

Public Safety Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
September 13, 2021



The audio file for this meeting can be found at: <http://www.cvag.org/audio.htm>

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** - The meeting was called to order by Chair Waymond Fermon, City of Indio, at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom videoconference, pursuant to Gov. Newsom's executive order governing how public meetings are held during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2. ROLL CALL** - Roll call taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

**Members Present**

Agua Caliente Band of	
Cahuilla Indians	Councilmember John Preckwinkle (arrived during Item 5)
City of Blythe	Councilmember Johnny Rodriguez (present at Items 5-8B)
City of Cathedral City	Councilmember Mark Carnevale
City of Coachella	Councilmember Megan Beaman-Jacinto, Vice Chair
City of Desert Hot Springs	Councilmember Roger Nuñez
City of Indian Wells	Councilmember Greg Sanders
City of Indio	Mayor Pro Tem Waymond Fermon, Chair
City of La Quinta	Councilmember John Peña
City of Palm Desert	Councilmember Karina Quintanilla (arrived during Item 8A)
City of Palm Springs	Councilmember Grace Garner (arrived during Item 4)
City of Rancho Mirage	Councilmember Iris Smotrich
County of Riverside	Juan Perez, Chief Operating Officer

**Ex-Officio Members Present**

City of Desert Hot Springs Police	Chief Jim Henson
City of Indio Police	Chief Mike Washburn
City of Palm Springs Police	Acting Chief Melissa Desmarais
City of Palm Springs Fire	Chief J. Kevin Nalder
Riverside County Fire	Deputy Chief Robert Fish
Agua Caliente	Emergency Services Mgr. Robert Bradbury
California Highway Patrol	Commander Dennis Woodbury

**Members & Ex-Officios Not Present**

City of Cathedral City Police	Chief George Crum
City of Cathedral City Fire	Chief John Muhr
Riverside County Sheriff	Sheriff Chad Bianco
Riverside County DA	Mike Hestrin
Riverside County Probation	Ron Miller
U.S. Customs and Border Patrol	Assistant Chief Patrol Agent David Kim
Palm Desert Sheriff's Substation	Capitan Dean Agnoletto
Thermal Sheriff Station	Captain Herman Lopez

## **Others Present**

CVAG	Tom Kirk
	Erica Felci
	Joanna Stueckle
	Oscar Vizcarra
Caltech Seismological Lab	Margaret Vinci
Riverside County – District 4	Pat Cooper
	Greg Rodriguez
Riverside County Public Health	Kim Saruwatari
City of Indian Wells	Kristen Nelson

### **3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

#### **A. Moment of Silence for U.S. Marine Cpl. Hunter Lopez**

Chair Fermon led the Committee in the pledge.

Chair Fermon asked for a moment of silence to honor Cpl. Hunter Lopez, who was one of the U.S. service members killed during the Kabul attack.

### **4. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None

### **5. CHAIR / COMMITTEE MEMBER/CVAG STAFF COMMENTS**

Erica Felci announced a new ex-officio member of the Public Safety Committee, Palm Springs Police Acting Chief Melissa Desmarais. Councilmember Grace Garner also provided introductory remarks before Acting Chief Desmarais made brief comments to the Committee.

Councilmember John Peña noted the upcoming funeral services for Cpl. Lopez and noted the community should remain patient as the cross-valley procession will result in traffic and road detours.

Councilmember Mark Carnevale welcomed Acting Chief Desmarais and noted how the neighboring cities work together closely.

Juan Perez provided an update to the recent storms that knocked out power for hundreds in the eastern Coachella Valley, and recapped the work that the County, Imperial Irrigation District and others were doing to restore help North Shore residents.

Chair Fermon provided details for the processional and funeral of Cpl. Lopez, which includes services from Sept. 16-18.

### **6. EX-OFFICIO COMMENTS**

Chief Mike Washburn, City of Indio, provided information on graffiti abatement as well as the transition of radio communications to the County's Public Safety Enterprise Communication (PSEC) system.

Committee members expressed interest in graffiti removal resources in the Coachella Valley, and staff stated an informational roundup would be provided at an upcoming meeting and shared with the Committee members as well.

## 7. CONSENT CALENDAR

**IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILMEMBER PENA AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER CARNEVALE TO:**

- A. Approve the June 14, 2021 Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes**
- B. Receive and file an update on the continued conversation on race, diversity and policing**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 10 AYES AND 2 ABSTENTIONS ON 7A, AND WITH 11 AYES AND 1 ABSTENTION ON 7B**

<b>Councilmember John Preckwinkle</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Johnny Rodriquez</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Mark Carnevale</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Megan Beaman Jacinto</b>	<b>ABSTAIN/ AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Roger Nuñez</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Greg Sanders</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Waymond Fermon</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember John Peña</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Karina Quintanilla</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Grace Garner</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
<b>Councilmember Iris Smotrich</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Chief Operating Officer Juan Perez</b>	<b>AYE</b>

## 8. DISCUSSION / ACTION

### A. Earthquake Education and the Great California ShakeOut

Ms. Felci introduced Margaret Vinci from the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) Seismological Laboratory, who manages the Office of Earthquake Programs. Ms. Vinci provided an update to the Great California ShakeOut in October. She also discussed the importance of earthquake early warning systems and the tips to remember in reacting to a quake. Community discussion ensued, including questions about gas and electric lines.

Committee members asked that a copy of the presentation be sent to members and local school districts. There was no action taken as this was an information item.

### B. Update on COVID-19 Public Health Crisis

Kim Saruwatari, Director of Riverside County's Public Health, provided an overview of the COVID-19 current conditions, including the distribution of the vaccine and the rates of hospitalization in both adults and children. Member conversation ensued, with many questions focused on the impact that COVID-19 was having on school-aged children and how contact tracing and information sharing is done with schools.

There was no action taken as this was an information item.

### **C. Election of Public Safety Committee Officers**

Tom Kirk introduced the item and asked for nominees. The only nomination was for the current officers to serve another term. During the discussion, both Chair Fermon and Vice Chair Megan Beaman Jacinto expressed interest in continuing to serve and working with the committee to further regional coordination on public safety issues.

**IT WAS MOVED BY COUNCILMEMBER PENA AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER SMOTRICH TO NOMINATE INDIO MAYOR PRO TEM WAYMOND FERMON AS PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE CHAIR AND COACHELLA COUNCILMEMBER MEGAN BEAMAN JACINTO AS PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR FOR FY 2021/22**

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH 11 AYES AND 1 MEMBER ABSENT**

<b>Councilmember John Preckwinkle</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Johnny Rodriguez</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
<b>Councilmember Mark Carnevale</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Megan Beaman Jacinto</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Roger Nuñez</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Greg Sanders</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Mayor Pro Tem Waymond Fermon</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember John Peña</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Karina Quintanilla</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Grace Garner</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilmember Iris Smotrich</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Chief Operating Officer Juan Perez</b>	<b>AYE</b>

### **9. INFORMATION – The following items were provided for information only:**

#### **A. Attendance Record**

### **10. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None

### **11. ANNOUNCEMENTS – Upcoming Meetings:**

The next meeting of the **Public Safety Committee** will be held on Monday, November 8, 2021, at 9 a.m. either via Zoom webinar or in-person, depending on the State's guidance and finalization of logistics.

The next meeting of the **Executive Committee** will be held on Monday, September 27, 2021, at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom webinar.

### **12. ADJOURN**

Prior to the meeting's end, Chair Fermon asked for additional information on active shooter training to be included at an upcoming committee agenda. Members also expressed appreciation

for the committee's collaboration, and it was requested that staff refine the process of including ex-officio updates in the meeting.

Chair Fermon adjourned the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Erica Felci*  
Assistant Executive Director