

POLICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

September 1, 1998

The Police Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on September 1, 1998 at 3:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Pat Pomeroy, Chairman
John Giles
Bill Jaffa

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

COUNCIL PRESENT

Keno Hawker

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Lin Adams
Neal Beats
Fred Conway
Linda Crocker
Luigi Digirolamo
Dennis Donna
G.T. Fowler
Mike Hutchinson
Barbara Jones
Ellen Pence
Ronald Poulin
Les Portee
Bryan Raines
Tom Remes
Jan Strauss
Ursula Strephans
Jeff Welker
Mike Whalen
David Zielonka
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

John Back, Jr.
Samuel Montes
Robbie Sherwood
Others

1. Hear and consider a Police Department Management Review and an Overtime Utilization Analysis as prepared by KPMG Peat Marwick.

Mr. John Back, Jr., a partner with the firm KPMG Peat Marwick (KPMG), firm Manager Samuel Montes, and Acting Police Chief Jan Strauss addressed the Committee relative to this agenda item and referred to copies of the City of Mesa Police Department Management Review and Overtime Utilization Analysis reports which were distributed to the Committee.

Mr. Back discussed anticipated growth levels in the City of Mesa over the next several years and emphasized the importance of addressing the needs of a growing population. Mr. Back highlighted data relative to Police Department activity and noted that over the past five years, Part I crimes have increased 12%, calls for service have increased 32% and the Mesa Police Department budget has increased by 66%. Mr. Back informed the Committee that the focus of the study performed by his company includes the overall cost effectiveness of the

Mesa Police Department's organizational structure, holding facility options, specific cost benefits of the crime lab and the Department's aviation program.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that Mesa Police Officers arrest more individuals than the current holding facility can accommodate, the fact that bookings have increased by 10% per year since 1993, the fact that the holding facility is closed to new bookings 40% of the days, requiring the Police Department to cite and release, the cost benefits of improving the existing facility, the possibility of initiating a pilot project to book arrestees into the County Southeast Jail located in the south central part of Mesa, and the importance of examining long-term strategies for addressing capacity needs.

Mr. Back and Mr. Montes also provided the Committee with a brief overview of the Overtime Utilization Analysis for the Mesa Police Department and stated that the objectives of the review were to evaluate the Police Department's practices for approving and managing overtime, quantify the costs relative to overtime use for specific overtime categories, and estimate the costs of hiring additional staff for the specific activities versus continuing to pay overtime.

Discussion ensued relative to staff interviews, the variety of documentation that was reviewed and analyzed, the fact that staff from KPMG limited their review to the three objectives listed above, KPMG's opinion that the Police Department has initiated a well-documented system and management practices for approving and monitoring overtime, the fact that many managers have explored methods of mitigating overtime, overtime categories, comparison to other law enforcement agencies, and the fact that the most significant areas of overtime utilization include investigations, report writing, minimum staffing at court, and heldover workloads.

Mr. Montes noted that a group of 58 sworn officers account for over 15% of the overtime charges for FY 1997-98 and stated that civilian employees within the department frequently work overtime to complete backlogged clerical work, such as transcribing tapes from investigations and filing records.

Mr. Back encouraged the members of the Committee to review the contents of both reports and indicated that he is willing to respond to questions at this time or in the future.

Chief Strauss responded to recommendations outlined in the report and provided the Committee with a brief overview of Departmental goals to address various recommendations. Chief Strauss commented on the issue of performance-based budgeting and advised that staff is developing plans for senior staff training in performance measurement evaluations. Chief Strauss stated the opinion that performance-based budgeting will occur in the Fiscal Year 2000-2001 budget year.

Assistant Chief Mike Whalen addressed the Committee and provided a brief presentation on the jail facility. Chief Whalen discussed staff's intention to reduce the population of the current jail facility and stated that on October 1, 1998 the population will decrease to 30 prisoners per day opposed to the current 60-70 prisoners that are housed on an average day. Chief Whalen stated that the conditions at the current facility are unsafe and must be addressed. Chief Whalen stated that prisoners will be moved to the Southeast Maricopa County facility and discussed plans to implement video arraignments.

Discussion ensued regarding a recommendation to hire two additional detention officers.

City Manager Charles Luster commented that neighbors in the area of the existing Police headquarters building have expressed strong opposition to the possible expansion of the holding facility at that location. Mr. Luster stated that although the expansion would probably be the most economic manner in which to proceed, neighborhood concerns dictate that this option not be further explored. Mr. Luster recommended to the Committee that the possible expansion of the holding facility at the existing Police headquarters building not be pursued. Mr. Luster also recommended that additional options, including privatization, be explored.

Chairman Pomeroy concurred with Mr. Luster's recommendations.

Committeemember Jaffa concurred that a holding facility expansion in the downtown area should not be pursued.

In response to a question from Committeemember Jaffa, Mr. Luster stated the opinion that a regional or an East Valley facility may also be appropriate and said that staff will research a variety of options.

It was moved by Committeemember Jaffa, seconded by Committeemember Giles, to recommend to the Council that expansion of the existing holding facility at the Police headquarters building not be pursued.

Carried unanimously.

Assistant Chief Fred Conway addressed the Committee relative to recommendations submitted by KPMG regarding the Crime Lab. Chief Conway discussed the Crime Lab's ability to perform enhanced DNA testing and presented brief responses to recommendations submitted by KPMG Peat Marwick.

Chief Conway commented on the Police Department's Aviation Unit and discussed a recommendation relative to conducting annual program reviews to distinguish funds that have been expended on each program and arrive at an annual cost per flight hour. Chief Conway advised that in the past the Department has maintained a cost per flight hour (operational) figure, which included all expenses required to maintain the aircraft in a safe, mechanically-sound condition. Chief Conway discussed staff's intention in the future to factor in all costs associated with the operation/maintenance of the Department's aircraft, including salaries for the aircraft mechanics.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the Department's Piper aircraft, which became the property of the Mesa Police Department as a result of a seizure operation, the fact that the aircraft has experienced minimum usage during the past year, staff's intention to devote resources to expand the use of the aircraft in the future, additional plans to initiate a study relative to the use of this aircraft which will be presented to the Council, and the possibility of utilizing the aircraft for interstate transportation purposes.

Police Chief Jan Strauss addressed the Committee and commented on KPMG's recommendations regarding overtime. Chief Strauss advised that the firm has recommended that the Police Department hire a sufficient number of officers in order to negate a large portion of the need for overtime. Chief Strauss reported that the hiring of 40 new police officers would be required to allow the Department to arrive at minimum staffing levels and eliminate a majority of the overtime costs.

Discussion ensued relative to conducting night court and staff's intention to analyze whether this action would mitigate a portion of the overtime, the Department's Work Order Policy, which identifies the areas requiring/utilizing overtime, and staff's intention to develop a written policy to evaluate the need for overtime.

Committeemember Giles commented that the utilization of video arraignment was not investigated as part of this report and indicated that staff should pursue this process. Committeemember Giles also stated concern relative to the fact that efforts have not already been expended to determine the actual costs associated with the utilization of the Department's Aviation Unit.

Committeemember Jaffa concurred with Committeemember Giles' remarks relative to the importance of pursuing video arraignments. Committeemember Jaffa encouraged staff to compile accurate statistics relative to current and future expenses associated with the Aviation Unit and to pursue methods of reducing the amount of report-writing time.

Chairman Pomeroy thanked the staff of KPMG Peat Marwick for their input and recommendations.

2. Discuss and consider a tattoo removal program as proposed by the Gang Prevention Steering Committee.

Acting Assistant Police Chief Ron Poulin addressed the Committee regarding this agenda item and provided a brief overview of a proposed tattoo removal program.

Chief Poulin informed the Committee that the proposal would provide individuals with gang-affiliated tattoos to have the tattoos professionally removed by a plastic surgeon without cost to the individuals. Chief Poulin explained that the Mesa Tattoo Removal Program would be a partnership of public and private agencies working together to help individuals remove gang-related tattoos and improve their likelihood of becoming successful members of the community.

Chief Poulin briefly highlighted data regarding known gang affiliations in Mesa and noted that a common characteristic of gang membership is displaying the gangs' insignia in the form of a tattoo. Chief Poulin reported that approximately 75% of the gang members/associates in Mesa currently have tattoos.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the Mesa Gang Intervention Project is currently working with approximately 85 gang members/associates and youths-at-risk for gang involvement; the fact that a number of former gang members are realizing that their tattoos are preventing them from obtaining legitimate jobs in the workforce, the positive effects, both mentally and physically, of having the tattoos removed, and the fact that the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department has been operating a similar program at a city park for approximately four years

It was moved by Committeemember Jaffa, seconded by Committeemember Giles, to recommend to the Council that the proposed tattoo removal program, proposed by the Gang Prevention Steering Committee, be approved.

Carried unanimously.

3. Consider entering into an agreement with the Lojack Corporation to provide the Police Department with a stolen vehicle recovery system.

Police Lieutenant Les Portee addressed the Committee relative to this agenda item. Lieutenant Portee informed the Committee that staff recommends entering into a contract with the Lojack Corporation in Boston,

Massachusetts, which has developed a stolen vehicle recovery system. Lieutenant Portee advised that the company sells transponders to consumers, which, when placed in their vehicles, enables the Police Department to track and locate the stolen vehicles and return them to their owners. Lieutenant Portee stated that tracking signals can be detected by any police vehicle located within three-miles of the stolen vehicle.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the equipment is currently utilized by police departments in 13 states and all report that they are extremely satisfied with the equipment, the fact that the cities of Phoenix and Tucson are currently entering into contracts with the Lojack Corporation, the fact that the Lojack Corporation boasts a 90% recovery rate on vehicles utilizing their equipment, and the fact that although the contract is for a five year period of time, the agreement may be cancelled within 90 days upon written notice to the Lojack Corporation.

In response to a question from Chairman Pomeroy, Lieutenant Portee advised that the equipment may be purchased by consumers at a cost of \$600 per vehicle and added that the Lojack Corporation will refund the total amount of purchase if the vehicle is not recovered within 24 hours.

Lieutenant Portee noted that the City of Mesa would not incur any expense other than the training of Police Officers in reporting and tracking the signal emitted from the equipment located in the stolen vehicle. Lieutenant Portee added that insurance rates may decrease as a result of this new technology. Lieutenant Portee noted that the Lojack Corporation is the only company that offers a product that is operated solely by police departments.

Chairman Pomeroy thanked staff for their presentation.

It was moved by Committeemember Jaffa, seconded by Committeemember Giles, to recommend to the Council that the City of Mesa enter into an agreement with the Lojack Corporation to provide the Police Department with a stolen vehicle recovery system.

Carried unanimously.

6. Adjournment.

It was moved by Committeemember Giles, seconded by Committeemember Jaffa, that the Police Committee meeting adjourn at 4:03 p.m.

Carried unanimously.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Police Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 1st day of September, 1998. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 1998

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK