

STAT COMMITTEE MEETING

June 27th, 2023

Meeting room of Sunland-Tujunga Branch Library

1. **Call to Order:** STAT Chairperson Pat Kramer called meeting to order at 6:12PM **Quorum of four was established** with STAT committee members: Pat Kramer, Chair; Jon von Gunten, Cochair; Leny Freeman, Member; George Arakel, Member; and Roger Swart, Member. Also present were: LAPD Motorcycle Officer Sal Venegas, Ricardo Flores, Sr. Field Deputy, CD7; Anthony Mainella and Ryan Dykstra, co-owner of Hoopers Rear Ends in Sun Valley; and Kimberly, representing a Sylmar business on Foothill Blvd.

2. **Chairperson's Announcements:** Pat welcomed everyone and asked each to introduce themselves. She spoke about the STAT committee's mission. The STAT Committee has existed for 8 years: We bring traffic issues to any relevant or possibly helpful government official and work on improvements to the main corridor. LAPD is our most helpful agency as they enforce effective anti-scofflaw measures.

3. **Approval of the June Minutes** of the STAT meeting: (Leny/George) moved to approve the Minutes, which were approved unanimously.

4. Reports by CD7 and LAPD:

Ricardo Flores of the Sunland-Tujunga office of CD7 cited various road and intersection projects to improve traffic including an emergency light at Tujunga LAFD #74 which replaces firefighters standing out in traffic to allow the fire trucks to leave the station. He did not have a timetable for the lefthand turn at Oro Vista and Foothill but said the light design was 90% finalized by DOT and could be installed in 3-6 months. He also spoke about a new solar street speedometer by the fire station. The other speed signs do not work and have been removed. Regarding the flooding and improvements requested for Oro Vista, he said Measure W funds are set to start on that soon. The Apperson/Valmont upgrade has been done as well as improvements along Tujunga Canyon Blvd. Pat relayed the committee's disapproval of installing any additional bollards due to fire evacuation concerns and asked for email updates on these projects.

LAPD Traffic Officer Sal Venegas gave traffic stats for May 2023:

In May, the Foothill District had 5 fatalities. 95% of fatalities are from pedestrians v. vehicles and often are homeless people. Fatalities are up 275% in the Foothill District. LAPD is planning to do pedestrian outreach to the homeless by giving them possibly reflective to wear when they cross streets, because they reliably ignore lights and crosswalks. DUIs and associated fatalities are down. New legislation says peds need not use crosswalks which means "No more jaywalking tickets." This old law was deemed prejudicial.

A commercial enforcement unit has been out on Tujunga Blvd. Mt. Gleason has no left turn signal from Gleason to Foothill (by Rattler) but Officer Venegas pointed out that the

current striping implies that such a turn is okay. They are dealing with a lot of abandoned vehicles. Previously, LAPD did an "Impound Detail" on Wednesdays, but now must give owner 24 hours' notice, so it takes double the time. Further, with manpower reduced, it's down to once a month. This derived from a lawsuit and the concern about large population living in RVs. Officer Venegas says he could tag 50 unregistered cars in 3 hours. The current situation requires more enforcement.

5. Public Comment:

Anthony Mainella and Ryan Dykstra, co-ownerz of Hoopers Rear Ends in Sun Valley, stated that there are consistent problems with a neighboring recycling business. They have called the city and gotten no response. Their business is on Branford between Glenoaks and San Fernando. The issues involve parked big rigs, trash being thrown in their dumpster, a narrow street with illegal dumping of recycled oil, and a man who runs out onto the street and blocks access to their driveway so customers can't access it. They asked for CD7 Flores' help, who stated that they were not in CD7. There was a difference in opinion on this issue. Ryan and Anthony stated that no entity is allowed to conduct business in street but DOT won't return their calls. They have extensive records on the problems they are encountering. The trucks that are blocking their driveway are adept at dodging citations by micro-movements.

Ricardo Flores said he would contact the neighboring deputy at CD6 and said he would help if he can. However, he said he didn't know what agency could provide code enforcement.

Our STAT committee referred Anthony and Ryan to the Sun Valley NC.

Officer Venegas noted that LAPD's Traffic Officers can't follow through on most accident investigations due to inaccurate info provided in traffic reports. He noted that the Valley Traffic Advisory Council—made up of volunteer business owners—helps LAPD facilitate officers ideas for improvements and raises funds for traffic enforcement.

Kimberly, who was representing a business in Sylmar, complained about construction on Foothill Boulevard which has shut down access to their business for the past four months. **The STAT committee referred her to the Sylmar NC.**

CD7's Ricardo Flores (213-254-7073) said he is getting ready to open the NVCH office again. He is in the process of hiring new people. Ricardo blamed City guidelines, not the Councilperson for STNC not being able to use NVCH for office space. He noted that the building is only open until 9 p.m. for meetings there.

Offers to publish what we send them in their social media.

Pat reiterated that we all need to cooperate with one another to solve problems. Dangerous traffic violators are S-T's biggest problem.

6. Committee Reports:

Leny Freeman has been speaking with two billboard companies about renting space for STAT to have messaging. His idea is to portray an officer pointing a laser-gun at oncoming traffic with the message to "Slow Down or Get a Ticket."

Officer Venegas said that 90% of citations issued are to neighborhood residents. Some public schools turn down LAPD's presentations on traffic fatalities.

7. **Next Meeting:** Our next STAT meeting is set for Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 6 p.m. We meet the 4th Tuesday each month.

8. Meeting Adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Minutes by Jon von Gunten