

Public Safety Planning for Summer Meeting Notes

In response to a series of recent public safety incidents, including three involving firearms, Councilmember Duggan convened a meeting to discuss public safety for the upcoming summer.

Attendees:

- City Prosecutor Doug Haubert
- Deputy Chief Michael Solomita
- East Division Police Commander Shaleana Benson
- Assistant Fire Chief Jim Underwood
- Health and Human Services Director Alison King and Deputy Director Erica Valencia-Adachi
- Gabriela Jilek, representing Dispatch as Communications Center Officer
- Lori Voss, Customer Service Supervisor, and Kellie Duggan, Assistant Administrative Analyst, Business Licensing Division
- Deputy District Attorney Jason Lustig, representing District Attorney Nathan Hochman's Office

Meeting Overview:

Increased Patrols in High-Activity Areas

Commander Shaleana Benson announced that overtime has been approved for summer patrols in the tidelands area. This means increased police presence in areas like the beachfront along Ocean Boulevard from the Peninsula past the Belmont Veterans Memorial Pier, Bayshore Beach, Mother's Beach, Colorado Lagoon, Marine Stadium, and 2nd Street. These areas have increased activity over the summer, and more police presence is expected to improve safety and help share the burden of calls for service. Officers have been directed to maintain a visible presence along 2nd Street when not responding to active calls.

Commander Benson also stated that the City's High Crime Focus Team, which focuses on reducing shootings and removing guns from our communities, will be working in the East Division over the summer bringing additional Police presence. This detail, as well as Motors and the Neighborhood Safety Bike Team, will be an available resource to help over the summer and not a daily occurrence.

The Role of Dispatch and Reporting

Gabriela Jilek emphasized the importance of reporting incidents through both 911 and the non-emergency line. Dispatch prioritizes calls based on four key pieces of information: Who, What, Where, and When.

Accurate and complete information directly affects how quickly and effectively resources are deployed. Even if an officer is not immediately dispatched, making a report still logs the incident, contributing to the overall data used to assess and allocate future resources.

Gabriela also encouraged callers to request a call number for tracking purposes and noted that they can ask for an officer to call them back, as well as inquire about the priority level of their report.

Call prioritization determines the speed and type of response. Priority 1 calls involve an immediate threat to life and receive urgent response. Priority 2 calls are serious but not life-threatening. Priority 3 calls are lower urgency issues, such as reports of illegally parked vehicles. On average, Priority 1 calls are responded to within 5.8 minutes. Priority 2 and 3 calls are addressed based on available resources.

Encampment Enforcement Post-Grants Pass v. Johnson

With the Supreme Court's decision in Grants Pass v. Johnson, officers are now allowed to ask individuals setting up encampments in public parks to vacate. Those who refuse can now be cited. However, the City's primary approach remains service-first—offering connections to housing and support services before taking enforcement action.

Alison King, Director of Health and Human Services, shared that people can report encampments by emailing HomelessServices@longbeach.gov with a description of the location and pictures when possible. The Outreach Team is ready to receive these reports and respond to reported encampments by offering services.

Prosecutor Doug Haubert also shared that his office has seen increased success in directing individuals into treatment programs now that there can be consequences for refusing services. This shift offers a new opportunity to reduce chronic issues tied to public encampments.

Sidewalk Vending Businesses

Concerns were raised about the growing number of sidewalk vending businesses operating after hours on 2nd Street. These vending businesses are drawing large crowds that linger on sidewalks late into the night, often after consuming alcohol. Unlike patrons at licensed establishments, there is no security presence or screening for weapons.

Lori Voss, from the Business Licensing Division, explained that under State law, violations related to sidewalk vending are treated as administrative fines rather than criminal offenses. As a result, the City's primary enforcement tool is the confiscation of food and equipment—a process that is resource-intensive and requires coordination across multiple departments including Health and Human Services, Public Works, Business Licensing, and Long Beach Police Department. Afterhours enforcement, when inspectors aren't typically scheduled, makes regular enforcement even more challenging.

Given these constraints, reporting these incidents becomes especially important. Each report helps build the case for deploying the Community Response Team to specific problem areas. Reports can be submitted through the Go Long Beach app, or by emailing FM-SidewalkVending@longbeach.gov for business license violations and HE-SidewalkVending@longbeach.gov for health concerns.

Councilmember Duggan explained that she has been pushing for afterhours enforcement of sidewalk vending businesses since the program launched, and for the City to explore enforcement tools that are not as resource intensive.

Prosecution of Crimes

Prosecutor Haubert explained that his office handles all misdemeanor cases, except for those involving juveniles. Felony and juvenile cases are handled by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office.

Prosecutor Haubert and Deputy District Attorney Lustig discussed several changes made in recent years to how crimes are prosecuted. Prosecutor Haubert highlighted Proposition 36, which allows repeat offenders of drug and theft crimes to be charged with felonies. Deputy District Attorney Lustig noted that District Attorney Hochman has removed blanket policies that

previously prohibited Deputy District Attorneys from filing charges for certain crimes. As a result, prosecutors now have the ability to review all cases and bring charges against individuals contributing to unsafe conditions in the community.

Closing of the Bars Early

Councilmember Duggan asked the City Attorney's Office and Community Development Department to explore whether it would be possible to require bars to close at midnight. After review, it was determined that this is not likely feasible, as the bars' operating regulations were established through a legal process. Moreover, the bars have taken steps to improve safety like checking for weapons and increasing training to prevent over-serving, thus making it difficult for the City to demonstrate a direct connection between criminal activity and bar operations. In most cases, individuals involved in violent incidents retrieved weapons from their vehicles after leaving the establishments.

As an alternative, Councilmember Duggan is exploring the possibility of limiting parking in public lots after midnight to permit holders only and is advocating for increased DUI enforcement. The goal is to limit the number of patrons driving cars to the bars as it is unlikely someone commits a crime and calls an Uber.

Councilmember Duggan is also requesting additional signage near the bars to remind patrons that 2nd Street is monitored by an extensive security camera system, meaning individuals are often captured on video before incidents occur. Additionally, in collaboration with the Belmont Shore Parking and Business Area Advisory Commission, Councilmember Duggan is calling for enhanced lighting and cameras in the parking lots, along with stronger enforcement against loitering in those areas.

E-Bikes and Motorized Minibikes

The meeting addressed the growing concern about e-bikes and minibikes, particularly the rise in unsafe group riding and "takeovers." Challenges include large groups of riders, sometimes exceeding 50 people, making it unsafe for officers to intervene. Many riders lack license plates or any identifying information, and often wear face coverings, which further complicates identification. Pursuing these riders can also pose significant safety risks for both officers and the public.

Enforcement is difficult due to these factors. Councilmember Duggan and the Police Department are working with local schools in District 3 to implement e-bike education. State law currently treats e-bikes like traditional bicycles, which has created a regulatory gap. Cities across California are exploring ways to address these safety issues.

Plan for the 4th of July

Councilmember Duggan brought together an interdepartmental team to improve the experience for residents during the 4th of July. The team includes representatives from the Marine Bureau, Long Beach Police Department, Long Beach Fire Department, Long Beach Lifeguards, Public Works, and residents who have actively partnered with the office to address ongoing issues related to the holiday.

Regarding safety, all active Long Beach Police Officers are required to work on the 4th of July. Earlier in the day, Officers will be proactively addressing drinking in public, while later in the day the focus will shift to addressing more immediate public safety concerns.

To address trash, the City will increase the number of trash cans, provide trash bags, and supply dumpsters throughout the area. Belmont Shore resident Katie has organized a 4th of July cleanup, and those interested in volunteering can sign up to participate [here](#). Councilmember Duggan is also working with CSULB to send communications out to Greek Life to encourage them to pick up trash so it doesn't pollute our ocean.

To better accommodate restroom needs, the City will be adding additional porta potties and encouraging visitors to avoid entering residential neighborhoods for restroom access. Enhanced signage, including a detailed map, will also be provided to help people easily locate restrooms, trash cans, and other available services.

The final plan is still in development.



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