



Recap of Meeting January 20, 2011

HOA Members Represented

Aldea – The Vistas	Cathedral Canyon #5
Candelwood Villas II	Cathedral Canyon #17
Cathedral Canyon #1	Cathedral Canyon #18
Cathedral Canyon #2	Montage at Mission Hills
Cathedral Canyon #4	Rio del Sol – Las Casitas

Legal Counsel: Jennifer James, Attorney at Law – Epstein, Grinnell & Howell

Guests Present

Bill Maxwell – Mira Vista (Rancho Mirage)
Lt. Glenn Haas – Cathedral City Police Department
Dave Koller – Coachella Valley Water District
Heather Engel – Coachella Valley Water District
Lorraine Acosta – Coachella Valley Water District
Leslie Spoor – Executive Errands

Announcement: Rita Greenwood introduced Al Hallinan as the new Co-Chair and Richard Pokard as the new Treasurer

Welcome: Al Hallinan, Co-Chair

Treasurer's Report – To be distributed

Guest Speaker – “Tips from a Reformed Burglar” Lt. Glenn Haas – Cathedral City Police Department

Lt. Haas said he has over 30 years in law enforcement and is currently Patrol Commander in the Cathedral City Police Department. He spoke in a very personable and factual manner, citing many examples to illustrate his points.

It is a horrible feeling to get home and have your stuff gone. Typically you will never see your stuff again. To improve the chances of recovering your stuff you should write down serial numbers of all items that have them and take a photo.

Burglars are not your TV burglars. They do not use sophisticated electronic devices to break into your home or track your patterns of coming and going. Their typical tools, if any, are a flashlight, screwdriver, wrench and maybe a hammer. They try doors and window to find one open or that can be forced open easily and quietly.

The number one deterrent to burglary is locking your windows and doors.



Burglars want to go in the easiest way possible, quietly, grab what is closest and go sell it.

Anything you can do to harden the target will move the burglar from your house to the next house or down the street or a few blocks over.

Have neighbors watch for unusual or suspicious persons or activity – and report it (many people observe, but do not report). Don't suppress your intuition; if something doesn't look right call the police and they will respond to investigate.

Get out and greet unfamiliar people on your street – the last thing a burglar wants is to be seen and recognized. Call out "Hey Pete, visiting your grandmother again?" After the greeting he knows he's been seen and will likely continue on a few more blocks. Or use your cell phone to take a picture.

Incidents of burglaries and crime throughout the valley are very low, but could always be better.

Panic alarm – the alarm that can be worn to press for summoning help in an emergency – he has never had a good one. They may be useful for medical emergencies, but are not good for criminal emergencies. The problem is it sends a distress signal but no other information about the reason or situation. The police have no idea of what they are getting into – and based on experience of never having responded to a real emergency, they do not respond as fast.

This also applies to security company alarms. Last year the City of Palm Springs had 8800 calls, 77 were actual crimes. Cathedral City had 5400 calls, 44 were crimes. The police evaluate the call history before committing resources to investigate. If the address has had 10 false calls within the past year, they may not respond at all.

The best way to report a crime in progress is to call 911 and stay on the line. The dispatcher will keep requesting information that they are typing into their computer and relaying to the officers that are in the process of responding. If you cannot talk, call 911 and drop the phone, the dispatcher can then hear just about everything going on in the room.

Most burglaries occur during the day – while people are at work and school.

He said that there is no real difference in crimes in gated vs. non-gated communities. A difference is that it takes the police longer to respond to a call within a gated community, because they need to open the gates.

Guest Speaker – "Make Staying Within Your Water Budget Your New Year's Resolution" Dave Koller – Coachella Valley Water District



The Water District is under a State mandate to reduce water consumption by 15% by 2015 and 20% by 2020. They are doing well, as of today they have already reduced consumption by 16%.

Plants need very little water in winter. Dave provided a graph of the “Weekly Watering Index – Historical” composed of a summary of several years of observations. It showed the peak consumption requirement the week of June 21st.indicated as 100%, from there the consumption declines to 20% by the end of December. Plants require only 20% of the water in winter that they require in the summer. If your sprinklers are set for 10 minutes in summer, they should be progressively adjusted to 2 minutes in winter.

He also provided a graph “Weekly Plant Water Use (Inches) – 2010” that showed the figures used by the CVWD to set the water budgets for customers. This graph tracked the historical graph very well, but showed deviations that had occurred during 2010 due to specific weather conditions that existed during 2010. An example was a significant reduction during December when we had all the rain. The CVWD adjusts the water budgets each billing cycle based on actual plant water use requirements.

He provided another example of graphical and tabular data form a HOA customer. It showed the monthly consumption for the past 3 years generally reflecting a reduction in water use and cost.

He stated that yellow grass is often the result of the use of fertilizer. If you use too much water, the fertilizer is washed through the soil and no longer available for the grass.

Gardeners are the hardest to convince to leave the smart sprinkler controllers alone. The controllers are normally initially set to deliver the proper amount of water to meet plant requirements. Normally if yellow or soggy areas appear it is due to problems with the sprinkle heads or their location.

CVWD is still participating in their smart controller program that will pay half the cost of upgrading to smart controllers. Install smart controller(s), CVWD inspects the installation and controller settings, and then they send a refund check.

They conduct Water Management classes for homeowners and gardeners frequently, the next will be January 26th, followed by another in June. The classes are available in both English and Spanish.

The priorities for actions to stay within your water budget are:

1. Have gardener manage clocks – keep them adjusted to the recommended watering times frequently (this costs nothing).



2. Invest in smart controllers (CVWD will reimburse you half the cost).
3. Look for wet spots/dry spots and fix sprinkle heads and lines.

Additional information is available on their website: www.cvwd.org

The District is currently talking to Cathedral City staff about initiating a turf buy back program.

Guest Speaker – “Enhancing Your Vendor List and More” Leslie Spoor – Executive Errands

Leslie provided an overview of the types of services and benefits homeowners and HOAs can receive from service referral firms.

Many HOAs make available to their homeowners a vendor list – this can subject the HOA to lawsuits from dissatisfied homeowners that use the listed vendors.

A better option is to use an outsource list from a referral service firm:

- This should be a licensed company that provides the HOA with a release of liability.
- The company should allow homeowners to choose their own contractors from the referred list.
- Company is responsible for making sure the contractors are properly licensed and insured.
- If your HOA is satisfied with a particular contractor, the service should be willing to add them to their referral list if they meet licensing and insurance requirements.
- The service should be at no cost to the HOA or homeowner.
- Funding for the service by contractor paid annual fees and referral fees.

These companies also can be a valuable resource for property managers.

Contractors these days are increasingly prone to dropping insurance to save money. Also dropping regular employees and hiring day laborers. To guard against problems that this may result in, all HOAs should carry Workers Comp insurance policies.

Leslie distributed her firm’s service flyer and her business card. The company website is: www.executive-errands.com

Community Forum

Rita requested that Council member provide suggestions for future topics for the Community Forum.



Handouts – in addition to those mentioned above:

- 2011 Lush & Efficient Calendar from Coachella Valley Water District containing month-to-month water wise landscape gardening
- Water Wise Newsletter – Fall 2010 from Coachella Valley Water District

Website – <http://hoapresidentscouncil.com> , Click on “Cathedral City”

Next Meeting – Thursday, February 17, 2011 at the Cathedral City – City Hall

Tom Tousignant, Recorder