

POLICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 8, 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 April 8, 1999 at 9:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Pat Pomeroy, Chairman
John Giles
Bill Jaffa

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

COUNCIL PRESENT

Jim Davidson
Keno Hawker
Dennis Kavanaugh

STAFF PRESENT

C.K. Luster
Kathy Barrett
Neal Beets
Fred Conway
Linda Crocker
Luigi Digirolamo
Barbara Jones
Mike Kalember
Ellen Pence
Tom Remes
Sharon Seekins
Jan Strauss
Michael Whalen
Kim West
Darryl Woodson
Others

OTHERS PRESENT

Robbie Sherwood
Others

1. Further discussion and consideration concerning a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a red light/photo radar traffic system.

Assistant Police Chief Mike Whalen briefly highlighted the contents of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the City of Mesa's red light camera/photo radar enforcement program and noted that the RFP was prepared in response to direction to staff at a previous Police Committee meeting. Chief Whalen noted that the contract with the City's current vendor expires on May 5, 1999.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the RFP, if approved, will be released within a few weeks, the fact that the proposal includes both photo safety speed enforcement and photo safety red light enforcement throughout the City, the fact that the proposal calls for an increase in the number of vans from three to five with distribution in each of the police districts and one to be utilized as an at-large traffic photo safety unit, proposed intersections where the equipment will be located, the fact that 20 sites will be included in the RFP and that ten active camera systems will be in operation at any one time, the fact that four of the proposed intersections will be capable of left-turn arrow enforcement, and the fact that the intersections that are not equipped with cameras will contain "dummy flash mechanisms" and will be able to perform traffic counts.

Police Lieutenant Luigi Digirolamo briefly highlighted minor revisions to the proposed RFP, which included: 1) page 16, under section 5.2, the second paragraph beginning "In the event that there is no response..." has been completely deleted. Lt. Digirolamo explained that the contractor will notify the Police Department which will have process serving in place to utilize for complaints that are not answered; 2) same page 16, 5.2, second to last paragraph, the last word in the last line of that paragraph should read "Police Department" rather than "City Court." Lt. Digirolamo explained that the Police Department will then forward the documentation to the City Court; 2) page 19, under section 9.0, paragraph four, the dollar amount should be changed from "\$30.00" to "\$50.00"; and 3) on page 21, under section 10.9, paragraph two, the dollar amount should also be changed from "\$30.00" to "\$50.00."

Chief Whalen informed the Committee that the only cost to the City will be personnel-related and said that the Police Department has included funding in the FY 1999-2000 budget for the addition of four photo safety operators to operate the speed vans and one administrative assistant.

Chief Whalen briefly reviewed statistics covering the period 1996 thru 1998 that were distributed to the Committee relative to the number of accidents that have occurred throughout neighboring cities and whether the cities have implemented a photo red light and/or speed enforcement program. Chief Whalen noted that the number of accidents in Mesa during the period 1997 to 1998, when the photo red light program was implemented, decreased by 50.

In response to a question from Chairman Pomeroy, Chief Whalen stated that should the Council approve staff's recommendation, the City's vendor will be contacted and asked to provide an interim extension of the contract until such time as a new contract is awarded.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that only ten of the 20 cameras will actually have the capability of taking photos and the other ten will simply flash, the fact that the Police Department will review statistics on a monthly basis to determine whether the cameras should be moved to other locations for optimum impact, the fact that locations in the future may be increased, a request from Committeemember Jaffa that staff provide him with additional information relative to proposed costs and revenues, including anticipated equipment expenses, personnel costs, related overhead costs, project revenues and the net cost to the City, and the fact that the contract will be for three years and staff's intention to closely monitor the program and continue to provide the Committee and the Council with updates and recommendations.

Committeemember Giles commented on the fact that the ASU study on this issue determined that the reduction in accidents was statistically significant and noted that the recent data indicates that the City of Glendale, which does not currently have any type of traffic safety enforcement in place, reported a decrease of 400 accidents. Committeemember Giles indicated that he would be interested in requesting that the consultants review the current accident statistics and provide the Committee with an interpretation of same. Committeemember Giles stated the opinion that the statistical analysis is incomplete and should contain a comparison among other communities.

Chief Whalen commented that staff would pursue this matter and clarified that the original report referred to crash rates which dealt with the number of vehicles that proceeded through a particular area as measured by Traffic Engineering and compared to the number of accidents, while the current data is "raw accident data."

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that the RFP will require the selected vendor to assume all responsibility for future equipment modifications and the bidder's price will reflect this responsibility, the fact

that the City will bear the cost of process serving, the fact that the operators of the vans are City of Mesa employees, and the fact that the vans are leased to the City by the vendor at a cost of \$1.00 per van.

Committeemember Giles concurred with Committeemember Jaffa's comments relative to the importance of obtaining additional information regarding all costs associated with expanding the program.

It was moved by Committeemember Giles, seconded by Committeemember Jaffa, to recommend to the Council that staff be directed to proceed with the issuance of the Request for Proposals for the expansion of the City's red light/photo radar traffic system.

Councilmember Davidson cautioned the Committee on rendering a decision based on "raw data" alone and added that statistics are frequently misleading. Councilmember Davidson also commented on fleet vehicle violations and questioned whether the employer or the City will be responsible for locating the actual driver of fleet vehicles. Chief Whalen discussed staff's intention to assume a proactive stance regarding fleet/corporate violations and ownership and reported that a front-facing photo of the offender will be attached to the citation copy that is mailed to the violator. Chief Whalen added that if the vehicle is corporation owned, the corporation will be mailed the actual citation with the photo of the offender on the front. Chief Whalen emphasized that at that point it will be the moral if not legal responsibility of the company to identify the driver.

In response to a question from Committeemember Jaffa, City Manager Charles Luster advised that a public hearing on the photo radar issue will be scheduled at the same meeting that the contract for the expansion of the City's program is approved by the Council.

Committeemember Jaffa requested that that he be provided the additional information relative to all of the costs associated with the program's expansion and a summary report on the significance of the statistics as soon as that information is available.

In response to a question from Mr. Luster, Chief Whalen clarified that the contract includes ten cameras, eight straight-through cameras and two left-turn cameras.

Mr. Luster expressed the opinion that the addition of two left-turn cameras is insufficient to address this increasing traffic hazard and requested that the Committee allow him an opportunity to meet with staff and determine a plan for obtaining necessary additional left-turn cameras.

Chairman Pomeroy, Committeemember Giles and Committeemember Jaffa spoke in support of Mr. Luster's recommendation that the number of left-turn cameras be increased and requested that Mr. Luster pursue this matter.

Carried unanimously.

3. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Police Committee adjourned at 9:16 a.m.

Police Committee Meeting

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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 8th day of April, 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