

POLICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 30, 2004

The Police Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on August 30, 2004 at 3:07 p.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Kyle Jones, Chairman
Tom Rawles
Claudia Walters

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Mike Hutchinson

1. Discuss and consider recommending proceeding with the development of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the continuation of the Photo Safety Program.

Police Chief Dennis Donna reported that the purpose of today's presentation is to follow-up on several inquiries posed by Committeemember Rawles at the July 12, 2004 Police Committee meeting regarding Mesa's Photo Safety Program. He explained that it is also staff's recommendation that the Police Department, in conjunction with the Transportation Division, be permitted to proceed with the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for the Photo Safety Program. He advised that the contract with the current provider, Affiliated Computer Services (ACS), expires in April of 2005. Chief Donna added that he anticipates significant technological changes in the field that would be worthy of consideration. He introduced Police Commander Hector Federico and Police Lieutenant Ben Kulina.

Commander Federico advised that at the July 12th meeting, Committeemember Rawles requested that staff assess "the occurrence of accidents since 1996 at 13 intersections which do not have red light cameras to determine whether there had been a similar 21% reduction overall in collisions as compared to the monitored sites." He stated that the Police Department, in conjunction with the Transportation Division, selected 11 photo safety monitored and non-monitored intersections (located geographically in the western portion of the City where most of the red light cameras are currently located); that comparing 1996 to 2003 with regards to monitored versus non-monitored intersections, there was a 40% decrease in injury/fatal collisions at monitored intersections as compared to a 20% reduction at non-monitored intersections. Commander Federico noted that a more recent three-year trend revealed a 20.4% decrease in injury/fatal collisions at red-light monitored intersections and a 4.1% decrease at non-monitored intersections.

Commander Federico advised that Committeemember Rawles also requested additional information concerning the timeframe within which citations are delivered to red light runners. He stated that process service generally must be completed within 120 days; that the citations

are mailed within three weeks to 30 days and the individual has 30 days within which to respond; that if the party fails to respond within 30 days, a citation is reissued; and that if the violator does not respond within 90 days, a process service company is employed to make service to the individual. (Service could also be made to a relative or friend at the specific address and not necessarily the person named in the citation.)

In response to a question from Chairman Jones regarding the 40% decrease in injury/fatal collisions, Lieutenant Kulina clarified that that figure represents any reported injury up to and including a fatality.

Committeemember Walters stated the opinion that it would be appropriate for staff to seek photo safety proposals, to conduct research relative to changes in technology and costs, and assess various options that could be incorporated into a new RFP. She noted that there have been many positive changes to traffic safety in the community since the Photo Safety Program began, which is just one component of the Department's comprehensive safety program. Committeemember Walters commented that when citizens assess the Photo Safety Program, they are often surprised to learn that it is not "a big money maker" for the City. She added that the goal of the program is to prevent injuries and save lives and said that in that regard, it has been a great success.

It was moved by Committeemember Walters, seconded by Committeemember Rawles, to recommend to the Council that staff be directed to proceed with the development of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the continuation of the Photo Safety Program and to provide a recommendation to the Council at a future date as to how to proceed after 2005 when the current contract with Affiliated Computer Services expires.

Committeemember Rawles expressed appreciation to staff for following up on this issue in order to provide a more relevant comparison of photo safety monitored versus non-monitored intersections. He commented that there appears to be a substantial and significant reduction in injury/fatal collisions at the red-light monitored intersections over and above the reductions at the non-monitored intersections and noted that it is important for the community to be aware of this fact as staff proceeds with the development of the RFP. He also thanked staff for the update on the process service.

Carried unanimously.

Chairman Jones voiced appreciation to staff for the presentation.

2. Discuss and consider recommending a proposal for the acquisition of new Glock service revolvers for sworn Police personnel.

Chief Donna reported that the Police Department had originally intended to seek funding from the Council next year for the replacement of some of the older Glock semiautomatic pistols that are issued to its sworn department members. He explained, however, that the gun manufacturer has extended a one-time offer to replace not only the Department's older Glock pistols, but as many as 1,000 Glock semiautomatic handguns, which would constitute the majority of the Department's stock of duty weapons. Chief Donna introduced Commander Gil Otanez and Range Master Sergeant Jeff Henderson.

Commander Otanez provided the Committee with a brief historical overview of this agenda item. He reported that in 1996, the Department initially purchased 600 Glock handguns to be issued to officers and subsequently acquired an additional 486 through purchase or seizure; that over

the last eight years, the manufacturer has made numerous upgrades and improvements to its pistols; that many of the older Glock pistols are showing excessive wear due to age and becoming less useful; that the night sights have a life expectancy of seven years, after which time they become dim and require replacement; that the cost of a new Glock semiautomatic pistol, including night sights, is \$477; and that the standard replacement cost of a Glock pistol with night sights is \$157 each, plus the exchange.

Commander Otanez commented that Glock is offering the Department a one-time purchase price of \$67 per pistol, including night sights, plus exchange, thereby making the purchase of complete, fully upgraded pistols less costly than only purchasing night sights. He added that the upgraded pistols would allow the attachment of various accessories such as a small flashlight. Commander Otanez noted that the total cost for the purchase of 1,000 Glock semiautomatic pistols would be \$67,000 plus tax and shipping, or \$21,000 less than the total cost of replacing only the night sights on all 1,000 pistols.

Chairman Jones expressed support for the proposal and commented that Glock is offering the City an excellent opportunity to replace its aging firearms.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the flashlight attachment is an effective tactical tool for police officers during building searches; that the Department issues five different models of Glock semiautomatic pistols to its sworn officers; and that the excessive wear on the pistols can be attributed to the age of the weapon, usage in the field, and firing rounds to qualify or for training practice.

It was moved by Committeemember Walters, seconded by Committeemember Rawles, to recommend to the Council that a proposal for the acquisition of new Glock service revolvers for sworn Police personnel, be approved.

Committeemember Rawles commented that it is important for Mesa residents to recognize that the wear and tear on a Police officer's weapon is due, in most cases, to shooting multiple rounds in order to comply with qualification standards or for training purposes and not as a result of firing excessive rounds while on duty.

In response to a question from Committeemember Rawles, Commander Otanez clarified that during the replacement process, the sworn department members would be issued an upgraded version of the same model of pistol they currently use.

Committeemember Rawles suggested that it may be appropriate for the Police Department to consider phasing in the replacement of guns in five years, especially since Glock may not offer such a substantial cost savings proposal in the future.

Carried unanimously.

Chairman Jones thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Hear an update on the CALEA accreditation process.

Chief Donna reported that the Police Department's on-site accreditation assessment was conducted last week, a process that occurs every three years. He introduced Assistant Police Chief G.T. Fowler and Lieutenant Jeff Kirkham, the Department's Accreditation Manager.

Chief Fowler explained that the accreditation process is designed to enable the Mesa Police Department to maintain compliance with standards that are implemented by the Commission on Accreditation on Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). He stated that there are currently 446 standards; that Mesa first received accreditation in 1993 and re-accreditation in 1998 and 2001; that the assessment process included a tour of Police facilities, inspection of equipment, and a review of proofs of compliance for each of the 446 standards; that interviews were conducted with Department members; and that citizen comment was obtained via telephone and at a public hearing. Chief Fowler noted that the Department received many overwhelmingly supportive comments at the public hearing, including positive remarks from Councilmember Thom.

Chief Fowler advised that the CALEA assessors determined that the Department had met all of the standards for re-accreditation and that such a recommendation would be made to the full Commission. He said that Chief Donna would attend the Accreditation Commission hearings in December and receive the Department's re-accreditation certificate at that time. Chief Fowler added that the lead assessor indicated that the Mesa Police Department was a model CALEA agency and a great organization for which everyone could be proud.

In response to a question from Committeemember Walters, Chief Fowler clarified that the three-year accreditation process, as opposed to every five years, provides law enforcement agencies with a more appropriate timeframe within which to monitor their compliance of the CALEA standards.

Committeemember Walters commended the Department as a whole and the staff members involved in the process for their superior performance.

Committeemember Rawles voiced appreciation to staff for their efforts and hard work relative to the extensive preparation that is required prior to the on-site accreditation process. He added he was hopeful that the successful completion of the re-accreditation process would serve as "a morale booster" throughout the Department.

Chairman Jones expressed appreciation to staff for the update.

4. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Police Committee meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.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 30th day of August 2004. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK