

**SECURITY COMMITTEE
JULY 7, 2008
MINUTES**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Erasmus Reyes
Antonio Maldonado
Daniel Vasse
Mary Jo Espasas
José Colón
Luis López

OTHERS

Lt. Miguel Velásquez, CIC
Capt. Benjamin Orengo, St. James
José J. Martínez, PHA

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. by Erasmo Reyes, Chairman of the PHA Security Committee.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the June 2, 2008 meeting were approved upon a motion by José Colón seconded by Daniel Vasse.

III. REVIEW OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Perimeter Surveillance System

Bank loan has been closed. The installation contract is under review. Once contract is signed the project will take two months to complete.

B. Security Manual

Draft of the PHA Security manual was sent to the Security Committee members on May 20, 2008. No comments were received. Document will be published final by mid –July.

C. Preferred Vendors Program

PHA list sent out to organizations, Committee members, business and regime administrators. No inputs received in terms of comments or names to be placed on the list.

D. Refresher Security Training

CPR, crime scene handling, fire-response detection, etc. refresher training program for the Security Department was completed during the month of June.

Antonio Maldonado pointed out that some patrols were observed driving too fast and talking on the phone. Instructions will be issued to maintain speed 5 miles below maximum speed limit. Use of cellular phone restrictions will be discussed once more with the Security patrols.

E. Solar Poles

Reflecting tape has been placed in new solar poles around the traffic circle and Country Club Drive.

F. Graffiti

A resurgence of the graffiti problem was noticed during the 4th of July weekend. A special watch/operative will be planned for the 25th of July weekend as an effort to identify and detain the perpetrators of this vandalism.

IV. CIC Presentation

Lt. Miguel Velázquez from the Police Criminal Investigation Corps (CIC), Humacao, Division, informed the Security Committee that violent crimes in the Humacao region have escalated substantially during the past two months. He feels that homicides among youngsters involved in the sale of drugs are almost out of control. There were 17 homicides during the 4th of July weekend; five of them in Humacao. Ages of victims were all under 25 and mostly 18 and under. Armed robberies in Puerto Rico have also increased significantly (approximately 30 per month). His concern is that armed robberies could lead to more homicides.

Lt. Velázquez feels that Palmas is relatively secure in view of what is happening outside of the Palmas complex. People committing burglaries are being chased away from Palmas and the measures implemented by Palmas security in checking all vehicles and intervening with people are paying off. According to Lt. Velázquez there are no indicators that will lead him to think that the situation in Palmas will worsen or that violent crimes as witnessed outside of Palmas may occur in the complex. He is also aware of the minor drug operations that take place in Palmas and is not concerned that fights among drug distributors, as seen outside, may occur in Palmas. He added that

those operations are under surveillance by the Narcotics division and individuals have been identified. He expects the Narcotics Division will haul away these individuals very soon. Lt. Velázquez also indicated that Palmas should keep the pressure upon the municipality to attain an effective enforcement of the Municipal Code and force all establishments within Palmas to close at reasonable hours.

V. INCIDENTS REVIEW

The 4th of July weekend transpired without major incidents in spite of a large number of visitors and people in the community. Biggest problem was graffiti vandalism at the beach access between Solarea and Crescent Beach and an inordinate number of young people driving around in golf carts until early hours of the morning. The contingency plan implemented for the weekend worked well. There was excellent support received from the state and municipal police. Extra efforts and planning were put in effect to control Palmanova Plaza with excellent results.

In terms of security incidents the situation in Palmas has remarkably improved since April 2008 following the implementation of added security resources and control measures at the gates. During the month of June there was no major criminal activity. There were twelve (12) illegal appropriations ranging from golf cart registration stickers to construction tools. Four of these illegal appropriations took place in residential areas. Three burglaries were reported to Palmas Security as well as to the Police (one each in Villa Franca, Club Villas and at the Beach Bohio). One vehicle was stolen from the Club Cala area and subsequently recovered. Thirty (30) individuals were intervened and eleven (11) of these detained and escorted out of Palmas or turned over to the Police. Forty two (42) fines were issued to golf carts totaling 305 for the year. Three individuals were rescued from drowning by the Beach Patrol bringing the total to 32 per year. In 2007 there were 19 rescues during the entire year.

The State Police and the Municipal Police continue to work closely with Palmas security providing excellent support. PHA is working closely with the municipality in the enforcement of the Municipal Code to have commercial establishments close as required by the code.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Antonio Maldonado indicated that some patrols have been seen driving too fast along Palmas Drive and Candelerero Road. He asked St. James that instructions be issued to have patrols drive at 5 miles below the maximum speed level except when responding to an emergency call. Also, patrols and security personnel must be reminded that the use of cellular phones for personal calls is not permitted while on duty.

Mary Jo Espasas informed that over the 4th of July weekend there were too many youngsters driving irresponsibly at late hours of the night. She suggests more severe fines.

The Security Committee recommended that assistance from the Municipal Police be requested to be in watch at late hours of the night, particularly on long weekends, and issue citations to golf carts in the street. The municipal fine for driving a golf cart in the street is \$500.00. Also, security must be more aggressive with golf carts late at night. Special operatives for golf carts and for the control of graffiti will be planned for the long 25th of July weekend.

Daniel Vasse indicated that, in spite of PHA best efforts with trash-cans along the cart-paths and beach areas, too much trash was being thrown in the streets. Bags of trash were being dropped along Coral Way as well as in parking areas. A campaign must be developed to raise the level of awareness to help keep Palmas clean. Mr. Vasse also recommended that coordination be also effected with the Police to intervene with people carrying and consuming alcoholic beverages from golf-carts. This should be part of the major campaign being planned for the 25th of July weekend.

Mary Jo Espasas pointed out that since the Coffee Bean opened autos and golf-carts are remaining a long time parked in that area. This creates a problem for people who normally stop in this area for a short time while conducting business at the bank. She suggests exploring shortening the time for people to park in these areas. This could be done using signs; however, currently the area is marked as a no-parking zone.

VII. ADJOURN

The Security Committee adjourned at 8:00 p.m.