

City of Chula Vista
Regular Police Department Community Advisory Committee Meeting
MINUTES

April 3, 2025, 9:30 a.m.
Chula Vista Police Department, Community Room
315 Fourth Avenue, Chula Vista

CCAC Members Present:	Member Aragon, Member Barros, Member Cazares, Member de la Garza, Member Harb, Member Kingkade, Member Lampkin, Member Navarro, Assistant Co-Chair Chavez, Co-Chair Sablan
Staff Present:	Chief Kennedy, Assistant Chief Peak, Captain Foxx, Captain Adkins, ASM Alegre, Assistant City Attorney McClurg, Committee Secretary Cathy Miller

Minutes are prepared and ordered to correspond to the agenda.

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Police Department's Community Advisory Committee of the City of Chula Vista was called to order at 9:33 am in the Community Room, located at the Chula Vista Police Department, 315 Fourth Ave. Chula Vista, California.

2. ROLL CALL

Secretary Miller called the roll.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Community member Robert expressed his gratitude to the Community Advisory Committee for allowing meeting recordings in support of transparency, noting it sets a positive example for the rest of the nation.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1 Approval of Meeting Minutes

Recommended Action:

Approve January 9, 2025 minutes.

Moved by Co-Chair Sablan

Seconded by Member Barros

Result:Carried Unanimously

5. CHIEF'S COMMENTS

5.1 AB 237 Impacts on Region

Assembly Bill 237, sponsored by Assemblymember Patel, aims to strengthen the legal response to threats made against public places, particularly schools. Under current law, a threat must be directed at a specific individual to be actionable. AB 237 would change that—acknowledging that threats targeting public spaces, like schools or hospitals, can shut down entire operations, cause panic, and traumatize communities, even when not aimed at a single person.

This bill has strong support from both CPCA and PORAC. Supporters believe that by establishing real consequences for these types of threats, especially those made by or involving younger individuals, future incidents could be deterred and possibly reduce the occurrence of copycat threats often amplified by media attention. It also ensures that law enforcement and school resource officers aren't overwhelmed responding to vague or broad threats with no accountability.

Committee member Kingkade, who served as a PERT liaison and with LECC and the Joint Terrorism Task Force, shared an example where someone threatened to shoot up Park Place Mall. Thanks to building-specific protocols, the individual was detained on a 5150 hold—but it highlighted the need for clear legal tools to address generalized threats to public places. To date, over 500 Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) have been filed, with 57 credible incidents receiving news coverage. These events not only terrorize families and students, but also disrupt school operations, increase SRO workload, and erode public trust in safety systems.

Committee member Cazares asked whether the bill applies specifically to schools—it does, but also extends to other public locations like hospitals, airports, and places of worship. Committee Co-Chair Sablan raised a question about whether the bill targets “loitering with intent to threaten”—the intent here is broader: AB 237 allows legal action based solely on threats directed at a location, not necessarily an individual.

The bill has successfully passed multiple levels of review and represents a critical step forward in ensuring public safety. Chief Kennedy wanted to ensure the committee members are aware of why this legislation is important and the impact it could have in protecting communities.

The department will share the bill text once it's available.

5.2 Staffing

As of January 2017; Chief Kennedy has hired 195 recruits and laterals; 192 professional staff, have promoted 198 employees. Retention has been a key focus for Command Staff, and the cost of living remains one of the critical factors under review. The department currently employs 20 hourly Community Service Officer (CSO) students who work part-time, with schedules of up to 30 hours per week. In addition, Measure A continues to support the hiring of full-time CSOs.

5.3 SB54 Impacts on Region

The department has been meeting regularly with community organizations and faith-based groups to listen, provide support, and ease concerns—especially during times of transition or uncertainty with the new Administration. CVPD's commitment to the community has not changed.

While the police department works with federal partners regularly, it is important to clarify CVPD does not engage in immigration enforcement. CVPD involvement remains focused solely on criminal activity. That will not change—CVPD always prioritizes public safety and protecting the community from crime.

Committee member Navarro shared how important it is to continuing to reinforce the message that CVPD does not get involved in politics. CVPD focuses on helping people. Chief Kennedy believes her officers need to be present, responsive, and compassionate, serving all members of the community.

CVPD mission is, and always will be, public safety.

5.4 Substation Discussion

The department is growing but remains understaffed when compared to the regional average. While it effectively leverages technology, it's important to recognize that quality-of-life issues are just as significant as crime—especially as the city continues to expand both vertically and geographically. Several councilmembers have expressed interest in addressing a substation. Staffing studies have already been requested, recognizing that the department is on track to eventually outgrow its current capacity.

There is no opposition to the idea of a substation; however, proper planning is essential. It's not simply about constructing a building, but about how it will be funded, developed, and staffed. The primary concern remains increasing the number of personnel—both sworn officers and professional staff. Community members expect timely responses, and recent feedback included reports of individuals waiting four to six hours for service. Regardless of internal reasoning, when someone calls the police, they want a response.

As the city considers a potential 50/50 split of Measure A funding, it's important that allocations reflect the police and fire department needs, not wants. While recent articles mention issues like parking shortages and the Chief's support for a substation, those are only parts of a larger conversation.

For example, the Police Department needs a long-term plan for storing vehicles held as evidence while cases await adjudication. Parking is already at a premium, with staff often forced to park outside the main structure. On training days, the demand for parking nearly doubles, prompting the department to shift some training off-site. These training demands, combined with ongoing property constraints, continue to create operational challenges. A candid discussion about future infrastructure needs is essential—particularly in light of the City Manager's upcoming retirement and the evolving direction of the Board of Supervisors. Committee member Cazares asked what a substation would look like. The Chief has expressed interest in surveying the community to gain feedback. If constructed, a \$50 million substation would be more than a simple storefront—it would function as a fully equipped mini police department, complete with evidence storage, office space, technology infrastructure, and full staffing.

Some community members have suggested storefront alternatives, which may be more cost-effective. These could be staffed with Community Service Officers (CSOs) or Senior Volunteer Patrol (SVP) but reallocating staff and maintaining overall coverage would remain a challenge. To be clear: while no one is opposed to the concept of a substation, the department's top priority continues to be increasing overall staffing levels. Without the personnel to support it, a new facility alone will not address the core concerns.

5.5 Awards & Recognition Ceremony

On May 8, the Police Department will host the Annual Awards and Recognition Ceremony in the front courtyard to honor both sworn and professional staff for their vital contributions to the safety and well-being of the community. This event serves as a meaningful reminder that public safety is built on true partnership. The event will begin at 11:30 with lunch to follow. Two food options will be available: Tacos El Gordo and a second vendor offering BBQ cuisine. To help manage lines and reduce wait times, attendees will receive meal tickets in advance based on their preferred option. Tacos El Gordo is generously donating their services for the event, and the department expresses sincere appreciation for their continued support.

6. ROUND TABLE: COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS (TO INCLUDE VOICING CONCERNS, QUESTIONS, OR COMMENTS AS COMMUNITY LIAISONS)

Committee Co-Chair Sablan requested a brief refresher on the Brown Act. Chief Kennedy suggested discussing having a training in July. As a reminder the Community Advisory Committee is not under the City of Chula Vista's Boards and Commission and is a committee that has been designed to be a liaison with the police department and community. Committee member Navarro shared Tacos El Gordo is planning to expand with a new warehouse and office location behind the Jack in the Box on Broadway. He also asked if the company has been publicly recognized. The owner does not like recognition, however, they are always recognized in the ARC programs.

Committee member de la Garza asked what the ratio is regarding officers to the Chula Vista population. It is about one officer to 10,000 citizens. Chief Kennedy also explained many officers have collateral duties which is a challenge. She hopes to get additional officers to cover the collateral duties so they can meet the community need.

Committee member de la Garza also asked the funding source for officer promotions. It was confirmed that these costs are paid directly by the Police Department, not the City. There was further discussion about marketing efforts to support recruitment. Chief Kennedy encouraged committee members to use public comment opportunities at City Council meetings and to contact the City Manager to voice their ideas and concerns. She emphasized that when residents and committee members speak up, especially regarding staffing and response time, their voices have impact.

Committee Co-Chair Sablan asked if the committee could have formal nametags identifying them when attending police functions.

Committee Member Cazares requested clarification regarding the ride-along requirements listed on the Community Advisory Committee event form. In accordance with the bylaws, the Chief requests that each member participate in one ride-along annually, generally lasting six hours. However, members with family or personal obligations may contact Captain Foxx directly to discuss alternative arrangements.

Assistant Chief Peak introduced soon to be promoted Captain Scott Adkins. He and soon to be Captain English will promote on April 4, 2025. Committee members were invited to attend the promotional ceremony at 10:00 am at the Police Department. Two lieutenants; two sergeants and two agents will also be promoted.

Committee member Navarro gave praise to the well-received presentation on military equipment used by the department—an important topic for community transparency.

6.1 CAC Member Kingkade - Discuss ad hoc committee for Evening with Heroes

It was noted that a member may propose the formation of an ad hoc committee; however, the committee would not have voting authority or the ability to take formal action until the July meeting.

CAC member Kingkade discussed the importance of providing support that extends beyond the immediate group and benefits the broader community. She emphasized that donations contribute not only to equipment and support but also fosters community engagement. She proposed that the group consider donating an auction item collectively.

Deputy City Attorney Carnahan pointed out that members can organize fundraising activities without the need to form an official committee. She referenced past successful efforts where members, (including Cazares, de la Garza & Sablan) actively participated with a letter of support from Chief Kennedy to solicit donations—an approach that proved effective.

A proposal to formally add an ad hoc working group focused on the Evening with Heroes event and outreach efforts. CAC member Kingkade volunteered to chair the ad hoc group. A motion was made by Committee member Kingkade and seconded by Committee Co-Chair Sablan to form a short-term, temporary ad hoc working group focused on event planning and community engagement (EWH).

The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Co-Chair Sablan suggested that the group consider becoming more engaged throughout the year. He mentioned that participation in such activities might qualify for up to six hours of training credit, provided they are approved by the Chief.

A list of upcoming events will be compiled and shared. CAC Secretary Miller will track attendance at these events.

Coffee with a Cop was highlighted as a successful event. Attendees shared concerns regarding homelessness, crime, and retail theft. The event provided a valuable opportunity for one-on-one conversations between community members and officers about local laws and propositions. Committee Co-Chair Sablan appreciated the high attendance and positive engagement, noting an incident where a lost wallet was returned to its owner. Committee member Harb mentioned the relaxed atmosphere and how much families and children enjoyed interacting with officers. The CVPD Community Relations Unit selects the location. Four locations are chosen throughout the year, each held in one of the Chula Vista districts. Hours vary. CAC members were invited to recommend future locations, which will be passed on to CRU for consideration.

Committee member Kingkade inquired about the new taco shop on Broadway, "Canelo's", as a potential location for a future "Tacos with a Cop" event. Nicole added that such events could be diversified and held at varying times, including early mornings or busy intersections, to reach different community members.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 am.

Minutes prepared by: Cathy Miller, Secretary

Cathy Miller, Committee Secretary