

Marina Bay Neighborhood Council Meeting Minutes for July, 9th, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by President Barbara Norrish. Other officers present were Diane Hedler, Vice President, Pat Kiely, Treasurer and Virginia Finlay, Immediate Past President and Acting Secretary. As usual, self introductions of those in attendance were made.

- 1. Beat Officer's Report:** Officer Opdyke reported that the Marina Bay neighborhood crime statistics continue to be very low and that "things are in excellent shape". He stressed the importance of continued vigilance by the community. For immediate issues please call the Police Department at the numbers noted below. To report suspicious activity, from a hard line telephone, call 911. Officer Opdyke reminded us once again that **when using a cell phone** do not call 911 but call 233-1214 to be connected directly to the Richmond Police Department Dispatch Unit. For ongoing issues you can use e-mail. For a general message to all of the beat officers for the Marina Bay area the address is pdbeat1@richmondpd.net. To contact Officer Opdyke the address is topdyke@richmondpd.net To contact Sgt. David Harris the address is dharris@richmondpd.net

- 2. Richmond Police Department Communications Center:** Sgt. Tod Opdkye arranged for Byron Baptiste, Communications Center Manager to attend the Marina Bay Neighborhood Council meeting and discuss the areas of responsibility and operations of the Dispatch Center that services the Richmond Police Department as well as the Richmond Fire Department, El Cerrito Police and Fire Departments, San Pablo Police Department, Kensington Police and the Contra College Community College District Police. The Richmond Communications Center is located at 326 27th Street in Richmond. The dispatch staff answers over 20,000 emergency and non-emergency phone calls per month. They are tasked with gathering critical information and dispatching appropriate police and fire units. In addition, dispatchers are responsible to keep track of field units and their assignments with the use of a computer aided dispatch system and state of the art radio equipment.

Communications Dispatchers have a dynamic position that requires excellent customer service skills, the capacity to remain calm under very tense circumstances and strong multi-tasking abilities. Dispatchers must be alert to the possibility that situations may escalate quickly. The ability to adapt and react appropriately without hesitation is an integral part of dispatcher duties.

Mr. Baptiste also stated that the dispatch staff is qualified to provide critical medical instructions on the telephone before emergency units arrive on scene. Through a regular system of review and training the center has been recognized as an Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE) since May 2001 with the National Academy of Emergency Dispatch. This distinction is granted to communications centers that regularly achieve or surpass professional standards in responding to emergency medical situations.

- 3. Tour of the Richmond Police Activities League Facility in Richmond:** Sgt. Opdyke provided transportation to the attendees at the meeting to travel to the Richmond PAL (Police Activities League) facility located at 2200 MacDonald Avenue. RPAL provides a safe environment for youth in Richmond who often have no place to go after school and no role models to guide them through their adolescent years.

The Police Activities League's One-Stop Youth Center, under the guidance of its director, Richmond Police Corporal Larry Lewis, addresses gang involvement and general delinquency involvement. The Center houses educational, recreational, social, and athletic programs for boys and girls ages 6-21. Among other functions, it provides a positive alternative to unstructured after-school activity. These programs are currently serving approximately 1,200 participants at the Macdonald Avenue facility and approximately 2,500 participants in their sports programs annually.

Council members were given an overview of the diverse training, educational, mentoring and physical programs offered by RPAL and a tour of the facilities including the new 20,000-square-foot gym that will provide a permanent home for RPAL's basketball leagues, long relegated to undersized community center recreation rooms and public school gyms. Corporal Lewis stated that "This building allows us to broaden what we do." "We want to focus more on older kids with our mentoring work, using police officers and other positive role models. I think we can start to do more of that now." The Hal Holt Memorial Gymnasium, named for one of the organization's founders, is adjacent to a renovated bank building that has for years provided RPAL's main office and classroom space.

According to Officer Lewis the gym will eventually will accommodate soccer, badminton, volleyball and a boxing program that he hopes will bring in more older kids, along with night basketball on weekdays. "I expect the fitness center and boxing ring will be well-used," Lewis said. "Boxing is a great hook for getting some of these kids in here. It's a real opportunity to work with kids about discipline and responsibility."

At the end of the tour, the members of the Council were transported back to the Harbormaster's Office.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Finlay, Immediate Past President
(and Acting Secretary)