

CAPISTRANO BAY DISTRICT
AGENDA REPORT
July 28, 2015

Security

ITEM 7

Training and Procedures for Gate Officers

Several homeowners have complained about the traffic backup at the community entrance on Saturdays. The afternoon of July 11th was one of the busiest we've had all year. Some owners indicated it took as much as fifteen minutes to get from Coast Highway to the community entrance.

In response to the congestion problem, the District Manager and our Security Supervisor spent several hours studying surveillance video of that day. The morning traffic was typically house cleaning service, some miscellaneous service, a few invited guests of homeowners and some owners returning from breakfast, shopping, etc.

The flow of traffic was intermittent and random up until about 3:00 PM when the flood gates opened and the new group of weekly vacation renters start arriving. The surveillance video, during this time, showed a solid lineup of vehicles out over the RR tracks and onto Coast Highway.

On that Saturday, July 11th from 3:00-4:30 PM, the gate processed 60 vehicles, primarily renters and/or guests of renters. This means we were processing one vehicle every 90 seconds and with the video record showing at least 10 vehicles backed up it's no wonder it took 15 minutes for homeowners to get in during this crunch time.

There are several variables that add together to create the vehicle backup. Most notably is the lack of experience on the part of two new officers. Additionally, a backup can occur when many renters/guests all show up at the same time, no matter who's working the gate. Also, when the weather is sunny and warm the adjacent county beach facility gets impacted with the public and this in itself can cause a substantial backup at the grade crossing.

Regarding the new officers, we had to remove two experienced gate officers recently due to performance issues and are now trying to bring the new replacements up to speed. This primarily involves on-the-job training with either the security supervisor or one of the more veteran gate officers working alongside the new officers with minimal intervention while the new people gain hands-on experience. Last Saturday was a good training opportunity as it was a bit slower due to the rain so the training was focused on practicing to increase the speed with which guests are processed. The second gate officer during this busy time on Saturdays is a big help but the truth is that more manpower is needed to deal with the other variables mentioned above.

SOLUTIONS

In order to speed things up at the gate it will be necessary to have more people on duty at the gate:

1. Our regular gate officer to process guest entries
2. A second gate officer to respond to phone calls and assist in data entry
3. A third officer in the driveway completing a new *Renter/Guest Entry Form* that the guest then shows to the gate to speed up the necessary information exchange. This officer in the driveway will also direct guests (who already have a pass) to pull out of the lineup and enter through the transponder lane (this helps to reduce the number of cars backed up in the guest driveway).
4. A fourth officer in the crossway at the RR tracks directing and controlling traffic movement: *There are two narrow incoming lanes at the grade crossing and new visitors often get caught out in the middle and end up blocking the access for the public to get to the beach park. This causes a gridlock and no one can move until the vehicle in the lead gets their pass and moves out. This is extremely hazardous if a train should come by or if emergency vehicles need rapid access. When a gridlock occurs the only outlet is to open the gate into our maintenance yard and direct our guests and renters into this area to clear the RR tracks. This is a new procedure that will be put into effect on Saturdays through the end of the rental season after Labor Day.*

By Board meeting time Security will have had a weekend to practice these new procedures and can report on their effectiveness.

COST

A rough calculation of the labor expense based on 4 hours minimum for each of the three additional officers can be from \$500 to \$700 of extra expense to deal with the crush of renters checking in at the community entrance. In tracking the renter counts each week the summer numbers are up to about 30 rentals per week.

Several years back the District began charging a *Renter Recovery Fee* of \$50 per rental group each week to help recover the costs to the community. The program was stopped on the advice of District counsel who pointed out that since *short term rentals* were expressly prohibited in the City Zoning Code at that time, it wasn't legal for the District to charge a fee on a prohibited activity. Today, however, with the legalization of vacation rentals, it now becomes legal for the District to assess such a fee.

The short term rental program does not benefit the entire community and benefit is one of the first 'tests' in determining the fairness of a program. If it's not fair to all then the community has to agree on what is acceptable to balance the scales. In this particular situation a monetary compensation, i.e., *Renter Recovery Fee*, could be a practical, fair and reasonable solution.