



Agenda Report

19-631

Agenda Date: 6/4/2019

REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT

Recognition of the "Every 15 Minutes" Planning Committee

BACKGROUND

The Santa Clara Police Department and Santa Clara Unified School District hosted a two-day drunk driving and distracted driving prevention program at Santa Clara High School, May 2-3, 2019. 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students participated in "Every 15 Minutes," a two-day event to create a realistic understanding of the impact on people involved in alcohol-related and distracted driving fatal collisions. This dramatic program draws on student emotions to serve as a powerful tool to create awareness among students that they are not invincible. It also extends beyond the student circle to help teens realize how many people are affected by their decisions.

On May 2, a fatal car collision involving four students was staged on the football field. The communication from Public Safety Dispatchers and the emergency response by police, fire and paramedics was fast paced and realistic. Students witnessed first-hand an injured student who received medical treatment on scene, a "critically injured" student was transported to Valley Medical Center hospital, another student proceeded through standardized field sobriety tests resulting in being arrested for driving under the influence, and the final student "succumbed" to their injuries and left the scene in a body bag. Parents were notified at their place of employment or at home that their child had been "killed" as a result of a DUI collision.

At the beginning of the school day 20 pre-selected students were one-by-one announced as having been "killed by a drunk driver" inside their classrooms. An obituary was then read to their classmates and a rose placed on the "deceased" student's desk. All 20 students were sequestered from family and friends overnight. During that time, the students participated in a driving exercise simulating being drunk, listened to special guest speakers who have personally experienced the tragedy of losing a loved one to a drunk driver, and wrote a letter to loved ones about what they would like to have done with their lives if it had not been tragically cut short by a drunk driver.

On May 3, the students reconvened in the gymnasium for a "mock" funeral for the students who "died." Speakers included the student's parents, a chaplain, Police Chief Michael Sellers and Principal Gregory Shelby.

The entire program was documented via video to be aired for residents of the City of Santa Clara on the local cable channel at a later date. A video highlighting the program at Wilcox High School is available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KPt_MHW8fTIWmunsAz6ZV9wcOPkPNvJY/view The video is not intended for young children; viewer discretion is advised.

DISCUSSION

Every 15 Minutes is supported by the Santa Clara Fire Department, Valley Medical Center, Lima Tow, The Lima Family Mortuary, The Plaza Suites Hotel and Santa Clara High School PTSA. Other local merchants and fraternal organizations have also donated their time, personnel, facilities and supplies to help bring this program to high school students in our community.

The Mayor and City Council would like to recognize the Every 15 Minutes Planning Committee as well as the local businesses and organizations that support the program.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(a) as it has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonable foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City’s official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City’s website and in the City Clerk’s Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at (408) 615-2220, email clerk@santaclaraca.gov <<mailto:clerk@santaclaraca.gov>> or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

Reviewed by: Michael J. Sellers, Chief of Police

Approved by: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager