



Minutes of the City Council's Public Safety & Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee held on

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Tuesday, May 13, 2008, 3:30 p.m., at the Tempe City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Member Present:

Councilmember Ben Arredondo, Chair
Councilmember Onnie Shekerjian

City Staff Present:

Debbie Bair, Sr Mgmt Asst
Kathy Berzins, Dep Comm Svcs Mgr
Brenda Buren, PD
Charles Cobbs, PD
John Dorsey, PD
Jim Gaintner, Asst Fire Chief
Shelley Hearn, Comm Relations Mgr
Cliff Jones, Fire Chief
Jan Hort, City Clerk
Jan Koehn, Code Compliance
Jayson Matthews, TCC
John Osgood, Dep Pub Works Mgr
Mark Richwine, Parks & Rec Mgr
John Rush, Asst Police Chief
Tom Ryff, Police Chief
Elizabeth Thomas, Neighborhood Pgm Spec
Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Svcs Dir

Guests Present:

Joe Pospicil, NAC
Stephanie Salazar, ASU

Councilmember Ben Arredondo called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Police Department Update on Neighborhood Policing Efforts

Assistant Police Chief John Rush gave an update on neighborhood policing efforts:

Evaluate efforts to reduce crime in neighborhoods

- Property crime has been reduced by 9%, motor vehicle theft by 34%, and violent crime by 16%.
- Changed responses to crime, especially in-progress crimes, so that we get there quicker and the areas are flooded with more officers.
- Deploy officers to the areas where most of the crime is occurring during the corresponding days and times which have reduced the Part 1 crimes that affect neighborhoods.

Assess efforts of Crime Prevention Unit with respect to addressing neighborhood public safety issues

- Attend neighborhood meetings to address the big issues of graffiti and alley problems.
- Concerning graffiti: visited every retail establishment that sells spray paint; reinforced policy of not selling those items to anyone under 21 years of age.
- Graffiti ordinance is being changed to make it stricter so that Public Works can go onto certain property and eradicate graffiti quicker.
- Hit 50 different identified party houses and reinforced with the owners that there will be no more parties. There has been positive feedback.

Revitalize GAIN

- This event occurs in October and was a big success last year.
- Have more strategies to work with some of the neighborhood groups to do more than done in the past.

Follow-up on Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission recommendations on internet safety.

- The Juvenile Unit has gone to the schools and addressed the issues with the students.

Measure the effectiveness of the Loud Party Ordinance

- Loud party calls are down about 7%.

Review neighborhood traffic enforcement efforts

- There has been a 10% reduction in accidents in the neighborhoods, and that is related to the higher enforcement, more visibility and photo radar.

Encourage ASU-City partnerships to improve student housing.

- ASU has been working with Ken Harmon in Crime Prevention and there have been positive results.
- A door hanger was distributed that dealt with the Loud Party Ordinance and nuisance issues, open containers, drinking laws; there have been positive results.
- Bike team is working with ASU to deploy resources toward those areas.
- Partnered with ASU on developing a sexual assault prevention pamphlet. Pamphlet distributed to apartment complexes and to students to raise awareness of the potential problems.

Councilmember Arredondo added that about three months ago, a number of people showed up from the Svob Park neighborhood. We had undercover police, uniformed police, and we had Parks & Recreation make sure that the lights were working. Public Works installed speed bumps. He stated that this shows how this City can cooperate with each department, move forward, and turn something around.

Stephanie Salazar (ASU) has continued with the loud party emphasis, so there has been a large impact. He stated that he will send a letter to Dr. Crow commending Stephanie Salazar for her contributions on improving these issues. Fire Chief Cliff Jones added that the Fire Department has worked extensively with Stephanie and she has been a tremendous help in getting public education messages on fire and life safety to the student community.

Councilmember Arredondo added that this community is very rich in what it produces through the citizens.

He further added that everything on the Committee's Work Plan for public safety has been completed.

Agenda Item 2 – Interdepartmental Committee on Neighborhood Issues

Brenda Buren summarized that the Police Department has worked with Shauna Warner in the Neighborhood Office to find ways to work together better. Through crime suppression efforts, they are learning to use the City data and the City relationships more proactively and to focus on neighborhood issues before they become a crisis. They have met with department heads and would propose to get a group together to see how this might be most productive.

Councilmember Arredondo directed staff to move forward and report back in September.

Agenda Item 3 – Identifying Unregistered Rental Properties

Jan Koehn summarized that this is in response to an issue that surfaced in the Ad Hoc Rental Housing Task Force for a better identification of rental housing units. Since that time, several things have been done.

- Tax & License database is now on line and is open to the public. It is possible to type in an address and determine if that property is licensed with the City Sales Tax Department. If it is not, they can file a complaint on line.
- The water deposit billings are checked monthly, because those are typically renters, and Tax & License cross-checks it with their database and her department cross-checks it to determine if they are licensed with the Maricopa County Assessor's Office.
- Maricopa County has also increased their vigilance on the required rental registration information that they collect and they are also cleaning up their records and their legal specifications.
- Results are beginning to show.

Councilmember Arredondo congratulated Jan and her office for fixing things that people didn't want to look at or didn't think could be fixed. It takes a lot of effort.

Agenda Item 4 – Neighborhood Alley Clean Up

John Osgood summarized that there is a close tie between GAIN and alley clean-up because many residents have expressed dissatisfaction with the condition of their alleys. An alley clean-up was done this past weekend in Scudder Park. Resident concerns can be anything from people throwing things over the fence, to the dust, to the feeling of being unsafe. One thing staff found this last weekend during the clean-up at Scudder Park was that they know what their neighbors are doing and what they should be doing, and they know what they are doing in terms of paying attention to their alley. The very thought of getting people from the streets on both sides of the alley to meet in the middle to clean it up is a great start. When GAIN happens again in October, they would like to build on what was started last year and with this event and encourage people to have a clean-up day on GAIN night.

He added that staff didn't know what to expect with the clean-up event at Scudder Park last weekend. There weren't so many doing the clean-up, but more people stopped by throughout the

time and asked questions. It was an opportunity to share information. The City was in a joint field operations presence with the uncontained program, the streets and the alley maintenance program, talking about what the City does and what the residents can do to keep the alleys looking good.

Shauna Warner added that people appreciated the “no dumping” signs. The residents were appreciative of the effort and about 30 to 40 people stopped by.

Councilmember Arredondo added that he understood it would take about \$2M to make sure every 4 years the alleys were cleaned.

Mr. Osgood clarified that in order to accelerate the program from 15 years to four (4), it would take about \$2M per year. If staff were to revisit that, they would look closer at those numbers. Staff is looking at different modifications of the program. From Public Works and Field Operations, this will be the summer of alleys and graffiti.

Councilmember Arredondo asked Mr. Osgood to look at those numbers and return in September with the information.

Agenda Item 5 – Discussion of the Fire Department’s Diversity Recruitment Effort

Fire Chief Jones summarized that diversity recruitment is very important to the Fire Department. Within the Fire Department, it is a labor management effort, so it is not only department administration and firefighters who work on recruitment, but it is the union in partnership with the department working on recruitment. We have taken on some additional avenues in diversity recruitment.

- Partnered with the Emerald Society, an Irish heritage organization that sponsors mentoring programs for different types of jobs, one of which is the fire service.
- Continuing to work with the Valley Bombaros on mentoring of firefighter candidates, and they have been doing firefighting mentoring for the longest time.
- Joined forces with the J. W. Robinson Society which is an African-American organization for firefighters.
- Began working with other fire departments, including Glendale, on mentoring and support programs. We are trying to synergize efforts by bringing more departments together and helping more young people prepare for the firefighter candidate test. In working with Glendale, we are looking at valley-wide mentoring for the written test, for the CPAT test, for oral boards.
- Fire Captain Don Jongewaard remains active in the City Diversity Committee. We are attempting to maximize resources in terms of recruiting, funding, and time by combining resources.
- The citywide recruitment team, including Police, Public Works, has joined with Fire on a number of opportunities throughout the Valley this past year to do joint recruitments.
- Completed a recruitment and first level interviews are occurring currently. There were about 1200 applicants, and about 500 are taking part in first level interviews; second level interviews will start next week. A new hiring list should be in place in June.
- Lisa Stark leads the department’s recruitment team, and she recently attended the National Women in Fire Service Conference with discussions on how to attract, prepare for the test, and retain qualified women candidates.
- Have done job fairs at Gilbert, South Mountain, Gateway Community College, ASU Spring Career Fair, the ASU West Career Fair, ASU Homecoming, Women’s Expo in Phoenix, Women in Public Safety at Maricopa County Community College District, in Phoenix Pride,

Rainbow Festival, Phoenix Mercury Women's Basketball games, Native American Youth Conference, JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes, Marcos De Niza High School Career Fair, Mr. Olympia Police and Fire Challenge in Las Vegas, and ran ads in local fitness magazines to attract a diverse and qualified pool of candidates.

Councilmember Arredondo commended Chief Jones and his staff for actively working on this issue.

Agenda Item 6 – Evaluate Fire Department Support Staff Needs Assessment

Jim Gaintner summarized that the Fire Department has had a five-year plan in place for many years and it is updated yearly. One of the sections identifies personnel needs, particularly staff support. Staff realizes in tough economic times moving forward on that is not realistic at this time, but it is important to continue to understand where we are. We will be re-evaluating the five-year plan again this coming year and updating it so we know our needs. For a number of years we have identified a fire mechanic, technical services specialist, fire inspectors, a medical director, and a variety of positions and we will continue to look at those.

Councilmember Arredondo asked staff to be prepared at Council this Thursday if the discussion gets to this point. When we go out for a bond this year vs. next year, there needs to be a discussion whether that will hurt our neighborhood response time and be prepared to answer it. Option #4 leaves some Fire items off and we need to know how we will be affected.

Councilmember Arredondo asked Police Chief Ryff to introduce his new staff member.

Chief Ryff introduced Charles Cobbs, the new Community Outreach Specialist. He has extensive experience in the community and it is an honor and privilege to have him as a member of the Police Department.

Charles Cobbs stated that he looks forward to working with staff and moving Tempe Police Department forward. The City enjoys a great reputation at this point and he looks forward to being here.

Councilmember Arredondo announced that there will be no meetings in June, July and August. He asked each staff member to give to Shauna Warner by August 1st five things they think would make this City a better place.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Prepared by: Connie Krosschell
Reviewed by: Shauna Warner

Jan Hort, City Clerk