

**QUESTION #7:** *The City modified its noise ordinance in 2010, resulting in a significant drop in noise complaints. Those numbers are starting to creep up again. There is currently a 13-14% citation rate, meaning 86% of the time, noise offenders either get a warning or nothing. Do you believe this enforcement ratio is acceptable? Why/why not? If not, what would you do to obtain better enforcement?*

**DONALD HEDRICK:** Just because an ordinance driven modification of behavior was successful does not mean that some statistical ratio or do you mean quota of enforcement is justification for enhancing enforcement. There is already an existing exercise of discretion available in the mix that is the dominant tool used in the enforcement of the complaints. So why are we talking of changes in quotas that are minor compared with the discretion factor. Lets wait till there is a more definable problem.

Our neighborhoods need to do more mentoring and citizen participation and interacting with their neighborhoods instead of asking government to solve its problems. I have in my own neighborhood performed as neighborhood watch, sidewalk superintendent, been proactive in solving problem behavior. When a little effort at picking up the litter inspires more respect from those that would litter, when setting an example inspires other to do better, when sometimes it takes a while holding the government's feet to the fire to address a problem that is in their jurisdiction, then we as citizens are doing the right thing for humanity. My saving a parking place for a burrito wagon on the most challenged nigh club night in my area on Latin Night has given the patrons coming out at the end of the evening something else to feed each other besides knuckles and put some extra eyes into that troubled area and calmed a problem. Personal involvement is the key to a healthy neighborhood.

**JAN MARX:** I propose strengthening our ordinances and adding more Police patrol officers, if the passage of Measure G makes it financially feasible to do so. If it does not pass, unfortunately, budget reductions may mean fewer Police Officers on patrol.

**JEFFERY SPECHT:** The officers are not enforcing the ordinances properly, as stated above. This reflects poorly on our local law enforcement. They are making a lot of money so I would ask why they aren't doing their job. A sole person can do nothing but act as a role model and build a coalition of other council members to vote toward solving the problem.

**DANIEL CANO:** The 13 - 14% is too small. Yet I see a hidden factor that may be impacting this. I believe the fines are too high for first time violators. It's a \$350 fine. The theory makes sense, the higher the fine, the less likely students are to make noise. Yet levying a \$350 first offense fine on say a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student living on a student budget may cost more for the city to try and collect. If the fine were the charge of a parking ticket, for example, city staff may be more likely to write the ticket.

**CARLYN CHRISTIANSON:** It's hard to tell if variations in enforcement data are a trending pattern or a normal variation, so I usually don't make judgments and decisions based on one statistic. I also never know if decreasing citation rates for any particular activity means that the problem is going away or that it just isn't being cited often enough, as this question suggests. However – I agree that noise complaints are an ongoing concern in general, in many areas of the city, whether from parties, barking dogs, or loud street behavior. It's important to do outreach and education to new residents and students, including face-to-face visits from neighbors and enforcement officials. It's important to recruit and train volunteers like our SNAP patrols, so that they can respond quickly and correctly to complaints when they are received. And adding more police patrols can certainly help, as well as making fines tougher, but as always, additional paid personnel are expensive and depend on sufficient resources being available. Also, at least in some neighborhoods, Cal Poly can contribute more university police patrol officers and resources to help enforce regulations.

**MICHAEL CLARK:** Neighborhoods are where people should feel safe and secure, can relax with family and friends and should be able to enjoy peace and quiet. As Dan Buettner points out in his book "*Thrive*" that was quite popular among city staff a few years ago, "... humans don't adapt to noise." He further states that, "... loud music from next door promise[s] a daily erosion of happiness." It would be wise for our Council to remember this when thinking of Neighborhood Wellness and its decline in many of our older well-established neighborhoods.

When residents call police to report a loud party, they should receive a prompt response that leads to a quiet, restful evening. With careful selection and comprehensive training, the Student Neighborhood Assistance Program can become an effective first step in quieting parties and in past years has done so. The teeth in the program, however, rests with conscientious and firm follow-up by uniformed officers who truly understand that residents are entitled to peace and quiet in their homes. This takes leadership from the top – the Council, the City Manager, and most importantly, the Police Chief. Until they are aligned with residents' needs, residents can look forward to a decline in "happiness" at home.

**GORDON MULLIN:** To be honest, I don't have, at this point, enough knowledge to make that judgment.

**DAN RIVOIRE:** I believe all residents initially deserve an opportunity to correct their behavior before being fined. Nevertheless, repeat offenders deserve citations. Without knowing more details about the actual number of complaints, warnings, and citations, I cannot say whether or not I find the enforcement ratio acceptable.

My goal is to reduce complaints and help neighbors get along. I believe we should take proactive measures to address noise issues throughout the community. Empowering residents to communicate and settle disputes on their own is a smarter use of our resources.