

TRLA ANNUAL NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUP **MEETING MINUTES 2018**

We had a very successful meeting on the evening of July 18th at the Ranch House with 30-40 landowners in attendance. Representatives from both local Sheriff Departments presented current information to us.

From Cibola County, Under Sheriff Mike Monk and Sgt. Nick Wadford

From McKinley County, Sheriff Silversmith and Lt. Rocky Kalein

Both counties now have a close relationship and assist each other in joint narcotics and DWI programs.

Nick Wadford is a retired Secret Service employee and now heads up the Cibola's tactical team (Tier 1 swat team) and participates in the SSU program (Safe Streets Unit).

One landowner mentioned a problem with motorized vehicles driving on a power line. It was suggested that some signs be installed indicating this is not allowed.

Mary Jo Wallen said she would mention at the July 21st Board meeting. Mary Jo mentioned that Timberlake has not had any vandalism reports in over a year and a half (thank goodness). However, instances like this as well as more suspicious vehicles/persons have been reported. Our "See Something Say Something" program has greatly increased awareness. We appreciate everyone who participates daily. Please remember, if you can get a vehicle description and license plate number (as well as a photo), you can provide to Mary Jo Wallen, Nancy Wills, or a Board Member so that we can determine if a landowner owns an abandoned vehicle, etc. It is also a great idea to have the green TRLA window sticker on all your vehicles.

When calling 911, please make sure you indicate your need Metro Dispatch and you are located in Timberlake Ranch in Ramah and indicate your county. Another reminder is that you should have your rural/street address in plain site at the end of your driveway for all emergency vehicles.

Both Sheriff Silversmith and Undersheriff Monk talked about their staff shortages as well as the District State Police Office closing this year. Four deputies from McKinley County just left for Albuquerque where they got a \$7,500 sign-on bonus, plus better wages. Would you work for \$15 an hour starting out as a trainee Sheriff with the understanding that you could get shot at any time. Several officers have gotten shot when on patrol by themselves, so in most cases, they now either have a dog (3 in McKinley) with them or another Sheriff will accompany them when a serious situation has been called in.

Cibola County's financial situation isn't the best and all new hires have been frozen for quite some time. Cibola is under audit. The Sheriff's Dept. has always met their budget, but unfortunately, are included in the entire County's budget situation with Santa Fe legislatures making final decisions. It was suggested that Timberlake landowners get more involved in the County Commissioners meetings, senate hearings, etc. to discuss positive solutions. (Both counties have gotten extra money to purchase tactical equipment from "go fund me accounts" and grants). Cibola County got a \$20,000 donation from one anonymous person thru a "go fund me account" to pay for all new tactical equipment. Cibola County is currently down 8 officers. Coverage area is 5,800 square miles with the last census of 20,000 people.

McKinley County covers 6,000 square miles and is not controlled by the State like Cibola County, so they can hire new trainees, etc. McKinley County is down 10 people. McKinley County also has an agreement that they have to help the Navajo Nation

FBI has indicated that NM is one of the highest states for crime (#2 behind Alaska). Gallup has serious problems with drugs and DWI's. I-40 is a drug corridor for meth and other dangerous narcotics. NM is coded as "red" - meaning the worst and Cibola is yellow, although criminals are coming out from Bernalillo and Albuquerque and committing property crimes to pay for drug habits. We have had past problems in this regard, but, we think that our "See Something Say Something" program has helped.

McKinley County has had 9 violent crimes so far this year (fatal crashes involving alcohol). An officer is then tied up for 10 hours taking care of paperwork. The Juvenile Detention Center in Gallup has closed, so juveniles must be taken to San Juan or Bernalillo. Cibola County takes juveniles to Farmington or Albuquerque, which leaves less law enforcement coverage in our counties.

Both counties want to get the new "Catch and Release" program changed. If someone does not commit a violent felony, they are processed and then released. Jails are all too full. Money is the issue!!! You can help by talking to your County Commissioners and State Representatives.

A game camera helped law enforcement retrieve seven utility trailers recently. So, put your cameras in several locations around your property. They can be used for more than just seeing our local wildlife, although we all

like seeing the cougars, bears, foxes and deer around the neighborhood.

Sheriff Silversmith said that there are 33 Sheriffs in NM with about 30 meeting once a month. Fifteen to 20 normally go to Santa Fe. He indicated several senators have been really good in listening to their concerns.

Roads is a #1 issue in the county. Sheriff Silversmith indicated he would not want to drive on our road every day and knows that it is a serious problem for law enforcement and emergency vehicles to do their jobs.

Linda Pedersen indicated that currently Cibola landowners pay a total of \$168,000 every year in property taxes. She is also working on the amounts for McKinley County. Information like this can be used when we communicate with our County Commissioners.

Both counties are working together on DWI and Drug Task force programs. At a recent checkpoint, 40 officers were working and got 5 or 6 drunk drivers. It appears that more and more people are using designated drivers, which is a great solution for drunk driving. Educational pamphlets are being distributed. McKinley County has had 300 DWI arrests so far this year.

CURRENT FIRE CONDITIONS

Julie Farrell and Bill Sanders represented the Ramah Volunteer Fire Department and provided some up-to-date information on the current fire conditions. Lightning strikes have been occurring quite often and Julie thanked everyone for calling in. She indicated that she needs one person from the Board who will work with the Incident Command when/if we have a fire again in the neighborhood. This person needs to control the roads so that fire equipment can get to the fire without having to drive around landowners who are blocking the road. If

you want to help, you need to become a volunteer because there is a liability issue if someone just helping got hurt.

A fire break needs to be established on Elk Drive since the road needs to be widened and trees trimmed on both sides. Since the meeting this evening, Julie spoke to Steve Stevens and Charley Haverstick who addressed this situation at the July 21st Board Meeting.

When calling 911, make sure you say that Timberlake Fire Station #55 is the closest fire station. You should then call either Julie Farrell at 783-2423, Bill Sanders at 783-2463, or Andy Wilson at 783-4704 so they can get all volunteers together.

Fire Ban has not been lifted in the State yet. A meeting will be held around August 1st to discuss. Electric chain saws can be used before 10 a.m., but nothing else.

PHI Cares has evacuated 3 landowners so far this year.

Last years evacuations were all caused by dehydration.

Please go to the TRLA website for information on PHI Cares and Air MedCare. We encourage everyone to have coverage from both companies. Weight limit for both is 400 lbs. and 6' tall. Cost is \$40 per year under the Timberlake Group rate. PHI phone number is 888-435-9744. Air MedCare is \$65 for seniors over 60, or \$85 annually for a normal family membership. There are discounts for 3, 5 or 10-year memberships. Call 1-877-708-6148 for information or to join.

(After this meeting, we verified PHI and AirMedCare's application information, etc., and have revised the information on the website (Emergency section), so it is up-to-date as of 7/25/2018)

Julie suggested that as you drive to and from Timberlake that you pay attention to mile markers so that you could provide more information when calling for help. The entrance to Timberlake on Highway 53 is mile marker #35. Numbers get bigger as you travel to Grants.

A new engine was recently obtained for our station.

Homeowners insurance rates will go down whenever we get 2 engines and 2 tankers (larger water capacity). The helicopter pad has been put on the back burner. So, helicopters will land between Buttonwood and Copperweed. One landowner indicated their insurance went down when they mentioned the new water tank that holds approximately 40,000 gallons of water.

We now have 16 volunteers and there are 12 in Ramah.

THANK YOU to everyone for volunteering and helping monitor fires – if you see or smell smoke, etc., call Julie, Bill, or Andy anytime of the day or night.

By: Mary Jo Wallen & Nancy Wills (Co-Coordinator for the Timberlake Watch Group)

783-4207

783-2457