated that this redeployment was part of a five-year plan and that the ambulance equipment and personnel were being moved to another part of the

Valley with a higher frequency of calls. He also pointed out that other Fire Department resources would fill in should we need additional help. What was not clarified was the possibility of the Porter Ranch area being left with no ambulance service for a period of 24 hours or more when the remaining Emergency Medical Technicians from Fire Station #28 are needed to staff the Brush Patrol Apparatus at Fire Station #8 on Tampa Avenue.

Although Battalion Chief Rose made an excellent presentation, the PRNC requested the Fire Department to cancel its planned reduction of personnel and equipment from Porter Ranch. This request was made because the Fire Department's Five-Year Plan, which is in its third year, may not have accounted for: (1) the explosion of growth in the area that we are currently experiencing; (2) the elimination of a local emergency room in the last two years making travel distance and time a critical factor when the local paramedics are busy and an ambulance would need to be dispatched from another location miles away; and (3) the steady increase in outdoor recreational activities and the aging population that will increase the potential need for ambulance services.

Since the ambulance crew consists of two (2) Firefighters who are trained as Emergency Medical Technicians, the community also expressed concern over the loss of two (2) Firefighters in a high fire danger area. The PRNC wants these Firefighters at Station #28 to staff the Brush Patrol Apparatus on high hazard days, and to continue their dual role as Firefighters and members of the ambulance crew. Furthermore, maintaining a 24-hour ambulance service in Porter Ranch will actually eliminate the need for overtime during the City's budget crisis. It is the PRNC's understanding that under the proposed redeployment plan, the Fire Department plans to pay overtime for the 12-hour shift during the day after the two Firefighters have been deployed elsewhere. The two Firefighters who currently staff the 24-hour ambulance service are on straight time. For these reasons, the Board of the PRNC will continue its effort to cancel the planned reduction of staff and equipment from Porter Ranch.

The community also voiced their concern regarding drag racing in Porter Ranch and the late-night loitering in the Porter Ranch Town Center on Thursday nights. The Board of Directors will continue to request assistance from the LAPD and Sheriff's Departments, and plans to discuss the loitering problem with the owners of the Porter Ranch Town Center.

The Board of Directors approved the budget encumbrances for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004. These encumbrances included funds for a PRNC Web Page, automated voice messaging system, outreach, community clean ups, and other administrative costs.

A number of announcements were made at the meeting. The Consumer Identity Theft Forum hosted by Councilmembers Greig Smith and Dennis Zine (June 26th) and the North Valley Emergency Preparedness & Safety Fair (June 26th) were announced. Other important upcoming events were also announced. These included: (1) the Shepherd of the Hills July 4th Fireworks Show (For more information, please call Seana at (818) 831-9333, extension 136); (2) the Supporters of Law Enforcement in Devonshire (S.O.L.I.D.) Car Show on Saturday, July 10th, at the First Presbyterian Church of Granada Hills located at 10400 Zelzah Avenue (For more information, please call (818) 756-9011, extension 2000); (3) the PRNC Mixer/Potluck at 5:30

P.M. on July 20th prior to the monthly meeting (For more information, please call Ms. Becky Leveque at (818) 368-2398 or e-mail her at DLeveque@socal.rr.com); and (4) the City's "Notice of Public Hearing" regarding the proposed ordinance to permit for-sale detached townhome developments in commercial and multifamily residential zones to be held at the Marvin Braude Constituent Center located at 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, First Floor, on Thursday, July 22, at 8:30 A.M. (For more information, please call (213) 978-1372 or (213) 978-1365).

The Board of Directors also announced its ongoing efforts related to the "Adopt a Fire Station" program. This program provides an opportunity for community members and organizations to donate funds and other resources to our local fire stations. Please call or visit Fire Station #28 (Captain Franklin, (818) 756-9728, 11641 Corbin Avenue north of Rinaldi Street) and Fire Station #8 (Captain Sawyer, (818) 756-8668, 11351 Tampa Avenue north of Rinaldi Street). You may also call Ms. Pam Birnkrant at (818) 831-2330 for further information regarding the program or to join the Adopt a Fire Station Committee.

The PRNC's "Business of the Month" was Shock U Electric (License #830251) owned and operated by Mr. Marc Warga. Shock U Electric specializes in residential and commercial electrical contracting and design. Shock U Electric handles electrical service upgrades, ceiling fan installations, recessed lighting, outdoor lighting, and much more. Mr. Warga's advertisement states that, "We will shock you with our prices and our services." Shock U Electric offers a 10% discount to senior citizens. Please call Mr. Warga at (818) 704-SHOC (7462) for a free estimate.

Mr. Mel Mitchell asked for volunteers to help with the design and programming of the PRNC Web page at <http://prnc.org>. If you would like to help with this project, please e-mail Mr. Mitchell at MelMitchell@prnc.org.

The next PRNC meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 20th, at the Shepherd of the Hills Church located at 19700 Rinaldi Street. We will be featuring the PRNC Mixer/Potluck at 5:30 P.M. and a panel discussion regarding the City's proposed Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance will begin at 7:00 P.M. If you are concerned about affordable and low-income housing in Porter Ranch, you must attend this very important meeting.