

# Citizen's Focus Group Committee Meeting

Tuesday, August 11, 2015

Andrea started the meeting at 2:00pm in the Police Department Community Room. A sign in sheet was passed to members to record attendance.

Present:

Andrea Gardner – City Manager  
Kevin Keller – Public Information Officer  
Marc Payne  
Sandy Vegh  
Chris Mulvey  
Ronnie Viss  
Marty Smith  
Matt Russell

Absent:

Marcie Lowery  
Tim McGinnis  
Ray Torres

Also present was AC Eddie Wilson and Senior Code Officer George Sinner to present to the group.

## I. General Announcements

Andrea advised she had nothing in particular to address with the group due to the presentation scheduled for this afternoon. Andrea asked the members if they had anything they would like to discuss or any questions they would like to have answered before the start of the presentation.

## II. Committee Discussion / Business (Open Forum)

### *Running for Council*

- **Chris** asked if there was a way to find out who is running for City Council. Andrea advised the information is available on the City's website and the Secretary of State's website. Andrea advised there are three places up for election this year, Place 1, Place 2 and Mayor. There are two individuals running for Mayor, two individuals running for Place 2 and one individual running for Place 1. Place 3, an un-filled and unexpired term, will have to be filled by special election due to the occupying member resigning his seat to run for Mayor. Andrea advised the City Council will take action to open this position for applicants and place the seat on the ballot to be filled in November for the unexpired term (1 year).

### *BUS 190 Master Plan Workgroup*

- **Andrea** updated the group on the BUS 190 MP Workgroup meeting as well as the BUS 190 Roadway Project. Andrea advised although there are a few businesses still in opposition of the project(s), others have embraced or accepted the idea.
- **Andrea** advised in other communities where landscaped medians have been implemented, the roadway safety has improved and the citizens happy with the design once they are used to it.
- **Ronnie** advised he hates that people in the city use the current center turn lane as a “merging” lane, driving quite a distance and making conditions dangerous for everyone waiting or wanting to turn.
- **Marc** advised he has issue with the flashing yellow arrows located on BUS 190. General discussion was held regarding the groups experience with these traffic devices.
- **Ronnie** wanted to know who is responsible for the landscaping in the City for areas like the firehouse and library, which do not look good. Andrea advised the Parks department is responsible for upkeep. Ronnie asked if for the medians it would be the City’s responsibility as well, stating if the City is having trouble keeping up with the landscaping at existing areas, he doesn’t see how they could keep up with the medians in the roadways. Andrea advised a new position specifically to maintain landscaping would need to be created and funded. This is being looked at by administration.

### *General Items*

- **Marc** advised there are grass clippings being blown into the street from City property after it is being cut. Marc advised it is difficult to keep the general public from doing this when it is happening with the municipality. Andrea advised if this is going on, she will handle it in the next staff meeting. Marc advised it last happened at the old PD, which is occupied by the Star Group and their lawn care people may not know. Grass clippings get into the drainage system and clog things up, so grass clippings should not be going into the street.
- **Andrea** discussed briefly with the group what she has been working on to include the budget, Parks and Receptions, and an annexation plan for the City. Andrea advised the City must have a plan in place 3 years before any action on the area can take place for an involuntary annexation. This will be on a September (15<sup>th</sup>) workshop.

### **III. Uniformed Services Division**

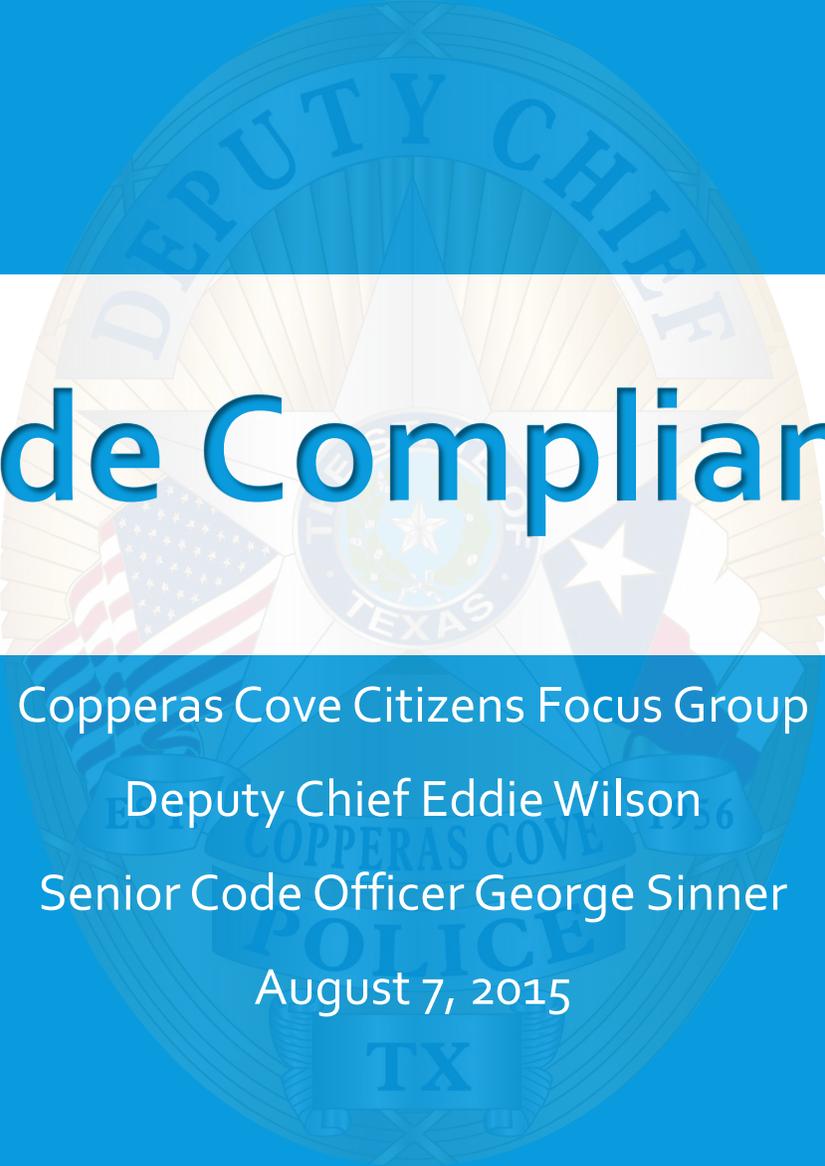
Senior Code Officer George Sinner was present to provide information on the Code Compliance department, which is a part of the Uniformed Services Division. This presentation is attached.

- **Chris** asked how many total Code officers there were in the City. George advised there were 3 total and 1 Administrative Assistant. Andrea advised there have been improvements within the department with the addition of the Admin since all the officers used to have to do their own notices and filing.

- **Chris** advised it seems like a lack of funding keeps any real issues from being addressed in the City since they only have 3 officers for all the properties here.
- **Chris** asked how low over the right-of-way (ROW) can a tree branch be. George advised a branch can be 14 feet over the roadway and 8 feet over the sidewalk. Chris advised he cannot drive his RV down most City streets because of trees in the area.
- **George** advised Code relies on citizens to let them know when violations are occurring. AC Wilson advised everyone needed to be aware of the fact that when a Code officer is called out to investigate a complaint, they sweep the entire street for violations, not just the address complained about. Sometimes this leads to the person complaining also receiving a violation warning. AC Wilson advised by sweeping the entire street, there are not complaints that only one person was warned when someone else has a violation. Additionally, this check makes sure everyone is in compliance the way they should be.
- **George** advised there are no longer any online food handler class licenses accepted by the City. All classes will be taught by Code officers.
- **General discussion** was held regarding the powers of the City when it comes to “dirty”, “messy” or “ugly “ homes. AC Wilson advised the appearance of each property is up to the individual homeowner and the City is very limited in what they can do. AC Wilson and George advised the property can be cited for violations, but City personnel cannot take items off the property, especially without a warrant. George further explained that Code officers attempt to work with the occupants of the house, giving them warnings with time requirements to have the issues abated. Code will only contract to cut grass on vacant/unoccupied property, which costs taxpayers \$75.00 each mow. Occupied property residents will receive a citation and have to appear in court, at which time the Judge makes the determination of the fine or fee.
- **Marc** asked who is responsible for the grass that grows up between the curb and the actual roadway. Andrea advised the City or TxDOT, depending on whose ROW the grass is growing in. Andrea advised TxDOT will come out and spray herbicide on Ave D to kill weeds growing up in the ROW and inevitably get spray on someone’s lawn. These people make claims to TxDOT to have their grass replaced, which delays TxDOT in returning to keep weeds off the ROW.

#### IV. Conclusion of Meeting

At the conclusion of the meeting, the members reviewed the next meeting date and location.



# Code Compliance

Copperas Cove Citizens Focus Group

Deputy Chief Eddie Wilson

Senior Code Officer George Sinner

August 7, 2015

# MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Code and Health Compliance Department is to promote public health and safety through education and training ensuring compliance with Federal, State, and City laws.

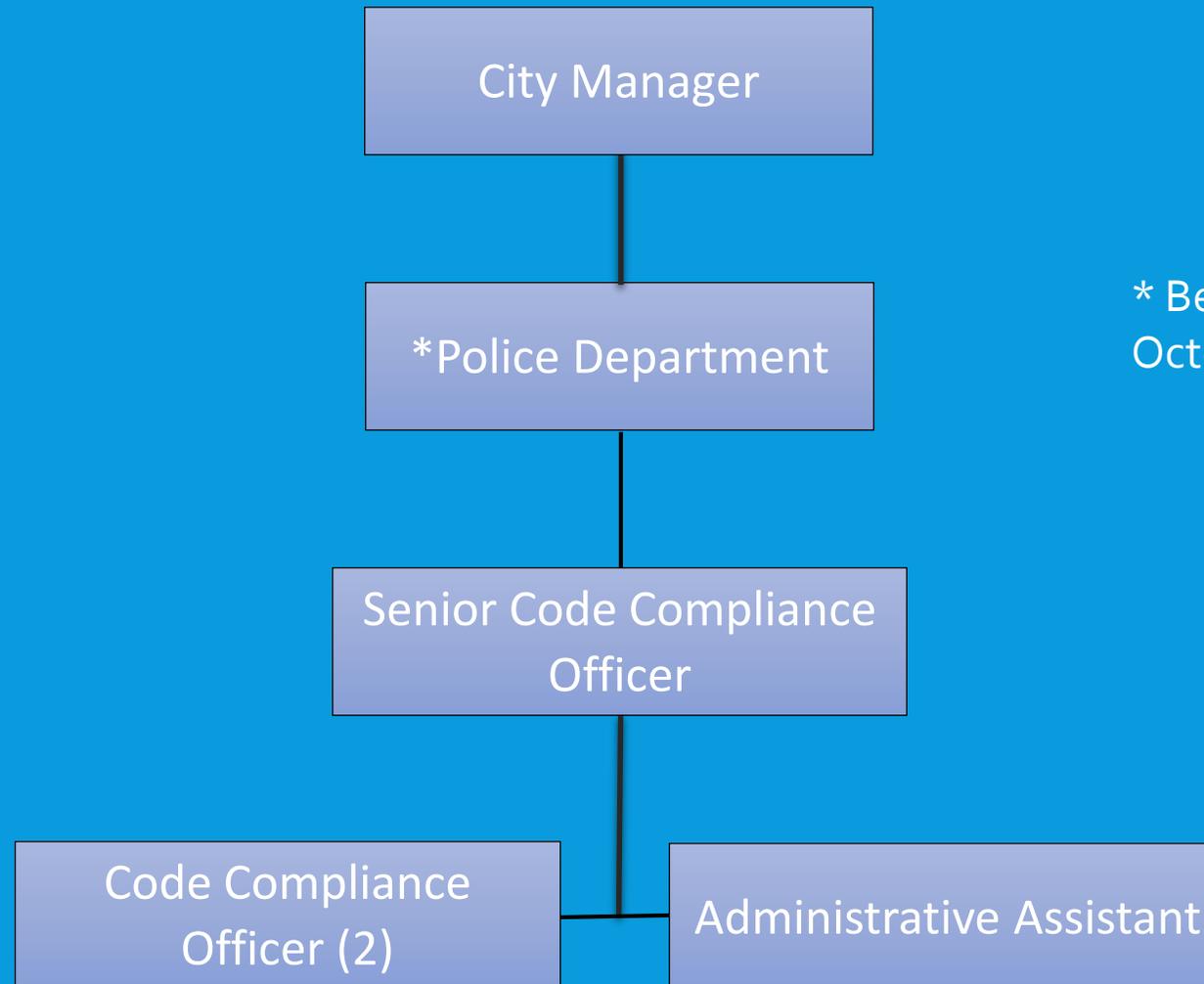
# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

- Responsible for the protection of the City's residential and business communities from blighted and deteriorated conditions.
- Responsible for the health and sanitation inspections of food establishments, mobile food vendors, schools, day cares, and foster/adoption homes.
- Educates the community on health and safety issues related to state laws and city ordinances.
- Enforces false alarm ordinance.

# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW (CONT.)

- Issues citations for ignored violations when possible but encourages voluntary compliance through education.
- Conducts food handler classes for non-profit groups.
- Organizes the abatement of violations through the use of contract labor or other resources.
- Office is open five days a week during normal business hours. Officers will work after hours and on weekends as needed.

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



\* Became effective  
October 20, 2012

# ACTIVITY REPORT CY 2014

Activity	
Complaints Received	1018
Warnings	5019
Citations Issued	168
Properties Abated	55
Food Handler Permits Issued	213
Food Handler Permits Issued Online	933
Food Manager Certifications Issued Online	20
Volunteer Food Handlers Trained	267
Health Inspections	357

# MOST COMMON VIOLATIONS CY 2014

Violation	Warnings
High Grass	1707
Junk/Rubbish/Trash in Yard	956
Right of Way	515
Vehicles on Grass	344
Obstructed Alleyway	267
House Numbers	178
Bulk/Trash on Curb	101
Basketball Goals	99

# ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES

- High Grass
- Weeds/grass clippings and storm drains
- Brush
- Junk Vehicles
- Junk/Rubbish/Trash
- Right of Way obstructions
- Abandoned Properties

# QUESTIONS

