

Monday, May 06, 2002

Honorable Mayor and Members of
The Hermosa Beach City Council

Regular meeting of
May 14, 2002

**DEPLOYMENT OF POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT
PERSONNEL FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY HOLIDAY**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council:

1. Receive and file the following report on the planning and preparations regarding the deployment of police and fire personnel on the Fourth of July holiday, 2002.
2. Consider adoption of an ordinance prohibiting parties advertised to the general public and amending the Hermosa Beach Municipal Code.

BACKGROUND

The Fourth of July is a major holiday in Hermosa Beach. Large numbers of people come into town to attend parties and go to the beach. The fireworks show in Redondo Beach serves as an added attraction as people come to the beach in Hermosa to watch the Redondo show. Traditionally, the police encounter large crowds with live bands at neighborhood parties. Due to the cooperative nature of most people in town on the Fourth, officers generally achieve cooperation and compliance through a low key, diplomatic and friendly approach.

In an effort to mitigate the undesirable effects of large parties, live bands and illegal fireworks use, last year the police department deployed additional officers including Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputies and California Highway Patrol Officers. The objective was to display a large police presence in the hopes of curtailing undesirable activities. The other objective was to have sufficient officers available to properly handle large unruly crowds. The police department felt that these objectives were achieved. The large deployment of officers was effective and certainly established a deployment pattern for future 4th of July holidays. As a recap of last year, officers handled a total of 433 calls for service in a 24-hour period. There were 12 arrests, and 116 citations issued, the majority of which (81) were for the possession and consumption of alcohol in public.

At the direction of Council, the Newport Beach and Huntington Beach Police Departments were contacted regarding their enforcement of noise complaints. Both cities utilize a noise meter and have implemented a complex noise ordinance around its use. Staff recommends against the use of a noise meter. The police department explored the use of a noise meter in the 1980's and found the use of a noise meter to be extremely complex not only in its use but in the presentation at court. The current noise ordinance utilizes the "reasonable man" approach which staff feels is much easier to implement and explain in court. The police department has been utilizing the new noise ordinance for loud parties. Additionally, a sample ordinance drafted by the City Attorney has been attached to this agenda item that specifically targets parties that are open to the general public which either charges some sort of admission fee or for which the party has been advertised as an open party. It is recommended that this ordinance be considered by Council as an additional tool to be utilized in the regulation and enforcement of

large parties that fall into this category. The police department has encountered such parties not only on the Fourth of July but on other occasions as well.

In the remaining weeks before the Fourth, the police and fire departments will utilize available media resources to advertise and educate the public on the illegality of fireworks and the illegal use of alcohol on the beach, Strand and other public areas. The local papers will be contacted and the "Beach Beat" program on the local cable channel will be utilized. A letter to residents regarding parties and alcohol use will be sent to strategic areas of the City and placed on the police department web site. A 4' by 30' banner will be installed at Pier Avenue and Valley Drive from June 17 through July 8 with a public safety message prohibiting fireworks. Placards with a "No Fireworks" message will be strategically placed throughout the City. Police officers have been and will continue to be detailed onto the beach and Strand on a weekly basis, especially on the weekends, to monitor and enforce alcohol violations. This early intervention will hopefully start sending the message about the restricted use of alcohol on the beach and Strand.

The entire police department will be mobilized to work the Fourth. Every officer that can be deployed during the afternoon and evening hours will be. Officers of the California Highway Patrol and deputies of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department will once again be brought in. The deputy sheriffs will be paired up with Hermosa Beach officers and deployed in foot patrols along the Strand. Their objective will be to monitor party activity among the Strand homes and alcohol possession/consumption on the Strand and beach. The CHP Officers will be utilized for traffic control and monitoring Pacific Coast Highway.

The annual so called "Ironman competition" will probably occur this year as it has done for the past several years. It is the intent of the police department to monitor this event as it takes place with the aim of making sure that order is maintained and people are kept safe. This has been our strategy for the past several years and it has been found to be very successful.

The fire department will have extra staffing commencing at 12:00 noon until midnight. Engines 11 and 12 will be fully staffed with 4 firefighters each and 2 fire investigators will work in the field as a team. This staffing may be accomplished with regular and reserve firefighters.

The purpose of the large deployment of police officers is two-fold. First, it is desired that the public see a large police presence. Second, this presence not only promotes a feeling of safety but also sends the message to those individuals that wish to start problems that the police have the resources to respond. Despite the large police presence, traditional methods of diplomacy and courtesy will be employed in dealing with large parties. However, if a particular problem occurs, the resources will be available to respond.

In conclusion, efforts taken in the coming weeks by the police and fire departments and a large police presence on the Fourth itself should mitigate many of the crowd and noise issues that are customary for this holiday. We felt that our deployment plan of last year was successful and we will continue to refine this plan this year. The overall objective is to promote safety and for people to enjoy themselves but not at the expense of others.

FISCAL IMPACT

The projected costs for these additional deployments are as follows:

Police Department overtime costs:	\$20,000 (Overtime account)
Contract costs for outside law enforcement:	15,000 (COPS budget)
Fire Department banner	1,075
No Fireworks Placards	330
Fire Department overtime and reserves	2,221
Projected total costs	\$38,626

Respectfully submitted,

Concur:

MICHAEL LAVIN, CHIEF OF POLICE
HERMOSA BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

STEPHEN BURRELL
CITY MANAGER

RUSSELL TINGLEY, FIRE CHIEF
HERMOSA BEACH FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fiscal Impact:

Viki Copeland, Finance Director

Dear Resident,

With the 4th of July holiday drawing near, we in the police department are seeking the cooperation of residents all over the City of Hermosa Beach in allowing everyone who lives here or comes to Hermosa Beach that day to have a safe and enjoyable holiday. We understand that the 4th of July is a great holiday for parties and having friends and family over. However, we in the police and fire departments have some concerns about how these gatherings are conducted. We would like to make you aware of some of the laws and ordinances that exist for your safety and make some recommendations. We would ask that you take this information into consideration if you are planning any type of party or gathering.

1. All fireworks are illegal in the City of Hermosa Beach.
2. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the Beach or Strand. Possession of open containers of alcohol and consumption of alcohol in public areas is unlawful. Public areas include public sidewalks (including the walk streets between Hermosa Avenue and the Strand) streets and public parks. If you are serving alcohol at your gathering please keep the alcohol on your property.
3. If you are going to have a live band at your party please be mindful of your neighbors and the noise generated by your party. Contact your neighbors and let them know of your plans. Give your neighbors your name and phone number to call you if they have a problem. It is preferable that a band plays during the daytime hours rather than the evening hours. It is preferable that a band plays inside of your residence instead of outside your residence. Bands playing outside have a tendency to attract crowds including unwanted guests. It is the crowd situation that concerns the police department the most. Crowds are unpredictable and difficult to control. If crowds are blocking the Strand or other walkways, the police will be called in and ask people to leave. If the band is too loud or is causing other problems, the band will be shut down. You as the host will be held responsible for the conduct of your party and you can be subject to citation, arrest, and reimbursement to the City for costs associated with the response of police officers to your party.
4. If you decide to have a party at your residence, please make arrangements to have adequate restroom facilities for your guests. The police department receives many complaints of people urinating in all sorts of places around town because of inadequate restroom facilities.

We feel that if you pay attention to these particular issues that many of the problems that develop on the 4th of July holiday can be averted or minimized. Rest assured that a large number of police officers will be deployed to enforce order. It is our desire for everyone to have an enjoyable holiday experience but not at the expense of others. Your cooperation would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Michael Lavin, Chief of Police
Hermosa Beach Police Department

Russell Tingley, Fire Chief
Hermosa Beach Fire Department

ORDINANCE NO.

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF HERMOSA BEACH
PROHIBITING PARTIES ADVERTISED
TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND AMENDING
THE HERMOSA BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE**

The City Council of the City of Hermosa Beach does ordain as follows:

Section 1. Title 9 of the Hermosa Beach Municipal Code is amended by adding thereto a new Chapter 9.28 to read as follows:

Chapter 9.28

Prohibition Against Parties Advertised and Open to the Public

Sections:

9.28.10 Parties Advertised and Open to Public Prohibited

9.28.10 Parties Advertised and Open to Public Prohibited

It shall be unlawful for any person to conduct or hold in any residence any party or dance at which live or recorded music is provided which is open to the general public and: (1) for which admission is charged, or, (2) for which brochures, posters, or handbills advertising the party or dance are distributed, or other advertisement made or published, or, (3) for which a charge is made for refreshments. This section shall not apply to functions organized for a charitable, religious or political purpose.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2002

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk