

FIRE COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 4, 1999

The Fire Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on February 4th, 1999 at 9:40 a.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Dennis Kavanaugh, Chairman
Jim Davidson
Keno Hawker

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Dennis Compton
Linda Crocker
Gil Damiani
Bob DeLeon
Cynthia Diaz
John Geier
Carl Geis
Mike Hutchinson
Dorinda Larsen

STAFF PRESENT (CONT.)

Bryan Raines
Tom Remes
Jenny Sheppard
Dan Stubbs
Mindy White
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Others

1. Discuss and consider the implementation of the following programs:

Fire Chief Dennis Compton introduced Management Assistant Dorinda Larsen and stated that Ms. Larsen was instrumental in preparing the reports which will be discussed at this meeting.

a. Fire Department Accreditation

Battalion Chief Dan Stubbs provided background information pertaining to the Fire Department's Accreditation program, and outlined the Department's plans for continuous and on-going evaluation. Chief Stubbs explained that the accreditation commission is a non-profit entity consisting of the International City Managers Association and the International Association of Fire Fighters who developed the program over a ten-year period of time. Chief Stubbs added that the program provides a system of evaluating fire and emergency services and represents a crucial tool in determining risks and fire safety needs by evaluating the performance of the organization.

Chief Stubbs stated that the Department's application for accreditation will be submitted in the fall of 1999, and added that although the Department has 18 months to complete the program, the Department's goal is to accomplish this feat in one year. Chief Stubbs emphasized that the accreditation program will benefit the Department by encouraging quality improvement through a continuous self-assessment process, provide a detailed evaluation of the Department and the services it provides to the community, provide a method for addressing deficiencies by building on the strong points, and provide a method for developing concurrent documents including strategic plans, action plans and program management guides.

Chief Stubbs reported that there are approximately 200 agencies in the nation involved in the accreditation process and that local agencies include Tempe, Chandler, Gilbert, Apache Junction, Peoria and Glendale. Chief

Stubbs summarized the goals of the program and said that it seeks to address whether the organization is effective, whether the goals and objectives of the organization are being achieved and the reasons for their success.

Chairman Kavanaugh stated that accreditation represents an important step for the Mesa Fire Department in improving its services.

Committeemember Davidson requested that the Fire Department continue to provide reports on its progress to the Committee. Committeemember Davidson indicated an interest in attending the training and implementation programs and requested that he be notified when these events are scheduled.

In response to a question from City Manager Charles Luster relative to the absence of Phoenix on the list of cities implementing the accreditation program, Chief Compton stated that a number of departments have not yet responded to the invitation to participate.

b. Risk Watch

Chief Compton introduced the Risk Watch program and stated the opinion that the program will represent the most critical impact the Department achieves in the area of public safety.

Assistant Fire Chief Bob DeLeon explained that Risk Watch is part of the Department's five-year plan and stated that the Department's goal is to become proactive in the prevention of unintentional injuries, particularly those involving children.

Assistant Chief DeLeon discussed the fact that national statistics reflect that unintentional injuries are the number one cause of death in the 1- to 34-year-old age group. Assistant Chief DeLeon also stated that one in four children are injured nationally each year, 7,000 die of their injuries, 50,000 are permanently injured, and added that of 951 child-related deaths reviewed in Arizona for 1997, 303 deaths could have been prevented.

Assistant Chief DeLeon explained that the Risk Watch program is designed for children in pre-school through the 8th grade and provides teachers with the knowledge to teach and apply concepts. Assistant Chief DeLeon stated that the program also provides information and schedules activities for parents.

Assistant Chief DeLeon reported that the Mesa Fire Department is one of only 20 departments in the nation to be selected to participate in the Risk Watch program and explained that the project is part of a coalition comprised of Mesa Public Schools, the Mesa Police Department, the Fire Department, Desert Samaritan Hospital and the National Fire Protection Association.

Committeemember Hawker commented on the merits of the program and noted that injuries from fire are proportionately small compared to total unintentional injuries.

Chief Compton responded that the Department's "Learn Not to Burn" program has been very successful and stated the opinion that the statistics on fire-related injuries are a reflection of the success of the program. Chief Compton added that the Risk Watch program includes information regarding burn safety.

In response to a question from Committeemember Hawker relative to the program's budget impact, Chief Compton reported that the initial implementation would cost \$89,000 and take three to five years to implement. Chief Compton added that it will cost an additional \$25,000 a year for the three to five year period. Chief Compton said that a pilot program is currently in use at two Mesa schools and that the Risk Watch program will eventually be implemented in all schools throughout the City.

Committeemember Davidson commented that the Fire Department is a major source of public information for the community and added that while current community education efforts appear to be focused, he is enthusiastic about broadening the base of that awareness to include other issues involving children.

Chairman Kavanaugh complimented the Department on achieving national recognition and stated the opinion that the cost to implement the program is minor in terms of lives that may be saved.

c. Domestic Preparedness Training

Assistant Fire Chief John Geier provided background information relative to Domestic Preparedness Training and stated that Mesa is one of 50 communities nationwide that was selected to participate in the program during 1999. Assistant Chief Geier stated that the program provides emergency plans and training for dealing with weapons of mass destruction. Assistant Chief Geier reported that the 1996 Nunn-Lugar-Domenici public law focused on countries which have access to weapons of mass destruction and the possible use of those weapons by terrorist groups. Assistant Chief Geier stated that the goal of the program is to provide state and local emergency response agencies with the training necessary to deal with the possibility of attack.

Assistant Chief Geier outlined the Department's timelines for the training which will begin with a workshop for senior officials on May 18, 1999, and include the members of the Council, and explained that the training will involve a number of government entities including the City's governing body, Emergency Medical Services, doctors, nurses, hospitals, 911 operations, law enforcement, and HazMat teams. Assistant Chief Geier added that following an evaluation of the training, the City will have an opportunity to apply for Federal funds to assist in the implementation of the program.

In response to a question from Committeemember Davidson relative to Tempe's efforts with FEMA (Federal Emergency Medical Act) and disaster recovery, Assistant Chief Geier responded that Tempe's program differs in that it is geared toward strengthening defenses against various disasters, including natural disasters, and added that a similar program is currently in effect in Mesa. Assistant Chief Geier emphasized the importance of the medical community's involvement in the program.

Committeemember Hawker remarked that he will be interested in observing the program's progress.

Chairman Kavanaugh thanked Chief Compton and staff for their presentation.

2. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

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 4th day of February, 1999. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this ____ day of _____ 1999

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK