

**Racquet Club Estates Neighborhood Organization  
Minutes of May 9, 2015@ Vista Del Monte School  
General Membership Meeting  
By, Joseph May**

**Welcome and Introductions**

Robert Perry called the meeting to order at 10:10AM. Board members in attendance were: Robert Perry, Terry Towne, Dean Nicastro, Joseph May, John Russell, Sylvie Teicher, Donna Chaban, Lauren Scarbro, and Rick Vila There were roughly twenty-five members in attendance. Everyone introduced themselves.

Robert read the RCENO Mission Statement:

The mission of Racquet Club Estates Neighborhood Organization is to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood. As a team of neighbors we meet to discuss and act upon issues affecting our neighborhood; striving to improve the safety and appearance of our neighborhood and to enhance communications among neighbors and with the city.

**Public Comments**

- One new member said that he was excited about the neighborhood.
- A member stated that he was excited to see a much-needed home renovation on his street.
- Somebody asked if there was any information about the Racquet Club, of course nobody knows what is going on there.

**Approval of Minutes**

Terry made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 2015 BOA meeting. Robert seconded the motion. All in attendance voted in favor. The minutes were approved.

**Financial Report**

Dean reported that we have \$41,081.26 in our general account and \$5,500 in our second account. In addition we have \$1603.19 in our Visa account. Our current assets total: \$48,184.45. Dean circulated two documents: Profit & Loss Detail for January through December 2014 and Profit & Loss Detail for the 2015 home tour.

The financial report precipitated a discussion among the board and general members. The question was posed: why so much money in our account? It was mentioned that we do give a lot back to the community and the city and people were urged to check out what we have donated on our website.

## **Officer Report**

Terry described her role as our representative to ONE-PS. She described what ONE-PS was and deferred her report to Lee Bonno who was on the agenda.

## **Guest Speaker: Palm Springs Police Department- Officer Richard Salomon**

Richard Salomon explained that he was assigned to our neighborhood as PSPD liaison. He began his discussion with crime rates for RCE. He began by saying our crime rate was pretty low except in the area of home burglaries. He stated that this is particularly a problem among vacation rentals. He advised us to maintain our vacation rentals with the best deterrent being lights on and windows and doors locked. He also told us to observe abandoned and vacant homes. Houses with hedges or tall foliage in front are particularly vulnerable to break-ins. Finally he said that neighborhood watches are a great idea.

Officer Salomon then entertained questions and answers from members and the board:

- One member advised people to put wooden dowels into their sliders as an extra precaution.
- A member asked about numbers of police on patrol and Officer Salomon gave us a break down: There are currently 36 patrol officers, 90 in total including those in other divisions. He said that they were currently in the process of hiring more as some officers work many overtime hours.
- A neighbor asked about how to follow up on stories like a car crash that he read about in The Desert Sun. Salomon said that he could go to the PD's website or Facebook page.
- Someone asked about traffic issues in RCE and Salomon cited problem intersections like Indian Canyon and Racquet Club and Vista Chino and Indian Canyon. He was asked if these hot spots can be modified and was told that would be the city's responsibility.
- A member stated that he would like to commend the PSPD for the great job that they do.
- Officer Salomon was asked why property crimes are up and he stated that due to Proposition 47 more offenders are released from jail.
- Someone asked if there was a website that has crime statistics and Officer Salomon answered that there is an app one can go to.
- The question was asked if it was better to keep one's car in the garage or driveway if they were away. Salomon replied that either way but the best thing is to let neighbors know if you are going away and to look out for each other.

Officer Salomon said that if anyone has any further questions they could email him [richard.salomon@palmsspringspsca.gov](mailto:richard.salomon@palmsspringspsca.gov)

### **Guest Speaker: Desert Water Agency-James Cioffi, Vice President**

Mr. Cioffi began by reminding us that we are really in an eight-year drought, which was interrupted by a wet 2011. He stated that the good news is that we sit upon a huge aquifer but as Californians we need to conserve. He said that the aquifer was in good shape as it is regularly replenished by Colorado River water.

The discussion turned to water conservation programs such as lawn buy-back and other conservations efforts. Mr. Cioffi told us that lawns could only be watered between 7:00PM and 7:00AM Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The city is turning off fountains and lots of landscaping is being converted to drought tolerant. Because 70% of our domestic water usage goes for outdoor use that is really the area to focus on. The water company will install smart water controllers free of charge to any house in their jurisdiction.

Overall James Cioffi summarizes the problem as a statewide issue that our whole system of moving water needs an overhaul. He said that a large amount of water from the Sierra watershed goes out to sea through San Francisco Bay. He claims that needs to be harnessed and that the tunnel project diverting water under the delta needs to be built.

Mr. Cioffi then took some questions from the audience:

- One member mentioned that our local lawn buy-back program is cumbersome because homeowners have to put out funds up front and some can't afford to do so.
- A member recommended the cisterns in San Francisco for Palm Springs to catch rain runoff and Mr. Cioffi replied that our aquifer is our cistern.
- Another member wanted to know why the water bills measure water in units and not the standard measurement of gallons. Mr. Cioffi answered that if they were in gallons the numbers would be very high. He stated that they would look into changing that.
- One member stated that the water bills were "boring," difficult to read, and should be educational and informative. Cioffi replied that they would look into redesigning the bill.
- One member suggested that incentives to conserve should be looked at.
- The information being published throughout the state is showing Palm Springs as using an astronomical amount of water per person, the highest in the state. Mr. Cioffi replied that that is deceiving because our population more than doubles with people from elsewhere. He stated that 40% of water bills get mailed to out-of-town addresses.
- The question about using recycled water for golf courses came up and we learned that all but two golf courses use recycled water.
- One member asked about the water bottling plants that are taking ground water. It was pointed out that this is occurring on tribal land, not under DWA jurisdiction. Cioffi also pointed out that the amount of water taken

for bottling is a tiny amount when you look at the big picture. 80% of California's water goes for agriculture.

### **Guest Speaker: ONE-PS – Lee Bonno, Director of Neighborhood and Community Relations**

Ms. Bonno brought a map of the current neighborhoods and announced the creation of two new ones and the potential expansion and creations of new neighborhoods. She also told us that once again she was going to Neighborhoods USA (NUSA) conference later this month in Huston. She will be presenting at the conference. A member asked Lee to talk about something that she has taken away from the conference in the past. She told us about a workshop that she attended about mediation services for neighbors who are experiencing communication issues with each other. She also discussed another topic about fitting appropriate projects to people.

### **Elections**

Robert described the Board of Advisors election process. There were five seats up for election. The following board members wanted to run for reelection to their seats: Terry Towne, John Russell, Sylvie Teicher, and Lauren Scarbro. Rick Vila did not want to run for reelection. At this point Robert presented Rick a certificate for his service on the board.

Robert asked the members if anyone wanted to run for a seat on the board and Scott Workman said that he was interested. Nobody else came forward so Robert made a motion to elect the incumbents plus Scott Workman to the board, Joseph seconded it, all were in favor and the new board was put in place.

### **Aluminaire House Donation**

John said that he would shelve this topic until he has more information.

### **Desert Blind and Handicapped/Roy's in the Desert Donations**

Last year we gave \$1,000 to Desert Blind and Handicapped. Robert made a motion that we give \$2,500 this year. Donna seconded the motion. The question arose as to why are we increasing the amount. Someone else asked why are we not getting a presentation? A discussion ensued about how we give our charitable donations. It was agreed that we are being a bit arbitrary and the need to set a policy as to the percentage we give away needed to occur. Terry suggested that we table the motion and wait until June to further discuss the issue. Everyone agreed.

### **Block Party**

Robert announced to the group that we are having a neighborhood block party and all are invited. The event will include food and drink and possibly music from local neighborhood musicians. The party will be held on Ace Circle, October 3 from 3:00PM to 5:00PM.

### **Old Business / New Business / Other / Adjournment**

- Lauren told the group that she has tee shirts for sale.
- Sylvie announced that she has found a storage unit for our stuff.

Robert made a motion that we adjourn, Terry seconded it, all were in favor and the meeting ended at 12:00 noon.

Ice cream was served to all.

### 2015 BOA Meeting Schedule

<b>Month</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Host</b>	<b>Time</b>
January	1/10/2015	Terry Towne	10:00AM-12:00PM
February	2/7/2015	Robert Perry	10:00AM-12:00PM
March	3/14/2015	Sylvie Teicher	4:00PM-6:00PM
April	4/11/2015	Donna Chaban	10:00AM-12:00PM
May	5/9/2015	Vista del Monte	10:00AM-12:00PM
June	6/13/2015	Scott Workman	10:00AM-12:00PM
July	No meeting		
August	8/8/2015	Lauren Scarbro	10:00AM-12:00PM
September	9/12/2015	Joseph May	10:00AM-12:00PM
October	10/03/2015	Block Party	3:00PM- 5:00PM
October	10/10/2015	Sylvie Teicher	10:00AM-12:00PM
November	11/14/2015	Terry Towne	10:00AM-12:00PM
December	12/12/2015	Robert Perry	10:00AM-12:00PM