

Claremont Police Commission
League of Women Voters of Mt. Baldy Area
Observer Report by Jack Caselles
May 2019

This is a summary of past issues and reports given at the regular meeting of the Claremont Police Commission.

Commission officers:

Commissioners: Jon Strash, Chair; John Perez, Vice Chair; Frank De Leo, Tina Brooks, Frank Bedoya, Caleb Mason

Others in Attendance: Police Chief Shelly Vander Veen, Captain Aaron Fate.

Staff: Lisa Amaya, Sr. Administrative Assistant of the City of Claremont.

Claremont is a quiet town in respect to major crime and issues that usually plague larger agencies. The Claremont Police Department keeps records of all crimes and how they were handled for ten years although only five years are required. During those ten years the major crimes of abduction, murder etc. are almost nonexistent. The Agency, its service men and women, and especially its leadership, are to be commended on the fine work they do. (Chief Vander Veen has been given the 41st Assembly District “Woman of Distinction Award.”)

The Commission is to be commended for the way that they attend to the issues and how they work to support the Agency.

The failure of the ballot measure to fund a new Police facility in the city of Claremont presents a continuing constant challenge: how to function as a modern enforcement agency in light of antiquated and failing equipment. The city hired a company to assess the station’s status. Its findings are: “Although the projected cost of the retrofit and expansion to the existing station is \$22.4M, the PSCAC's recommendation is to pursue a \$ 17. 5M parcel tax in November 2020. The remaining \$ 5M would have to come from other funding sources, grants, loans, etc.” (Police Commission minutes 7/11/2019).

Crime in the city continues to be one of the lowest in the surrounding area, but efforts to diminish Part 1 crimes continue. A full report of the status of crime in the city was given at the March 7, 2019 meeting and is available online at <https://www.ci.claremont.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=13322> . Most crimes of theft and burglary are related to unattended automobiles and bicycles. A major achievement is the education and response of apartment owners and managers to methods of improving surveillance due to the “Crime Free Multi-Housing Program.”

The issue of “racial profiling” was addressed and the Chief commented that there had been two complaints this year. One was dismissed and the other was still under investigation. Resident Jim Keith suggested that the city hire the County Sheriff’s department to investigate the issue. It was noted that the Claremont Police Department had only two complaints out of 32,000 calls. Another major issue is that of the Homeless. This issue will be addressed at the Commission’s May 7th meeting.