

Woodland City Council
City Council Chambers
300 First Street
Woodland, California

January 28, 1997

The Woodland City Council met in adjourned session at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Rominger, Borchard, Flory, Losoya, Ryhal

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Kristensen, Smith, Brown, Siprelle

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public comment was requested. No comments were received.

PUBLIC HEARING - PROPOSED DAYTIME CURFEW ORDINANCE:

Police Lieutenant Terry Brown explained what the proposed daytime curfew/loitering proposal will do to help the youth in our community. He said there may be some misunderstanding about what the proposed ordinance would do and how it would change the way the Police Department conducts its business. He said those minors who are exempted from the regulations are: (1) students whose school is out, (2) minors accompanied by a parent/guardian, (3) minors traveling to and from work, (4) minors traveling to a medical appointment, and (5) minors traveling to and from lunch. He said the objective is to provide a consequence to those minors who are not in school and take a proactive approach to deter daytime crimes and truancy by implementing a daytime loitering ordinance.

Police Officer Jim Lucero briefed the Council on the daily activities involved with the Truancy Program. He said he checks the different school schedules and makes home visits to assist in finding alternative education for truant minors.

Police Sergeant Julie Larson said the key for the Police Department is to identify the minors involved in truancy early on so they can have an impact on them. She said the way Officer Lucero does his job will not be affected by the proposed ordinance. She said he will still be bringing the students back to school or to the parents. She said early on intervention allows the Truant Officer to join with the family and the student as well as school officials to identify issues.

Officer Lucero responded to questions about the process of bringing a minor before the School Attendance Review Board (SARB).

Responding to a questions from Mayor Rominger, City Attorney Ann Siprelle said

students who are suspended or expelled are not considered truant.

Council Member Ryhal inquired about how many of the reported arrests made of minors last year were suspended or expelled students. He said if these are the students who are causing the problems, there is a tool in place to divert to youth services. He ask why this cannot be done sooner. He said the suspicion is for everybody when the problems are really created by a few. He said we should focus on the few habitual truants and malcontents.

Lieutenant Brown said that is exactly what is being suggested with the exemptions in the proposed ordinance. He said Police Officers will always stop youth during the day during school hours if it appears they should be in school. There is a two minute or less phone call to the parent or the school to determine if the student is on a legitimate mission. He said with the existing ordinance the Police cannot do anything with the suspended students.

Vice Mayor Losoya said he is aware there are some students who are not in school and are involved in illegal activities, and the City needs to find a way to address the issue so that people in the community are not victimized. He said he is supportive of developing some sort of program to alleviate the problem. He said one concern he has is if a stop by the Police Officer escalates into something more serious when someone gets hurt or killed. He asked what would happen if a student were stopped on the street and did not cooperate, how far would an officer go to attempt to stop the student?

Sergeant Larson said it depends on the circumstances of the situation. If the student was just walking down the street a bulge in the waistband or any unusual behavior might necessitate a more lengthy discussion. She said the officer will use discretion and take into account the behavior of the individual.

Council Member Flory said he agrees that he would endorse some type of vehicle that will meet the goals of what we are trying to do. He said he feels the Police Officers are being the social workers in this situation. He said we can have programs to help youth, but the emphasis needs to go back to the schools and the School Board.

Sergeant Larson said that is part of the work of the Police Department to catch the kids who fall between the cracks and to intervene when necessary. She then explained the SARB contract process.

Jim Pappas, Detective of the Millbrae Police Department, explained how a daytime curfew ordinance works in his community.

Jill Plumb, who has been involved in Woodland Adult Education for 18 years, explained her background in teaching "at risk" adults. She said she is also the developer and coordinator for the Home School Program and oversees its daily operations. She said she was not representing the Woodland Joint Unified School District, but was present to provide information to the Council. She said the Woodland Home Study Program is not taking a stand about whether or not it supports a curfew but is there to facilitate the education of the students of the parents who come to them when they want to home school their children. She said when students are suspended in the Woodland Joint Unified School District a contract is signed to state that the student will not be a bother to

the community while they are suspended and released to their parents. She said the heart of the issue is parental responsibility, and she said the Woodland Police Department is valiantly trying to handle the problems when it really should be passed back to parents.

She said she has been appointed by the Superintendent of the Woodland Joint Unified School District to serve as a liaison between the Yolo County Youth Services Task Force and the Woodland Joint Unified School District. She said they have been meeting for about a year and have plans for youth in the community involving intervening with youths at a much younger age. This will develop into an "at risk" program for youths kindergarten through sixth grade.

Debbie Gable, Yolo County Probation Department, Youth Division, said truancy is a gateway into crime. She said she has worked with youth at the Probation Department for 20 years, and she said the Department supports a daytime curfew ordinance. She said this will give the Police Department the ability to identify youths at the earliest level. By the time the Probation Department gets phone calls the student has been out of school from several months to two to three years. She said the contacts made early on are critical so that services and parenting skills can be provided. She explained how the SARB process can take so long.

Council Member Ryhal said he is not hearing anything that the proposed ordinance provides that is not already in place.

Council took a recess from 9:25 p.m. until 9:35 p.m.

Vice Mayor Losoya opened the public hearing.

Kenny Garrison, Woodland High School student, said he reviewed the material regarding the proposed curfew ordinance, and he urged the Council to approve the regulations. He said he would feel safer knowing the officers are stopping youth and did not feel the ordinance would affect the average student.

The following persons spoke in opposition to the curfew proposal: Nicole Blann-Moreland, Victoria Lambert, David Llewellyn, Chuck Hermle, Pastor John S. Waldrip, Gary Christopherson, Jennifer Christopherson, Yvonne Powell, Ed Hernandez, Melanie Madden, Randy Thomas, and Armando Fernandez.

There being no further comments, Vice Mayor Losoya closed the hearing.

Council thanked the speakers and discussed concerns with adopting a curfew ordinance.

On motion of Council Member Borchard, seconded by Council Member Ryhal, and carried by unanimous vote, the City Council agreed not to introduce the proposed curfew/loitering ordinance.

REVIEW OF BUILDING INSPECTION ISSUES:

Council postponed review of building inspection issues.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 9:52 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Deputy City Clerk of the City of Woodland