



## Montclair Safety and Improvement Council

Minutes of Thursday, June 6, 2013, 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm, Montclair Presbyterian Church, Oakland California

[www.montclairsic.org](http://www.montclairsic.org)

The public MISC meeting was conducted by Sandra Pohutsky on behalf of MSIC board president Jill Broadhurst and was attended by approximately 20 people.

Board members attending:

Jim Clardy  
Ralph Morewitz  
Sandra Pohutsky  
Michael Tigges

### **OAKLAND POLICE OFFICER JASON TRODE CRIME REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The four most important messages:

1. Be on the lookout for an older white van (maybe a Ford Econoline) or white minivan from the 1990's driven by two suspects: a white female over age 40 with a raggedy appearance and a Hispanic or white male. If you see suspicious activity from people and vehicles matching this description, call Oakland Police non emergency 777-3333 and tell them that we have been asked to look for suspected burglars matching this description. Report what you see, where you see it and at least the last 3 digits of the license plate if possible. Be patient and stay on the phone; OPD is acutely short of police dispatchers.
2. Buy an outside alarm to attach to your home security system. Burglars move fast, often kicking in doors. A loud outside alarm is a serious deterrent and will notify neighbors to look at your house immediately. Call your security company to discuss the horn.
3. Go to the hardware store and buy 1 3/4 inch screws. Remove the deadbolts from your door and replace the small screws with the long 1 3/4 screws and reinstall the deadbolts. This will make your door more secure against kicking burglars.
4. Call in all suspicious behavior such as people circling your neighborhood, just sitting in their cars and watching, people taking photos, people ringing doorbells, solicitors, etc. Do not be bashful, do not feel like you are causing trouble. Citizens reports are extraordinary helpful in catching burglars. There are several groups of burglars circulating in Montclair all the time,

especially between 7 am and 4 pm, watching for people to leave home for work and errands. Once you have left your home, they strike fast and steal your property in a flash.

If you see burglar-casing type behavior, call police nonemergency 777-3333. If you see what appears to be a break-in in process call 911 from a landline or 777-3211 from a cell phone. (Do not call 911 from your cell phone because it takes time for the call to be routed to OPD dispatcher.) Be patient when you call OPD; call volume is high and increasing and there are not enough dispatchers. Always ask for an 'incident number' when you call police dispatch.

Other important messages from Officer Trode:

On Saturday June 8, the Oakland Police Department will divide into 5 sections. Montclair and nearby neighborhoods will be in Section 2. Captain Anthony Toribio is in charge of our Section 2 and will be held accountable for the results. Lt. Christopher Bolton and Lt. Robert Chan are also assigned to Section 2. This reorganization does not add officers but places responsibility in a different manner than before. Officer Trode will continue as Beat 13 (x, y and z) Problem Solving Officer and he believes that Montclair will benefit from this reorganization. However, Officer Trode and other PSOs are being re-assigned on weekends to go to East Oakland to curb the dangerous show-off driving called 'side show.'

OPD understaffing: there is only one property crime investigator for the entire City of Oakland. Fingerprints are not taken for burglaries.

The crime problems in District 2 are primarily property crimes. In the last month in Beat 13-Z:

- a. there have been no robberies (robber vs. victim in person)
- b. auto burglary has declined slightly.
- c. home burglary - 7 in a month of which 4 were garage burglaries. In one case, a burglar took a remote control from a car and used it to open the garage door. Of the 7 home burglaries, 6 homeowners had security systems with 'silent' alarms - i.e., no loud outside alarms were triggered.
- d. They have been 261 calls from security systems year to date. Of these, only 25 were break-ins; the others were false alarms or 'ringers.' This is a misuse of police time and homeowners are asked to be careful in managing their home alarm systems.
- e. Many cars stolen in other areas are found dumped in the Oakland Hills. If you see a car in your neighborhood that has been sitting on the street for over 72 hours, call 777-8622 and leave the location, description of the vehicle and license plate number.
- f. On Thursday June 6th at 7 am, auto break-in occurred when driver left her purse in the car while she went to the ATM for a minute. Trode cautioned against leaving any property visible in a car, saying that burglars will break in for just a diaper bag.

Beat 13z (generally Montclair) has been calling in more crimes and suspicious behavior, organizing more Neighborhood Watch groups, installing more home security alarms and cameras; all of these steps have reduced burglary.

Caution to drivers and pedestrians in Montclair Village: drivers must stop for pedestrians and pedestrians must cross at the crosswalks. Tickets will be issued.

Recent high auto break-ins near Lake Temescal: students at nearby school were leaving iPods in cars; burglars broke into the cars to steal the iPods.

**LISA RUHLAND, REPRESENTING OAKLAND CITY COUNCILMEMBER LIBBY SCHAAF FOR MONTCLAIR**

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CITY BUDGET DECISION PENDING

The Oakland city council is on the verge of passing the city budget for two years July 1 2013 - June 30 2015, spending about \$1 billion per year. There are three budget proposals:

1. Mayor Jean Quan's proposed budget provides money for four police academies over two years and hiring five more police dispatchers. <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/OAK040588>.
2. Council President Pat Kernighan and councilmember Libby Schaaf's proposed budget includes the mayor's proposed police academies and five dispatchers plus hiring seven new crime technicians for fingerprints, etc.
3. Councilmembers Reid/Brooks/Gallo proposed budget rejects all additional spending for Oakland Police Dept but allocates \$3 million a year for civilian city employees, as advocated by employee unions. A recent report by the city administrator indicates that the Reid/Brook/Gallo proposed budget will cause a deficit of almost \$8.8 million over two years.

To express your wish on which budget proposal should be adopted by the city council, email the council immediately; they are considering the budget on **Thursday June 13th** and will vote on their decision Thursday June 27th.

It takes five votes of the eight member council to approve a budget. Only in case of tie will the mayor cast a vote. Three Councilmembers who have not yet expressed their choice of budget: Dan Kalb, Rebecca Kaplan and Lynette Gibson McElhaney.

To send email to the entire Oakland city council: [DL-COUNCILMEMBERS@OAKLANDNET.COM](mailto:DL-COUNCILMEMBERS@OAKLANDNET.COM)

WILDFIRE PREVENTION ASSESSMENT DISTRICT

The Wildfire Assessment District in the Oakland Hills, which was created in 2003 to monitor and cut vegetation, expires in 2014. We must vote to renew the district via mail-in ballots to be sent later this year. Homeowners pay \$65 a year on their property tax bill. A 2/3's approval rate is needed to extend the assessment district for another ten years.

<http://www.oaklandnet.com/wildfireprevention>

SAFE OAKLAND SPEAKER SERIES - last two evenings

<http://safeoakland.com/events> (includes parking, shuttle and live video streaming information)

Gerald Chaleff: CAN CONSTITUTIONAL POLICING MAKE SAFER STREETS? **Wednesday, June 19th**, 7 – 9 pm

LAPD Special Assistant for Constitutional Policing Gerald Chaleff explains why constitutional policing matters and how it helped, not hindered, reducing crime in tough cities like LA.

Mark Kleiman: CRIME & PUNISHMENT: HOW TO HAVE LESS OF BOTH **Wednesday, June 26th**, 7 – 9 pm

UCLA public policy professor Mark Kleiman discusses how clear rules and credible sanctions could control crime without crowding the prisons.

RETIREMENT OF LONG TIME POLICE SERGEANT Councilmember Schaaf sponsored a City Council Resolution honoring OPD Sergeant Robert Crawford who recently retired after 45 years of service - 12,000 shifts - without taking a single sick day. Sgt. Crawford is the last police officer who is included in the 1951 Oakland Police and Fire Retirement System.

SCHAAF AND RUHLAND OPEN OFFICE HOURS IN MONTCLAIR VILLAGE Councilmember Libby Schaaf and Montclair liaison Lisa Ruhland are in Montclair village on the fourth Sunday of each month between 9:30 am and 11:30 am at Montclair Farmers Market. Come by and chat about City of Oakland business. This is a great chance for a face-to-face discussion! (In case of rain, see them at Colonial Donuts, 6126 La Salle Avenue.) Summer dates: **June 23, July 28, August 25**.

SCHAAF NEWSLETTER To receive Libby Schaaf's emailed newsletter, sign up at

<http://libbyschaaf.com>, upper right corner.

OAKLAND A BASEBALL TICKETS If your neighborhood group or club wishes to honor special service by awarding tickets to an Oakland A's baseball game, contact Lisa Ruhland to ask if free tickets are available.

**MONTCLAIR VILLAGE ASSOCIATION (MVA, merchants in Montclair Village)** report by Ralph Morewitz

The former president of MVA, who is innocent until proved guilty, has been charged with embezzling from her former employer's customers. There is no indication that any money of the MVA is missing.

MVA's income is derived from dues from its members and parking fees paid at the Montclair parking garage at the top end of LaSalle. People are reminded that some merchants validate parking and that you will have no fear of a parking ticket if you park in the garage.

Saturday June 29th is the Montclair Beer and Wine Celebration, during the weekend of the Fine Arts and Crafts Festival. See details at [www.montclairvillage.com](http://www.montclairvillage.com)

A meeting attendee pointed out there is considerable sidewalk damage in the Village and asked if MVA is working with the City of Oakland public works department to get the repairs done.

MVA pays to steam clean the sidewalks once or twice a year but it is up to individual residents to report sidewalk damage to Oakland Public Work Department.

A meeting attendee reported a lot of graffiti in the Village in places that are not highly noticeable. Sandra Pohutsky suggested that people seeing graffiti contact MVA and asked to be put in touch with the building owner to report the graffiti. The City of Oakland requires property owners to remove graffiti quickly when the graffiti is on private property.

### **DIANE A. HILL, MONTCLAIR REPRESENTATIVE ON CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE WILDFIRE PREVENTION DISTRICT**

Ms. Hill is sending out monthly email notices of seasonal tips for wildfire prevention, vegetation management and maintaining defensible space in our neighborhoods. Please contact Diane to add your neighborhood group, or your personal email, to the distribution list. This is a critical matter for Montclair residents. The June message is "Have You Planned for Evacuation In Case of a Wildfire?"

To receive the monthly email news, contact Diane A. Hill: [DWrasse@aol.com](mailto:DWrasse@aol.com)

A meeting attendee asked about the pending plan to remove thousands of eucalyptus, Monterey pines and acacia trees, all "fire prone trees," from the Oakland and Berkeley Hills land owned by East Bay Regional Parks, Oakland and UC Berkeley. The plan, based on experiences of the 1991 Firestorm, focuses on ridgelines and areas surrounding homes. This plan has been held up since 2005 by a small group, opposed to any tree removal, which sued for a more complete environmental impact report. That EIR report is now complete and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) may release \$5.6 million later this year so that the public agencies can remove the trees, a process which will take up to ten years.

Ms. Hill reported that she had attended a recent public hearing on the matter which was highly emotional. As a representative of the Wildfire Prevention Assessment District, Ms. Hill supports the removal of the fire-prone trees.

### **FRIENDS OF SAUSAL CREEK [www.sausalcreek.org](http://www.sausalcreek.org)**

Barry Klezmer, site leader with Friends of Sausal Creek, invites Montclair residents to the **Wednesday June 12th** FOSC board meeting: 7 to 9 pm, Park Presbyterian Church, 4101 Park Blvd. Friends of Sausal Creek is a very active grass roots organization formed in 1996 to protect Sausal Creek, which arises in the Oakland Hills and runs into the bay.

Meeting adjourned AT 8:15 pm. Residents are invited to attend the next MISC meeting on Thursday **August 1, 2013**, at 7 pm, Montclair Presbyterian Church, 5701 Thornhill Drive, Oakland California.