

CAC Meeting Minutes, July 12, 2021

HB 1310: State and local police are studying whether they can continue to assist in incidents of behavioral health emergencies due to a new state law, HB-1310, a law which scales back the scope of law enforcement from what they do now. In the past they have cleared scenes so that firefighters and paramedics can do their work in safety. The issue is very complex. For example, suicide is not a crime, so law enforcement may be limited in their response. So we as the NMRFA will also be looking at how any changes by law enforcement will affect our procedures. Deputy Sheriff Ryan Spurling has provided a powerful public presentation on the issue which describes the stress law enforcement is experiencing as discussions on the topic are ongoing. Fire personnel responses such as having a reserve deputy on shift, having firefighters wearing Kevlar vests, relying on other crisis responders, and having law enforcement stage further away from the scene have been discussed but can all have very mixed success so are not feasible. We will be continuing our discussions with law enforcement personnel and among our responders as we study the situation and work out changes in policy.

Burn Ban: This has changed with increased heat and drier weather. The Fire Marshall has declared there is a full burn ban in effect. All outdoor burning is restricted until at least the end of September. Fireworks were restricted to a six-hour period to reduce fire danger. There possibly could be better signage about burn bans and restrictions on fireworks, such as at realty offices or at the MTA Park and Ride, so that everyone is informed.

HQ Station: The building is coming together quickly. There was a question of the building being close to the road. That's not a problem because we are planning for the rigs to return, coming around the back of the building, not the front. It is possible that the CAC members will meet at the building site for the October 11 meeting, and have the Supervisor take us on a walk-through. The planned opening is in February of 2022.

Strategic Plan: The Strategic Plan Committee members are preparing to present the plan to commissioners. It's a very ambitious plan that will push us as we go forward.

Behavioral Health Program: We have been able, through a federal government grant, to hire Lea Sullivan, a professional who works specifically with public safety employees. She is available 24/7 for our crew members and recently did a de-brief with B Shift after a very tough call. She does individual counseling and preventive health programs for Authority employees as well.

Next CAC Meeting: October 11, 2021.