

**Morongo Basin Municipal Advisory Council
to the Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe
Minutes, Regular Open Session Meeting, 5:30 P.M., Monday, October 11, 2021
Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

A. Call to Order @ 5:31 pm

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Roll Call: Steve Bardwell: Pioneertown, Michel Cicero: Landers, Kate Collins: Copper Mountain Mesa, Pat Flanagan: Desert Heights, Glen Harris: Joshua Tree, Jim Harvey: Johnson Valley, Gayl Swarat: Morongo Valley, Tom Ziegert: Yucca Mesa. All present. (No current rep for Wonder Valley.)

D. The 10/11/21 MAC Meeting Agenda was adopted.

E. The 9/13/21 MAC MEETING Minutes unanimously approved as submitted.

F. Glen Harris appointed board chair. Kate Collins appointed secretary.

G. Public Safety Reports:

1. SB County Fire/Chief Tuttle: No stats this month due to trouble with call stat reporting software. New website is up and running with burn status displayed at bottom (sbcfire.org). Good source of information along with SB Ready app.

2. Morongo Valley Fire/Chief Yearsley: Call breakdown in Morongo Valley area for September: 43 total, 23 EMS, 12 paramedic, 1 fire, 5 accidents, 6 mutual aids with Riverside county. Road construction continues on Highway 62. Please slow down; there have been many near misses. No burning in Morongo Valley area; no burn permits being issued currently. There have also been reports of bears ripping through park trash cans and a mountain lion spotting.

3. CHP/Lt. Lee: Statistics for last month as follows: 32 Crashes (24 non-injury, 6 minor, 1 suspected serious, 1 fatal). 20 DUI arrests. Citations: 87 in Morongo Valley (7 misdemeanors, 2 felonies), 144 in Landers (4 misdemeanors, 2 felonies) , 322 in Joshua Tree (22 misdemeanors, 1 felony), 7 east of 29 Palms (2 misdemeanors). Highway 62 construction continues; this Caltrans website gives information and also has an option to sign up for alerts: <https://state-route-62-mill-and-overlay.constantcontactsites.com/> National night out (first responder meet and greet) Thursday Oct 21st. Will take place at Yucca Valley community center center, Town Hall and City Park. There's a demonstration at the community center from 5:30 to 7:30pm.

4. Sheriff/Captain Niles: Operation Hammerstrike still ongoing, press releases are being issued. There has been a high call volume over summer. Summer is usually busy with an average of 1,800 calls/month for service, but this summer was closer to 2k /month. There has been a significant rise in property crime, compared to 10 year avg. 65 burglary calls, 70 grand theft, 30 grand theft of vehicle. Not sure what to attribute rise in crime to. Know your neighbors and your neighborhood. Contact sheriff's department if you see suspicious behavior.

1. Question (M. Cicero/Landers). What is status of illegal grows/Opertation Hammerstrike? The Operation is county wide. County is large; it can take time to get search warrants. Never hesitate to contact dept. if new grows are spotted.
2. Question (Heather Clisby/Z107.7). Do door cameras like Ring help sheriff response to property crimes? Yes. Please share any information you have that could be helpful. Can submit via email or anonymous tip submission via phone or online.
3. Question (Eric Hamberg): Is there a percentage of illegal grow sites that have been impacted by county enforcement? ~33% of sites that were known since March 16 2021 have been shut down. This includes local operations and Operation Hammerstrike, which started in late August.
4. Question (Jane Jarlsburg): Which neighborhoods are being hit by increased property crimes and is there any relation to increased Airbnb presence? Not sure, but majority occur in Mesa/Landers area. However, every area of the Basin has been affected to some degree. Sheriff dept. does not note any rental (short-term or longterm) status in crime statistics.
5. CalFire/Alison Hesterly: Continue to stay vigilant about fire safety, especially with a high wind event continuing through tomorrow.

H. PRESENTATION: Rural Broadband by Blake Baxter

Upload speeds are very important, but most connections here have higher download than upload speed. Upload speed has become increasingly important since pandemic with Zoom, etc. Grant funding is based on census blocks, which don't align neatly with neighborhoods in the real world. More funding will become available from the national infrastructure bill. County plan does not include funding for internet.

Question/Comment (Jane Jarlsberg): Pretty discouraging. Moved here 5 years ago. MAC should have subcommittee to focus on internet. B. Baxter: We should should have an economic development group focused on broadband. We need more funding from county, and should organize to encourage development in this area.

I. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Thank you and congrats to Steve Reyes. Honored to have position.

I. MAC MEMBERS REPORTS:

S. Bardwell/Pioneertown: Overlay district proposal has been submitted to the county. There is wide community support,

but some individuals have not approved yet because they want clarification on which temporary special events can be held in Pioneertown. SB County preparing housing element (HE) update to general plan. The Central goal is providing affordable

housing. It must be updated every 8 years. Dept. of Land Use services has posted a draft. There's been concern regarding the effect short term rentals (STRs) have on housing. Currently HE not required to address STRs. MBCA is putting together a letter to request guidance on this issue. CA public utilities commissions is trying to set new net metering plan. Advocating to reduce money paid to customers for rooftop solar. MBCA and Save California Solar working to encourage rooftop solar. Save California Solar: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/12IJiULQVUJSY0mkO0xwqJ6UQq9rscPiBgT7Tfl8ez8/edit>

M. Cicero/Landers: Congrats to Landers resident Roxanne Shamay, Morongo Basin sheriff volunteer of the year. Moharve Mercantile general store exhibit opening. Gran Opening party on Sat Oct 16 from 11 to 3. More at MorongoBasinHistoricalSociety.com

K. Collins/Copper Mountain: USDA Food Distribution held 3rd Tuesdays of the Month, next one will be 10/19 from 9-11AM at Copper Mountain Mesa Community Center. Community center breakfasts are still on hold due to kitchen repairs, but should start back up soon.

G. Harris/Joshua Tree: This weekend and next weekend having Highway 62 Art Tours. Featuring 150+ local artists showing their work at their own private studios. 10am-5 pm Catalog, map, and app at hwy62arttours.org

G. Swarat/Morongo Valley: People are having hard time getting homeowner's insurance due to fires. Wild animals continue to be at the park in Morongo Valley. Make sure to supervise kids and pack out your trash.

J. Harvey/Johnson Valley: Debris from illegal marijuana farms remains after busts. County is working at abatement ordinance to clean up after farms, remove infrastructure.

T.Ziegert/Yucca Mesa: There is still an issue with extensive fencing blocking wildlife corridors. The nets on the Burrtec property at 247 and Buena Vista have deteriorated; trash has been blowing off property (especially eastward).

Wonder Valley: No report; Still in process of appointing new WV rep.

J. New Business/Public Comments:

Jane Jarlsberg: Consider allowing for public comment at start of meeting. We should include water district reports on agenda. Also, the Joshua Basin Water Dist. has regulations for re-use of water; there should be a meeting with STR owners about water conservation. Jane will follow up. Ziegert: Supports liaison with water district. Public comment put at the end due to "gorilla commenting"

Ray Kennedy with redistricting commission: CA supreme court deadline Nov 15 for preliminary draft map, followed by 14

days for public comment. Map to be finalized by Dec 20. There is a meeting this Thursday 11am-6pm More info at wedrawthelinesca.org/meetings

K. Adjournment: 7:11PM. Next Meeting: Nov 8th, 5:30pm on Zoom