

**Board of Commissioners
Lake Vista Crime Prevention District
Lake Vista Community Center, Second Floor
July 12, 2022, 5:30PM
Minutes**

1. Blanchard called the meeting to order at 5:30pm. Blanchard noted to attendees that copies of the agenda and/or financials are available. However, because of such a large turnout there may not be enough to go around. If you do not receive a copy and would like one, please provide your email and a copy will be emailed.

a. Introduction of Commissioners in attendance: Blanchard, Settoon, O'Brien, Mann, & Moore.

English-Absent

Note: LVCPD Board of Commissioners is still waiting for approval of nomination of Jessica Hardie to Board since January 2022 by Senator Jimmy Harris.

b. Introduction of attending officials:

Capt. Mike Brenckle, OLDP Commander; Kellie Lopardi, OLDP Flood Authority Detail Coordinator; Tyrone Butler, OLDP Platoon Commander; Sgt. Vance Bienemy, OLDP, Lt. Ernest Luster, NOPD; Stephanie Hilferty, State Representative District 94, Eugene Greene, City Councilman, District D.

2. Meeting Minutes Approval – Blanchard noted that copies of the April 2022 minutes are available if anyone is interested in reviewing. Blanchard motioned to approve April minutes, moved by Settoon, and seconded by Mann. Unanimously approved.

3. Finance Report: Prior to the meeting, English provided the Board a Balance Sheet and a Profit and Loss Report, both as of July 10, 2022, as she was unable to attend. Blanchard noted that copies of financials are available to anyone

interested in reviewing. Blanchard motioned to approve financial reports. Moved by Mann and seconded by Moore. Unanimously approved.

Note: 2023 Budget approval postponed until 4th quarter meeting in October.

Blanchard noted that our expenses and income have not changed from last year. Each resident is paying \$200/yr. for the Crime Prevention District and most of the funding that we spend goes toward the security detail as well as the camera initiative that we are doing in the neighborhood. Cameras which are in the perimeter at every entrance to the neighborhood. We are looking at other ways to thwart what is going on in our neighborhood and it may require that we increase the parcel fee in the future. We recently lowered the fee from \$220 per to \$200

4. LVCPD Website Proposal: A proposal from Paul Caboche to integrate/migrate the current LVCPD website to become part of the LVPOA Website at www.golvpoa.com. For \$100/month or \$1200/yr., Caboche would build, maintain, and update website as needed and send regular meeting announcements by email blast and social media posts. All information to be supplied by the LVCPD Board. Hopefully, this will result in more awareness and participation from Lake Vista residents of the Crime Prevention District in Lake Vista. Mann motioned to approve and seconded by Settoon. Unanimously approved.

5. Update and Recap of recent uptick in car break-ins:

Captain Brenckle reported that he was sorry to hear about the car break-ins in Lake Vista. Question was asked about the shifts/hours of patrol. Brenckle mentioned that in addition to the LVCPD patrol, OLDP patrols the lakefront neighborhoods 24/7. People should call 504-283-9800 to report any irregular activity. If we call 911, the NOPD dispatcher will call the OLD dispatcher. Shreves clarified that in addition to the OLDP, Lake Vista has its own detail provided by off duty officers of the OLDP. Patrols are at night with one officer between the hours of 5:00pm – 5:00am 7 days/week. Residents asked why we do not have cameras at every street in LV. Currently, we do not have the money/funds to provide that. However, if the neighborhood decides that we want cameras on every street, we need to figure out a way to fund it and organize it. Nola Safe Cam does not donate cameras. LVCPD would have to purchase the cameras and

then we would have to deal with maintenance and connectivity via internet as well as planning. Question was asked if our cameras are being monitored. Blanchard mentioned that cameras are not monitored at real time however we are looking at initiatives on how we can automate some of these things. Lake Vista resident, Candice Boucree motioned to add a second detail to the already existing patrol. Blanchard mentioned that we have limited funds. Unless the neighborhood wants to setup an additional method to donate funds for a second detail, we could work on that. However, this will not be resolved in a one-hour meeting. Stephanie Hilferty mentioned that because the patrol was originally donation-based system, we could do that. She will check whether the LVCPD or LVPOA would oversee the financials. Hilferty will double check with the city and the state if the board were interested in a rate increase that would have to go through the legislature and put on the next ballot, which we are trying to get on ASAP.

6. Guest Speaker: Eugene Greene, City Councilman District D

Councilman Greene expressed his concerns and said Incidents that have occurred are regrettable. Media is constantly reporting that there is a shortage of Police Officers and putting out an image that the NOPD cannot do their job. We have a police force that is making arrests. The problems occur after arrests are made. Criminals are being released back into the streets. So far this year, NOPD have made 1700 arrests. 901 are violent felonies and only 146 prosecutions have happened, that is less than 1 out of 6 chance that you will get prosecuted on a violent crime. It goes to the District Attorney, the Magistrates, the Criminal District Court Judges, and the Juvenile District Court Judges and the Sheriff's Office. Mr. Greene encourages that all Crime Prevention District groups invite those other than the police to speak at their meetings such as the D.A., Judges, and others to ask the tough questions. Currently, the City Council is working on measures to increase the NOPD by 2% per year. We have hundreds of cameras throughout the city, but none are being monitored. Hilferty asked about State Police patrolling on our interstate. Greene mentioned that there are State Police in our city, and they are making arrests and conducting chases in New Orleans East.

NOPD Lt. Luster commented that the center of attention is the shortage of officers, including the State Police. This is the case across the nation. State Police have been asked to assist NOPD on the ground with more violent offenses in lieu of traffic. Lt. Luster also mentioned that one of the priorities should be for residents to invest in great quality, high-definition cameras. We need quality pictures and videos to assist in investigations to better prosecute criminals. Ring cameras are ok but not sufficient. Keep in mind that NOPD is making an exponential number of arrests on a consistent basis. Additionally, in the 3rd District, we have a 16% reduction in property crime from last year. Last year at this time we had 579 car burglaries and this year at this time we have 468 so we do have a significant drop in property crime. Occasionally we do have spikes in crime where several cars are hit at the same time and currently, we are working on a plan to address that. Current LV resident and former NOPD Lieutenant Eddie Selby, recommended that NOPD flood the area with police visibility to keep the criminals away. Lt. Luster agreed, however, NOPD no longer has the workforce for that. Violent crimes take priority, but they are doing the best they can. Also, NOPD works along with OLDP. Capt. Brenckle noted that OLDP has had three officers patrolling the Lake Vista area in addition to the normal Lake Vista patrol. Orleans Levee District has also pulled officers from the Jefferson Parish authority to assist in the New Orleans Lakefront area. LV resident, Candice Boucree, has voluntarily requested to take the lead in reaching out via social media to LV residents regarding donations to help with supplemental patrols via the NOPD's Office of Secondary Placement.

Commissioner Settoon asked Councilman Greene to update us on the status of the proposed ordinance to reverse the previous ordinance to outlaw cameras. Councilman Greene stated that this is his ordinance asking for a full reversal of the things that were taken in 2020 such as facial recognition and license plate readers. Greene encourages all residents to contact both City Council Members listed in support of a **full reversal** of the ordinance which will be voted on July 21, 2022:

Helena Moreno helena.moreno@nola.gov J.P. Morrell JP.Morrell@nola.gov

Blanchard noted that he has a copy of the ordinance if anyone is interested in a copy. The LVPOA will send out an email blast to all LV residents notifying them of this upcoming ordinance. A resident asked how difficult it would be to close Marconi at Lakeshore Drive / Beauregard at Lakeshore Drive during early morning hours to keep traffic in/out of Lake Vista. Captain Brenckle said that they can not block or shut down city streets. Also, they would need probable cause to stop any vehicle regardless of the time. Shreves asked about the status of the Juvenile curfew during the summer months. Lt. Luster noted that unfortunately officers cannot take them to a curfew center because Covid rules are still in place. Officers release juveniles to the parents/guardians. They are not arrested. A LV resident suggested that the LV neighborhood set up some type of quick communication, via either email or text, between residents to alert each other of crime as it happens. Blanchard said this is something into which we can look. Another LV resident asked if he could put a camera on a city light pole. Settoon said it is complicated. There needs to be a cooperative agreement with the city to mount them and it is not a simple process. LV resident, Gia Blanchard, mentioned that there are 775 homes in Lake Vista and only 380 that are members of the LVPOA which only charges \$75/yr. for membership. We need involvement from every household in the neighborhood so please join if you are not already a member or ask your neighbors on your street to join the LVPOA. Councilman Greene recapped that he is willing and available to assist the LVCPD in any way. Greene also mentioned that text messaging is more effective than email in relaying quick group messaging to residents.

Lt. Luster recommended that you remove ALL ITEMS from your vehicle including registration documents. He advised that leaving your vehicle unlocked helps prevent window smashing. Another suggestion by Lt. Luster, because Lake Vista is a dark subdivision covered with trees and brush, install lighting throughout the exterior of your homes and light it up all night. Also, it is difficult to find street addresses. Hilferty suggested working with LVPOA to put together a list of

streetlight/lane light outages and she will work with Councilman Greene via Department of Public Works (DPW) to get these repaired.

OLDP Sgt. Bienemy commented on the vast area the Orleans Levee District covers all along the Levee from West End to West Bank.

Most arrests are recurring criminals, and they are being released from jail even before the paperwork is completed. We must address this problem with the District Attorney's Office. Greene suggested we send messages via email to the D.A.'s office at info@orleansda.com to complain about the release of criminals back to the streets to continue committing crimes.

Lt. Luster advised that even if you only had your car rummaged and nothing stolen, you should still contact NOPD or OLDP to notify them of the situation. At some point, the criminal will make a mistake and every investigation may reveal something to convict them. Blanchard commented that if you wait a long time for a response to contact him directly. Carla Widmer, resident on Spanish Fort, suggested placing voice recording on motion lighting that says, "You are being watched." In closing, Greene noted that he believes that better days are ahead because the City Council is listening to public concerns across New Orleans about the increase in crime. Also, for everyone to continue to put pressure on everyone in the system. Track your city council meetings and comment. Participate and get involved. Blanchard thanked all for attending.

7. Blanchard motioned to adjourn the meeting. Motioned by O'Brien, seconded by Moore. Meeting ended at 7:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Gloria Moore, Secretary