



NEWPORT BEACH

City Council Staff Report

January 24, 2023
Agenda Item No. 3

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Joe Cartwright, Acting Chief of Police - 949-644-3701,
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TITLE: Resolution No. 2023-6: Supporting Efforts to Eliminate the Threat of Fentanyl to the Newport Beach Community

ABSTRACT:

At its January 10, 2023 meeting, the City Council voted unanimously, via a straw poll, in favor of staff returning with an item for the Council's consideration that would convey the City of Newport Beach's support of efforts to eliminate the threat of fentanyl. The increasing presence of fentanyl poses a considerable public health and safety risk to all communities including Newport Beach. As part of a countywide effort, the Newport Beach Police Department is dedicated to fighting the sale and trafficking of fentanyl, as well as raising public awareness of this illicit, dangerous, and potentially deadly drug.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
- b) Adopt Resolution No. 2023-6, *A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Newport Beach, California, Supporting Efforts to Eliminate the Threat of Fentanyl to the Newport Beach Community.*

DISCUSSION:

At the request of Council Member Joe Stapleton, at its January 10, 2023 meeting, the Council considered placing a resolution on a future agenda that, if adopted, would affirm the City's support of efforts to eliminate the threat of fentanyl by devoting resources to the interdiction of narcotics, holding drug traffickers accountable, and raising public awareness about the dangers of drug use. The Council voted 7-0, via a straw poll, in favor of staff bringing forward a resolution for its consideration.

Fentanyl is the single deadliest drug threat the nation has ever encountered. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 107,622 people in the United

States died of drug overdoses and drug poisonings in 2021. Approximately 67% of those deaths involved synthetic opioids like fentanyl.

Some of these deaths were attributed to fentanyl mixed with other illicit drugs like cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin, with many users unaware they were actually taking fentanyl. Only two milligrams of fentanyl is considered a potentially lethal dose. It is particularly dangerous for someone who does not have a tolerance to opioids.

In Orange County, fentanyl-related deaths have increased more than 1,000%, from 57 in 2017 to 636 in 2021. Along with local, state and federal partners, the Newport Beach Police Department has been dedicated to fighting the sale and trafficking of fentanyl.

Since January of 2020, the Newport Beach Police Department has begun investigating all fentanyl-related overdoses in order to progressively pursue arrests and successful prosecutions, at both the state and federal level, of known fentanyl dealers. On December 9, 2022, the Newport Beach Police Department arrested a suspected narcotics dealer and seized approximately 50,000 fentanyl pills, with an estimated street value of \$250,000.

The Orange County Sheriff's Department and Newport Beach Police Department have begun issuing advisements to all those arrested for selling narcotics, informing them that if a dealer sells, furnishes, or distributes drugs to someone, and that person dies as a result of using the drugs, the dealer can be charged with murder. The Orange County District Attorney's office has adopted a similar advisement for those convicted of certain drug-related charges.

In solidarity with our law enforcement partners, the Newport Beach Police Department is committed to taking aggressive enforcement measures to eliminate the threat of fentanyl and bring public awareness, through community outreach, to the dangerous and potentially deadly effects that this illicit drug poses to the Newport Beach community.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact related to this item.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Staff recommends the City Council find this action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

NOTICING:

The agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Council considers the item).

ATTACHMENT:

Attachment A – Resolution No. 2023-6