

**SECURITY COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 6, 2008  
MINUTES**

  
10/15/08

**Attendance**

Mary Jo Espasas  
Julio Bagué  
José Colón  
Antonio Maldonado  
Daniel Vasse  
Victor Nieto  
Luis López

**Others Attending**

Capt. Benjamín Orengo, St. James

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m. by acting Chairman, Antonio Maldonado.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the September 8, 2008 meeting were approved upon a motion by Mary Jo Espasas seconded by Mr. Julio Bagué.

**III. REVIEW OF OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Perimeter Surveillance System**

Installation of system is on-going. Cameras in Cocoloba, Roble Valley, Port Road, Harbor Lights and Sunrise are installed. Additional cameras are being installed at the end of Cocoloba St. Transmission equipment and antennas at the water tanks, the Academy and at the PHA building is complete. Monitoring equipment and computer terminals at the Security Department will be installed on October 14-16, 2008. End-user training will start October 21, 2008. Project is running two weeks behind due to heavy rains in late September.

**B. Problem at Shipyards**

Public hearings were held by the Municipal Legislature Security Commission on September 17, 2008. Hearings were attended by Mr. Julio Bagué, Mr. Antonio Maldonado, Ms. Gladys Fornaris, Mr. José Garcés and Mr. Luis López representing the

community. Representatives from the state and municipal Police and Municipal Permits Office also attended the hearings. A full presentation detailing the problems and all the actions taken to date was given to the Commission by Mr. Bagué. Following an extensive question and answer period, the Commission concluded to issue instructions to the Municipal Permits Office to proceed with the administrative process of withdrawing the use permit granted to the Shipyards'. Subsequent to the hearings the Permits Office started the administrative process for withdrawal of the use-permit.

On a parallel action, PHA through attorney Israel Delgado has initiated an injunction process to have the court issue a cease-and desist order to insure the Shipyards' is brought into compliance with the law and the Palmas restrictive covenants. Mr. Delgado is very confident that the community will obtain the injunction. Meanwhile, the establishment remains open under close surveillance by Palmas security and the Police. On October 3, 2008 a police task force with representatives from the Treasury Department, Fire Department, Health Department and the Municipal Permits Office raided Shipyards. Over \$20,000 in fines were issued for several law violations. Place remains open but operating very quietly.

**C. Police Station**

The PHA Police Station began to operate on September 15, 2008 manned by two officers from the Municipal Police working the 8:00 pm to 4:00 am shift. These officers are being augmented by the state police during weekends and holidays.

**D. Stray Dogs**

PHA continues to work the stray dogs' problem very aggressively. In addition to its dog-trapping program, PHA has contracted the services of Dr. Edwin Serrano, Humacao Animal Shelter. Dr. Serrano uses tranquilizer darts to capture dangerous dogs. Five dogs including the leader of the pack have been captured over the past three weeks in two different operatives.

**E. Bottle Thrower**

Bottle thrower individual reported by Edd Siler at the last Security meeting was caught and detained. The individual lives in Beach Village and works at a local pharmaceutical plant. He was totally embarrassed and gave assurance the incidents will not be repeated.

**F. Security Training Report**

At the last Security Committee meeting Mr. Julio Bagué requested St. James to prepare a comprehensive training report outlining all aspects of the training being provided to security guards assigned to Palmas. The purpose of this report is to evaluate if adequate training has been provided to assigned security personnel. On October 6, 2008, the St. James Director of Operations submitted a report to the Security Committee. This report was rejected and deemed not acceptable as it failed to provide sufficient details in order

to determine adequacy of training being provided to security personnel. Instructions were given in terms of the format in which said report should be provided. The format should reflect specific tasks for each post and the training being given to officers occupying those posts. Report should take in consideration the scope of work for each position, SOP's, rules and regulations and any other written or oral PHA guidance. All these elements are addressed in the PHA Security Training Manual and the PHA Security guidelines revised in May 2008 by the PHA Security Committee. A letter will be sent to St. James requesting an appropriate report prior to the next Security Committee meeting.

#### **IV. CIC REPORT**

Lt. Miguel Velázquez, Police CIC, Humacao Region, briefed the Security Committee on the latest criminal activity taking place in the region and the status of cases at Palmas being investigated by the CIC. Lt. Velázquez reported that seven burglaries committed in Sunrise, Villa Franca and Palmas Reales have been solved and that the primary burglar involved in these cases is behind bars. Five of these burglaries were solved through the use of fingerprints. Also, three other individuals associated with burglaries at Palmas have been identified. He is confident that these individuals will collaborate in solving other cases.

Mr. Velázquez indicated that two agents remain assigned exclusively to investigate Palmas cases. Also, under-cover agents worked for five days at Palmas during a recent week-end as an additional effort to catch burglars operating in the community. Internal suspects were kept under surveillance and he remains optimistic that eventually these suspects will be caught in the act.

Lt. Velázquez compared the rate of crime at Palmas versus other communities in the region. Other communities with much less population are experiencing twice the level of incidents being experienced at Palmas del Mar. More importantly there are no homicides, sex crimes or armed robberies taking place within Palmas del Mar. So far the worst crime being experienced at Palmas is burglary and is tracking well below the rate being experienced else where in the Humacao region.

Mr. Julio Bagué and other Security Committee members expressed their appreciation to Lt. Velázquez and the members of the CIC for the strong support being provided to the community.

#### **V. INCIDENTS REVIEW**

Antonio Maldonado presented a comprehensive report outlining all security incidents and criminal activity within Palmas for the month of September and year-to-date. No major criminal activities such as homicides, sexual assaults, aggressions, robberies or car thefts were reported. Ten illegal appropriations were reported. Five of these were construction related in the Harbor Lights project and two in the Los Lagos project. Two took place in commercial areas and one in Beach Village. Six burglaries were reported. Two in Villa Franca, two in Beach Village, one in Harbor Lakes and one in Sunrise. Suspects have

been identified in the Villa Franca, Beach Village and Sunrise incidents. Eleven individuals were detained and five were turned over to the police. More than 250 alarms were investigated.



**VI. ADJOURN**

The Security Committee adjourned at 8:40 p.m.