

**Joint
Public Safety and Beautification & Maintenance
Commissions
Special Meeting**

**April 21, 2005
7:30 p.m.**

Chairperson Veronica Bloomfield called the joint Public Safety and Beautification & Maintenance Commission to order at 7:30 p.m., April 21, 2005, at Artesia City Hall, 18747 Clarkdale Ave. Chairperson John Bothof led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Commissioner Veronica Bloomfield
 Commissioner Karen Speers
 Commissioner Joyce Yeutter
 Commissioner Pete Ochoa
 Commissioner Barbara Applebury
 Commissioner Adrian Mulder
 Commissioner Aurelia Palhinha
 Commissioner John Bothof
 Commissioner Paul Barcelos*

ABSENT: Commissioner Tom Stephens

ALSO PRESENT: Maria Dadian, City Manager
 Justine Menzel, Deputy City Manager
 Ed Leon, Public Works Foreman
 Sgt. Jeanette Dingillo, Sheriff
 Amelia Nacu, Administrative Secretary

*Commissioner Paul Barcelos arrived at 7:40 p.m.

4. COMMUNICATION FROM THE AUDIENCE

Commissioner Veronica Bloomfield announced that this is the time for public input relative to issues on or not on the printed agenda, and to observe the time limit of five minutes.

There were no public comments.

5. STAFF REPORTS

a. A Staff Report Relative to the City's Graffiti Removal Program

City Manager Maria Dadian opened up with stating the purpose of the joint meeting between the Public Safety and Beautification & Maintenance Program. The Public Safety Commission wished to discuss the city's Graffiti Abatement Program with the Beautification & Maintenance Commission. The Public Safety Commission wanted to review the Graffiti Abatement Program and hold a discussion on how the two groups can work together, and possibly develop something as a group for the program.

Maria Dadian stated that the city undertook a Vine Planting Program a few years ago to sponsor the program, which was run by donations. The program was successful initially. Neighboring cities asked on how Artesia implemented the program in areas that had no ground landscaping. The vines did deter graffiti in that area. Recently, graffiti is again on the rise and is associated with gangs and tagging crews.

Maria Dadian stated that once a month a Task Force meets at City Hall to talk about various crime-related problems, graffiti being one of the most continuous topics.

Maria Dadian stated the procedure Public Works does before removing graffiti, which is to take a picture of the graffiti before removing the graffiti and then relaying the photo to the sheriff's department in an effort to identify individuals engaging in vandalism.

Maria Dadian stated that if graffiti is on private property, there is a certain procedure that must be done before the city can work on the graffiti.

Maria Dadian stated that a code enforcement officer went from business to business on Artesia Boulevard to have the owner sign a Graffiti Abatement Consent and Release form so that, in the future, if the business is vandalized, code enforcement can go ahead and remove the graffiti without going through the process again (because the owner already signed the form). It is the intent of Code Enforcement to have every business in the city sign this form.

Commissioner Paul Barcelos stated that as the two commissions discuss the topic of graffiti abatement, he hopes the city council takes their recommendations seriously.

Commissioner Karen Speers agreed with Barcelos.

Commissioner John Bothof said it doesn't make sense that public works can't come through an alley and clean up graffiti, and he thinks something ought to be done.

Commissioner Barcelos suggested "identifying" what the problems are, and making a way that is more accessible to residents to report a problem, like a "hotline". Barcelos also opted for more surveillance and "some kind of patrol", as well as making parents responsible for the problem. He wants to find a way to make the people in the city more aware and more "empowered".

Sgt Jeanette Dingillo talked about different ways taggers can make “markers”. Maria Dadian said the city is “exploring” different techniques and equipment for graffiti abatement. Dadian also said that the budget for graffiti abatement is \$6000.

Commissioner Barcelos said that \$6000 is too small.

Maria Dadian said that if the city spent more, then next year’s budget will fit the expenditure.

Commissioner Barcelos said their purpose here is to find out some way to make things better.

Maria Dadian said the most important thing is if the commissioners can convince the 17 thousand people in Artesia who do not attend these meetings that this is their problem as well. Public awareness is important, Dadian said, and it is frustrating when nobody cares, and the ones that do care are too busy.

Commissioner Barcelos said that one thing they need to discuss is to find a way to make more people aware. Barcelos acknowledged that people fear getting involved. Barcelos said one possible tactic is to have “tagger’s” parents pay the fine.

Commissioner Adrian Mulder said it’s time to start talking to neighborhood watch block captains and the PTA at the schools, and then present these ideas to the parents of the children who do this.

Commissioner Paul Barcelos suggested writing letters to the local newspaper.

Commissioner Veronica Bloomfield said there is a parental responsibility for the actions of their children, and that the commissions should discuss this to fully understand how everything works.

Maria Dadian suggested the commissions hold a town hall meeting to explore the graffiti problem in Artesia. Take the time to market this to the community, so people can get a chance to share information.

Commissioner Paul Barcelos suggested meeting with business leaders in the community and see what they’d be willing to do and how the city can help them.

Commissioner John Bothof suggested we be out there and start planting more vines so that people know that we’re doing something about it before the commissions have a town hall meeting.

Commissioner Paul Barcelos suggested an “Adopt-a-Wall” Program.

The commissioners and the city manager began speaking about the price of vines.

Maria Dadian reported to the commission about an illegal addition at a property in Artesia.

Sgt. Dingillo recounted an encounter with a juvenile to emphasize the point that some parents are not taking responsibility for their children.

After some discussion, Commissioner Joyce Yeutter stated whether the commissions agreed to have an ad hoc committee consisting of two people from each commission. The commission will consist of Karen Speers, Pete Ochoa, Paul Barcelos, and Adrian Mulder.

Maria Dadian stated that the ad hoc commission needs to plan a date to meet, and the city will assist if needed.

The next special joint meeting of the Public Safety and Beautification & Maintenance Commissions was decided to be on May 31, 2005.

6. COMMISSION REPORTS

7. ADJOURNMENT

The joint meeting of the Public Safety and Beautification & Maintenance Commissions was adjourned at 9:20 p.m. to the next joint meeting on May 31, 2005, at 7:30 p.m.