



# council agenda report

CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Meeting Date	February 10, 2005
Item Number	BUS 1

FROM: Deborah Linden, Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Resolution Establishing a City-wide Safety Enhancement Zone until March 2, 2005

## CAO RECOMMENDATION

1. That the City Council adopt a resolution establishing a city-wide Safety Enhancement Zone in the City of San Luis Obispo effective immediately, and ending at noon on March 2, 2005.
2. That the City Council review the status of the Safety Enhancement Zone at its regularly scheduled meeting on March 1, 2005, to determine if it needs to be extended beyond March 2, 2005.

## DISCUSSION

On December 14, 2004, Council adopted an ordinance adding Chapter 9.22 of the San Luis Obispo Municipal Code that enabled the designation of Safety Enhancement Zones in the City of San Luis Obispo. When a Safety Enhancement Zone is in effect, fines for certain Municipal Code violations are tripled, up to a maximum fine of \$1000. The ordinance allows Council to designate a Safety Enhancement Zone by ordinance or by resolution.

At the same December 14 Council meeting, Council established a city-wide Safety Enhancement Zone during the period of Mardi Gras each year. In 2005, the Safety Enhancement Zone was in effect from Thursday, February 3, 2005, until Wednesday, February 9, 2005. City staff received extensive feedback that the Safety Enhancement Zone Ordinance, specifically the tripling of fines, was a very effective deterrent to criminal behavior during this period.

During the past two weeks, there has been a growing movement promoting a new event being called "Poly Gras" for the weekend following Mardi Gras. This idea began when a Cal Poly student wrote a letter that was published in the Mustang Daily newspaper. The letter called for people to celebrate the first annual Poly Gras the weekend after Mardi Gras. The letter reads, in part, *"It's brilliant. One-third the fines, no checkpoints, no extra police, no high school kids or other foreign invaders. That's right everyone, we just outsmarted the entire city by rearranging the calendar."* Soon after, similar messages were posted on the Internet and were distributed via email and Internet chat rooms.

The City has received information from a variety of sources concerning the so-called Poly Gras. This event may not result in a repeat of last year's Mardi Gras riot, but based on the attached web pages and summary of input to the Police Department, staff is recommending that the City err on the side of caution and, consequently, requests that the Council adopt the attached resolution adopting a citywide Safety Enhancement Zone with an extended effective period.

The triple fines provided under Chapter 9.22 of the Municipal Code only apply to those caught violating certain local laws. Thus, for all persons who do not violate the law (hopefully the vast majority), the triple fines do not apply and are of no consequence.

**CONCURRENCES**

City Attorney

**FISCAL IMPACT**

None

**ALTERNATIVES**

Council can deny the CAO recommendation. This is not recommended since staff believes the Safety Enhancement Zone will be an effective tool in preventing dangerous and criminal behavior in light of the potential problems being presented by the "Poly Gras" effort.

Council can extend or shorten the period of time the Safety Enhancement Zone is in effect: Staff feels the amount of time designated is appropriate for this situation, especially if Council reviews this action at their March 1 meeting.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Resolution establishing a city-wide Safety Enhancement Zone effective immediately until noon on March 2, 2005
2. Web Pages
3. Excerpts of Input to Police Department



## RESOLUTION NO. (2005 Series)

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO  
DESIGNATING A CITY-WIDE SAFETY ENHANCEMENT ZONE EFFECTIVE  
THROUGH MARCH 2, 2005**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Chapter 9.22 of the San Luis Obispo Municipal Code, the City Council may by resolution designate a specific geographical area as a Safety Enhancement Zone and specify the time period during which the designation shall be effective; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Chapter 9.22 a city-wide Safety Enhancement Zone was established and was in effect during the "Mardi Gras period" from 12:01 a.m. on Thursday, February 3, 2005 until 7 a.m. on Wednesday, February 9, 2005; and

**WHEREAS**, the designation of a city-wide Safety Enhancement Zone was an effective deterrent to unlawful behavior during this Mardi Gras period; and

**WHEREAS**, the potential for large crowd gatherings, inappropriate and unlawful behavior, bodily injury and property damage remains, even after the conclusion of the Mardi Gras period, due to the widespread promotion of an alternative party weekend after the Safety Enhancement Zone period has ended.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of San Luis Obispo that the city-wide Safety Enhancement Zone shall be re-established, effective immediately, and shall remain in effect through noon, Wednesday, March 2, 2005.

Upon motion of \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_,  
and on the following roll call vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

The foregoing resolution was adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2005.

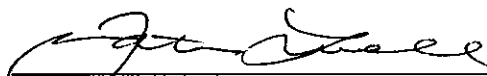
\_\_\_\_\_  
David F. Romero, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Audrey Hooper  
City Clerk

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_ (2005 Series)  
Page 2

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

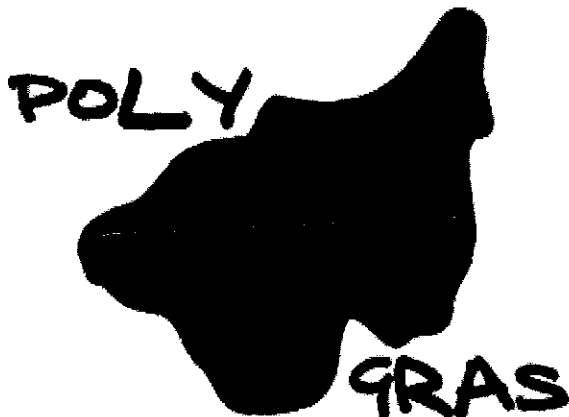
A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jonathan P. Lowell", is written over a horizontal line.

Jonathan P. Lowell, City Attorney

## Poly Gras -- The Party Is On ...

[Visit the Forum](#) | [Contact](#)

### The Birth of Poly Gras



#### Forget about Mardi Gras

PASS THIS TO AS MANY  
PEOPLE IN SLO AS POSSIBLE  
AND CELEBRATE THE FIRST  
ANNUAL POLY GRAS ON  
SATURDAY FEBRUARY 12, 2005

The City of San Luis Obispo is  
determined to prevent this year's  
Mardi Gras from happening by

bringing in 400 police officers from neighboring cities and counties. They are easily  
spending over \$600,000 (more than the price of the riots, damage, and costs of extra  
law enforcement last year). Their philosophy is to eliminate ANY gathering of people as  
quickly as possible. And frankly they might just succeed...that or the City Council has  
really made a bad call this time. Enter Poly Gras.

So...instead of possibly getting arrested, beaten, and just plain abused, Everyone  
needs to rally together and watch the City of San Luis Obispo waste their money as we  
celebrate The First Annual Poly Gras the weekend after Mardi Gras. Just think of the  
understaffed SLO PD next weekend when they realize that there is a reason we got  
into college...we aren't ignorant. We deserve the right to party at least one weekend  
out of the year!

Enjoy your Mardi Gras, be safe, respectful, and don't get arrested. Just know that Poly  
Gras is waiting for you next weekend, so you might want to save some of your beads.  
;)

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[Spread the Word](#)

#### City Links

[San Luis Obispo .  
com](#)

[City Council](#)

[SLO Police](#)

[Department](#)

[SLO Sheriff](#)

[New Times SLO](#)

#### Party Links

[Don't Drink and  
Drive](#)

#### Headlines

[Letter sparks "Poly  
Gras" movement --  
full story...](#)

[Poly students split on  
celebration -- full  
story...](#)

[Mardi Gras preps in  
place -- full story...](#)

[Students from  
elsewhere may not be  
coming to town full  
story...](#)

[How hardy can we  
party? full story...](#)

[SLO Mardi Gras  
Celebration Provokes  
Riots -- full story...](#)

[Chico got tough with](#)

## ATTACHMENT 2

### Poly Gras -- The Party Is On ...

[Visit the Forum](#) | [Contact](#)

#### Spread the Word



#### The Party is ON, but be safe!

It's too late for the city to cancel their plans for this weekend, and if they do... well, then party it up for Mardi Gras!

Be smart when you go out for Poly Gras. The cops are waiting, ready to pounce on you if you do something stupid. Have a good time, see some flesh and drink

with your friends, but do not invoke a riot! This is exactly what the city is hoping for. So...

#### PROTECT YOURSELF!

That's right -- bring cameras, video cameras, tape recorders... ANYTHING that could be used to document the night if the cops try to pull a fast one again. If the riots really are the student's fault, well, maybe it is time for Mardi Gras to be over. That's not what happened last year though; everything was fine until the cops showed up (and everything was fine the two years before that because the "riot squad" never forced themselves on Cedar Creek). Any video or audio clips you can provide of cops in the wrong and students in the right will be hugely beneficial to the future of Mardi Gras in our town.

Spread the word. Poly Gras '05!

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[Don't Drink and Drive](#)

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[Poly students split on celebration -- full story...](#)

[Mardi Gras preps in place -- full story...](#)

[Students from elsewhere may not be coming to town full story...](#)

[How hardy can we party? full story...](#)

[SLO Mardi Gras Celebration Provokes Riots -- full story...](#)

[Chico got tough with](#)

cafe**press**.com[Cart & Checkout](#) | [Help](#) | [Order Status](#) | [Shop Home](#)

JHG Design

- » [Poly Gras 2005](#)
- » [Engineers Turn Me On](#)
- » [Talented](#)
- » [Engineers Make Me Horny](#)
- » [Everyone Loves a Graphic Designer](#)
- » [Everybody Loves A Persian Girl](#)
- » [Everyone Loves a Hawaiian Girl](#)
- » [Everyone Loves a Hawaiian Boy](#)
- » [Royalty](#)

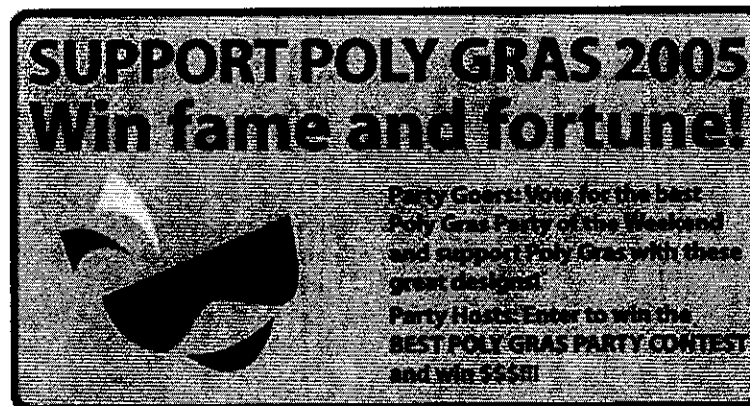
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[Poly Gras 2005](#)

Support Poly Gras 2005! Proceeds go towards the best party contest!

ATTACHMENT 2

**Excerpts of Input to the Police Department Regarding Poly Gras**

- Various fliers promoting Poly Gras posted at the Cal Poly and Cuesta campuses and at the large off-campus Mustang Village apartment complex.
- Internet discussion boards, including one called "Thefacebook," an "online directory that connects people through social networks at colleges," broadcast messages promoting Poly Gras. "Thefacebook" provides online discussion boards for college students at 375 colleges and universities throughout the country, including Cal Poly and other CSU and UC schools.
- Shortly after the Mustang Daily letter, a Poly Gras website was created promoting the event on both Friday and Saturday nights, specifically in the area of Foothill and California.
- City and Cal Poly staffs have been contacted by numerous people who said they received emails with the information, saw the fliers, or overheard people in the community talking about Poly Gras. Officers reported hearing groups of people yelling "Poly Gras" while at the downtown bars. Staff has spoken to numerous students who said there is widespread talk about Poly Gras at Cal Poly and Cuesta and that the event is being promoted as a time to party and drink when the fines are not tripled and there are fewer officers in town. During Mardi Gras weekend, officers reported hearing widespread discussion about Poly Gras among the students walking around town. Officers reported hearing students on their balconies yelling about Poly Gras to passers-by below.
- Staff was contacted by the parent of a 19-year old Cal Poly student concerned about what her daughter was hearing. The parent said that her daughter has been hearing so much about Poly Gras on campus and from friends that she has decided to go home for the weekend because she fears it is going to be out of control. The talk among other students was that they want to make it bigger and better than Mardi Gras.
- A Cal Poly student told staff that students are talking about Poly Gras, specifically that they will go to locations like Foothill and California and exercise their "right" to get drunk.
- Staff contacted other CSU and UC campuses in California and confirmed that Poly Gras was being talked about by students at other campuses, including San Diego State, Cal State Hayward, UCSB, and Chico State. Staff also received information that fliers advertising the event were posted at San Diego State, UCSB, Fresno State, and San Jose State Universities.
- During the past several days Police Department dispatchers have received numerous calls from individuals asking when the triple-fine period is ending. One caller this morning asked a dispatcher if we would be extending the triple-



fine zone. When the dispatcher asked the caller why we would do so, the caller replied, "Because of Poly Gras!"

- Staff researched Internet web "blog" postings and discussion boards for conversation about Poly Gras. The following are excerpts taken from some of these postings:

- *Mardi Gras weekend is this weekend, and supposedly there's going to be a huge party NEXT weekend called Poly Gras. Poly Gras is basically a party after Mardi Gras weekend, when the 400+ police officers are all gone and the town of SLO is weakened again for the overtaking of all of us crazy college students.*
- *Poly Gras is supposed to happen this weekend. Apparently the police interviewed the kid who came up with the idea of Poly Gras but they couldn't do anything to him.*
- *So this weekend is the infamous Mardi Gras weekend here in San Luis Obispo and I don't think that I will be going out. The charges for misdemeanors and infractions are 3 times the amount that they usually are. They have been playing all of these PSA's on TV about last year's Mardi Gras and how that the party is now over.*

*But will they be prepared for Poly Gras?*

*Last week, me and hundreds of others received a message on TheFacebook about Cal Poly's new tradition, Poly Gras, which takes place the weekend following Mardi Gras. Basically, it's Mardi Gras, but on a different date.*

*And last night, apparently the news had found out about Poly Gras and how it was spread through The Facebook.*

*So will the city of San Luis Obispo dish out another \$600,000 of good taxpayer money for that weekend too?*

*We'll see.*

- *Poly Gras is here!!!*

*WOOO WEEEE!!!!*

*another excuse to get drunk and wake up in someone else's bed who's name i don't remember!!!*

*I don't remember ever sleeping in a bed that had a name.*