



Garden Villa Association  
*Representing Residents of All 3-Story Buildings*

## **Minutes**

### **General Meeting of Garden Villa Association**

### **March 14, 2024**

President Stuart Hack called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

This morning's guest speaker was Eric R. Nuñez, Director of Security at Laguna Woods Village. Director Nuñez is a Past President of the California Police Chiefs Association, and the former Chief of Police for the City of Los Alamitos. He holds a Master's Degree in Leadership from USC.

Also present were Third Mutual President Mark Laws, Third Mutual Treasurer Andy Ginocchio, and Third Mutual Director S.K. Park.

#### **LWV Security Department**

Director Nuñez presented an overview of The Village's Security Department, with a particular emphasis on operations during 2023. The department includes not only Security, but Compliance and Social Services, as well. During that time, the Security Department handled a total of 49,643 incidents.

These incidents encompassed not only Security calls, but after-hours handling of all requests to Resident Services, which are routed to the Security Department after 4:30 PM. Total number of calls handled during 2023, including off-hours Resident Services requests, totaled 80,000 calls.

Over the course of 2023, the Security Department logged over 3,000 incident reports, and the Traffic division issued over 3,000 notices of traffic violations.

Director Nuñez explained that, due to the legal structure under which the Village operates, Security Department officers do not exercise the full range of police powers found in a government agency, such as the Orange County Sheriff's Department. When a crime has been committed, Village Security calls in the OCSD and assists in their investigation. Laguna Woods Village is considered private property, and the California enabling

statutes grant it authority to exercise a limited subset of law enforcement powers.

Trespassing has been a problem for The Village in the past, and it is an area where the Security Department has worked with OCSD over the past several years. These efforts are producing positive results, with the number of trespass incidents falling to a total of 21 in 2023, with 3 of those occurring in GVA buildings. The assistance of residents in this regard is very important. If you see something happening that doesn't look right, please call Security.

Elevators in three-story buildings generally work well, but there were 96 elevator incidents in 2023. 19 of these incidents involved residents trapped in stuck elevators; Security was able to resolve about half of these incidents and called the Orange County Fire Department on the others.

The OCFD logs an average of 22 runs a day to Laguna Woods Village, or 8,030 runs per year.

### **LWV Compliance Department**

The LWV Compliance Department logs over 8900 cases per year. Director Nuñez characterized the relationship between Security and Compliance as being analogous to a hospital. Security is often the initial point of contact, much as an emergency room is for a hospital. Both have the job of dealing with an immediate problem. But, just as a hospital emergency room is backed up by the regular hospital staff, Security is backed up by the Compliance staff, who works toward longer-term resolution of problems.

A common misconception among Village residents is that Compliance initiates disciplinary proceedings for violators. Under the legal framework in which The Village operates, only the Mutual boards can initiate those proceedings. The role of Compliance is limited to recommending proceedings in cases where Compliance considers it appropriate.

The most frequent complaints to Compliance involve clutter, both in common areas and on balconies. Illegal occupancy is an ongoing problem. In some cases, manors are leased illegally, and we have had cases of outright squatters. If you believe there is a case of illegal occupancy in your building, please contact Compliance.

## **LWV Social Services Department**

The LWV Social Services Department offers a variety of Social Services to Residents, including helping residents cope with the aftermath of a frightening and stressful event, helping residents gain greater mobility and stability, support for residents battling cancer, helping residents learn about advanced care planning, and more. The Social Services Department handled roughly 7,000 cases in 2023 and is staffed by Licensed Clinical Social Workers.

**LWV Traffic Enforcement** Village Security handles the enforcement of traffic rules in the Village, and it also manages the Gate Ambassador program. In the first two and a half months of 2024, the Village issued 72 Notices of Violation for speeding, with 16 of those for speeds of 40 MPH or more.

Stop sign compliance continues to be a problem, with one recent incident involving a car and a golf cart resulting in a loss of life. Director Nuñez noted that in traffic enforcement, there is an old saying: “The guy with the most lug nuts wins in any collision,” and he urged residents to drive defensively, particularly in golf carts.

Gate Ambassadors account for one-third of the LWV Security budget. LWV employs roughly 160 Gate Ambassadors, and 66 Ambassadors are needed to cover all gates in any 24-hour period. Security estimates that, over the course of a year, there are approximately 10 million passages through the LWV gates.

## **Questions from the Audience**

**Smoking:** There were several questions about smoking in manors and in public places. Smoking complaints are among the most difficult issues that Compliance is called upon to handle, because violators so often simply deny that they do so. Where common areas are involved, particularly outside a building, it is difficult to determine who was involved in the violation, and whether it occurred within 20 feet of a building. Hard evidence, such as witnessing the violation, can help move cases involving chronic violators toward a disciplinary hearing.

**Security cameras:** Several questions were raised about security cameras and how to get Security to install them. Director Nuñez explained that Security does not install cameras; that’s done by the LWV Information Technology department. The Security Department has a very limited ability

to monitor cameras—to fully staff to monitor cameras in every building would add millions to the Security budget, and that would show up in monthly assessments.

Several comments were offered about resident-purchased and monitored security cameras. President Hack urged caution in doing so, for two reasons. First, residents don't have the right to install anything on walls or ceilings in common areas, and Compliance would be within their rights to demand that they be removed. Second, California has rather strict privacy laws, and Third Mutual could potentially be exposed to legal liability for a violation of those laws by its residents, which is why Compliance does not allow private cameras in public areas.

**Traffic violations:** Are manor owners responsible for traffic violations by their guests or other visitors they 'call in at the gate'? Yes, they are. Under California law, Laguna Woods Village does not have traffic enforcement jurisdiction over visitors to The Village. It only has jurisdiction over its members—that is, manor owners. That's why traffic Notices of Violation for visitors go to the manor owners. So, be careful who you allow in at the gate—you are responsible for them.

President Hack thanked Director Nuñez for his time and his presentation, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.

**SUBMITTED** on March 14, 2024, by David C. Veeneman, Secretary, Garden Villa Association.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David C. Veeneman", written over a horizontal line.

David C. Veeneman  
Secretary