



CITY OF MENIFEE

SUBJECT: First Reading and Introduction of an Ordinance Establishing Regulations for Unruly and Loud Conduct

MEETING DATE: July 17, 2024

TO: Mayor and City Council

PREPARED BY: Paul Barbieri, Lieutenant

REVIEWED BY: Chris Karrer, Police Chief

APPROVED BY: Armando G. Villa, City Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Introduce an ordinance adding Chapter 11.07 to Title 11 of the Meniffee Municipal Code establishing regulations for loud and unruly conduct from residential, commercial, and multi-family properties.

DISCUSSION

The City of Meniffee currently has two ordinances which address quality of life issues that may be affected by loud parties, boisterous conduct, or unreasonable noise. Section 11.06.020 of Title 11 of the Meniffee Municipal Code addresses the hosting of parties where underage drinking occurs, and Title 9, Planning and Zoning, 9.210.060 (Noise Control Regulations) addresses noise levels. While those ordinances address important issues, they do not capture the full range of conduct that can threaten the public health, safety, and welfare of the community, and the quiet enjoyment of residential property or public property.

To close that gap, the proposed ordinance would broadly regulate any unruly or loud conduct, including, without limitation, obstruction of streets by crowds or vehicles; public drunkenness; public urination; public defecation; service to, possession of, or consumption of alcoholic beverages by an underage person(s); assaults; batteries; vandalism; and littering. The proposed ordinance would also hold hosts of parties, gatherings or events – including parents of juveniles that host parties, gatherings, or events – responsible for loud or unruly conduct that occurs at those events.

The need for this ordinance was identified through a review of the calls for service to the Police Department (PD) between July 1, 2020, and December 31, 2022. During that period, PD responded to 9346 calls for service associated with noise complaints and other conduct that

constituted a threat to public peace, morals, and safety. Of the 9346 calls for service, 1633 calls were at locations where PD had previously received and responded to at least one similar call for service.

These types of calls divert time and resources away from other important enforcement activities. The average time spent responding to and handling disturbance type calls varies based on the location and the number of individuals on scene. It is not uncommon for these calls to involve alcohol, and some involve uncooperative individuals, which require several officers to respond. A minimum of two officers are required for all disturbance complaint calls. These factors combine to cause a significant fiscal impact and lost officer productivity.

Enforcement protocols would begin with appropriate warnings and efforts to achieve voluntary compliance. In appropriate circumstances, e.g., repeated calls for service or unreasonable disturbances of neighbors, the full palette of enforcement tools would be available to law enforcement personnel.

While the proposed ordinance would allow for the use of all criminal, civil, and administrative enforcement tools (as is typical for most violations of the Municipal Code) its core purpose is to minimize the unnecessary burden to PD resources caused by an excessive amount of complaint calls. This may be done through a documented warning, an administrative citation issued by the officer on scene, or a misdemeanor charge. While the ordinance leaves enforcement discretion with PD, in typical circumstances a warning would be issued in the first instance, followed by the City's current administrative fines established in Resolution No. 09-100; \$100, \$200, and \$500 for each subsequent violation.

STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVE

Safe and Attractive Community

This ordinance would allow officers to enforce quality of life issues.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no measurable fiscal impact associated with the recommended action. Adding new enforcement tools will likely reduce the number of calls for service and increase officer productivity. In addition, administrative fines may be collected in connection to the ordinance, which would partially offset the costs of responding to these calls.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Ordinance