

Summary of Blackball Working Group Public Meeting

On Monday, October 21, 2013 the Blackball Working Group held a Surfing Regulations Review Meeting at 6:00 pm in the Community Room, located at the City of Newport Beach Civic Center.

- The Blackball Working Group consists of Ron Cole (PB&R Vice Chair), Rob Williams (Assistant Chief, Fire Department), Mike Halphide (Lifeguard Captain, Fire Department), David McGill (Deputy Chief, Police Department), Sean Levin (Superintendent, Recreation and Senior Services Department), and Racquel Valdez (Manager, Recreations and Senior Services Department).
- The Blackball Working Group was established to develop and discuss thoughtful, educated changes to existing rules (if any) pertaining to the dates, times and locations of the Blackball Surfing Regulations. If based on community input there is a necessity for change, the Blackball Working Group to bring forth recommendations to the Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Commission for review.
- Approximately two hundred people were in attendance. All of the 150 seats were filled and a crowd was gathered around the open door area. A sign-in sheet was available that included an option to leave email contact information for the purposes of creating a distribution list to notify individuals about future meeting dates.
- The purpose of the October 21, 2013, meeting was to solicit input from the community regarding surfing regulation policies, and to develop and discuss alternatives since the implementation of City Resolution No. 95-116, which designated surfing areas and established dates and hours when surfing areas may be used.
- Assistant Chief Rob Williams introduced the Blackball Working Group Members and explained the approximate timeline and steps of the review process.
- Lifeguard Captain Mike Halphide reviewed the history of surfing regulations in Newport Beach.
- After the review, the floor was open to public comments. Thirty-seven (37) individuals provided comments regarding surfing regulations. Comments began at 6:13 pm and continued until 7:38pm.
- Comments focused around issues of safety, equality, traffic, beach usage, and enforcement.
- Various opinions were represented during public comments.
 - Some individuals expressed interest in keeping regulations the same.

- Some individuals expressed interest in decreasing the amount of regulation or eliminating regulation all together.
 - Comments often were directed to specific areas of the beach including West Newport, the closure area between Towers 40-44, “Blackies”, and the Wedge.
 - Many of the public comments addressed regulations at the Wedge. These comments focused on issues of safety and equality.
- At the closure of the meeting the public was encouraged to contact the Blackball Working Group by email to express any further comments. Comments should be forwarded to: blackball@newportbeachca.gov