

North Hills Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NH NCPC)

**Meeting Minutes**

**Quarterly Town Hall Meeting**

Wednesday, November 7, 2007, started at 7:20 PM

Highlands Country Club, 110 Hiller Drive, Oakland, CA

*Yahoo! Group:* northhillsncpc (by invitation only)

*Website:* [www.northhillsncpc.org](http://www.northhillsncpc.org)

*Email:* [info@northhillsncpc.org](mailto:info@northhillsncpc.org)

*Approximate attendance:* 90

**1. Welcome (Nancy Mueller)** – Nancy explained what NCPC stands for. About 15 people raised their hand that this was their first meeting. Nancy went over the map for Beat 13Y. She said, “We want all the neighborhoods to have a Neighborhood Watch Group.”

**2. Introduction (Nancy Mueller)** - all those listed were present unless otherwise stated. Nancy introduced the Steering Committee, the representatives of the Police Department and the Guest Speakers including Jean Quan who would go first because she had to leave shortly to go to another meeting. Nancy said we have a new website that Barry will be presenting.

NH NCPC Interim Steering Committee:

Nancy Mueller, Chair  
Jim Dexter, Vice Chair  
Teresa Ferguson, Treasurer  
Steve Reinlib, Secretary  
Sara Somers, Publicity Committee Leader  
Barry Pilger and Jim Dexter, Co-Webmasters  
Barry Pilger, Nomination Committee Leader

Oakland Police Department:

PSA2 Commander, Lt. Jim Meeks, Oakland Police Department, DID NOT ATTEND  
PSO Officer Debbie Mack, Oakland Police Department  
NSC Paul-Brekke-Miesner, Neighborhood Services Department

Oakland City Council:

District 1

Jane Brunner, Councilmember for District 1, DID NOT ATTEND  
Zach Wald, Chief of Staff for District 1, DID NOT ATTEND

District 4

Jean Quan, Councilmember for District 1  
Sue Piper, Staff Member responsible Beat 13Y portion of District 4

Guest Speakers:

Chief Wayne Tucker, Oakland Police Department  
Nicholas Vigilante, Chair, Neighborhood Watch Steering Committee  
Claudia Albano, Manager, Neighborhood Services Department  
Paul Brekke-Miesner, Beat 13Y Neighborhood Services Coordinator (NSC)  
Jean Quan, Oakland Councilmember, District 4

**3. Special Guest Speaker:**

**Opening Remarks by Jean Quan:**

“We already have a strong group up here. Looking out for each other is important. Having neighborhood Problem Solving Officers (PSO) along with organized neighborhood groups can reduce crime, although we can’t make everyone safe all the time.” Jean told a San Ramon story with the punch line that in Oakland it is much easier to get to know your neighbors (than in San Ramon). Jean said she has been trying to get people to park in their garage and then use only one side of the street for parking. They like to do this in a friendly way with the neighborhood. They have so far been successful on 3 streets already.

**4. Announcements:**

**A. Explanation of Door Prize (Sara Somers) – 2 MVP tickets with excellent seats.**

**B. Clubs for Steering Wheels (Teresa Ferguson) – They are available for only \$15. Several people were interested and were told they could buy Clubs at the end of the meeting.**

**C. Importance of Reporting Crime (Steve Reinlib)**

Steve explained it was important to report crimes because it assisted the Police Department in knowing what crimes there are here. And even small crimes where you are not expecting the police to do anything assists our neighborhood by getting police here. While on the way to the location, they may spot something on the way or they may just get familiar with the neighborhood. You can report crimes by fax. The form to do this is available at this meeting on your chair at the back of the handout and also on our website. Use the “Citizen Crime Report”, report form.

**D. No parking signs installed - Paul Brekke-Miesner reported that through our efforts the City has detected and installed signs at 10 locations where they were missing. Nancy said, “Please let us know if there are any missing signs.”**

**E. Tax exempt status of donations 501 C (3) non profit reported by Teresa Ferguson and that we have the status and we can accept donations here tonight.**

**F. New NH NCPC Communications: website & Yahoo! Group- Barry Pilger, co-webmaster, reported that the Beta test is complete and the website is up and running. Please look at it and recommend changes and things to post on the website. The website has crime tips and the Crime reporting form, “Citizen Crime Report”. You can sign up for our Yahoo Group on the computer that Barry has set up in the back of the room. We think we know where all the current NCPCs and neighborhood groups are. Let us know if you know if there are any missing from our list. Eventually we want to have all the neighborhoods represented.**

**5. Business:**

**A. Results from the Oct. 2007 NH NCPC (Jim Dexter, Officer Debbie Mack)**

Jim said, “The intended structure of the Neighborhood Watch Groups (NWG) and the NCPC is to be the contact point with the police. That is; citizens through their NWG contact the NCPC and then NCPC contacts the police. The police are responding. It is happening - they are responding. This is working. We are getting feedback from police regarding our priorities.”

Jim introduced Debbie Mack, our Problem Solving Officer (PSO), who is back from maternity leave. Debbie said, “Skateboarder links that she has checked out for us as one of our priorities haven’t generated anything. They may be traveling elsewhere.” Debbie recommended that we change our priorities to things that will get more help from her. You can contact her direct cell phone at 510-774-6127, Tuesday-Friday, Noon – 10PM.

**B. Request for New Nov. 2007 NH NCPC Priorities to OPD (Jim Dexter, all Audience)**

Open Session to Suggest New NH NCPC Priorities to the NH NCPC Executive Council

**C. Election of NH NCPC 2008 Steering Committee (Barry Pilger)**

Barry announced upcoming elections will be at the Town Hall meeting, Feb.6, 2008

Elections will be for Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary, and Treasurer

**D. When asked what caused people to come to tonight’s meeting, the following results were counted:**

A-Frames – 15

Email – 15

Montclarion – 1

A friend told them - 10

**6. SCHEDULED GUEST SPEAKERS:**

**A. Community Policing & Neighborhood Watch - Claudia Albano remarks:**

Claudia asked who knew who William Dawes was. No one knew. Claudia asked who knew who Paul Revere was and everyone knew. The story she then told was that they both rode out with the call to arms but Paul Revere was successful with his ride but that Dawes was not. People responded to Revere and not to Dawes. This was because people knew who Revere was so they listened to him. People were less willing to listen to someone calling for them to get their gun from a stranger, Dawes. This was even though they were expecting this might happen. Claudia said,

**“This is how it is with us – knowing our neighbors. When there is a network of people through community organizations and they know each other, then things get done faster. This is called neighborhood “social capital”. Statistics show that people don’t trust the government: 11% trust the federal government, 17% trust the state government, and 24% trust the local government. Although this is low, the local government has the most trust. How do we relate to the police department when there are hundreds of employees? The Neighborhood Services Department does this for us by being the focal point of the police and the neighborhood association.”**

Claudia complimented this NCPC Steering Committee for helping to organize the Neighborhood Watch Groups.

**B. North Hills NCPC—Beat 13Y - Paul Brekke-Miesner remarks:**

Paul spends 60% of his time developing Neighborhood Watch Groups (NWG) because neighbors who know each other prevent crime. Right now there are 500 NWGs in the City. In Beat 13Y the leadership has been working with Paul to get more NWGs. It only takes 2 trainings for a NWG. A police tech comes to your home to make a presentation. Paul actually knocks on doors – not just handing out flyers – to get people to come to the meetings. Paul is in constant contact with the NWG block captains. Please contact Paul to develop a NWG in your neighborhood.

Developing a strong NCPC is also critical. This NCPC is less than one year old and a structure has already been developed here. Now the NCPC leaders have a relationship to the police department. So far the police have been successful at solving the problems that our NCPC has listed as our priorities.

Nancy acknowledged Paul for all of his work.

**C. Neighborhood Watch Steering Committee - Nicholas Vigilante remarks:**

Nick feels that every neighborhood should have a Neighborhood Watch Group (NWG). He said, “Emergency preparedness combines with crime prevention. Networking is available for block Captains – you can see what other neighborhoods are doing. The next meeting is on 11/28 at 6:30 – 8:30 PM (see below for details.) Last month’s meeting had some heavy duty police crime fighters present and they will give a presentation on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Come learn about the Oakland Police Department.

“NWG and NCPC and Community Policing Advisory Board (CPAB) work together. The NWG Block Captain represents their neighborhoods to the NCPC. And coming to the NCPC you can learn about City Government and how it works. The NCPC relates to the CPAB. CPAB oversees all the NCPCs (54 each). Nick has been to almost all of them to meet with their steering committees.

“Engage younger people (not teens, but young adults in their 20s). The younger people are often missing from the meetings and it is important to have them here.

“There is software for groups for NCPCs. This will help our neighborhood relate. Taking pictures of our homes, listing our neighbors and finding out who does what. Knowing who has a chain saw can sometimes be important. See Jim Dexter to set this up.”

The Neighborhood Watch Steering Committee Meeting aka Networking for Block Captains meeting details: Wednesday, November 28, 6:30PM – 8:30PM. It is at City Hall, 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, 2nd floor, Hearing room 4. Light refreshments. All Block Captains are invited. RSVP to Felicia Verdin at 238-3126 or email [fverdin@oaklandnet.com](mailto:fverdin@oaklandnet.com) .

**D. The New Geographic Alignment of OPD - OPD Chief Wayne Tucker remarks:**

“Thank you for inviting me. This is a nice place to be.

“The negotiated settlement agreement as a result of the recent lawsuit which has two tasks to be done is almost done or is in substantial compliance. The OPD has changed how it does policing. Contemporary business practices, police officer standards and other national practices are in place. The Judge (who lives near us) wants OPD to succeed. He

has also taken over the California Department of Corrections and has done a great job with them. The Judge has successfully worked with CA Fish and Game related to the dolphin catching. And now OPD is another one of his success stories.

“Crime in Oakland is up 3% this year over last year, pretty much similar to any part of the rest of the country. That’s the bad news. The good news is that serious crimes against people are down. 129 murders last year compared to 110 this year. In Oakland, we are 5% down on assaults regarding weapons. Domestic violence is up but that may be that there is more reporting of it. Family violence may be increasing due to additional foreclosures causing more tension, people in closer quarters. The department has been helping the Family Justice Center.

“Crime continues to be a real issue, especially property crimes. The Department is not yet successful at dealing with burglaries. It is a question of staffing – there are 731 officers. There are 803 authorized officers plus 20 in the academy at all times. As they get more staff they will continue to be more successful at dealing with property crimes and the follow-up investigations necessary to solve them.

“Regarding the Academy, OPD has been hiring, training, and graduating. It was expected that 25% would not be successful through the Academy. Current attrition is high at 47%. They have been working with the attrition rate because they underestimated the separation out of the OPD. They hired 125 new people but 135 people left. 53 took disability retirements, 43 service retirements and 11 were terminated by OPD as not suitable. Often the retirements want to go work somewhere else. They may be taking a move – up position, becoming a Lieutenant, Captain or Chief in another town. They retire here because they can take their retirement pay and get another job elsewhere. Possibly the OPD will be attempting to double the Academy population to deal with the attrition. There is a new class graduating in late March-April.

“Measure Y – the violence prevention act. This is the adhoc tax of \$20,000,000 per year in Oakland for police, fire, intervention services since January 2005. This money pays problem solving officers (PSO) like Officer Mack. Currently they have 30 PSOs out of the 57 they are trying to fill. There are 35 police beats – some beats get 2 officers.

“Youth Uprising and Youth Employment Partnering – We are recognizing that crime is a social problem and the department recognizes they need more than enforcement. We are initiating work with the local youth programs like Common Cause. This is the at risk community.

“Anger Management – to out reach to workers and ex-offenders through community based organizations. OPD wants to put more officers where the problems arise, like near the liquor stores. This is hot spot policing.

“Neighborhood Watch – We are always better than the sum of our parts. This is so important. What is in our common interest is being part of the group. Come to these meetings and when the OPD works on the priorities we give them they can make a difference. OPD using NCPC as Community policing will create public safety.

“OPD has a different shift from midnight to 8AM. The day watch is traffic, schools, crime people hear when they wake up. The afternoon watch has a service spike around 2 to 3 PM from youth events, (loud kids), school bus incidents and business disturbances. They have been looking at it on a time basis. The new OPD is going to have it be geographically driven. There are 411,00 people here and OPD will, as of January 2008, have each area that will have 1 Captain, 4 Lieutenants, a Crime team, PSOs with all the help that is needed.”

Nicholas thanked the Captain and thanked the Steering Committee for inviting them and setting this up.

**7. Open Forum: 18 Questions** - Jim Dexter explained the Ground Rules: that he would be the timekeeper, that each Speaker must identify themselves: Name & address, limit themselves to 2 minutes with all subsequent discussion usually limited to 3 minutes.

Q: (Don) - He is pleased with the work over the last year. “Why aren’t OPD fully staffed?”

A: (Chief) – “Because so many officers have retired at age 50 and we need more officers than ever before. We take 5% of the number that apply. That is only 50 out of 1,000 applicants. Next we will have 2 academies at the same time. 20 to 25 students give the best result of the class.”

Q: (Fred) – “What can be done about the enforcement of the no parking signs?”

A: (Chief) – “I see my PSO taking notes and we can do something about this problem.”

A: (Jim) – “When we last complained about this OPD responded and has made efforts after 24 hours.”

Q: (Fred) – “What can be done about the aggressive behavior of the contractors, especially towards women?”

A: (Chief) – “Someone has to be a victim and make a report.”

Q: (Herwick Sherwick) – “There is a mini crime war in my neighborhood. What can be done?”

A: (Officer Roland) – “Let me get with you afterwards to get the details.”

Q: (Laut) – “Alarms keep going off in my neighborhood?”

A: (Chief) – “Speak to Officer Debbie Mack – she will help you with that.”

Q: “What would be the best 3 points that you’d like for your department, Chief?”

A (Chief) – “Convince the State to pay for all the things they make us do. Have them pay us what it is worth to do those mandates. We are paying \$10,000,000 on stuff that is ordered by the State but that the State doesn’t reimburse us for. Have any state mandate be reimbursed by the State.”

A (Claudia) – “More home inspections – Call us at 238-3091 for an appointment for a free home inspection.”

A: (Nicholas) – “Attend Neighborhood Watch Groups and learn how to avoid auto theft.”

Q: (Norman) – “My home was burglarized and it took 24 hours for the police to come out. The crime scene tech said that he the only one. Chief, would you comment on the recent newspaper articles by Chip Johnson?”

A: (Chief) – “Some of Chip’s comments are deserved. But what happened in Alameda was 15 years ago. Notice that there is a ‘no snitching’ youth uprising is in effect. We need people to cooperate with us. We are required to close a case in the year that it happens.”

Q: (Nancy) – “I am a home invasion victim. And there was a car theft. And then there was a parking ticket on the car. Why didn’t the system pick up that this was a stolen car?”

A: (Chief) – “There is a different agency that writes tickets. But since that happened, we have introduced technology to read license plates as the patrol cars roll past the parked cars. We do have it on some of our cars at this time.”

Q: (Russ, Grizzly Peak) – “We are isolated where we live. The response time is slow where I am. What is the response time we can expect?”

A: (Chief) – “It depends on the time of day. If you call from a cell phone that delays us getting your call and it may be 15 minutes. From a hard line, 911 emergency calls priority one, can expect a 6 minute response time. If you don’t have a verified response from Alameda County, then call the OPD.”

Q: (Teresa, Alvarado) – “Will the geographical reorganization help us have officers who know our areas?”

A: (Chief) – “Yes, we expect that cross beat dispatching will be minimized so that familiar officers will respond.”

A: (Sue Piper) – “I suggest you turn on porch lights and motion sensor lights to help them find you.”

Q: ((Nancy Balsalm, Broadway Terrace) – “What makes a vibrant Watch Group, meeting all the time or what?”

A: (Claudia) – “Yes, it should meet frequently, probably monthly. But the most important thing is to know your neighbors – call the police and each other if there is a problem. Meet at least once per year. Support National Night Out with a block party.”

A: (Nicholas) – “Children’s gatherings help parents connect. Sprinkle all gatherings with safety stuff.”

A: (Jim) – “Neighborhood Watch Org has lots of stuff for Block Captains.”

Q: (Carrie) – “There was a marijuana arrest on Parkwoods Drive. We need advice.”

A: (Jim) – “There is a Neighborhood Watch Group there.”

A: (Chief) – “Yes, that did occur. This was a commercial growing operation with money laundering. This was not medicinal marijuana. There was also an arrest at 578 West Grand.”

A: “Our HOA posted notices about that. It went really smooth.”

A: (Chief) – “Talk to Paul about your concerns.”

Q: "What makes it possible to keep officers in the department?, incentives?"

A: (Chief) – We are looking at ways to retain officers. It is harder for OPD than other cities because Oakland has two different retirement plans. Then we have some hiring practices that are in the way."

Q: (Andica) – "People don't know that crime is in their neighborhood. (Comment)  
What do you want for your department Chief?"

A: (Chief) – "100 officers, 75 techs, 20 dispatchers, 10-13 criminalists, 10 evidence techs: \$40,000,000 of labor."

Q: (Jim) – "Can the crime stats be published all the time?"

A: (Chief) – "We are working on it. Our system isn't set up that way, but we are working on it by hand as we address the issue."

Q: (Nancy) – "The mailing in our community is costly."

A: - "Speak with Paul?"

Q: (Amir, Parkwoods) – "I suggest that Core (citizen disaster response) and Neighborhood Watch Group (NWG) communicate."

A: (Jim) – "I believe they should be the same organization."

A: (Claudia) – "Whatever you organize around helps you be organized. That is then a neighborhood group which gives you more collaboration. Core and NWG could be the same group."

A: (Nicholas) – "One face to public safety – Core and NWG coordinate very closely. I do sell each of them to each other."

Q: ((Teresa) – "OPD cannot talk to Berkeley police."

A: (Chief) – "OPD has a modern radio system. Berkeley's old radios can't talk to us. But we can talk to them through the black box that all Fire Fighters have. We can patch through that today. And our dispatchers can talk to each other. Homeland Security's Project 25, the Super UWASY (Super Urban Area) – This is specifically to allow local communities to talk to each other. San Diego is the model in California. We are working on this problem."

Q: (Jim) – "When do you think (the above) will be done?"

A: (Chief) – Seven to eight years out due to getting all the counties involved. Speak to Rene Domingo, Oakland Emergency Services person."

#### **8. Closing Remarks (Jim Dexter) Jim thanked everyone for coming.**

**A. Door prize drawing (Sara Somers) was won by Cheryl Alvarado.**

**B. Thank you to Hiller Clubhouse, Peet's Coffee, Bread Garden, neighbors (Nancy Mueller)**

**C. Next quarterly Meeting: Wednesday Feb.6, 2008 (elections) (Nancy Mueller)**

**D. Adjournment to Neighborhood Watch Groups AND Refreshments (Nancy Mueller)**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:30PM.**

#### **Upcoming NH NCPC Calendar:**

*Wednesday, December.5, NH NCPC Steering Committee*  
*Wednesday, January 9, NH NCPC Town Hall Subcommittee*  
*Wednesday, February 6, NH NCPC TOWN HALL meeting*