

POLICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

January 28, 1999

The Police Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on January 28, 1999 at 9:29 a.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Pat Pomeroy, Chairman
John Giles
Bill Jaffa

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

COUNCIL PRESENT

Jim Davidson
Keno Hawker

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Cindy Barris
Fred Conway
Luigi Digirolamo
Dennis Donna
Hector Federico
Greg Fowler
Mike Hutchinson
Barbara Jones
Richard Kasper
Gilbert Otanez
Ellen Pence
Les Portee
Ronald Poulin

STAFF PRESENT (CONT.)

Bryan Raines
Tom Remes
Jan Strauss
Ursula Strehfens
Mike Whalen
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Robbie Sherwood
David Udall
Marilyn Wennerstrom
Others

1. Consider an amendment to the City Code definition of secondhand dealers.

Councilmember Jaffa indicated that he had a potential conflict of interest in connection with the matter now under discussion which he wanted recorded in the minutes of the meeting, and because of such conflict of interest, he would refrain from voting upon or otherwise participating in any manner in connection with same.

Dave Udall, 30 West 1st Street, representing Half Price Books, outlined a request on behalf of his client to revise the City Code in relation to secondhand dealers (definition of term and associated record-keeping requirements). Mr. Udall advised that an ordinance amending the Code has been drafted which is satisfactory to both his client and the Mesa Police Department. Mr. Udall encouraged support for the amendment.

It was moved by Committeemember Giles, seconded by Chairman Pomeroy, that the proposed ordinance be included on the agenda for introduction at the February 1, 1999 Regular Council Meeting.

Upon a tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Giles-Pomeroy
NAYS - None
ABSTAIN - Jaffa

Chairman Pomeroy declared the motion carried unanimously by those voting.

2. Review and discuss statistics regarding fatal traffic accidents resulting from red light violations and failure-to-yield violations.

Police Lieutenant Luigi Digirolamo presented a comparison of fatal traffic collisions during 1997 (26 collisions) and 1998 (34 collisions). Lt. Digirolamo reported that of the 27 deaths in 1997, 1 was attributed to a red light violation and 0 to failure-to-yield violations; and of the 34 deaths in 1998, 5 were attributed to red light violations and 3 to failure-to-yield violations. Lt. Digirolamo identified sites of the collisions, noting that none occurred in intersections with red light cameras.

Lt. Digirolamo advised that the Arizona State University (ASU) study relating to the City's photo radar and red light camera program is anticipated to be available at the beginning of March 1999.

Chairman Pomeroy referred to a recent publication which ranked Mesa as second (following Phoenix) among cities in the number of red light fatalities in recent years. Lt. Digirolamo stated that he will research this item and forward information (e.g., statistics for 1994, 1995, and 1996) to the Committee.

Committeemember Giles noted the significance of the issue and suggested further review following the presentation of the ASU study.

In response to a question from Committeemember Jaffa, Assistant Police Chief Mike Whalen said that the City originally contracted with ASU for the photo radar/red light camera study and the final report will be authored by a member of the ASU staff in concert with a consultant.

Committeemember Jaffa commented regarding current aggressive driving practices by citizens and questioned the availability/allocation of City resources pertaining to traffic enforcement. Police Chief Jan Strauss indicated that a program has been initiated to address the matter, which staff will continue to monitor. Chief Strauss related activities of the City's motorcycle squad.

Chairman Pomeroy expressed concern pertaining to the increase in the number of fatal collisions from 1997 to 1998.

Chairman Pomeroy thanked Lt. Digirolamo for the presentation.

3. Review and discuss the Police Department's responses to the Peat Marwick observations and recommendations.

Committeemember Giles stated appreciation for the responses from the Police Department to the Peat Marwick observations and recommendations. Committeemember Giles noted that the study did not address the issue of video arraignments but encouraged the Police Department to consider the option, which may result in a reduction of overtime.

(At 9:45 a.m., Committeemember Giles was excused for the remainder of the meeting.)

Chief Strauss reviewed the Peat Marwick recommendations and provided an overview of the anticipated implementation schedule. Chief Strauss highlighted proposed strategies relating to performance measurement training for managers, continual review of patrol staff ratios, the City's holding facility/overflow booking to the County, unit costs for programs within the Crime Lab, cost-recovery options, Aviation Unit program reviews, and evaluation of the use of the Piper aircraft.

Chief Strauss stated that a report has been provided to the Committee identifying mitigation potential within the Police Department by category of overtime (work orders). Chief Strauss spoke concerning efforts to achieve full staffing in patrol districts, which may reduce the necessity for "called-in" personnel to fulfill mandated minimum staffing requirements, but noted that overtime cannot be eliminated given patrol responsibilities such as report writing.

Discussion ensued pertaining to the status of settlement negotiations in relation to computer hardware/software to be utilized for report writing. Committeemember Jaffa noted the importance of automation as a tool for decreasing costs/increasing efficiency and encouraged efforts to proceed with the matter.

Chairman Pomeroy expressed appreciation to Chief Strauss for the update.

4. Hear a report regarding reorganization in the Police Department.

Acting Assistant Police Chief Ron Poulin displayed a chart and outlined a proposed reorganization within the Police Department. Chief Poulin said that the reorganization includes the formation of a new Patrol Resource Division and a new Planning and Analysis Division and the reassignment of the Mesa Gang Intervention Project (OJJDP Grant) to a new Lieutenant's position within the Special Investigations Division.

Chairman Pomeroy thanked Chief Poulin for the report.

5. Hear a progress report on the new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and the Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) system.

Police Commander Dennis Donna presented an update concerning the new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) systems. Commander Donna explained the components of the systems, training programs to date, equipment backup arrangements, and plans for on-line operation commencing March 8, 1999.

Chairman Pomeroy noted the significance of the systems to the City and expressed appreciation to Commander Donna for the progress report.

6. Hear a report and discuss the handling of City prisoners.

This issue was discussed under Item 3.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 10:08 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 28th day of January, 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